

INSPECTION REPORT

Westfield Special School
Weymouth

LEA area: Dorset

Unique Reference Number: 113960

Inspection Number: 193201

Headteacher: Mr P Silvester

Reporting inspector: Mr I R Naylor

Dates of inspection: 20th - 24th September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708331

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

© Crown Copyright 1999

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one. The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable. Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline
Tel. 0171 421 6567

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
Type of control:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Littlemoor Road Preston Weymouth Dorset DT3 6AA
Telephone number:	01305 833 518
Fax number:	01305 835 414
Appropriate authority:	Dorset LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Kathryn Gould
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Name	Subjects	Aspects
Ian Naylor <i>(Registered Inspector)</i>	Physical education;	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Curriculum and assessment.
David Holroyd <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>		Attendance; Partnership with parents; Support and guidance.
Joss Bennathan <i>(Team Member)</i>	English; Modern foreign languages; Music; Equal opportunities.	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
Brian Fletcher <i>(Team Member)</i>	Mathematics; Design and technology.	Efficiency of the school.
David Walker <i>(Team Member)</i>	History; Geography; Religious education; Special educational needs.	Leadership and management.
Gill Lawson <i>(Team Member)</i>	English; Personal, social and health education; Art; Under fives.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Rowland Hull <i>(Team Member)</i>	Science; Information technology.	Staffing, accommodation, learning resources.

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

0171 924 1093

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London

WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well
Where the school has weaknesses
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards in subjects
Quality of teaching
Other aspects of the school
The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school 1-3
Key indicators 4

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress 5-14
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 15-20
Attendance 21

Quality of education provided

Teaching 22-25
The curriculum and assessment 26-37
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 38-42
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 43-48
Partnership with parents and the community 49-55

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management 56-59
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 60-63
The efficiency of the school 64-67

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Autistic Classes (AB1, AB2, AB3, Key Stages 1, 2, and 3)	68-73
English, mathematics and science	74-110
Other subjects or courses	111-147

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	148
Data and indicators	149

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- . The ethos of the school is excellent.
- . Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- . Progress of pupils is good.
- . Teaching is of a high standard.
- . The curriculum is very good and relevant to pupils' needs.
- . Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- . Leadership of the school is very good.
- . There is very good financial management.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There are no major weaknesses.

The weaknesses of the school are minor and are far outweighed by what the school does well but they will form the basis of the governors action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

· How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has an excellent capacity for improvement. Weaknesses found in the last inspection have been successfully dealt with. The quality of teaching has improved and is good or better in over 80 per cent of lessons and never less than satisfactory. The curriculum is now better because teachers have written schemes of work, better planning and regular checks of what and how they teach. Literacy and numeracy hours are in place. Autistic pupils have specialised teaching. Provision has been made for specialist accommodation for science, pupils with autism, and better facilities for information technology and music. Very good office and therapy facilities are now in place. Staff training and qualifications are now very good. Nationally recognised courses for 16 year olds are available in most subjects, and are increasing opportunities for all pupils. Staff and governors are working together effectively to raise standards. The school's finances are managed excellently. There is marked improvement in pupils' progress since the last inspection. This is due to good teaching and the emphasis the school places upon pupils' personal and academic development.

Whether pupils are making enough progress

Progress in:	By 11	By 16	
Targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	<i>Key</i>
English:			<i>y</i>
listening and speaking	A	A	<i>very good</i>
reading	B	B	<i>good</i>
writing	B	B	<i>satisfactory</i>
Mathematics	B	B	<i>unsatisfactory</i>
Science	B	B	<i>poor</i>
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	B	A	

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

Progress is good or better in seven out of ten lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. This is a significant improvement in progress since the last inspection. In English, mathematics and science it has improved from sound to good overall. When pupils are admitted to the school, their achievements are very low, but by sixteen pupils have made good progress academically and socially. They are very well prepared for the next stage in education or for employment

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
5 – 11 years	Good	Physical education, and autistic classes	
11 – 16 years	Good	Physical education, French, and autistic class, art at GCSE	
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		
Science	Good		
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	Good		

Teaching is excellent or very good in four out of ten lessons, and good in another four, with the remainder satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection, when there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Very good and excellent teaching is present in the junior and senior departments. Teaching is excellent in French and very good in physical education. Teaching is good in the other subjects, except in religious education and history, where it is satisfactory.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good and remain a strength of the school.
Attendance	Pupils attend the school regularly. Where there is absence the school has in place good measures to check whether this is genuine.
Ethos*	Excellent!
Leadership and management	Very good. The school is very effectively led by the head teacher, with the full support of staff and governors. There are clear aims shared by everyone.
Curriculum	Very good.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good moral, social and cultural, and good spiritual development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good staffing levels; very good staff training; accommodation improved dramatically and now good.
Value for money	Very good.

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

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
II. Very caring environment with good help and guidance given to pupils and parents. III. Good progress by the pupils, particularly in social skills and self-esteem. IV. Staff very generous with their time. V. Good residential activities available for pupils. VI. Good information for parents. VII. Good management of behaviour - pupils are polite, responsive and well mannered.	VIII. Mixed views about homework. IX. Individual education plans (IEPs) need

Inspectors agree with parents about most of the above. Homework is regularly given and checked, and often consists of reading. Parents are invited to annual reviews where individual education plans are discussed.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan:

- *. The revision of schemes of work for design and technology, art, religious education, information technology and personal social education, as indicated in the School Improvement Plan, should be completed.
(Paragraph: 26)
- *. Planning in a few lessons at Key Stage 3 and 4 should be more carefully matched to the abilities of pupils, through the use of assessment information and setting individual education plan targets which are specific and measurable.
(Paragraphs: 25, 35)
- *. Further opportunities should be developed for pupils to produce creative, extended and independent writing in English at Key Stage 3 and 4.
(Paragraphs: 25, 81)
- * The purpose of the annual review and of annual reports should be more clearly stated to parents so that they understand how pupils' progress is reported in each of them.
 - * *(Paragraph: 51)*
- *. The number of behavioural policies could be reduced and made more accessible and consistent, by adopting a single whole school approach.
(Paragraph: 44)
- *. The school should continue to review the numbers of pupils in teaching groups, and reduce them where possible to ten or less.
(Paragraphs: 59, 69)

* **INTRODUCTION**

* **Characteristics of the school**

1. Westfield is a former Grant Maintained school that assumed Foundation Special School status on the 6th September 1999. This places the school back under the control of the Dorset Local Education Authority. There are 157 boys and girls on roll, aged from 3 to 16 years, with moderate learning and associated difficulties. Pupils are white and there are no minority ethnic groups. The school is situated in the eastern outskirts of Weymouth but serves a very wide area of Dorset.

2. There is a programme for re-integration of pupils to mainstream schools. There are newly organised Outreach activities, with an assigned staff member from school to support pupils in mainstream schools (e.g. The Way Valley Pyramid of schools), partly funded by the local education authority. The other principal change to the school since the previous inspection has been the increased capacity of the Autistic Base from six to eighteen pupils, in three separate class bases. There has also been a significant building programme that has enhanced provision, particularly for autistic pupils.

3. School Aims- published in the school prospectus:

We want our school:

- * to be a warm, welcoming community of children, parents and staff which offers its members support and every opportunity for personal growth;
- * to help our children to develop into confident, independent young people;
- * to follow a curriculum which enables children to enjoy their learning and achieve their full academic potential;
- * to respond to individual needs, to recognise individual achievement and to offer equal opportunities;
- * to offer children a secure and stimulating environment which positively encourages the development of self-esteem;
- * to be a place where children and parents feel that staff are approachable and that they will always make time to listen to them;
- * to work in partnership with our parents;
- * to be well-managed and to value the contribution that each member of our community makes to the whole;
- * to be recognised as a model of good practice in the local and in the wider community.

