

INSPECTION REPORT

DALE GROVE SCHOOL

Secondary Centre - Ashton under Lyne,
Tameside
Primary Centre - Hyde

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106278

Headteacher: Mr J Cousil

Reporting inspector: Ms P Potheary
21765

Dates of inspection: 19th – 23rd March 2001

Inspection number: 192377

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:	Educational and behavioural difficulties
Age range of pupils:	5 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School addresses:	Secondary Centre Wilshaw Lane Ashton under Lyne Tameside
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Goode
Date of previous inspection:	March and May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21765	Ms P Potheary	Registered inspector	Physical education Religious education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9619	Mr R Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? Attendance How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Accommodation
19996	M G Watson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art	Efficiency
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Design and technology Science	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
22821	Ms L Wolstencroft	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs	How good is the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development?
20084	Ms A Berger	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Music	Assessment, staffing, resources

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dale Grove is a community day special school for 70 pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties aged five to sixteen years. The majority of pupils are from Tameside with a few from neighbouring authorities. There are 67 pupils on roll, mainly boys with only three girls, all of primary age. All of the pupils are of white UK heritage, 39 per cent of pupils have free school meals, and 25 per cent of pupils are looked after by the local authority. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational need. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below national average, with many pupils having significant additional special educational needs such as speech, language and communication difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and difficulties with reading. There are 27 pupils in the Primary Centre and 40 pupils in the Secondary Centre. The nature of pupils' behaviour and learning difficulties on entry to the Primary Centre are increasingly complex and severe. The primary and Secondary Centre buildings are five miles apart and were different schools until September 1999 when they were amalgamated. The Primary Centre has proportionately more children in Years 4, 5 and 6 with only four pupils in Key Stage 1. The Secondary Centre takes pupils from many different schools including some from Dale Grove Primary Centre. During the last academic year ten of the 27 pupils on roll in Key Stages 1 and 2 were new to the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Dale Grove is a good school where disturbed and vulnerable pupils are helped to behave very well, focus on working hard and achieve good goals. The quality of teaching is high and in Key Stages 3 and 4, leads to high standards and very good qualifications. The quality of leadership and management is good overall but is focused more effectively on Key Stages 3 and 4. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal maturity and enthusiasm for school develop very well.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school helping children to make good progress.
- The curriculum for secondary aged pupils particularly in Key Stage 3 is very good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- The school cares very well for the pupils keeping them safe and guiding them well.
- The school continues to improve, pupils gain increasingly good qualifications and achievements are rising.

What could be improved

- The headteacher's and governors' role in the strategic development of Dale Grove as one school and in particular their role in the development of Key Stages 1 and 2 and is insufficient.
- The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2, although broadly satisfactory, is not fully developed, some schemes of work are incomplete, and subject assessment is not fully in place.
- There are too few planned links between the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 curriculum to support good continuity as pupils move from one stage to the next.
- Provision for the recently changing nature of pupils' behaviour and learning difficulties in Key Stages 1 and 2 is not yet in place.

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 was last inspected in March and May 1997 and improvement since then has been good, especially in the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and behaviour management throughout the school. In Key Stages 3 and 4 improvement has been very good in the rising standards and qualifications gained by pupils. In Key Stages 1 and 2 several key areas have improved, including some aspects of the curriculum, the progress made by pupils and parental involvement in the school. However improvement has been slower than in Key Stages 3 and 4 and some key issues from the last inspection have not yet been fully addressed. In particular: the role of Key Stages 1 and 2 co-ordinators in developing schemes of work, although improved is not complete; assessment procedures for Key Stages 1 and 2 although developed in some subjects are still unsatisfactory for the majority of subjects. The school development plan contains these issues as a priority for this school year.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's targets to improve standards in the core subjects as well as improve attendance are wholly suitable, resulting in improved performance in those areas. The majority of pupils, including those with additional special educational needs such as reading and speech, communication and language difficulties, achieve well and make good progress. Progress and achievement are good for the majority of pupils in English, mathematics and science as well as personal and social development. By the end of Key Stage 2 good achievement is particularly reflected in the skilled reading shown by pupils, the good Statutory Assessment Test results in science and the fact that pupils are sufficiently calm to work hard and sometimes return to mainstream school. Low pupil numbers in Key Stages 1 and 2 make comparison of test results with other schools unreliable. Individual education plan reviews and other assessments show good progress for the majority of primary aged pupils in literacy, numeracy, geography, history, music and art and satisfactory progress in all other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are increasingly able to discuss subjects maturely, read very well and demonstrate very good skills in physical education, religious education and music. Achievement and progress in all other subjects is good by this age. The school's examination results are very good. The school's GCSE points score is almost double those of similar schools nationally and improving year on year. In addition pupils achieve the Certificate of Achievement in several subjects as well as Bronze and currently Silver certificates in the Youth Award Scheme. The Secondary Centre has recently been awarded a School Achievement Award.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good throughout the school. Pupils in all age groups are motivated to do their best and show interest and concentrate well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is usually very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils occasionally have behaviour difficulties but these are usually ignored by the majority. Older pupils show increasing self-control.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good. Younger pupils are affectionate and begin to trust the adults and each other. Older pupils work well together, making decisions to help the school develop.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and is well above the average for similar schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning are good throughout the school, including teaching of pupils who have additional special educational needs. Teaching in five per cent of lessons is excellent, in 37 per cent is very good, in 37 per cent is good and in 20 per cent satisfactory. The satisfactory teaching is mainly in Key Stages 1 and 2 and represents just under half of all teaching for this age group. The one per cent of unsatisfactory teaching is in Key Stage 4. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good overall and very good in Key Stage 3. The teaching and quality of learning in personal, social and health education is very good throughout the school.

The strengths in teaching include very good teamwork between teachers and learning support staff, and the very good quality of relationships between staff and pupils. This ensures that pupils are well supported individually and feel confident to contribute in lessons. The range of activities and pace of lessons particularly in Key Stage 3 leads to high levels of effort and motivation by pupils. In a few lessons in Key Stage 2 there is insufficient challenge for some of the pupils and in Key Stage 4 a few pupils cannot always fully understand what is required, leading to slower progress in a few lessons for both groups. However, expectations of pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 are suitably high for the majority. In Key Stage 2 teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and the specialist teachers in Key Stages 3 and 4 demonstrate very thorough knowledge of their subjects. Behaviour is managed very well during lessons in all key stages, so that pupils are able to focus on learning, however there are times in Key Stages 1 and 2 when some very disturbed behaviour impinges on teaching time because prevention strategies are not fully in place. This disrupts the learning of others, particularly during some afternoons. Literacy, numeracy and speaking and listening skills are well taught in most subjects, but opportunities for extended writing are more limited in many subjects resulting in the slower progress in pupils'

writing development. Lesson planning is generally good and sets appropriate goals for different pupils' learning needs, however the quality of lesson planning in subjects with no schemes of work in Key Stages 1 and 2 is inconsistent, leading to more lessons which are satisfactory rather than good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is good overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 however, schemes of work are not fully in place and the Key Stage 1 curriculum does not fully meet the needs of the pupils. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is very good, particularly reading recovery. Accreditation in Key Stage 4 is broad and successful, leading to very good qualifications for pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and for spiritual and cultural development is good. Rich opportunities are provided throughout the curriculum and staff take great care to include elements which develop pupils' personal skills in these areas very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection, improving attendance and behaviour are all very good. Monitoring of academic performance is good overall, notably in Key Stages 3 and 4, but is weak in several subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2, which lowers the quality of those lessons. Partnership with parents is good and the information provided for them is good especially the end of year reports. Attendance at annual review meetings is excellent and supports pupils' progress well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff is good overall. There is a clear direction where learning and achievement are valued and successful. Separation of management for the primary and secondary age groups, however, means that the quality of curriculum provision is not consistent across the school.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory duties well. Their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is satisfactory overall. They steer the work of the school effectively, most notably for Key Stages 3 and 4 and in a more limited way for Key Stages 1 and 2.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors and evaluates its performance well and is able to use this information to continually improve standards.
The strategic use of resources	The management of resources to ensure that money is spent wisely is good and effective, day to day administration is very good. The staffing, accommodation and quality of resources are also good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils make good progress• The quality of teaching is good• Parents are kept well informed• The school is easy to approach and works closely with parents• Pupils are expected to work hard• The school is well led and managed	A minority of parents would like improved: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework given• The quality of extra-curricular activity• Pupils' behaviour

The findings of the inspection team agrees with the views of parents in most respects. Teaching, progress, high expectations, information provided for parents and leadership and management are all good. Homework is given on an individual basis and is satisfactory. However the inspection team found behaviour to be very good and the amount of extra-curricular activity provided to be good particularly during lunchtimes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards are below national averages for the majority of pupils when they enter the school at primary and secondary age.¹ By the end of Key Stage 2 the number of pupils is too small to compare Standard Assessment Tests with similar schools nationally, however teacher assessments indicate good progress and test results are particularly good in reading and science. This is despite the fact that almost half of the pupils entered Key Stages 1 and 2 for the first time in the year 1999/2000. Results in the end of Key Stage 3 Standard Assessment Tests are above those found in similar schools nationally for English, mathematics and science. GCSE points scores for mathematics, English, physical education and art are almost double similar schools nationally and results in the Certificate of Achievement and ASDAN Youth Award Scheme are very good. Tests and examinations in all key stages show an improvement year after year. The school has just been awarded a school achievement award, not only for very good and improved examination results but also for improved attendance and the way that pupils are 'engaging more meaningfully and effectively with the learning process'.
2. Pupils make good progress and as a result their achievements are good overall. In Key Stage 1 where there are only four pupils and progress is satisfactory, in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 progress is considered to be good. Progress for the small number of girls is equally good. This generally good progress represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Several pupils within Dale Grove have additional special educational needs. These include speech, language and communication difficulties, attention deficit, reading disability, visual impairment, moderate learning difficulties and severe emotional disturbances. Generally, these pupils make progress that is similar to other pupils in the school. However, there are an increasing number of younger pupils with speech, communication and language difficulties and the more severe behavioural conditions. The impact of the increase in difficult behaviour and daily disturbances to lessons means that the progress and achievement made by these younger pupils tends to be slower.
3. In English, achievement and the progress pupils make are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2, particularly in reading development. After a relatively short time in the school half of these primary aged pupils have made good progress in two or more English attainment targets. The good development in pupils' speaking and listening skills at this age is evident in the way that many pupils listen carefully to instructions for most lessons, and are confident to express their opinion, sometimes in English, but also in religious education, history, geography and during assemblies and social events. Reading development at this age is particularly strong and pupils read confidently to learning support staff and aloud in lessons. A few pupils have quite advanced reading skills; one pupil for example downloaded information from the Internet on Ancient Egyptians and read all of the complicated words such as 'archaeologist' with good expression. There are fewer examples of extended or free written work to gauge development at this age as much of the pupils' work is on worksheets; however pupils do make satisfactory progress learning to write in

¹ Pupils entering the secondary phase come from a variety of schools including Dale Grove primary phase. However the highest attaining pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 usually move back into mainstream schools. This means that the achievement on entry to Key Stages 3 and 4 does not reflect achievement by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

sentences and improve their punctuation, particularly the use of commas and full stops.