4. Key indicators

SATs results 1999

4. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

1999 14 pupils - none disapplied. None at National Curriculum Level 2 or above in Teacher Assessments. Tasks or Tests

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

1999 16 pupils - none disapplied. None at National Curriculum Level 4 or above in Teacher Assessments. Tasks or Tests

4. Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

1999 16 pupils - none disapplied. None at National Curriculum Level 5 or above in Teacher Assessments. Tasks or Tests

4. Attainment at Key Stage 4¹

1999 GCSE (Southern Exam Group)

Art	Grade B	1 pupil
	Grade C	2 pupils
	Grade D	2 pupils
	Grade E	1 pupil
Mathematics	Grade G	4 pupils

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

³ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

⁴ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

1999 Certificate of Achievement

	Exam board	Pass	Merit	Distinction
English	NEAB	3	6	6
Mathematics	SEG	1	3	8
Food Technology	NEAB	3	3	0
Geography	AEB	2	0	0

(This represents an improvement on nil results reported in 1996 and those for 1997, and 1998)

ASDAN (Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network)
Youth Award Scheme

4. Bronze award - 11 pupils

4.

4. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.4
	National comparative data	8
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.3
	National comparative data	3

4.

4. Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	9
Permanent	2

4. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	40
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

4. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

4. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

4. Attainment and progress

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

2. Progress is good or better in seven out of ten lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Pupils' work shows that they also make good progress over time. There has been a significant improvement in progress since the last inspection. In English, mathematics and science it has improved from sound to good overall. Pupils' achievements on admission are very low, but by the time they leave school at sixteen pupils have made good progress academically and very good progress in their personal and social skills. They are very well prepared for the next stage in education or for employment.

3. Figures for Standard Assessment Tests show that since 1996 there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining National Curriculum Levels 1, 2 and 3. There has also been a significant uptake in the number of pupils taking and achieving A-G grades at GCSE, and distinction and merit passes in Certificates of Achievement. This is a clear overall improvement on the previous inspection.

4. In English, progress is good at each key stage. The introduction of the Literacy Hour has strengthened progress in Key Stage 1 and 2 in particular. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in developing early reading and writing skills. They are growing in confidence in expressing themselves, and speaking and listening skills are good. By the end of Key Stage 2 progress is very good in each of these areas. Pupils are now reading simple stories with fluency, accuracy, and understanding.

Handwriting is neat and well formed, and there is some understanding of punctuation.

Pupils discuss their likes and dislikes and ask and answer questions sensibly. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have further extended these skills. They are confident speakers and can write for a variety of purposes in a cursive script, with good attention to spelling and punctuation. Reading has improved and pupils read both fiction and non-fiction and can gather information from their reading. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils use their good skills in speaking and listening, reading, and writing to explore and produce stories and plays, and to write evaluations of their work experience and college placements. Pupils make good use of English skills across all the other subjects of the curriculum

5. In mathematics, progress is good at each key stage. Pupils make steady gains in arithmetic skills at Key Stages 1 and 2 and by the end of Key Stage 3 apply their knowledge to everyday shopping or other practical activities. They extend their knowledge of pattern and shape, understand symmetry, use maps to plan routes and use a calculator successfully. By the time they leave school, pupils have the knowledge they will need to manage their everyday lives. Good use is made of mathematical skills across other subjects of the curriculum, particularly in science and in design and technology.

6. In science, progress is good at each key stage. From the simple explorations made at Key Stage 1, through the use of experiments and investigation across the other key stages, pupils gradually develop skills of observation and prediction, and understand how to record and interpret their results accurately. Pupils in Key Stage 4 are expected to achieve success in the certificates of achievement at the end of the year.

7. In religious education, progress is generally satisfactory at Key Stages 1, 2, and 4, and good at Key Stage 3. By the time they leave school pupils have a general understanding of several other religions and know about different beliefs and ideas about God. They also know about the Christian faith and stories from the Bible.

8. Progress in information and communications technology (ICT) is also good at each key stage. Younger pupils quickly learn how to use the mouse and key-board to move the cursor key and to make commands. They successfully use programs to support work in literacy and numeracy. Older pupils become quite proficient at word-processing skills, and at using

information retrieval systems and desk-top printing packages to support their work across a range of other subject areas, notably English, art and science.

9. Progress is very good in French, music, and art at Key Stages 3 and 4. It is good in design and technology, art at Key Stages 1 and 2, geography, and personal and social development. Progress is satisfactory in history. Pupils in the autistic classes make very good progress across all areas, but particularly in their communication and social skills.

10. Across most subjects, although the general context for lessons was one of good progress by pupils, progress was impeded by the large size of some teaching groups. It was also hampered by the fact that some teachers in Key Stages 3 and 4 did not sufficiently match teaching activities to the ability levels of pupils.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

11. Pupils behaviour in lessons and around school, as well as their attitudes to learning, remains a strength of the school and are very good.

12. Attitudes to learning are consistently positive. Pupils are fully engaged and motivated. They take pride in showing their work and explaining what they are doing. They listen and follow instructions carefully but are also able to work independently when required. Pupils are always eager to participate in class discussions, where, regardless of ability, they ask questions and offer comments. They are able to concentrate and persevere, even when they find the work hard. Most are confident enough to respond well when the work set is challenging.

13. Behaviour in and around the school is very good indeed. No bullying or vandalism was seen during the inspection. In discussion, pupils said that on the few occasions when bullying did occur, they were willing and able to ask for help to solve the problem.

14. Relationships in the school community are also very good. In lessons, pupils work well together, supporting each other. They acknowledge one another's achievements and often spontaneously applaud others' work. When working in groups, they negotiate well.

15. Pupils show respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. They are confident in expressing what they think, but listen carefully to others' points of view. No evidence of racist attitudes was seen or heard during the inspection. Pupils use the school code of conduct as a way of reminding themselves and each other of the way to treat others. Examples were seen of pupils being kind by taking turns during a wet playtime, helping each other by sharing, and respecting one another's space and games during lunch time in the playground.

16. Personal development is very good and pupils are keen to take as much responsibility as possible. They volunteer to distribute resources in lessons, set out chairs for assemblies, and return registers to the school office. Half the school participates in the school choir. The school council has to hold elections because there are so many volunteers. Pupils take initiative, handing out books for other pupils without prompting, and getting out and tidying up their own work in lessons. Pupils in the junior and senior departments benefit from

working with each other in the 'buddying system'. Pupils speak of the enjoyment and pride they take in their experiences outside school, whether on work experience or participating in community activities, and these experiences give them confidence and maturity. Girls are, in general, confident and participate fully, despite being outnumbered by boys in all classes.

20. **Attendance**

17. The levels of pupils' attendance and their motivation to attend school are good, and the level of attendance and punctuality found at the last inspection has been sustained. All year groups have attendance consistently above 90 per cent. In a random week surveyed, average school attendance was over 94 per cent. Punctuality is good at the start of the day and for lessons.

21. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

21. **Teaching**

18. Teaching is excellent or very good in four out of ten lessons, good in another four, and satisfactory in the remainder. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection, when there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Very good and excellent teaching is present in each key stage. In the subjects there has also been an improvement in the quality of teaching. Teaching is excellent in French, and is sustaining the high quality evident during the previous inspection. It is very good in physical education, which is an improved position since the previous inspection. Teaching is good in each of the other subjects except religious education and history, where it is satisfactory. Again this represents either a sustained position or an improvement since the previous inspection

19. The effectiveness of the teaching results from a number of factors. Teachers' planning is usually good and sometimes exceptional, for example in the autistic classes. Lessons are well organised and prepared. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a very detailed knowledge of pupils' abilities and needs. They use this knowledge very effectively when making tasks and activities suitable for the individual. Teachers record the achievements of pupils effectively and make good use of this information to make assessments of their progress and to prepare individual education plans. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of performance, effort and behaviour. This factor, together with skilful re-direction of any inappropriate behaviour and good use of praise and encouragement, leads to very good management, control, and ultimately to the overall very good behaviour of pupils across the school. There is excellent liaison and close working with learning support assistants, who accept responsibility very well, teaching with groups and with individuals. They make a vital contribution to the success of lessons and to the good progress of pupils.

20. Where teaching is at its most effective, in the excellent and many very good lessons observed, there is a great enthusiasm by the teacher for what is being taught. Teaching motivates and challenges through the depth of the teacher's subject knowledge and organisational skills, and from their meticulous attention to detail and to the individual needs

of pupils. Teachers inspire the trust and confidence of pupils so that self-esteem is cultivated amongst them to work hard and to succeed. There are many examples of these attributes, particularly in the autistic classes, in French, physical education, and music, and in personal and social education and careers lessons.

25. In lessons which have satisfactory teaching fewer of the factors described above are present. Occasionally at Key Stage 3 and 4, in some subjects there is not enough attention in lesson planning to the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils, with the result that progress, although sound to good, could be even better. In English, independent writing skills at Key Stage 4 could be given more priority. Tasks in mathematics for higher attaining pupils could be made more challenging.

25.

25. **The curriculum and assessment**

21. The curriculum has been greatly strengthened since the previous report. It is now very good overall and is broad balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. A great deal of conscientious work by teachers has gone into this process, and the school's Action Plan and subsequent school development/improvement plans are clear evidence of the commitment of senior managers and all staff to reviewing, evaluating and increasing the quality of the curriculum delivered. The designation of the deputy head teacher as the school's curriculum co-ordinator has helped significantly in focusing the efforts of staff on priority areas. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for most subjects, with the majority being very comprehensive and providing good guidance. As a result, both teaching and progress have been well supported, and more successfully than previously. Requirements of the National Curriculum are now met in each subject, and there is a good balance between subjects on the school timetable at each key stage. Religious education, sex and drugs education requirements are also appropriately met. However, the programme of study for religious education is in abeyance awaiting the outcome of national negotiations, although schemes of work are sensibly based on previous advice. Schemes of work in design and technology are currently being revised by the newly appointed co-ordinator, and those for art need to be completed.

22. Great success has been achieved in the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours at Key Stages 1 and 2. This is appropriately and very successfully adjusted from the national scheme to better meet the types of individual needs of pupils in this school. The literacy hour in particular is very good and has already made a good contribution to raising standards of reading and writing. The numeracy hour is the more recent development, and indications are that this too will help to raise standards in arithmetic and basic mathematical skills. A great deal of curriculum development work has been undertaken by teachers to reinforce the curriculum in Class 1, where most pupils are chronologically at Key Stage 1 but still need an Early Years curriculum. This work has successfully introduced elements of desirable outcomes from the Early Years curriculum. Planning and organisation now reflect this, and this has helped to raise the quality both of teaching and of pupils' progress at this key stage.

23. The autistic classes now have their own curriculum policy and scheme of work. These are very good, highly relevant, and appropriate to the needs of individual pupils. They rely very much on the principles of the TEACCH method of delivery, with a carefully structured approach to classroom organisation and to curriculum content. There has been a huge

improvement in the quality of the curriculum for autistic pupils and its implementation in the classroom since the previous report. This has made a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and to the rate of progress for pupils, and standards in both are now high.

24. The curriculum is planned effectively. Schemes of work, curriculum plans and topic work cycles provide good forward planning and give very good opportunities for pupils to make continuous progress within each class and as they move from key stage to key stage. There are suitable policies for equal opportunities and special educational needs. Together with the aims of the school and the well-structured curriculum planning, these ensure that there is equal access and opportunity for all pupils. Codes of Practice requirements for special educational needs are also met, with well-written and detailed annual reviews and individual education plans for each pupil.

25. Extra-curricular activities are very good and well provided, despite the obstacle of home to school transport and the distance that most pupils live from the school. The staff nevertheless manage a very wide ranging programme to provide for interests and experiences at each age group. Some lunch clubs provide for access to computers, reading and sporting activities, for example practising with fishing rods for angling. There are frequent sporting fixtures, including soccer and netball against other special schools and some mainstream schools.

26. There are excellent residential opportunities, which include both sporting and outdoor adventurous activities (for example camping on Dartmoor and visits to Atlantic College), and visits to sites of cultural or historical interest in London are organised each year.

27. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 has been broadened by the introduction of additional courses leading to nationally recognised examinations in General Certificate of Secondary Education, and Certificate of Achievement. This provision has complemented and enhanced existing courses at this key stage which centre upon the national ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Youth Award Scheme. These are operated very successfully, sustaining the high quality of delivery noted at the previous inspection. Access to GCSE courses has been extended to include mathematics as well as art. There are, however, pupils for whom access to GCSE in English and other subjects would broaden their opportunities and support their progress still further. The school improvement plan gives suitable recognition to introducing this as early as is practicable.

28. A recently introduced whole school scheme of work and new timetable arrangements for personal and social education have reinforced and strengthened the already good curriculum for this area, so that now it is very good and sometimes excellent. The school rightly takes pride in establishing pupils' personal and social development. Raising their self-esteem is at the forefront of curriculum aims and planning, and the school achieves this with outstanding success. An example is the huge impact that this area of the curriculum has in the autistic classes.

29. Pupils' personal development is also supported by the very good careers education and guidance provided by teachers in conjunction with the local careers service. This, together with an excellent work experience programme and very good links to further education, helps to prepare pupils extremely successfully for the next phase of their education.

30. The school successfully uses baseline assessment. Assessment is further suitably supported by teachers' assessments for the end of key stage Standard Assessment Tests and Task, by analysing the results of GCSE and Certificate of Achievements examinations, and by a continuous process of monitoring progress across targets set for individual education plans. Progress is very closely monitored. Good use is made of National Records of Achievement. Procedures for assessment, and the recording and use of this information to plan for the curriculum and individual education plans, is generally good at Key Stage 3 and 4 and very good at Key Stage 1 and 2 and in the autistic classes. The difference is that assessment is more effectively linked to lesson planning and targets for individual education plans in the junior department of the school.

35. Integration

31. As circumstances allow, the school makes a strong effort to return children to mainstream education. The main considerations are first that the pupil is ready to make the transition to the curriculum of the receiving school, and second that the pupil is ready socially and emotionally to cope with such a change.

32. Inspectors' discussions with two local schools who are participating show a very significant effort on the part of both Westfield school and the receiving school to investigate, negotiate and then provide for the return of individual pupils. These efforts include securing appropriate time for learning support assistants and other professional support, as is judged to be necessary for the pupil concerned. Also Westfield school staff offer continuing guidance and support to the staff of the receiving school. As a result, a number of pupils have now achieved integration successfully at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Also, two pupils from the Autistic Base have been successfully re-integrated into the main school at Westfield during the past year.

37. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and good provision for pupils' spiritual development. In the last inspection, provision for the moral, and social development of the pupils was identified as strength of the school. The school has sustained and built on this achievement.