4. In Key Stages 3 and 4, achievement in English is also good and very good in respect of reading. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills during Key Stage 3 and show an increasing confidence to contribute to discussion in many lessons. In religious education for example, analytical thinking and a wide range of vocabulary means that pupils can compare and contrast events from religious teachings and their lives today very well. Reading develops extremely well with over 50 per cent of pupils improving their reading ability by three to five years, enabling them to achieve the high standard of examination results in several subjects including English. Writing skills also improve well so that by the time they leave school, most pupils can write letters, fill in forms, send e-mails and compile reports. However, progress is slower than for reading.
5. In mathematics pupils achieve well throughout the school. By the age of eleven pupils have made good improvements in their ability to work with numbers, doing mental calculations quickly, they learn the names and properties of common shapes such as triangles, can tell the time well, measure things accurately and work with money confidently recording their findings. During Key Stage 3 the good progress continues as pupils learn how to plot graphs, find co-ordinates and work well with calculators for different functions. In Key Stage 4 many pupils pass their GCSE mathematics examination a year early, some gaining high grades.
6. Progress in science is good in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils build a sound knowledge of scientific methods learning about living things, their own bodies and how electricity works. In the secondary school, good progress is shown as pupils learn to manage the equipment and conduct investigations about different forces in the human body as well as in nature. The majority of pupils in all key stages make very good progress in their personal and social development reaching and exceeding targets on their individual education plans and therefore being able to learn positively often for the first time. This is a key element of the success in other areas of the curriculum. Even the most disturbed of the youngest pupils learn to remain calm for longer and develop positive relationships with the staff.
7. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in geography, history and art throughout the school. In design and technology and information and communication technology in Key Stages 1 and 2 progress and achievement are satisfactory and good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Progress is satisfactory in physical education and religious education in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4, leading to good achievement. Progress in French in Key Stage 3 is also good. Progress in music is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4.
8. The school has made good improvements in the level of pupils' achievement and the progress made in most subjects since the last inspection. In Key Stages 1 and 2 there are slower improvements in the non-core subjects of design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education, religious education and music. All of these subjects have improved, but not sufficiently to ensure the quality of progress seen in the other subjects.
9. The school has set suitable challenging targets for this academic year for raising standards in the core subjects as well as careful analysis of performance in all areas of school life to guide the work of the school. The success of these targets is

particularly evident in the improved attendance figures and the very good examination results.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes throughout the school are very good in most lessons and most pupils respond well to the teaching. Pupils and staff have a high level of respect for one another. This assists in the development of a very inclusive approach towards and amongst all pupils.
11. In Key Stages 1 and 2 most pupils demonstrate very good positive attitudes to their work. In a design and technology lesson for example, pupils carefully assemble wooden doweling to construct shadufs and show obvious pride in their achievements. There is some disturbed and difficult behaviour from a few younger pupils who have serious emotional difficulties. This behaviour disrupts learning on occasion when sufficient numbers of pupils are being disturbed, but generally the majority ignore it and continue well with their work. There are very good levels of enthusiasm from the pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 who show very high levels of interest in the good range of activities taking place outside the formal school day. In many lessons, including science, art and design and technology, students in the secondary phase show sustained interest in their work when they carefully cut out their lino tiles to form printing blocks and use scientific equipment accurately to set up reactions between liquids, substances and indicators. The students have positive attitudes towards safety and use advanced equipment and apparatus correctly.
12. Throughout the school pupils' behaviour is often very good. There are occasional difficulties arising from frustration, personality clashes or other issues relating to the individual needs of individual pupils. As pupils move through the school they show increasing self-control, reflecting the success of the school's behaviour policies implemented by the staff. Lunch and other recreational times are social orderly occasions. Pupils respect the school's property and develop positive attitudes towards their classmates as they mature. In the previous school year there have been three short exclusions all from Key Stages 3 and 4 and the incidence of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 absenting themselves from the classrooms has diminished.
13. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good overall. This very high level of personal development begins in Key Stages 1 and 2 where, for example, pupils begin to collaborate to complete scientific investigations. This is particularly evident when teachers include behaviour improvement objectives in their lesson planning. There are very good social relationships between pupils and the staff. For example board games and pool contests take place between primary aged pupils and staff, helping to build on the positive relationships already established.
14. In Key Stage 4 pupils often work well in groups or pairs and are able to hold class discussions with their teacher. They do not talk over each other or interrupt. The older pupils confidently accept responsibility for projects to improve the school car park and enhance the classroom environments by applying their craft skills to cabinet making, renovation and repairs. The School Council meets regularly. In this arena proposals to spend resources to improve the school environment are discussed and pupils' opinions are considered. Recent examples of this decision-making process include the purchase of new computers and the positioning of pupils' lockers. This adds to the pupils' sense of ownership and community. Many pupils take part in community related projects such as the 'Princes Diana Awards' and 'Voices of Promise'. They participate in team-building projects. The school recognises these achievements and celebrates the successes, which are positive aspects of the 'Personal Development' policy. There is a very good sense of community.

15. The inspection findings represent a good improvement on those of the previous report where personal development and behaviour was considered to be satisfactory. In Key Stages 3 and 4 for example there is no longer any constantly disruptive behaviour. This is exemplified by the reduction in exclusions.
16. Attendance at Dale Grove School is very good and a significant improvement on the previous inspection, particularly in Key Stages 3 and 4, where the authorised absence rate has been greatly reduced. The overall attendance rate for the whole school, at around 90 per cent, is well above the national average for similar schools. Punctuality for a minority of the older pupils is a problem mainly due to the transport provided for them. This not only disrupts the start of the day but also adversely affects their attainment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning are good throughout the school. It is equally good for pupils with additional learning difficulties such as reading difficulty or speech and language difficulties and for the few girls in the Primary Centre. Teaching is excellent in 5 per cent of lessons, very good in 37 per cent, good in 37 per cent and satisfactory in 20 per cent. The teaching is satisfactory in almost all of Key Stages 1 and 2 and represents just under half of the teaching seen in these key stages, the rest being good or very good. Teaching and the quality of learning are very good in Key Stage 3. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 1 per cent of lessons, all in Key Stage 4.
18. In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching and learning are good overall in English, science, mathematics, history, geography, physical education, religious education, music and art. A few subjects, particularly English are taught to a satisfactory rather than good level to the few Key Stage 1 pupils in the first class because the approach towards the mixed age group is not always appropriate to the needs of these youngest pupils. However, the quality of mathematics teaching for this age group is very good. In design and technology and information and communication technology teaching for primary pupils is satisfactory.
19. Teaching and learning are very good in Key Stage 3 in all subjects except information and communication technology where they are good. In Key Stage 4 teaching and learning are good in all subjects except music and physical education where they are very good. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in personal, social and health education is very good, especially during assemblies.
20. A strong feature of the good teaching is the very good teamwork between learning support staff and teachers where each day's work is planned together, resulting in maximum support for the pupils who need it. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school is another strong feature, which leads to the very good behaviour management and the improving attitude to work by most pupils. The atmosphere in lessons for the younger pupils is caring and very supportive, enabling pupils in music for example to be confident enough to sing beautifully to the group. For the older pupils the humour and confidence with which pupils approach the discussion in subjects such as religious education supports learning very well.
21. A very good range of activities, pace of lessons and engaging approach is a significant element of most lessons, but particularly in Key Stage 3. This leads to high motivation and interest, as in one Key Stage 3 football lesson where teaching points were made through activities changing regularly, this set an excellent pace keeping everyone on task. Planning is careful and generally considers the different needs of all pupils in most lessons, which is a significant improvement since the last

inspection. However in Key Stages 1 and 2 the quality of lesson planning is inconsistent where there is no scheme of work to refer to, leading to a higher number of satisfactory rather than good lessons in these subjects, particularly information and communication technology and design and technology. In a few lessons in Key Stage 4 the needs of the pupils who find learning most difficult are not always planned for and they find it hard to understand. Also in Key Stage 2 some lessons do not sufficiently challenge the pupils who grasp ideas quickly and so they make slower progress in those lessons. Another weakness in some of the satisfactory teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is the limited pace and reliance on worksheets to end a lesson without drawing sufficient attention to what has been learned. Where teaching is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4 there is insufficient work planned to engage or motivate pupils and they are left to their own devices for too long. This means that little learning takes place during the lesson.

22. Throughout the school management of difficult behaviour in lessons is well planned, skilled and calm contributing to the high quality of learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2 however, behaviour sometimes disrupts learning due to the increasing numbers of very disturbed pupils. Teachers and learning support staff react well to these disturbances, following the school guidelines and using considerable skill in calming pupils down, but they lack sufficient strategies to prevent and change the behaviour.
23. Literacy and numeracy are well taught in all subjects where appropriate. This is particularly true of speaking and listening where plenty of opportunities are provided in most subjects for discussion and responses by the pupils. The use of worksheets limits opportunities for extended writing in other subjects but does encourage the reading of good subject related vocabulary. Science, geography and physical education are some of the subjects where pupils learn to measure, record information in graphs and find co-ordinates. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in most subjects. For example in a Key Stage 2 history lesson pupils logged on to the Internet and found the information they needed for a project on Ancient Egypt.