34. There are well planned assemblies that are appropriate to the ages of the pupils and encourage pupils to celebrate their own and achievements and those of others. They provide opportunities for prayer and personal reflection. The focus of assemblies is often the same theme, which runs through 'thought for the day' and collective worship and is followed up in many lessons. Visitors, such as the local vicar, bring a special focus to assemblies. Assemblies celebrate a variety of religious festivals, with opportunities for the recognition of achievement and the value of each individual. Older pupils occasionally lead the daily act of collective worship, and so in a respectful and meaningful way. The youngest pupils with the most complex needs respond very well indeed to the peaceful atmosphere created by candles and calming music. The school gives pupils many opportunities to succeed, and it achieves its primary aim to develop pupils' confidence and social skills, and to promote the self-esteem of the individual. Different religions are celebrated in the good displays, in assemblies, and in the daily life of the school. In religious education, pupils learn about shared beliefs and values and they are given opportunities to consider the mysteries of life. In some curriculum areas, for example art and music, there are planned experiences for pupils' spiritual development. However, in other subjects such planning is at an early stage.

35. Provision for pupils' moral awareness is very good, and is reflected in the relationships in the school. Pupils are encouraged to distinguish right from wrong and to be sensitive to others in the school's daily routines, assemblies and lessons. They are taught to understand the consequences of actions and are encouraged to

value each other and respect property. The staff are very good role models, and older pupils set a good example to younger ones. A conversation with Year 10 boys, who were putting away chairs after assembly, showed them to be earnest in their desire to support and befriend younger pupils. Several older pupils spend time in the autistic classes as part of the school's *Buddy Scheme*, working with pupils with complex needs. This activity is recognised by the school and accredited as part of the Youth Award Scheme. Pupils were anxious to tell inspectors that they enjoy this work even though it is sometimes difficult. They were quite clear about the effect that their good behaviour, interest and attitudes had on the pupils they worked with. The positive attitudes to good behaviour are underpinned by the school's 'golden rules', where pupils are taught from the earliest age to respect and care for each other. There are good opportunities for pupils to understand and reflect on feelings and values in lessons. For example, in art, pupils consider the feelings that colours express, and in personal and social education, Year 5 and 6 pupils understand that their feelings and attitudes can affect the way they treat and are treated by others.

36. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially. Great emphasis is placed on pupils developing the ability to take responsibility for themselves and to relate well to others. Through the school council, pupils play a real part in running of the school and they develop an understanding of democratic principles. Pupils' social development is promoted well through the curriculum. They have opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through group work in a variety of subjects, through research projects in art and information technology, by working on the Youth Award Scheme, by taking responsibility for recording their achievements, and from being involved in a number of leisure activities. Pupils understand the need for rules and discipline in playing games and entering sports competitions. They have good opportunities to develop team work and leadership skills during residential visits. In Key Stage 4 pupils successfully take part in work experience placements of high quality each year, with resulting gains to their social skills.

37. The school also makes very good provision for pupils' cultural awareness. In lessons, pupils gain a good understanding of other cultures, particularly in religious education, music and art. Representatives from different cultural groups come into the school. Very good use is made of local artists and musicians-in-residence. Several original pieces of art from known artists adorn the school, and the school has plans to open its own gallery where a range of artists could exhibit. Regular visits to museums and galleries as well as visitors to the school add to pupils' cultural experiences.

42. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

38. Support, guidance and welfare is good, and in some areas very good. There is good documentation to support pupils. Pupils have a secure learning environment. The school draws extensively upon close working and liaison with a range of professional services, including health professionals. Very good procedures are in place for attendance, links with external support, monitoring progress and development, and promoting good discipline and behaviour.

39. The school provides a very happy, supportive, and caring learning environment and has a set of aims whereby each pupil is valued and enabled to develop and prepare for adult life. This ethos is an evident part of school life. There is a school code of conduct. This aims to focus the response to behaviour within classrooms. There are other procedures that support positive behaviour, and which eliminate bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour. There were no instances of bullying seen during the inspection. The policies and procedures in place for behaviour are good. They could be further improved if there were some simplification leading to a more cohesive and commonly understood policy, applied uniformly across the school. As an example, the use of rewards - sweets, merits etc. - for good behaviour varies across the school. This means that pupils can be left uncertain about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

40. Annual review procedures follow the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and are very thorough. The scheduling of meetings and compiling of very full reports to the multi-disciplinary annual reviews is achieved very efficiently. Parents are invited and fully involved in setting future targets for their child.

41. Arrangements for pre-admission contacts with parents and the induction of pupils are good. They are well received by parents and contribute to the welfare and progress of pupils. The school has contacts with a full range of health professionals and others. These include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, educational psychologist, and provision for hearing impaired pupils. The services provided relate well to the school, and all the staff seen felt fully involved with the school. There is also a range of links through the integration and outreach programmes.

42. There are very good procedures for following up absences. The school thus secures a very good level of authorisation for all absences, with the exception of Year 11, where there has been a decline from the levels of attendance identified in the last report. This is primarily due to a small group of Year 11 pupils who have a long-standing attendance problem. The school has in place a range of good measures to address this issue. These include swift follow-up of absence by phone or letter, and detailed records. These measures have started to slow down the rise in absence levels in the Year 11 group. Liaison with the education welfare service has recently been reviewed, and new procedures have been agreed that will reinforce the very good efforts made by the school to prevent any deterioration in levels of attendance.

43. Child protection procedures and practice are very good. The school has a strong and clear understanding of the requirements of pupil protection and significant experience in the practice of it. There has been recent training for all staff to ensure continued awareness of child protection issues. The school has in place satisfactory, routine monitoring by governors and staff of health and safety issues, and a good procedure for the swift reporting and recording of serious incidents. The governors' premises committee oversees health and safety and has addressed a number of safety matters following the recent building works. The recent checks by this committee found no items of concern across the rest of the school. The health and safety matters noted in the previous report have been suitably resolved.

48. Partnership with parents and the community

44. The school has a good partnership with parents, and this has some very good features. Partnership and links with the community are well developed and make a helpful contribution to educational standards. The school benefits from a supportive parent and supporters' group. They have a useful record of accomplishment for fund raising through the FOWS (Friends of Westfield school).

45. School information for parents is very good. Parents recognise the school as an open community. The school prospectus is well written and very well presented. It deals in a factual way with answers to frequent questions. Other parental information, including the Governors' Annual Report to Parents is similarly well presented and satisfies legal requirements.

46. The school provides very good information about pupil progress. The major form of reporting is the annual review, which suitably seeks comment and approval from parents and pupil. Annual reviews set a range of appropriate targets including behavioural targets and are well regarded by parents. Parents consider the reports, reviews, newsletters and parent meetings effective and responsive to their needs. They also feel that access to teachers for informal or other contact outside parents' meetings serves the best interests of parents and their children. Parents participate in the annual review and there are effective arrangements for those parents who are unable to attend or need further help to play their part. The annual report on their child's progress, which is sent to parents at the end of the school year, transmits Standard Assessment Test results. It also confirms attendance for the year, and aims to supplement those reports given in great detail during the annual reviews. It does not repeat the annual review information and is viewed as a reminder of the outcomes of the annual review. However, there is a need to provide greater clarification to parents of the information on their child's progress in each of the subjects which they can expect to see in either the annual review or the annual report, and this has been recognised by the school.

47. There is good involvement by parents in the use of home/school books, particularly across the junior department and in the autistic classes. These books record incidents and the progress and development of pupils, and receive parental comments. In the senior department there are 'student planners', through which teachers and parents help pupils with curriculum issues. Few parents assist within the school. The very wide area from which pupils are drawn exacerbates the difficulties of parents becoming regularly involved in the school. The greatest use of parents is in the junior department, where they offer special help with reading and games. Parents have also acted as escorts on school day visits or trips. The Friends Association is a partnership of parents and supporters of the school, and they raise helpful sums of money. This effort enhances the educational resources provided. Items supplied include library books, computer items, and playground and computer facilities. The school has also managed to secure donations through parental contacts with local charities. These efforts add valuable resources to the school and are a good example of parental support.