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

24. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall, including provision for pupils with additional special educational needs such as visual impairment and reading difficulties. They are satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in Key Stage 3. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and provides very well for pupils' personal and social development. Since the last inspection there have been satisfactory improvements in the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 and good improvements in Key Stages 3 and 4. All statutory requirements are now met and adjustments have been made to the timetable to ensure that recommended time allocations are observed.
25. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 still contains weaknesses however. Although co-ordinators are now in place, schemes of work are not fully developed and implemented for information and communication technology, music, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. Consequently pupils may repeat work and are not certain to build systematically on previous learning. Some co-ordinators use the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance in planning work, but this is not yet consistent practice. The primary regime also proves difficult for some Key Stage 1 pupils in the afternoons and does not fully address the increasingly complex needs of this group. Lessons for all but the basic subjects of English and mathematics take place at this time when a large amount of information

is taught. This often results in deteriorating behaviour for one or two of the most disturbed pupils, who are removed. On a few occasions this means that other pupils cannot learn and begin to misbehave themselves. This is a new situation and the school is working hard to resolve the issues, which are being addressed through the school development plan. The primary school's planning for English and mathematics takes satisfactory account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and which are adapted to suit the pupils' special educational needs.

26. The curriculum is good in Key Stage 4 and very good in Key Stage 3 where pupils are helped to make rapid progress often after spending considerable time out of school before joining Dale Grove. All issues reported in the last inspection have been addressed well. There is a good curriculum development plan that links well to behaviour management and learning styles. In Key Stage 4 there is a very good range of external accreditation available including the Certificate of Achievement, GCSEs and the Youth Award Scheme. Literacy is promoted through the very effective use of Reading Recovery, which has a significant and positive impact on raising pupils' literacy skills.
27. The combining of Dale Grove primary and Secondary Centres to make one school took place in September 1999. There has been little liaison yet to look at ways of linking the curriculum so that pupils make a smooth transition and continue to build their skills and knowledge systematically when they move from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. This is just beginning in the expressive arts. The difference in quality of curriculum provision between the primary and secondary phases is also an issue, which has not yet been addressed. However, the school is beginning to consider collaborating using expertise from both schools to support curriculum development and innovation.
28. The school's provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is good overall, enabling pupils with visual impairment or attention difficulties for example to make equally good progress alongside their peers. Programmes of work are developed between all staff and pupils are supported on a regular basis by well-informed and skilled support staff. Provision for the three girls in Key Stage 2 is suitable and they make good progress.
29. Provision for personal and social and health education (PSHE) is very good throughout the school. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the programme is being taught as a separate subject and includes both drugs awareness and sex education. The staff take care to promote personal development very well through individual education plans as well as during assemblies and with initiatives such as the 'Munch Club' where pupils who have met their targets have a social tea on Thursdays. In Key Stages 3 and 4 the options afternoon makes a significant contribution in giving pupils of all ages the opportunity to work alongside one another or together on a range of activities. The inspection team was particularly impressed with the range of activities and the thoroughness with which personal and social and health education is planned and taught. Topics such as success, bullying, assertiveness, feeling good, decision-making and friendship support personal development, while sex education, drugs issues and health-related matters are also covered within science and physical education as well as PSHE. All of these programmes contribute well to the confidence, developing maturity and increasing self-control in pupils.
30. Some good opportunities are found for reintegration of pupils into mainstream schools. There has been particular success with several pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2, where this happens, good use is made of the support services to provide graduated links between the two schools. During the inspection a Key Stage 3 pupil left to join a mainstream school, he was looking forward to this and had been very

well supported throughout by all staff. There was genuine excitement within the school and all staff signed his leaving card.

31. The curriculum for careers and vocational education is very good and there are good links with the Careers Service. The students are well prepared for moving into the adult world through access to 'M Power', a vocational work-related training programme organised by Manchester Training and Enterprise Council. Students in this scheme work towards NVQ accreditation. Pupils' development and work placement is well monitored by the co-ordinator and pupils during the inspection spoke clearly and approvingly of the experiences they have had. Links with local colleges are fewer but this is not always within the school's power.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Although restricted by end of day transport arrangements the school has established a range of activities at both sites for pupils to access at lunchtimes. These include working with computers, indoor games and model making. Lunchtime clubs provide older pupils with competitive sport and non-teaching time is always constructively used for both recreation and skill development.
33. Systems to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities are very good. The school has an equal opportunities policy that is monitored at regular intervals. In addition there are policies for both gender and race issues and the school places great emphasis on social and educational inclusion. Withdrawal of pupils from lessons, for whatever reason, is closely monitored and girls have the opportunity for single sex education lessons as appropriate. This is an improvement on the previous inspections.
34. There are very good links with the wider community. In Key Stages 1 and 2 these include work with the RSPCA partnership school scheme, outdoor pursuits with the support of Hyde District Assembly and community awards for outdoor play equipment. In all Key Stages very effective work has been carried out in conjunction with the Police Liaison Team, the Careers Service and the local Arts College. Access to museums, art galleries and the countryside are also supported through good community links. The school also works very well with partner institutions. Currently it has links with the local Arts College to develop the drama element of the curriculum that was identified as an area for development within the last report. The information and communication technology technician has received training and support from Hyde Technology College. Close relationships are fostered with mainstream schools, which join with the school to reintegrate pupils at all key stages.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development at Dale Grove is good. In Key Stages 1 and 2 a sense of wonder was developed in one assembly when, in a sunny area, the music of Vivaldi held pupils enraptured before they talked about the signs of spring and watched in awe as a wasp's nest was opened. In Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils were helped to understand how to use the Bible as a 'manual' to guide them when they have problems. Assemblies are also used very well to help pupils consider how people value and support each other and to celebrate each others' successes. Art, music and literature also contribute very well in many ways to this growth in pupils' spiritual understanding.
36. The school's provision for developing pupils' moral understanding is very good. The school's very clear behaviour management system provides a strong basis for teaching pupils right from wrong. For example notices are well displayed which make a positive stand against bullying. In addition subjects such as personal, social and health education, history, religious education and English take every opportunity to

discuss moral issues such as theft, bullying, honesty, friendship, which provides a strong basis for the moral and personal development of all pupils.

37. Very good opportunities are provided for the social development of pupils. Pupils are helped to co-operate during lessons, in pairs, in groups of three or four and as a class. Adults take care to model teamwork and good social skills. Pupils are encouraged to play fairly in organised games lessons and staff are careful to promote good manners at lunch and in social settings such as food technology. The inspection team was impressed by the standards of sensible movement around the building and mature behaviour towards visitors. There are many opportunities for all pupils to meet adults from the community and they respond appropriately.
38. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge about a range of cultures and lifestyles. For example pupils study 'Macbeth', 'Mice and Men' and 'Julius Caesar' in English and research Native Americans, Greece and Anglo Saxons in history and geography. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to visit art galleries, museums and historical sites and has invited in a drama group and artists to support work in careers. In one excellent food technology lesson pupils cooked Chinese food which built on work that has been carried out on the Chinese New Year. The one weakness is the limited amount of work on contemporary cultures in modern Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school cares for its pupils, including those with additional special educational needs very well, which is a significant improvement on the previous inspection, especially for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. The specific provision in pupils' statements is met. This is done very effectively, for example in the case of speech and language therapy through liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the speech and language therapy service and ensures good educational inclusion.
40. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are very good. Clear guidelines are laid down for child protection for all staff; key staff and other members of staff are well trained and procedures are strictly adhered to. There is effective liaison with outside agencies and the school nurse is ideally placed next to the Primary Centre to offer regular health advice. Health and safety are well monitored and regular checks are carried out on all electrical and fire equipment. Risk assessments are also undertaken.
41. The concerns that were raised in the previous inspection report concerning the outdoor play area of the Primary Centre have been addressed successfully.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. There are daily checks of registers and unexplained absences are quickly followed up. Registers are kept in an immaculate fashion and fully meet statutory requirements. The services of the educational welfare officer are used appropriately.
43. Procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. There has been an improvement on the previous inspections in the way staff manage pupils, the number of support staff employed to assist and the manner in which withdrawals from lessons and exclusions are monitored and recorded. Restraint training has also been undertaken and incidents were handled well during the inspection. All incidents of a bullying, racist or other oppressive nature are fully recorded and this feature too, is an improvement on the previous inspections. The

very good, positively written behaviour policy was the subject of wide consultation. It clearly identifies rewards and sanctions, which are well understood by pupils and staff alike. There is a need to develop additional strategies to address the increasingly challenging behaviour of some pupils now being admitted in Key Stages 1 and 2.

44. The school takes great care to provide pupils and their families with good individual education plans, to review them regularly and to involve the children and their families as much as possible. Targets within individual education plans have improved considerably since the last inspection. Additional work is now planned to improve the sharpness of behavioural targets, which are weaker. The school also makes very good use of external services for behaviour management, dyslexia and sensory impairment.
45. Pupils' personal development is monitored well. Pupils are assessed on entry using the national 'P' scales and their progress is regularly reviewed. The results of the assessments and the gains made are plotted on a graph that is used to identify future targets. This gives a very clear picture of what has been achieved and the time it has taken.
46. Pupils' academic performance is monitored well in English and mathematics in all key stages and in all subjects in Key Stages 3 and 4. Work is marked well and pupils understand what they need to do to improve in the future. In Key Stages 1 and 2 however assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress in science, history, geography, physical education, music, information and communication technology and design and technology is too limited, because formal arrangements for assessing what pupils have learned are not yet in place. This results in inconsistent lesson planning in these subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents view this as a good, supportive and caring school. The partnership that exists with parents is good and an improvement on the previous inspections. The quality of information provided for them, especially the end of year academic reports on their child's progress, is good. The individual education plans for each pupil at Key Stages 3 and 4 are a significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is a prospectus and a regular newsletter that keeps parents informed of the activities taking place within school and this has been welcomed.
48. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and the contribution they make to their children's learning remains limited. There is currently no parent association and only one parent is helping in school. Less than half of all parents help with their child's homework where set by a teacher or asked for by the pupils themselves. There is a good contribution being made at home by adults looking after those children who are in the care of the local authority.
49. Parents are always invited to reviews and meetings relating to additional special needs and to the annual reviews of statements and 100 per cent of parents attend. This is a tribute to the groundwork put in by the special educational needs co-ordinators and to the very strong partnership between school and families.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff is good overall. There is a very clear sense of purpose with a strong and successful emphasis on curriculum development and pupils' academic achievement. The headteacher has a very effective approach, which has successfully led the Secondary Centre towards a very high standard of accreditation and success for pupils. The deputy headteacher in charge of the Primary Centre leads a close, highly motivated team well and has overseen continuous improvement to the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. The school's aims and values are clearly reflected in the success and improvements seen in the achievements of its pupils, not only in the academic subjects, but also in the very good improvements in their behaviour and personal development.
51. The main weakness is in the comparative focus by the headteacher and governors on the Dale Grove Secondary Centre. The two centres are still seen as separate institutions, partly because of the distance between them and there are two separate school development plans. The result is that in Key Stages 1 and 2 although the quality of curriculum and assessment are satisfactory and teaching is good they are not of equivalent quality to provision in Key Stages 3 and 4. Responsibility has been delegated to the deputy in charge of the Primary Centre to operate as an entirely separate school, but without the budgetary control, administrative support or primary curriculum focus in whole school management meetings to take full control. The role of the deputy in the secondary school is different to that of the deputy in the primary school and does not free the headteacher to oversee both schools and the behaviour support service for the local authority, in equal measure. The outcome of this is for a slower rate of improvement in Key Stages 1 and 2 with a particular impact on the quality of curriculum development. The headteacher recognises a need to support development in Key Stages 1 and 2 in a more focused way but has not yet incorporated this into the school development plan.
52. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the role and responsibilities of the subject co-ordinators are not fully delegated or operational for all subjects and one result of this is that subject schemes are still not all in place and the monitoring of pupil progress is not well established in all areas. This results in variations in the quality of teaching between subjects. In Key Stages 3 and 4 the role of subject co-ordinators is well defined and effective, leading to increasingly high standards.
53. In addition, the recent changing nature of pupils entering Key Stages 1 and 2 is the responsibility of the local authority, and is not controlled by an admissions policy. The impact of this is an increase in the range and frequency of difficult behaviour caused by the more serious conditions presented by the younger pupils. However, the management strategies are not yet in place to prevent behaviour problems affecting learning or to support behaviour change for this difficult group and this is unsatisfactory. The school is currently working towards addressing this issue.
54. The role of the governing body in fulfilling statutory duties is good and all statutory duties are fulfilled. The role of governors in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the school and in shaping its direction is satisfactory overall. The governors are particularly effective in supporting the work of Key Stages 3 and 4 school, but do not currently place sufficient focus on visiting and supporting the work of Key Stages 1 and 2 leading to the slower development of provision for this age group as described above.
55. The headteacher and governing body manage the school efficiently; they take their responsibilities seriously and have established, over time, a prudent but pragmatic

approach to financial planning which pays due regard to the principles of best value. In this they have maintained the positive situation noted at the time of the last inspection and the day-to-day administration remains very good. The school has efficient procedures for monitoring expenditure over the course of a year, and these are effective in identifying potential anomalies. The finance secretary is able to provide up to date, accurate information on request, and this is used to inform the governing body. The back up of computer systems is carried out regularly and often, and there are sensible security measures.

56. When considering some issues, such as the development of information technology systems, the school shows it can take a longer-term view and plan effectively when it is clear about what needs to be done. However, in some instances, there is still a significant weakness when planning beyond the current financial year. Some aims, though entirely appropriate, are often expressed as vague intentions and lack the precision that would allow the school to be sure that funding available now is used in the best possible way. This lack of clarity also makes it difficult for the school to check whether it is on course to achieve its aims, and restricts its ability to adjust its objectives if and when necessary. The headteacher and governors have yet to establish a clear, long-term framework for planning that reflects the establishment of Dale Grove as an all age school, that ensures an appropriate balance between areas of expenditure is maintained, and that allows the new school to be well prepared for the impact of possible changes.
57. The accommodation overall provides a good learning environment for all pupils. The school has made significant improvements to the premises since the previous inspections. The outside of the Primary Centre building has been decorated and railings erected in front of the school to make it a more attractive and secure site. The adjacent car park has been re-surfaced. The Secondary Centre has specialist rooms for science, design and technology and information and communication technology. There is a well-equipped sports hall for physical education. The food technology room has been completely re-fitted and this has been achieved through judicious financial planning and good co-operation with the local community.
58. The premises are well maintained by the two caretakers and kept very clean. All the issues surrounding the previous inspections have been addressed. The accommodation is of a high quality, except the outside classroom at the Secondary Centre and this is in the process of development. The premises do not currently however, fully meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
59. The school has recruited a good quality staff team of teachers and teaching assistants who have appropriate qualifications. They undertake a wide range of training and are committed to continuously updating their skills. The appointment of an information and communication technology technician is proving effective at supporting the use of the complex equipment across the school.
60. The school is well staffed to support additional special educational needs. Outside agencies, such as support services, educational psychologists and speech therapists provide a good source of expertise. However, the changing nature and severity of the needs of some younger pupils is not matched by current staff development and expertise. The induction and support programmes for all staff work well. It is carefully planned and linked to the school's development plan and the targets identified for individual staff.
61. Resources to support teaching are good in the majority of subjects and have improved since the last inspection. The large investment in information and communication technology is effective and impacts on learning across the school.

Pupils treat the school's resources with respect and as a result they are of a high quality and seldom damaged.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. To develop a greater consistency in the quality of provision and raise standards further the headteacher and governors should:

(a) Develop a more active role in the strategic development of Dale Grove as one school by:

- Focusing on the development of Key Stages 1 and 2 equally with Key Stages 3 and 4. *(Para ref: 51)*
- Producing one overall school development plan. *(Para ref: 51)*

(b) Improve the curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 by:

- Delegating, clarifying and monitoring the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators in all subjects to improve their effectiveness. *(Para ref: 52)*
- Completing all schemes of work to enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills more systematically. *(Para ref: 25)*
- Improving assessment and monitoring in science, information and communication technology and all non-core subjects. *(Para ref: 46)*
- Developing closer curricular links between Key Stages 2 and 3. *(Para ref: 27)*

(c) Improve provision for the increasing complexity of pupils' special educational needs and challenging behaviour in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:

- Developing a strategic plan to fully address the needs of these pupils. *(Para ref: 52)*
- Developing an increased range of responses to the pupils' changing behaviour and providing the associated staff development. *(Para ref: 52)*
- Adjusting the curriculum balance and provision to meet the needs of all pupils. *(Para ref: 25)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	92
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5%	37%	37%	20%	1%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	67
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	26

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	15.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1

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

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	67
Number of questionnaires returned	22

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	32	18	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	32	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	27	32	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	9	36	23	18	14
The teaching is good.	68	32	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	82	9	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	9	5	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	5	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	32	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	18	5	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	36	14	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	27	14	0	9

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents and carers feel that the school expects pupils to work hard and helps them to make good progress. The quality of teaching and leadership and management is considered to be good by the majority. Most parents feel well informed about what is happening in school and with their child and feel that they work closely with the school. These views reflect the findings of the inspection team. A minority of parents feel that there is insufficient homework. The inspection team found that the system for giving homework and practice in lessons to be satisfactory, with room for improvement. The range of extra-curricular activities was considered insufficient by a few parents but this view was not supported by the inspection findings and extra-curricular activity is considered to be good. A few parents are concerned about the behaviour in the school and pupils' growing maturity. The inspection team found these aspects to be good.

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

ENGLISH

63. Pupils make good progress in English overall. In Key Stage 1 achievement is satisfactory and in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 it is good. Pupils enter the school at different times during the year and in all key stages, with different levels of skill in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Within a year or so, at least half of the pupils have made good progress in two or more of their English attainment targets. By the end of Key Stage 4, two pupils gained merits and one a pass in the Certificate of Achievement. Reading development is very good throughout the school. This represents good progress since the last inspection.
64. Sound progress in speaking and listening is made in Key Stage 1. For example pupils listen to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and recount it giving the first line as each of the characters might say it. Not all pupils of this age can concentrate well enough to join in and answer questions, although most will talk when they feel relaxed. By the end of Key Stage 2 good progress has been made and most pupils can hold a mature and detailed conversation, giving their reasons for their opinions. Pupils also give examples of verbs, nouns and adjectives and show that they understand how to use them by putting them in a sentence. Other pupils use a television serial as the basis for literacy work. They follow the story with interest and use a notebook to record important details during the programme, which they can relate afterwards. In Key Stages 3 and 4, progress in speaking and listening is good. Pupils gain in confidence by the end of the key stage and are able to talk to the class or speak in assembly with clarity and confidence. Pupils' vocabulary is sometimes limited, but it is good with regard to the technical vocabulary required in subjects such as science, history, geography, physical education and information and communication technology. During Key Stage 4 most leave the school able to talk with confidence in settings such as interviews. During the inspection, a pupil was 'interviewed' by a trained careers officer who was not known to him. His presentation and ability to answer specific questions and detail his work experience was impressive and provides a good basis for future development.
65. In all key stages reading progress is very good, reflecting the opportunities teachers make in developing literacy in all areas of the curriculum and pupils are keen to read. For example pupils from one class in Key Stage 2 read aloud a poem about spring in assembly. Others at this age can read fluently from their reading books and also read complicated words picked out at random. Reading at Key Stages 3 and 4, and in particular the 'reading recovery programme', is a strength of the school. All pupils of this age make some progress, nearly 90 per cent make good progress or better and well over 50 per cent of pupils made very good progress indeed, gaining between three and five years of reading improvement in often quite short spaces of time. This contributes to pupils' willingness to read in class, use the library and gain information from the Internet.
66. Pupils' writing skills are less well developed although they are satisfactory in all key stages. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to write and appropriate emphasis is put on the development of letters, but they have too few opportunities to write as much of their work is recorded using worksheets. Some pupils use the computer to record a conversation between two of the characters in the story. Writing improves equally soundly during Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils who enter the school unsure of committing themselves to paper, are soon able and willing to write stories, reports and letters. They demonstrate this in all lessons and sound progress

continues until they leave school, when many can sustain two or three pages of text. However not enough attention is paid to sentence structures, spelling and punctuation. Although this improves, the standard reached by the end of all key stages is lower than it might be with a more rigorous and structured approach.