48. The school has a good range of links with the local community, and these include the extensive use of community facilities to support the curriculum. There are links with local churches. Pupils also go out extensively into the local community. These visits include formal events such as choir concerts and less formal visits to schools to join in classes. There is also use of the Outdoor Education Centre by senior pupils, and numerous sporting events with other schools. There are also business or industrial links. These are mainly as part of the work experience scheme or careers provision. The range of work experience is good, with a wide range of placements, including an equestrian centre and an engineering company.

49. The school has developed a successful programme of Outreach work. This involves members of staff using designated time to visit local schools. Here they provide support to teachers, advise upon the use of individual educational plans and give some training and guidance to learning support assistants. This service has included 20 schools across all phases of education. There have also been occasional visits to Westfield by teaching and support staff from other schools. These have mainly been to undertake training or occasionally to work with a returning or newly admitted child. The Outreach service helps mainstream schools to understand better the services the school can provide. This has led to more appropriate requests for admission to Westfield.

50. This work gives excellent support to the professional development of staff and also helps the school to know more about opportunities for integration and developments within mainstream education, and raises the potential for more pupils to return to mainstream education.

55. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

55. Leadership and management

51. The headteacher is a very effective leader and has a detailed knowledge of the day to day activities of the school. He has provided the vision and drive to raise overall standards of achievement and to improve the quality of the educational provision and school environment. He is very well supported by the senior management team and staff, who are very hard working and dedicated. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood, with a clear management structure. There is a very supportive governing body who have an agreed perspective and purpose for the overall direction of the school. They play an important part in its life and have become well known, both to pupils and to staff. Governors make formal and informal visits to the school in addition to their regular meetings so that they keep well informed. They have a suitable committee structure and terms of reference and this enables them to discharge their responsibilities rigorously and conscientiously. They are actively involved with the future development of the school.

52. The quality of teaching is constantly reviewed by the headteacher and senior staff through visits to lessons and checks on lesson planning. They also evaluate curriculum and lesson planning, though subject leaders have greater responsibility in this area and some time is available to them for this in the timetable. This represents a major improvement since the last inspection. Further development of this aspect is required, to ensure for example, that learning support assistants are used effectively in the senior department and opportunities for higher attaining pupils are not lost. This is a recognised priority in the current school improvement plan.

53. The school has clear aims that have been revised since the last inspection to give better emphasis to the educational focus of the school. All staff work towards a shared understanding of the school's aims and values. This gives consistency to the experiences offered to pupils and helps to provide an effective and relevant climate for learning. Very good attitudes to work, good relationships, and the commitment to high standards make the school very successful in meeting its aims, and it has an excellent ethos.

54. The school improvement plan is an effective planning document. It has a two-year rolling programme to meet the immediate priorities and to work toward the long-term aims of the school. All staff make contributions to this document. The school improvement plan recognises the need for staff training to build and maintain standards. It makes clear those who are responsible for carrying out actions and suitable ways of measuring their successful completion. The leadership of the school recognises that some classes are too large and has correctly increased the number of learning support assistants to help this situation. Further improvements to the teacher-pupil ratio are realistically planned to occur when the school's financial resources allow. Good decisions about re-integration have established realistic targets for integrating a number of pupils into mainstream schools in the current year and this has created a climate of success, with the likely participation of a greater number of schools.

59. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

55. The number of appropriately qualified teachers is broadly average when compared with that of other similar schools, and there is a well above average level of learning support assistants to support the needs of pupils. In the main, learning support assistants work very closely and effectively as a team with teachers.

56. Professional development opportunities for all staff are very good, and are supported substantially by a clear and helpful policy and a good budget. Appraisal is well developed, with teachers and learning support assistants fully included in the process. The school has a very helpful and clear induction and mentoring programme in place, with all new staff having good opportunities to discuss their needs with the school management. Job descriptions are sound and are reviewed annually as part of the appraisal process. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of this provision is underscored by the recent Investors in People Award gained by the school.

57. The accommodation is now good and has been greatly improved since the last inspection with the addition of a purpose built wing. This houses a science laboratory, several new classrooms and two purpose-designed classrooms for autistic pupils, and new administrative areas. Other improvements have included adjustments to the existing building, with another autistic classroom, food technology area, music room, two information technology suites and a new library. The whole school has been carefully reviewed to make the most of the increased space, and outside spaces have been significantly enhanced to provide attractive and creative play areas. The music room unfortunately is rather small for some teaching groups. Physical education for older pupils relies on the use of a good playing field and local sporting and recreational facilities. Art and design and technology share the same accommodation, and this hinders full access to the curriculum for each subject. A design and technology suite is the subject of a school bid for extra resources and there are already architectural plans in place. This, if successful, will remedy the current position. A committed caretaker and cleaning staff keep the school very clean and tidy. Classrooms are bright, with staff making good use of wall-space to display and celebrate pupils' work. The quality of fixtures and fittings is good.

58. School resources are good overall and some are excellent. The school has recently invested heavily in new computers and now has an excellent information and communications technology suite. There is network cabling to each part of the school, except for the Year 10 and 11 base, which is scheduled for connection soon. The library is very well stocked, with a very well ordered computerised access system, and there is an excellent staff library to support professional development. There are sufficient television sets, overhead projectors and video recorders in each department of the school. There are several digital camera, as well as video cameras, to record pupils' work and progress. Subject resources are good overall. They are very good for information and communications technology and science; and good for English and mathematics, religious education, music, art history and modern foreign language. They are satisfactory for geography, design and technology, and physical education. The autistic classes are very well equipped.

63. **The efficiency of the school**

59. Financial planning is excellent and is guided throughout by the needs of the pupils. There are very effective and efficient working practices to plan, manage and monitor the school's finances. Financial systems have been significantly improved since the last inspection. Spending is reviewed regularly by the headteacher, who administers the budget effectively and well. He ensures that spending reflects changing needs. The governors' finance committee meets regularly to review expenditure and assess future needs. The school finance officer provides the governors with comprehensive statements of the school's account. The governors now take a full part in the management of the school's finance. The school improvement plan accurately reflects the priorities identified by the school.

60. By prudent and painstaking financial management the head teacher and governors have provided funding for special purposes such as additional buildings. As evidence of their financial skill, the capital debt for the building projects is well on the way to being repaid. The school's account is broadly in balance. Cost effective measures and success criteria are in place to ensure that the school spends its money wisely and that wastage is kept to a minimum. What is spent is linked to school improvement planning that clearly sets out the cost of each of its areas for action and reflects the school's educational priorities well. Detailed spending plans are in place for the current year. The governors take a long-term view of the school's finances and are developing a financial strategy for future years.

61. The school has an exemplary code of practice for financial management. Day-to-day financial control is excellent. The school finance officer is meticulous in checking delivery notes and invoices and in maintaining records of daily expenditure on computer. All accounts are fully backed up and the school's procedures are in line with the local authority requirements. A recent full audit of the school's finances found them to be in very good order. The school fund account is correctly the subject of a separate audit.

62. Accommodation is used imaginatively and provides a very pleasant learning environment. There are plans to extend accommodation further to provide better facilities for design and technology. Management of learning resources is good and subject co-ordinators capably manage their own budgets to support learning. The school uses its human and material resources very efficiently. Although some class sizes are large, there has been creative use of learning support assistants to reduce group size and to increase adult-to-pupil ratios. Accommodation and learning resources are used efficiently. Financial control is very good and the budget is spent wisely for the pupils' benefit. The amount spent per pupil is just above the average for similar schools. When account is taken of the low attainment of pupils on entry to the school, and the good progress they make by the time they leave, the school provides very good value for money. These findings indicate a significant improvement since the last inspection.

67. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Autistic Classes (AB1, AB2, AB3, Key Stages 1, 2, and 3)

63. The Autistic Classes are a success story. The provision for autism was fiercely criticised in the previous report, and the school management and teachers have undertaken a huge programme of improvement, as clearly identified in successive school improvement plans.