67. The quality of teaching in English in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory, is usually good and in a number of lessons observed is very good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection and ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress. Teachers include elements of the National Literacy Strategy in lessons, adapted to suit the special needs of their groups. Where teaching is very good teachers build on pupils' previous knowledge, which ensures that pupils understand and can use their knowledge in a range of contexts. Teachers make good use of questions to check that everyone has understood. For example in a lesson where the class activity was to use connectives, pupils were asked to give examples of how they would use such words such as 'eventually'. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning at all key stages and good classroom teamwork is a strength of teaching at Dale Grove. By providing effective support for individuals the adults ensure that pupils understand what to do and concentrate. Materials are well chosen to interest pupils.
68. English teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 is never less than good and usually very good. A blend of sensitivity, a wide range of teaching skills and strong direction ensures that good standards of behaviour are observed, time is used efficiently and as a result all pupils are fully engaged. This contributes well to both literacy development and personal maturity. A good range of activities is used, for example in a very good Year 9 lesson temptation within 'Macbeth' is explored through role play, using a car stealing scenario as the basis. One pupil who was upset and disinterested at the start of the lesson worked closely with the teacher and did as well as his peers. The majority of the class developed their role-play and presented very effectively, all presentations being characterised by confidence and insight into 'Macbeth'.
69. English is co-ordinated well in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very well in Key Stages 3 and 4, representing good improvement since the last inspection. All Key Stage 1 and 2 staff have undertaken training for the National Literacy Strategy, which they adapt to suit the needs of pupils. Elements of this strategy are also being incorporated into Key Stage 3 which will improve links and continuity between the two key stages which are currently not planned or evident. There is particularly impressive provision for developing literacy skills across the whole curriculum, with subject specific vocabulary sheets, good marking policies and the effective use of word processing in most subjects, although this is not systematically co-ordinated. The regular opportunities for pupils to read include regular individual reading to an adult and reading aloud in class or in assembly and this supports the very good development in reading across the school.
70. Analysis of data in the Primary Centre is good, helping to inform developments in the subject. There has been significant development of assessment and monitoring procedures at secondary level since the last inspection, together with imaginative progress in the area of accredited courses. GCSE work in English will soon be a regular part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum. This also represents good progress since the last inspection. The libraries have a range of appropriate books, which are well organised and attractively presented. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

71. Provision for mathematics is now consistently good throughout the school. In this, the school has made a positive response to the findings of the last inspection.
72. Pupils' levels of achievement throughout the school are good. By the end of Key Stage 1, more able pupils can solve simple addition problems and know that 16 is ten more than six. They can identify the missing number in a sequence, and know that seven pence = 7 x 1p coins. They appreciate why standard units of measurement are necessary and have a good understanding of how large one metre is, although some pupils get confused with the mathematical language and consider that a big man with a big stride will take more strides to cover a longer distance. Less able pupils can sort articles by colour and shape, and can recognise numbers between one and five, although their number formation is at times uncertain. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good gains in learning and respond enthusiastically, particularly when the quick-fire pace and organisation of the activities reflects the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. They know and record their own birthdays and can compile simple bar graphs. They also know the names of basic shapes, solids and polygons and can use numbers to solve simple problems, although their verbal reasoning is more accurate than their written answers. Pupils can tell the time to quarter-past and quarter-to the hour and more able ones can tell the time to five-minute intervals. They can work out that $35p + 99p = 134p$ and can record it correctly as £1.34, although they are not yet confident in using strategies such as rounding up or rounding down in order to make these calculations quicker and easier.
73. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils consolidate what they have already learned to good effect. They have a good understanding of simple symmetry and can identify missing elements in patterns. Pupils know the conventions associated with the x and y axes when plotting graphs, translate these into co-ordinates and use the information to help calculate the volume of three-dimensional solids. They also know the difference between the mean and the median and demonstrate a good understanding of the principles that lie behind such terms. They know how to use calculators and, when they have finished their work, they use their time productively by using computers independently and responsibly to practise their basic skills in handling numbers. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 4, pupils demonstrate their knowledge and understanding successfully in the context of relevant, accredited coursework and all pupils gaining an A–G pass a year early. All pupils also gain their Certificate of Achievement a year early, ten gaining distinctions in July 2000. They can handle simultaneous equations and use numbers to good effect in relevant, practical projects such as planning an extension for the school car park. They also apply their skills readily in the context of other subjects such as art. They concentrate well and try hard, accepting and recognising their own errors with good humour and refraining from commenting on the mistakes of their classmates. In these respects, their personal and social development is good.
74. The teaching of mathematics throughout the school is good and often very good. This quality and consistency marks a significant improvement when compared with the findings of the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and very well organised. On occasion, the behaviour of individual pupils can disrupt the smooth flow of the lesson, but staff work well together as a team, particularly when considering the needs of individual pupils, and the supportive, positive relationships between all concerned ensure that lessons are purposeful and that no time is wasted. As a result, pupils clearly understand what is expected of them, settle quickly, respond eagerly, and rise to the occasion with enthusiasm. Where teaching is most successful, as in a very effective lesson for seven-year-olds on basic number skills, or a very productive

lesson for 12-year-olds on handling data, a wide variety of well paced activities, handled in ways that reflect the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, are carefully organised to ensure that all pupils understand and can participate.

75. The school has a satisfactory policy for mathematics that pays due regard to the National Curriculum guidelines, and has effectively implemented the National Numeracy Strategy which in turn has had a significant, positive impact on improving provision particularly for primary aged pupils. The guidelines for teachers' planning are well supported both by commercial schemes and the framework provided by the GCSE courses, and give appropriate emphasis to the practical use and application of mathematics in everyday life. However, opportunities to accredit the mathematical content of vocational projects for the oldest pupils, such as developing the school car park, are not fully exploited. The two co-ordinators have good oversight of the primary and secondary provision respectively, but there is little liaison between the two departments. As a result, the school has difficulty in making sure that pupils are as well prepared as they should be when they transfer to the Dale Grove site at the end of Key Stage 2.

SCIENCE

76. Achievement and progress in science is good in Key Stages 1, 2, and 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. This represents a good improvement in the Primary and Secondary Centres since the last inspections. Teachers' assessments identified half the pupils as working at the average level by age eleven, and there have been improvements year by year, however numbers are too small to use for comparisons with similar schools or previous years.
77. By the end of Key Stage 3, achievement for pupils in the Statutory Assessment Tests are good compared to similar schools nationally. The oldest students also achieved well, six students achieving the Certificate of Achievement in science. In the current academic year one student is on course to pass his GCSE in science and the remaining seven students are on course to achieve the Certificate of Achievement.
78. The good progress in Key Stage 1 is evident as pupils develop a basic understanding of why and how plants grow. They observe shadows and notice that the shadows change length as the day progresses. The progress made by half the class is good, however, the pupils with disturbed behaviour sometimes stop the other pupils concentrating. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. For example they use accurate vocabulary in a full range of scientific activities, visiting all the Programmes of Study. They know about the life cycles of human beings and frogs. They recognise the function of different teeth and understand how muscles work to move parts of the body. They construct electrical circuits using batteries, wires and bulbs. By the end of Key Stage 2 about half of the pupils have some basic understanding of what constitutes a fair test.
79. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 3 and very good progress by the end of Key Stage 4. They learn to handle scientific equipment and involve themselves in investigations to gain greater understanding of scientific knowledge. The oldest students record their knowledge of the function of the lungs and the workings of the digestive system. They record their investigations into lung capacity and conduct experiments to analyse when forces working in opposition to each other become balanced. Younger pupils identify ways to strengthen electro magnets. They conduct experiments into light and sound and continue to build up their scientific vocabulary using correct terminology in their discussions and their recordings.

80. The quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall. Good use is made of video material and kaleidoscopes to engage pupils' initial interest. Teachers question pupils well to ensure that they understand the scientific terms being used. They work hard to address pupils' poor behaviour and are usually successful. However, the absence of a classroom support assistant in some lessons does restrict the teacher's strategy to deal with disturbed behaviour. Where teaching is very good a lesson begins with a clear and concise revision of previous work, which helps pupils recall previous activities and organise their scientific knowledge. A practical investigative task that is within pupils' capability is carefully explained and the teacher reminds pupils of rewards during the lesson for good behaviour. Almost all pupils are attentive and are keen to assemble open cube shapes and open triangular prisms to ascertain which is the strongest structure. There is a very good working atmosphere and pupils are able to discuss the work with their classmates. In a few lessons a lack of challenge for the pupils who learn quickly is seen when they finish the work and have no extension activity to stretch their thinking further. The classroom support assistant makes a very good contribution to the lesson, supporting pupils as they discover that an open cube or open triangular prism is strongest when it is placed on its edges rather than its faces.
81. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 3 is good and in Key Stage 4 very good. This is because the teaching is clearly directed by appropriate subject documentation. The head of science, who teaches all lessons in the science laboratory, has very good subject knowledge. Lesson planning always links the acquisition of knowledge with the development of the skills of scientific investigation. For example, pupils investigate both everyday liquids such as lemonade and vinegar together with basic laboratory chemicals. They are taught how to handle corrosive liquids safely and learn to classify them as either acid or alkali. Older students continue this investigation to identify the effectiveness of different dissolving agents. There are very good links between the lesson and the use of dissolving agents in everyday life. Other students continue this theme to investigate the effectiveness of commercial brands of detergents, successfully organising fair tests and collecting data to analyse the results. Students are sensible with a full range of hazardous materials. They keep the rules and use the apparatus and equipment accurately and safely. They enjoy their work and take it seriously. There are very good relationships between students and between adults and students. The skilled learning support assistants are well deployed and contribute well to the lessons.
82. The scheme of work for Key Stages 1 and 2 is close to being completed. It is appropriate and is supported well by the national documentation. However, there are insufficient procedures to establish the levels of pupils' achievement and assessment is unsatisfactory. Consequently it is difficult for teachers to build on pupils' previous learning, knowledge and understanding. There are good links between science and design and technology.
83. Management of the subject in Key Stages 3 and 4 is very good. Lessons are timed well and timetables are maintained. The co-ordinator has responded well to the new National Curriculum and information and communication technology is increasingly incorporated into the science curriculum, particularly in the application of data handling. The laboratory is safe, well resourced and a very good learning environment.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Pupils' levels of achievement in art and design throughout the school are good, particularly in practical activities. They enjoy the subject, concentrate well, and often

become increasingly absorbed in their work. In this respect, the subject makes a positive contribution towards their spiritual development. Pupils at Key Stage 1 and younger pupils at Key Stage 2 use a good range of simple media to create rich, colourful illustrations of their work in other subject areas, drawing firm, bold outlines and shading them in with precision, although such work tends to lack expression. They decorate patterns on cardboard clothes for teddy bears, and use drawing programmes well on the computer when making cards for Mothers' Day. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 practise their observational skills to good effect when drawing such everyday articles as chocolate bars and daffodils, showing some understanding of such elements as balance and proportion when developing their work, but make little use of sketchbooks, or other planning tools, when exploring their ideas. Pupils use cardboard and junk materials to create effective reliefs of Tutankhamen, and handle such tools as brushes and felt tip pens with care and intention.

85. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 build on these practical skills very effectively with the result that they gain good results in their accredited courses and score notable successes in local art competitions. They have a tendency to stick with familiar ideas and images, but will use a wide range of source materials and ideas to good effect and some pupils, particularly the older ones, are more adventurous and willing to experiment. More able pupils have a sound grasp of concepts such as style, tone and line, and some can discuss such ideas when considering work that has been inspired by, for example, Picasso's portraits or Giacometti's sculptures. Pupils look after their work well, and show their commitment by negotiating use of the art room during the day and after school in order to complete their course-work. They produce work that is often individual, but they take an interest in the work of their classmates, and there is some productive, critical self-evaluation. Pupils also take pride in their work, and the respect they show for the often fragile displays that brighten the classrooms and corridors demonstrates that the subject is helping them address their individual emotional and behavioural difficulties very effectively. In all these various ways, art makes a highly significant contribution to the pupils' personal development.
86. The quality of teaching in art is now good at Key Stages 1 and 2, and consistently very good at Key Stages 3 and 4. In this respect, there has been a positive response to the findings of the last inspection. Lessons are well organised, and under-pinned by relaxed, good-humoured relationships between all concerned with the result that pupils know what is expected of them and settle to work quickly. No time is wasted and a wide range of resources, including clay, plaster and information and communication technology, are used to very good effect. Staff successfully adopt a consistent, patient approach and, in the most successful lessons, use quiet, supportive questioning very effectively not only to help pupils decide what they need to do next in order to achieve the effect that they want, but also to reflect on the consequences of their own behaviour. The behaviour management and teaching methods used are generally excellent in Key Stages 3 and 4 leading to achievements in line with national expectations and helping pupils to experience some real successes in their GCSEs. Source materials are used very effectively in ways that allow pupils to develop their knowledge of different artists and cultural influences, although they are not always used or contrasted in ways that ensure pupils fully understand why some techniques or images are more effective than others for a given purpose.
87. The school's scheme of work pays due regard to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, and is overseen by two well-informed co-ordinators, one for Key Stages 1 and 2 and one for Key Stages 3 and 4. At present, though, the school has difficulty in ensuring that pupils consolidate what they already know and can do and use it as a springboard for further learning as they grow up and pass from one department to the other. However, the newly developed arrangements that allow the

co-ordinators to liaise more effectively should go a long way to overcoming this difficulty.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. Pupils' achievement and the progress that they make in design and technology is good overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 progress is satisfactory and in Key Stages 3 and 4 progress is good. This represents a good improvement overall since the last inspection with satisfactory improvement in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good improvement in Key Stages 3 and 4 where progress was considered unsatisfactory.
89. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress. Their competence and skills in the safe use of tools and equipment is typical of the work of pupils in similar schools. They draw basic plans of the pieces of furniture they are proposing to construct and many students know how to use a good range of cutting and shaping tools. However, this work with resistant materials is generally restricted to wood and opportunities to work with metals and plastics are not regularly provided. In addition pupils follow a given design or the teacher's direction but have too few opportunities to create their own designs. Some good results are achieved in food technology, pupils have limited opportunities to make choices and design their own dishes. The youngest pupils in the school enjoy melting, stirring and mixing ingredients as they prepare chocolate truffles. There are good links with science as pupils observe examples of both irreversible and reversible change as the chocolate melts when heated, then solidifies as it cools, trapping within it the other ingredients. Older pupils create a salad, but they do not choose the vegetables they would like to include in their finished product. Pupils use construction kits to create and assemble buildings, and environments where prehistoric animals live. However, these kits are limited and lack challenge.
90. In Key Stages 3 and 4 good progress is made when the older pupils construct wooden furniture such as cabinets, cupboards and wheeled toys for family members and friends. They follow their basic plan and accurately measure, mark, cut to size and assemble their projects. The finished products are of a good standard. In food technology, students in Year 9 prepare a flan and, in doing so, gain a comprehensive range of food preparation and cooking skills. There are very good insights into the Chinese culture as other students learn 'stir fry' techniques and develop their ability to think ahead when cooking and referring to the recipe. The standard of food produced and involvement of pupils in the design of their food is very good.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Lesson planning in Key Stages 1 and 2 does not fully incorporate the process of 'designing' and pupils are not challenged to record their ideas and then follow their plans to construct or assemble their models. Pupils do move between the processes of 'designing' and 'making' when they use construction kits and teachers challenge them to apply their scientific knowledge to their products by incorporating electrical circuitry to make them move. There are good links between design and technology and history with the teacher setting up a focused task to construct a 'shaduf'. The pupils are given a basic plan and are provided with good opportunities to use specific tools to measure out materials, cut them to size and then assemble them. The pupils involved in the activity showed high levels of interest and concentration. They shared out the materials and worked effectively in a good co-operative atmosphere. The skilled learning support assistant was effectively deployed and ably assisted pupils to complete the tasks. However, the challenge for the highest attaining pupils is limited and sometimes they easily complete the work required.

92. There are good relationships between pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 and the staff who work with them and so pupils readily accept advice on the use of tools and the correct sequence of construction. Both teachers and learning support assistants question students effectively, entering into reasoned discussions to help them understand the most economic procedure for cutting wood to length. Good instruction is given in the safe use of tools and the workshop environment is a safe and productive place. Work proceeds with good pace. In food technology there is very good teaching with the students able to make choices of which ingredients to include and decide the cooking time. The calm atmosphere gives students the confidence to ask questions as they try hard and complete their tasks successfully. All staff work well together and are good role models for the students. There is effective organisation and adults are skilled in the subject.
93. The subject is used very effectively to support students' personal, social and health education. The interest group, which meets weekly, encourages older students to work with younger boys. This develops a good attitude towards care and consideration for others. Students are given very good insights into other world cultures through the study of Chinese food and Dragon Festivals. They are taught the importance of clearing away once the lesson has finished and confidently talk about what they have made during the lessons.
94. The subject provision has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in the organisation of the curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4. However, subject development in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been slow, the scheme of work is not yet complete and lacks sufficient opportunity for designing. In addition the lack of assessment and a planned programme of work, does not ensure that pupils of this age are able to build their skills and knowledge systematically from year to year.

GEOGRAPHY

95. The achievement and progress pupils make in geography is good throughout the school. During the last inspection geography was considered unsatisfactory in Key Stages 3 and 4 and no judgement was made for Key Stages 1 and 2. Improvement in the subject since then is good.
96. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress when they learn about finding directions and study simple maps. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of life in Australia and they focused their study on the Olympic Games. In one lesson on modern Egypt, using the Internet, pupils were able to research information well on irrigating land around the Nile and had found out about the shaduf, which they had designed and made. They then watched a video showing how an Egyptian farmer watered his land. Pupils know that there are both similarities and differences between the area they are studying and where they live. For example in the video they learned that bananas need much water to grow but all understand that while rain had resulted in floods at home it was not warm enough to grow bananas as a crop. The use of worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills in the subject although speaking and listening skills and subject vocabulary is learned well.
97. Progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 is good. This is clearly indicated by the fact that last year the pupils gained eight bronze and one silver awards in the first year of the Certificate of Achievement programme. This year teacher assessment indicates that there will be fourteen bronze awards and some silver/bronze. Pupils respond well as may be seen from the examination results. Pupils' good achievement is shown when they find information using books and the Internet. They show a good knowledge of maps and their symbols, understand places in England and can name some capital

cities. They enjoy the variety of activities, take a pride in their work and retain much of what is taught which was clear when they answered questions in an examination revision lesson in Year 10. In their files work indicates that pupils retain and use significant elements of geographical work. They respond well to the variety of activities, including puzzles, word squares and computer map work. They also take a justifiable pride in their certificated work. They recognise the care and interest shown by staff.

98. The quality of teaching in geography was good in the two lessons observed during the inspection and pupils learned well. Lessons are well planned, with very good links to other subjects such as history, information and communication technology English and science. A range of resources are used including videos, computers and a bank of worksheets which help to hold pupils' interest and help them to find out more about the subject. Relationships between pupils and staff are also good and this gives pupils the confidence to relax and discuss their ideas with the group. Work is well prepared to suit the needs of all pupils in all key stages but teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to do their best. Literacy skills are supported well through subject specific vocabulary and provision of opportunities to write and check spellings. The subject is well supported through the use of computers to find and process work.
99. Subject co-ordination in Key Stages 1 and 2 although satisfactory has significant shortcomings because there is no scheme of work or assessment to judge how pupils are progressing and staff development has not taken place. Resources although satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 have limited textbooks or atlases to enable a broad range of skills to be taught. The school has developed plans to address these issues during this academic year. In Key Stages 3 and 4 co-ordination is good with a clear scheme of work and good record keeping. The school is now instituting a GCSE in geography and this represents very good progress across the whole subject over the past two years.

HISTORY

100. There has been a satisfactory improvement in history in Key Stages 1 and 2 since the last inspection. Improvement in Key Stage 3 has been good. Teaching in history has improved at all key stages and the requirements of the National Curriculum are now met. At the time of the last inspection history was taught through a topic-based approach, which also included geography. History and geography are now timetabled separately. There are co-ordinators in place. As yet no scheme of work is in place to inform teachers' planning in Key Stage 1, but this is in place in Key Stages 2 and 3.
101. Achievement in history is satisfactory overall in Key Stages 1 and 2. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have learned about changes to familiar things as time passes. For example they have looked at houses and how bread is made. During the week of the inspection pupils listened to a story about the Great Fire of London. Not all of them can understand the history behind the story and some are unable to concentrate for an appropriate amount of time. In Key Stage 2 younger pupils learn about Jason and the Argonauts. They understand the differences between myths and legends and learn new words such as 'fleece'. Older pupils discuss the differences between then and now when learning about Anglo Saxon domestic life. At the end of the key stage pupils are learning about the Ancient Egyptians. They know a great many detailed facts about mummification and why it was done. They show that they understand important facts about the culture of the Egyptians.

102. In Key Stages 3 and 4 all pupils progress well in their understanding of historical events and the lives of others. They learn to use evidence, to gain information from the Internet and to express different points of view. The quality of learning is good as pupils make a very large effort and concentrate very well during their lessons. Many pupils experience difficulties when confronted with unfamiliar situations and people from different settings than their own. Through their study of history, they come to understand why other people act the way they do and how men and women in times past lived their lives and dealt with major issues. In addition, they progress in their ability to listen to opinions other than their own. Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills also develop well with the help of subject vocabulary sheets and well-structured worksheets. Work within Key Stage 3 indicates a growing ability to consider a range of evidence with regard to life in the Roman Empire, medieval England, the early North Americans and the First World War. All pupils show an increasing ability to remember key events, personalities and the main themes from each topic.
103. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In one lesson observed in Key Stage 2 it is very good. Where teaching is good teachers know the topic well and can illustrate facts with interesting snippets of information. This helps maintain pupils' interest. Resources are well chosen. Video material is interesting and helps to develop pupils' understanding. In the best teaching expectations are high and pupils respond well. In less effective lessons subject material is not sufficiently matched to the needs of individual pupils. Teachers work together to plan work to be covered and the guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is being referred to when planning. This is not consistent. Difficulties in planning are further compounded by mixed age classes in which pupils may remain for a number of years.
104. In Key Stage 3 teaching in history is always at least good or very good and often excellent. Pace, very good use of questions, respect for views, a good knowledge base and a natural rapport with pupils form the repertoire of the specialist teacher. Topics meet National Curriculum requirements and individual lessons are planned to provide variety, information and a range of evidence and viewpoints. A very good Year 9 lesson on the Treaty of Versailles sees pupils using a CD-ROM to identify personalities from the First World War. Although pupils are tired and start the lesson irritably, they settle down to work well and make good use of reference skills and ask questions in a very mature way. The sensitivity and availability of the teacher and support assistant assists in prompt responses and a good working atmosphere. Very well chosen textbooks and computer materials assist pupils at all levels to organise their views. Teaching in history at secondary level is a very significant improvement on the last inspection, as is the planning and recording.
105. At both key stages, the very good choice of topics ensures that pupils always enjoy history. Topics are deliberately designed to catch the interest, through the horror of the First World War, the excitement of the Battle of Hastings or the life of a Roman soldier and the assassination of Julius Caesar. Pupils behave well in lessons because their interest is captured within every topic. They respect the views and guidance of a very expert teacher and they appreciate the importance placed on their own views and ideas. They are always highly motivated to look at new themes and tackle work that might otherwise be thought too difficult. They produce extended pieces of writing and use mature debating skills. This, together with the very mature level of behaviour in lessons, is a sign of their real enjoyment of the subject. Thus, in an excellent lesson on the Battle of Hastings, pupils are asked to read passages from the textbook around the class. Every pupil volunteers and reads, although it is not an easy task for all. The follow up activity requires them to match pictures to text and

this requires care and attention. All pupils show enthusiasm and behaviour is of the highest order.

106. Every effort has been made to incorporate elements from other subjects such as geography, English and information and communication technology. Particularly good use has been made of Internet resources.
107. In Key Stages 1 and 2 co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a realistic view of the development needs of the subject. A bank of lessons on each topic has been developed which ensures that there is continuity through the teaching of each topic. However, with no scheme of work to guide teachers' planning pupils in some classes may repeat work. There is no procedure for assessing what pupils know or can do at this age nor any system for the co-ordinator to monitor what is being taught. History is co-ordinated very well in Key Stages 3 and 4. Very good resources, books, visits, worksheets and videos have been built up to support new topics. For example during the week of the inspection pupils benefited from a visit by a specialist from the National Trust and when they learned about Tudor writing, they were able to write using quills and ink.
108. Not enough use is currently made of historical artefacts, but the co-ordinator sees this as a development for the coming year. Recording of progress and assessment in these key stages is very good. Accreditation in the form of the Certificate of Achievement has been implemented since the last inspection and there are plans to develop a GCSE course once the geography course has been set up.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory overall in Key Stages 1 and 2 and good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement across all key stages. At Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils have access to computers both in the newly installed suite and in classrooms. At Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils have access to computers in a number of classrooms and there are plans to add to these resources through the purchase of laptops, which can be used in specialist rooms such as the science laboratory. With the developing expertise among staff and support from the technician shared between the two sites the school is well placed to improve further.
110. In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress when they use the computer to word process their work and to make items such as cards for special occasions such as Mothers' Day. For example one pupil word-processed an interview between two people relating to the story of the three bears. Pupils are confident in their use of the computers. They use the mouse to move the cursor and can enter their work using the keyboard. Pupils are unsure however, how to make corrections when they make mistakes. Older Key Stage 2 pupils use the computer suite regularly. They know how to log on and enter their password. They know how to use the mouse to activate the menus and to interact with the software program. Younger pupils in this key stage are beginning to understand the elements of control using the cursor to make left and right turns to capture objects on the screen. Older Key Stage 2 pupils develop these skills through the use of 'Roamer Logo' and can provide directions such as forwards and backwards. Older pupils can use menus to change the style and size of the fonts they have used and can access the Internet to search for material on their project on the Ancient Egyptians.
111. Information and communication technology in Key Stages 3 and 4 is a strength of the school. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils access the Internet, send e-mails and use

websites for information and illustrations. All have developed early skills in word processing and data handling appropriate for Key Stage 2. This represents good progress considering the short time that most have worked with computers. The progress continues through Key Stage 4 and a few pupils develop quite sophisticated skills and a high degree of independence in a range of computer uses. Although the ICT curriculum is in an early stage of development, pupils are on course to consolidate skills over the full range of print, data, control, communication and information retrieval.

112. In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching of ICT is always satisfactory and in some lessons observed it is good. Where teaching is good, pupils are challenged and are encouraged to use their skills. Teachers are not all confident in the use of ICT and sometimes do not plan lessons which ensure that pupils at all levels will make progress. Teachers are beginning to use ICT across the curriculum. It is used to support development in mathematics and for pupils to draft and redraft and illustrate work in English. Teachers organise a computer club at lunchtimes. During the week of the inspection, pupils researched material on the Internet, generated pictures using a paint programme and enjoyed playing games.
113. Teaching in ICT is always good in Key Stages 3 and 4. This is a distinct improvement on the last inspection. ICT is used to good effect in many subjects, for example it is used to support work on data handling in science, keyboard skills in music and information retrieval in history and geography. The specialist teacher demonstrates a high level of knowledge and understanding of her subject. Lessons are always well planned and there is regular support from special support assistants who are developing their own good ICT skills. Their combined skills allow good attention to individual needs and this in turn means that problems and frustrations can be reduced throughout the lesson. Thus, in a very good Year 11 lesson developing spreadsheet skills, the teacher moves around the room and provides advice and support as it is needed. She demonstrates a clear idea of which aspects of the work will motivate pupils, reinforces the basic skills she has planned for and assists in the production of effective results for the pupils themselves. This combined with a highly motivational scheme of work and high pupil motivation contributes to satisfactory progress from a group of pupils with a wide range of skills, some of whom lack confidence.
114. The subject is co-ordinated enthusiastically on both sites. In Key Stages 1 and 2 staff are developing expertise through good advice and support from the co-ordinator. Training is arranged to develop staff confidence and expertise further. There is no scheme of work or assessment in place for this age group but the guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is being used as reference for planning. However this is unsatisfactory and restricts the ability for teachers to build pupils' skills and knowledge systematically from year to year. Resources at Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory. The suite is well used and the range of software is being developed. Although the ICT curriculum and schemes of work are in their infancy in Key Stages 3 and 4 the co-ordinator has provided good leadership in this subject. Modules have been developed in some detail with appropriate planning, resources and assessment. The inspection team observed a number of occasions when the use of computers across the curriculum strengthened the learning that was taking place. The development of the 'Successmaker' programme to support basic literacy and numeracy skills has contributed significantly to pupil progress.
115. Much of the progress that has taken place has occurred because of the very good resources purchased by the school. The computer suites allow individuals and small groups to work with good quality hardware. Concentration on a single programme for word processing and data handling has focused the attention of pupils and assisted

in the consolidation of their skills. Pupils enjoy using computers in many different subjects and during the lunchtime computer club. This is well supervised and allows a sensible freedom for pupils, while ensuring that access is limited to appropriate materials. Pupil progress is also assisted by expert supervision from the specialist teacher and the technician who works on both sites. Pupils know they can rely on these staff for interest and skilled advice. This assists in maintaining their concentration when problems arise.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

116. Pupils in Key Stage 3 make good progress in French. Their achievements are good. Pupils are confident in speaking to the teacher and respond appropriately to questions asked in French. In one lesson they were able to use the words for size 'petit', 'moyenne taille' and 'grand' very well including being able to identify masculine and feminine forms of the word correctly. Pupils showed that they had remembered the details very well from previous lessons. Their pronunciation is improving over time and their inflection, accent and articulation develops in line with their confidence. Their spelling and writing skills are slower to develop largely due to pupils' difficulties with literacy.
117. The quality of teaching in French is good. Lessons progress at a brisk speed with a variety of challenging activities that build on pupils' previous learning. For example games, role-play and tape work are often used to motivate and support pupils' learning well. There is good teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants and as a result behaviour is managed well and the pupils remain focused on their work. The learning support staff also speak French well supporting the teacher teaching in French where possible. Pupils are kept on task and focused as a result of this effective adult support. The good teaching allows pupils to practise their skills in a safe atmosphere. Lessons are well prepared and structured games provide many opportunities to rehearse the vocabulary and keep pupils involved. Computers are used for word processing to support and improve pupils' writing skills.
118. The subject co-ordinator assesses all pupils against the National Curriculum levels and monitors their progress carefully. Appropriate schemes of work are being used and the curriculum is continuously improving and this subject is well organised. However the minimum required time is given to the subject which restricts the amount of French pupils are able to learn during their time in school.