64. Provision has been increased to three classes with a total of 18 places. There are currently 12 pupils. Several pupils from the main classes of the school have some lessons in the autistic classes. Admission criteria have been appropriately adjusted since the previous report, so that only pupils who have moderate learning difficulties and autism are now admitted. Staff development has been a priority. All teachers and learning support assistants working in the Autistic Classes have received relevant training or are currently engaged in training. The school has adopted policies and approaches that are well considered and entirely appropriate to the aims of the school and of the Autistic Classes. The National Autistic Society's SPELL (Structure, Positive, Empathetic, Low Arousal, Links) approach has been appropriately adopted as the main channel for teaching. Teaching is also suitably informed by the TEACCH (Treatment and Education of autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children) method of structured working. The result of these changes is that there is now a very good curriculum, and teaching to match, that enables autistic pupils to make very good progress overall. One of the most successful features is the extent to which the pupils in each of the autistic classes are seen as part of the whole school and encouraged to engage in whole school activities wherever appropriate.

65. Pupils at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 with very complex emotional, communication and social needs make outstanding progress in their individual achievements in personal and social education and across the whole range of National Curriculum subjects. Helped by teaching that creates appropriate structures for learning, and which has very detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and abilities, pupils' progress is channelled towards activities that are carefully prepared and matched to individual needs. In this way pupils are enabled to experience success and to build up confidence and improve across a range of skill areas despite the difficulties and setbacks they often face as a result of their emotional and communication difficulties. Examples of very good progress were evident in lesson observations and in scrutiny of pupils' work. During a science lesson at Key Stage 1, very good teaching gave pupils opportunity to experience by feel several different materials and clothing that keep us warm. Pupils were aware of them and some could say which materials and clothes were hard or soft. When they put on the scarves and gloves they knew that they were warm. The best progress, however, was evident in the way in which the four pupils were able to work at a table together and relate to the activity, to one another, and to staff. A mathematics lesson at Key Stage 2 had made very good use of information technology, with two pupils taking turns use an electronic turtle, using a concept keyboard to make the turtle change directions or stop. Again, participation, co-operation and turn-taking were the best elements of progress made by these pupils. At Key Stage 3, pupils make very good progress in French. They are new to the subject and the class and make amazing adjustments within the calm atmosphere created by the teacher and learning support assistant. Pupils recognise the names of colours in French and show engagement to the task and awareness of the routine of the group. One pupil successfully writes and draws the colours, using an information technology draw program.

66. Teaching is consistently very good in each of the three classes. This is principally because teachers and learning support assistants have a very clear idea of what they want pupils to achieve and are very skilful in their planning and organisation to ensure that this then happens. Teachers and learning support assistants have in-depth knowledge about autism, and apply this knowledge successfully to lessons. Classroom organisation is carefully structured so that pupils understand where to be, what to do, and how to do it, all as independently as possible. Detailed use is made of very good lesson plans, curriculum plans, individual education plans and daily assessments to build up information about each pupil so that teaching can be precisely matched to individual need. To this end, teachers and learning support assistants work together extremely successfully as a team within each class, and also support one another well across all the classes.

67. In AB1 (Autistic Base Key Stage 1) a system of working has been developed that is carefully organised to give clearly defined duties for 'teacher', 'manager', and 'facilitator', with a rotating timetable that has teacher and learning support assistants performing each of the roles interchangeably. This is very successful, as it enables staff to sustain high quality of teaching, activity, care and assessment for very demanding younger pupils. In AB2 and 3, emphasis is correctly and successfully placed on encouraging pupils to become more independent, and gradually to accept partial or full-time placement in the main classes of the school. Teaching also successfully embraces challenging and motivating activities and experiences using individual and group formats that give pupils excellent opportunities to develop social relationships. Teacher and learning support assistants have a calm and orderly type of approach, never speaking loudly, across, or about pupils in front of them. This has the remarkable effect of engaging pupils' trust and creating the correct climate for improving pupils' self-image and confidence.

68. The three classes are well managed. There has recently been a change in the leadership of the classes, with a new co-ordinator temporarily in post whilst her predecessor undertakes a year of further advanced training about autism. The former co-ordinator now teaches one day per week, and continuity of approach is thus well supported, particularly in AB1. The two have co-operated well and as a result there has been a smooth well-planned transition. Teachers and learning support have been included in an extensive programme of relevant professional development. The school curriculum has been appropriately adapted for autistic pupils, but all National Curriculum subjects are taught. There is a well-balanced programme of activities in each class that is entirely suitable to age and abilities of pupils. Individual education plans are very detailed and give achievable targets for pupils to reach. They are constantly reviewed and updated, using information gathered from very close assessment of each pupil's attainments. Resources are very good and well managed. Excellent use is made of the local community to add to the range of facilities available to pupils. The accommodation has been greatly improved, particularly with the addition of the three new purpose-designed classrooms under the recently completed building programme, and is now very good.

73. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

73. English

69. Since the last report, the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced. This has had a significant impact upon progress and has been fully implemented in the junior department of the school. The daily literacy hour not only fulfils legal requirements, it has been appropriately adapted and enhanced to meet the particular needs of the pupils.

70. Overall, pupils make good progress in English, and very good progress at Key Stage 2. This is because the innovations since the last report have begun in the junior department. As the present group of pupils move up the school, and as plans for further developments are implemented, progress should become more consistent. Throughout the school, pupils' progress in speaking and listening skills is very good. Reading skills show good progress at each key stage. In writing, progress is also good at each key stage for the majority of pupils, but only satisfactory for higher attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stage 4.

71. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. Pupils can explain what they have been asked to do, talk about likes and dislikes, and follow instructions. They understand that reading goes from left to right and from front to back. They use pictures in stories to help recognise words in their reading books and recognise simple words. They can identify objects that begin with a particular letter in speech. Those who have not yet learned to write develop fine motor co-ordination. These pupils trace objects with reasonable accuracy and draw round and identify simple shapes. Other pupils shape letters and simple words with care.

72. At Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is very good. Pupils can discuss what their favourite toys, films and stories are and, in response to questions, explain reasons for these preferences. They speak about what actions are kind and helpful, and encourage each other to behave appropriately. They are able to identify words beginning with different letters. Some understand different types of word, such as adjectives and verbs. In reading, pupils retain information and use picture clues to help work out unfamiliar words. When reading unfamiliar stories they are able to speculate about what might happen next. They use indexing and library skills to find information and to choose books. Some can identify the differences between fiction and non-fiction. Pupils recall, with varying degrees of detail, stories they have read. Some read simple stories aloud with expression and fluency. In writing, pupils shape letters correctly and neatly. Most use punctuation with varying degrees of accuracy.

73. At Key Stage 3, pupils' progress is good. They talk about the fiction and poetry they have read, recalling key names and events and, with prompting, identifying themes. They can explain why they have chosen particular subjects or words when writing poems. Some can explain different forms of writing, such as the differences between a poem, a newsletter and a play script. In drama, they begin to use language appropriate to the age and personality of the characters. In some cases, they can use 'adjective' as definition of a describing word. Pupils read aloud with varying degrees of expression. They tackle unfamiliar words and texts with increasing confidence and fluency. At the start of the key stage, all pupils use

joined-up writing that is, in general, tidy and even. Throughout the key stage, writing shows clearer letter formation, more accurate spelling, and greater ease in expressing ideas and opinions briefly. Pupils write poems independently, and after appropriate structure and guidance they write book reviews, letters and newspaper articles. They respond to set questions about characters and events in the books they have read.

74. At Key Stage 4, most pupils make good progress over time, although only satisfactory progress was evident in the lessons seen, particularly for higher attaining pupils. When speaking, pupils can describe why the opening of a story is interesting and why it might appeal to small children. They can recall the plots and characters of stories and plays they have read, although not always accurately, and respond to questions about preferences in fiction. They can identify differences between life in the town and life in the country. When working in role, a few pupils speak with language, tone of voice and speech patterns that match the character they are portraying. Some are able to make links between different characters' experiences and their own. When reading, higher attaining pupils read aloud with some confidence and expression, reading unfamiliar words accurately. These pupils show understanding of a range of texts. Lower attaining pupils read simple texts with understanding and know how to sound out new words. Most pupils write neatly, although punctuation and spelling are often uncertain and, in some cases, letter formation is not consistently clear. They can offer brief written responses to questions about the books they are reading, the television they watch, and their leisure pursuits. Some take advantage of opportunities offered for longer pieces in different forms, such as a diary entry for a mystery stories, or a letter. Good use is made of word-processing skills to help with drafting work, and for writing articles for the newspaper project. Pupils use their reading and writing skills well to complete their own evaluations of work experience and college placements.

75. In lessons, pupils' response is usually good and often very good. All pupils are proud of their work and keen to show what they are doing. They are almost all able to concentrate and persevere, even when work is unfamiliar or challenging. They are consistently courteous to each other and to staff. When working in a group, pupils negotiate and co-operate with each other, listening carefully and valuing one another's suggestions. On the few occasions when pupils' response is satisfactory rather than good, this is because their attention wanes in extended whole group discussion or if they have listened for a long time. Sometimes, when pupils work in pairs, one disengages and expects the other to do all the thinking, planning and writing.

76. Overall, teaching is good, but it varies. There are some examples of very good teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2, but at Key Stages 3 and 4, the range is from satisfactory to good. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, good rapport with pupils and enthusiasm. Most have impressive knowledge of the subject they are teaching. The very best teaching is characterised by pace, energy and lesson planning which enables the teacher to check what has been learnt and understood. It also uses learning support assistants as part of a teaching team. The work set is varied to match targets identified for different pupils to support their progress in literacy. Writing frames and information and communication technology are used to support the development of independent writing skills. Explanations

by teachers are kept suitably brief. Skilful questioning encourages well thought out answers. Discussion leads to, and supports, written work. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, there is less focus on matching of activities to different abilities, especially for older pupils with the potential for higher attainment. There is scope for more use of play texts and non-fiction in early stages of Key Stage 3, and increasing the opportunities for independent writing for older pupils at Key Stage 4.

77. Since the last inspection, an enormous amount of effective work has taken place. The subject is now managed well, although co-ordination is shared, and this has some drawbacks such as ensuring continuity of approach between key stages. The English curriculum now covers all aspects of the National Curriculum, and is accessible to all pupils. Teaching has been appropriately focused on the importance of developing basic reading and writing skills. Courses have been introduced which enable older pupils to leave school with publicly recognised certificates and qualifications. In 1999 all Year 11 pupils were successful in gaining a Certificate of Achievement (Northern Examination and Assessment Board). In the department, there is an ongoing review of how English should be taught. This has correctly identified areas for development, including access for higher attaining pupils to the broader syllabus of GCSE examinations.

78. Accommodation and resources are good. The library has a very good range of fiction and non-fiction. Pupils' access to the library during registration, during break, and at lunchtime makes a major contribution to the culture of reading in the school.

83.

83. **Mathematics**

79. Pupils' progress in mathematics at all key stages is good. Initially, pupils work from a base of low skills and understanding but make good progress through skilled individual attention, a wide variety of teaching techniques and skilful use of classroom resources. The careful preparation and teaching of the numeracy hour is already making a significant impact on progress, particularly on mental arithmetic skills. Pupils are developing confidence in using number and applying it to simple, everyday problem solving. There are frequent checks to see what they have remembered and what they can do. The progress of all pupils is usually well supported by individual learning programmes and targets based on prior attainment, but some are not specific enough. Each pupil works at his or her own pace and progress is regularly assessed and recorded. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

80. In all key stages, the planned use of computers for number, shape and graph-work improves progress because the pupils can quickly see the results of their work. All pupils are encouraged to learn the language of mathematics and to use it. Key words are displayed in the classroom. Good links are made with other subjects, for example science and food technology, where pupils are given practical experience in the use of number, shape and measuring. Ensuring the correct mix for '*melting moment*' cakes is just one example.

81. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. They count reliably to 5 and back down to nought, and exchange pennies for buns in a singing game that confirms their number skills. Pupils recognise and name shapes, distinguish *large* from *small*, and are able to measure lengths of paper and put them in the correct order. They draw a simple graph of mini-beasts.

82. Pupils continue to make good progress by the end of Key Stage 2. They write, order and match numbers, adding and subtracting. Pupils recognise and name a wider range of common shapes and count out small sums of money accurately, using comparative language like *less* and *more than*. They use non-standard measure like spans and cubits as well as centimetres, and measure distances with a trundle wheel. Collecting information about favourite fruits amongst the class, they illustrate their results using a block graph.

83. By the end of Key Stage 3, progress is good. Pupils extend their knowledge of shape and pattern, correctly identifying lines of symmetry in a range of simple shapes and finding the area and perimeter. Whilst practising their knowledge of time they plan a video schedule for recording television programmes.

84. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils' progress is good and they work well towards nationally recognised examinations. In 1999, all Year 11 pupils were successful in gaining a Certificate of Achievement. Some obtained a creditable pass in the GCSE. Pupils apply their knowledge well to practical activity both in the mathematics lessons and in subjects like science and design and technology. Pupils gain the knowledge that they will require in order to manage their everyday lives when they leave the school. By planning routes and understanding compass points, pupils use their knowledge of co-ordinates to read maps. Learning about probability and chance, pupils assess the likelihood of winning the national lottery. They become familiar with the use of a calculator.

85. Pupils' response to mathematics is generally good, and often very good. Attitudes are always positive. Pupils have the confidence to speak up in class and are not afraid to make mistakes. They enjoy the work and accept the challenge of solving problems. They help each other and tackle joint assignments cheerfully. They persevere and learn from their mistakes, and are pleased when things go right.

86. Teaching is consistently good and often very good in all key stages. This is a notable improvement on the last inspection. The excellent liaison between class teacher and learning support assistants promotes progress and ensures that the majority of the pupils get the help they most need. Teachers' knowledge is good and they have a good understanding of the way pupils learn. Lessons are well planned and are based on assessment of previous learning. The range of activities provides a good stimulus for pupils' work. Teaching methods are varied which ensures that pupils do not become bored. The best lessons have excellent timing. Teachers know the pupils well and are quick to spot when a pupil is in difficulty. They also listen to what the pupils say and make use of the ideas they offer. Expectations of effort and behaviour are high. Teachers motivate their pupils well by generous praise and warm personal relationships. Occasionally, pupils who are above the average in mathematical ability are asked to do work which is too easy for them. Although the worksheets used are appropriate they require very little written work from the pupil, and some opportunities to confirm learning are lost.

87. The subject is very well managed. All staff work as a team to ensure that pupils are numerate by the time they leave the school, and that they can cope with the mathematics of everyday life. Resources are plentiful, accessible, and very well used. Classrooms are bright and stimulating.

92. Science

88. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils have the opportunity to look at their world, describe simple features of different objects, and chart their observations. Pupils name parts of the body and different parts of the plant such as *leaf* and *petal*, and they recognise and identify different animals, such as *fly*, *goldfish* and *robin*. Physical processes are explored, and pupils record changes in light, sound and movement. Simple experiments with sound motivate and interest pupils, and they produce drum sounds with different objects such as rice and beads, clattering different objects to consider the noise different materials make. Pupils explore the principles of basic electricity during simple experiments with electric circuits.