MUSIC

119. The achievement and the progress pupils make in music are good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection when progress was good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in Key Stages 1 and 2.
120. Most pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 can sing in tune and maintain a beat in simple parts. Many pupils can play simple rhythms on instruments very well and can vary the pitch and volume of sounds. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can clap to musical notation, accurately following instructions for stop, start and double speed. There is some high quality singing in this age group. Pupils in Key Stage 2 acquire a broad range of musical experience, for example pupils listened to Gamalan music as part of an arts project. They show that they understand dynamics and tempo well through

listening to guitar playing and discussing what they have heard. One pupil is able to play the keyboard for the class with good skill when they sing a favourite song. In Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils' achievements are very good. A number have received national awards for composition and pupils build on their composing and performing skills from Year 7 where they start to learn to use keyboards and play the guitar. By the end of Year 9 they can compose using complex patterns, evaluate the quality of their work and improve on it. Many pupils choose to continue with music in Key Stage 4, gaining in confidence to perform their work in assemblies and other public occasions.

121. The quality of teaching in music is very good. In Key Stages 1 and 2 it is good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching. All teachers can play an instrument and there are many opportunities for pupils to learn through songs and other musical activities and this supports pupils in developing good behaviour. Teaching assistants support well by modelling the activities, joining in with skill and enthusiasm and so pupils enjoy their music lessons. The teaching of music in Key Stages 3 and 4 is very good. Careful planning and excellent resources enable pupils to make very good progress. Teaching is planned to build on pupils' interests and strengths. They are therefore very motivated to learn and enjoy this subject. Pupils are expected to work independently and are taught the skills to enable them to do so. The outstanding relationships between staff and pupils ensure pupils do very well in these lessons.
122. The subject co-ordinator in Key Stages 1 and 2 has ensured that music is taught more systematically since the last inspection. She meets regularly with all staff. Resources are now satisfactory and a scheme of work building on the work done in Key Stages 3 and 4 is developing. Good use is made of external musicians to provide a wide variety of opportunities for listening to music. However pupils' learning at this age is not assessed formally and it is therefore difficult for teachers to judge the progress pupils make in a broad range of skills and so plan to build on these skills from year to year. The subject co-ordinator for Key Stages 3 and 4 has produced an excellent scheme of work, which includes a carefully planned progression over five years to build the skills pupils need. Pupils' progress is very well monitored and this information informs the planning of future lessons. A wider range of resources has been purchased since the last inspection and pupils make very good use of these.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. The achievement of pupils in physical education and the progress they make, including those with additional special educational needs, is good overall. It is always satisfactory and often good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and usually very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. This represents a good improvement since the last inspections.
124. In Key Stages 1 and 2 achievement is satisfactory overall and many pupils make good progress. Pupils learn to swim safely and well, developing sound crawl and breaststroke; others who are learning to swim, take their feet off the bottom of the pool and gradually manage to swim without an aid. In gymnastics pupils are able to travel around the room using their hands and feet in different ways and are very creative in their range of movements. A few pupils who have severe behavioural difficulties are unable to take advantage of the lesson and so make much slower progress than the rest. Good progress in games is shown when pupils co-operate well with each other. This is particularly evident during breaks and lunchtimes, when a spontaneous game of football is well organised by the pupils themselves and they

show proper regard for the rules, playing enthusiastically and with good ball control skills.

125. In Key Stages 3 and 4 most of the progress is very good in a wide range of activities. When orienteering pupils find magnetic north, take a bearing and follow the correct route. Teamwork and problem solving skills develop well during this exercise. In football pupils make excellent progress showing very good knowledge of the stretching exercises, control skills, use of space and passing. In a GCSE class one pupil was very skilled in describing the difference between dynamic and explosive strength and using this to help others improve. In the theory class very good achievement and progress was shown when pupils demonstrated their knowledge of the differences between motor and physical fitness. However, in one of the sport options progress is slower as pupils are not encouraged to develop their general motor skills with a range of activities. This is balanced by the very good and excellent progress made in other physical education lessons.
126. The quality of teaching in physical education is very good overall. It is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the behaviour management is calm and often very good. The classes are small but despite this the teachers manage to create a good team atmosphere and sense of purpose. For example during a quick cricket game with three pupils, the pupils tried hard to improve their ball skills, listened well and showed excitement in scoring runs. Work in gymnastics for the oldest primary pupils is well planned to allow pupils to try a variety of movements and improve their techniques. Throughout the school teachers take good care to feed back to pupils how well they are doing so that they understand how they might improve. In Key Stages 3 and 4 several lessons are of an excellent standard. During one excellent football training session every minute of the lesson was constructed to motivate pupils who asked good questions about how to improve their performance as well as showing excellent concentration so that they made very good progress in developing passing skills. The subject knowledge of the specialist teacher in Key Stages 3 and 4 is of a very high standard, which is resulting in an increasing number of qualifications every year with 100 per cent of pupils passing the GCSE short course in 2000. There are weaknesses, mainly a lack of challenge for a few pupils in the primary school who find a some tasks easy and therefore do not progress as fast as they might with more demanding work. In Key Stages 3 and 4, a lack of planning and challenge in the sports option leads to limited motivation and progress for the pupils.
127. Pupils throughout the school are supported well in numeracy skills particularly when they learn to count or measure changes in their own bodies. Literacy is supported well through written examination work for older pupils and the younger groups are helped to follow instructions and listen carefully during lessons.
128. The subject management is good overall. It is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and since the last inspection has improved in curriculum content and is monitored through lesson observations and scrutiny of subject planning. This has led to improved teaching and learning for this age group. However, there is limited assessment of skills and no system to ensure that pupils systematically build their skills from one year to the next. The school has recently appointed a new co-ordinator to develop the subject further. In Key Stages 3 and 4 subject management is good. The curriculum is also good with some areas of excellence, particularly the football and GCSE work. However there is a limited range of outdoor education experiences provided. This is recognised by the co-ordinator who plans to extend this aspect of the curriculum. Specialist subject management has improved the quality of teaching and standards of achievement since the last inspection and the thorough records and

assessment of performance helps with curriculum and lesson planning so that pupils are able to build their skills systematically.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. The progress and achievement of pupils in religious education is good overall including the progress made by pupils with additional special educational needs such as speech, language and communication difficulties and reading difficulties. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the progress made by pupils is satisfactory overall and good in half of all lessons seen. In Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils' progress is very good in the majority of lessons. This represents good progress since the last inspection.
130. In Key Stages 1 and 2 good progress is seen when the pupils in the youngest class are helped to understand what mothers do and discuss what they might do to help. Older primary pupils learn well what happens during Easter and can answer questions about Gethsemane and the role of the disciples during that time. Good progress is evident when pupils remember facts about Mary Magdalene, understand the word 'tomb' and complete an Easter word search with enthusiasm and good recognition. Pupils are able to link different religious symbols for earth, fire, air and water with their five senses, showing that they have understood these ideas from previous lessons. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress learning about the Christian saints and the Christian view of creation as well as recording facts about the main world religions. In Key Stages 3 and 4 very good progress is seen during discussions, for example pupils recall key words from previous lessons about the existence of God. Some pupils were able to discuss the story of the Good Samaritan very well and compare a robbery from the time of Jesus to a modern day mugging. One pupil analysed the symbolism from the story of the 'house on the rock' and succinctly compared the moral to building one's own life on strong foundations. In one lesson good progress was made when pupils discussed the Sermon on the Mount and showed an understanding that the concepts of happiness, contentment and materialism are modern ideas. Pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 are now studying for their Certificate of Achievement for the first time and are in line to do well.
131. The quality of teaching in religious education is good overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching is usually good and in Key Stages 3 and 4 it is generally very good. The primary teachers and learning support assistants demonstrate calm skilled behaviour management, which is usually effective. However, the number of younger pupils displaying extreme and disturbed behaviour is sometimes too many to allow teaching to continue, which then slows learning for the majority. Primary teachers raise sensitive issues such as family life very well enabling pupils to enter into the discussion with confidence. In some classes the spiritual element of the lessons is strong, in one class for example the atmosphere was electric as pupils listened to a musical story of the crucifixion. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the ending of a few lessons lack challenge for some pupils who quickly finish the simple worksheet exercises and time is wasted. Questions by teachers in all key stages are careful to address the understanding of different pupils so that they can all feel confident to share their ideas about religious stories and traditions. Lesson organisation, planning and subject knowledge are also strong in throughout the school, which leads to very good involvement by the pupils in the subject matter of the lesson. In one Year 10 class, for example, pupils were helped to analyse what the symbols of a bird and a bush represent and were able to bring their thoughts back to the discussion. In Key Stages 3 and 4 very good questioning and excellent pupil management leads to a very high quality of discussion and teachers help pupils to work together very well to explore the ideas further. Occasionally the work is too difficult for some Key Stage 3 and 4

pupils, which slows the progress that they are able to make. However, when this happened in one lesson the teacher recognised it and began to support pupils' understanding with good appropriate questions and suggestions.

132. Teachers take good care to support pupils' literacy skills in religious education lessons. Pupils are helped to write well and read their work and particularly good progress in speaking and listening skills is supported through the high quality discussion in both schools. The use of worksheets in many lessons however limits the opportunities for some pupils to write at length when they have explored the ideas in discussion.
133. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the locally agreed Programme of Study, is not yet organised to systematically build skills and knowledge as pupils move through the school. The Key Stages 3 and 4 co-ordinator has adapted the syllabus to focus more heavily on the Christian tradition, but recognises a need for greater coverage of other religions. The subject organisation is sufficient throughout the school to give pupils a sound basis for their understanding of religion as a force in the lives of many different people. There is, however, no link between the Primary and Secondary Centres to allow for a smooth transition and gradual building of skills and knowledge as pupils move from one school to the other. In addition the assessment of pupils' work is not systematic in Key Stages 1 and 2 and throughout the school the monitoring of teaching to raise standards further is too limited.