89. In Key Stage 2, progress is good. Pupils explore different materials, consider what makes a good diet, healthy foodstuffs, waste and decay, and get to know the different habitats of animals. Using simple experiments pupils begin to understand about oxygen in the blood and the role of the heart and its response to exercise. They explore the effect of water on different materials and make observations.

90. Progress in Key Stage 3 is good, with pupils making simple experiments. They observe and record chemical changes in eggs, plant reproduction, physical change of materials (melting and dissolving), force and friction, and the effects of erosion on rocks. Photographic evidence shows pupils exploring the effect of air on liquid, role-playing the composition of materials (atoms), and studying habitats of different animals.

91. In Key Stage 4, pupils make good progress in their investigations and experiments. They learn and understand about human reproduction, and the reproductive parts of flowers. Whilst experimenting with the properties of different types of materials and the effect of chain reactions, pupils reach some understanding of movement and force. They help to select appropriate equipment for experiments, and can discuss and comment on their investigations. Pupils clearly understand the notion of a fair test and the importance of keeping clear and accurate data to compile their results. A good example of this was a lesson where pupils investigated the movement of a solid through wallpaper paste, where the conditions of the test and importance of data collation were clearly understood.

92. Pupils' attitude to learning is good. Pupils enjoy the practical aspect of the subject and are enjoying using the new science laboratory, accepting and understanding the new rules on safety. Pupils offer good comments in lessons and work together well. Concentration levels and behaviour are good. Younger pupils relate well to the interesting and creative ideas that are offered within the investigations, and respond well to the teacher's enthusiasm. Older pupils show a very mature approach to their work, sharing ideas and appreciating one another's endeavour.

93. Teaching in science across the school is good. Three teachers teach the subject across Key Stage 3 and 4, one of them new to the school. Teachers work well to the very clear scheme of work, which provides good continuity for the subject across each key stage. They have good subject knowledge and are very well supported by excellent learning support assistants. Teachers make investigation and experimentation both informative and fun. All

lessons at each key stage are well planned, organised and prepared, and they use a modular approach to topics very well. Matching of tasks and activities to pupils' ability is best at Key Stage 1 and 2, and less successful at Key Stages 3 and 4, where there is some inconsistency in the detail of this approach. Lessons are timed well, have clear direction, and are well focused.

94. The contribution to social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good, with pupils enjoying the practical application of the subject. This was especially evident in the junior department, where teachers go to great pains to ensure the experiments are relevant to pupils' understanding. This approach promotes self-esteem and self-confidence. Very good support from learning support assistants is very helpful in building pupil's confidence and personal development.

95. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The curriculum has been much improved since the last inspection by the completion of a scheme of work. This is reflected well by pupils entering national examinations this year for the first time. As a temporary measure, the co-ordinator is not teaching within the department but is allocated appropriate management time to monitor the subject. Resources are much improved and are now very good, and the new science laboratory is very well organised and equipped.

Information technology

96. Progress across the school is good. At Key Stage 1, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observation shows that information technology is well used in both literacy and numeracy. Pupils show a keen interest in the use of the computers and are able to practise both letter and number recognition and matching. Pupils understand how to use concept keyboards and some pupils are learning to use the computer mouse and to recognise that computers offer stimulating ways to learn. By the end of Key Stage 2, progress is good, with pupils using computers to work on target letters supporting their literacy skills. Pupils have a good understanding of the use of clip art programmes to create pictures of their own design and know to use the turtle (automated control and appropriate response). By the end of Key Stage 3, progress is good. In an art project, pupils search the patterns of letters, different fonts, size and position. In English, pupils work well together, sharing a computer, correcting each other's mistakes, and working to develop a school newspaper. They change font, colour, text and images, and design posters that describe the content of rooms across the school. Pupils know how to use a digital camera work and start to use this to support their work. In some lessons, notably science, pupils make good use of CD-ROMs for research that supports investigative work well.

97. Progress by the end of Key Stage 4 is good, with pupils making an increasing use of the digital camera, which helps to support their confidence. Pupils use word-processing skills to write articles for a school newspaper, and for data handling in mathematics, personal achievement records in science, and work experience. They have interactive research skills using a CD-ROM's encyclopaedia for project work, and know how to access the Internet. Pupils show a good understanding of Windows-based software, and save and retrieve their work. As yet, access within the classroom for the senior pupils to the Internet is limited. Access to information technology at the local college of further education during link courses reinforces pupils' work in school.

98. Pupils' attitude to learning is good across the school. They are keen to use the computers, and the school's aim of using computers to motivate pupils is well justified. Behaviour is always good, with pupils respecting and valuing the equipment. Pupils begin to have good opportunities to work together and share computers well. The new equipment has been well received by pupils, and they are keen to try out and explore different aspects of the software they are offered. Pupils, especially the senior pupils, value the opportunity to be able to present their work in a word-processed format and are proud of their achievements.

99. Teaching across the school is good, with teachers responding well to the increased resource base. Individual teaching skills are constantly being updated by both formal and informal training, but this increase in skills is not fully reflected in all subjects. There is some notably good use of information technology in the senior department within subjects, namely art and science, and in the Youth Award Scheme. Teachers in the junior department make good use of computers in literacy and numeracy hours. They are increasing their knowledge of the use of the software and machines, and take care to ensure that the use of computers is relevant.

100. Co-ordination of the subject is good, with clear and supportive leadership. The draft policy is well set out and reflects the demands of the National Curriculum. Reference to new national initiatives is good and the school is proactive in seeking new funds and embracing recent relevant developments in the subject. There is as yet no written Internet management strategy in place, to supplement the current understanding. The co-ordinator has satisfactory management time to undertake the role. There is good in-service support, and internal monitoring of what is delivered in the curriculum.

101. Resources are continually reviewed and there has been recent successful bidding for extra resources from the National Grid for Learning and other sources. This extra money has been well spent in the development of greater access for all pupils through networking across the school, but this has yet to reach the classroom base of the senior pupils. New computers are now in place in each classroom. There is a very good understanding of software. The school has two excellent new information technology suites. Staff and pupils alike value the very good resources available. Computers are used well at lunch-times by pupils, in a computer club and in classrooms.

106. Religious education

102. Overall, progress is satisfactory. It is always at least satisfactory, and in Key Stage 3 it is good. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, but scrutiny of teachers' planning and records, evidence from photographs, and pupils' attitudes support this judgement. At Key Stage 2, pupils show that they understand why some things are 'special' and recognise the significance of, and can name, special artefacts and places. For example, they know the importance of Mecca, mosques and prayer mats to Muslims. They can name the Hindu gods and recognise Hindu images of 'god'. At Key Stage 3, pupils demonstrate understanding of emotions expressed through music. They know the Christian creation story and can relate it to other ideas of creation. They recognise significant beliefs, personalities and artefacts of the Sikh faith and can discuss different beliefs and ideas about 'god'. At Key Stage 4, pupils understand and discuss concepts of justice and equality and recognise the characteristics of prejudice.

103.Overall, pupils' response is good. Pupils generally listen attentively to teachers, are interested, and become fully involved in the lesson. They are keen to answer questions and demonstrate their understanding. Older pupils sustain better concentration. Pupils listen to each other's answers politely, showing good skills in speaking and listening, and demonstrate a growing independence of thought. Older pupils complete written work in a competent manner.

104.Teaching is always at least satisfactory, sometimes good, and occasionally very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Planning is generally effective, with the main points of the lesson clearly specified, though little use is made of day-to-day assessment. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and generally pupils are able to meet them. Teachers usually manage behaviour well and all have a good relationship with pupils, allowing them to express their opinions and treating their views with respect. In all lessons there is a realistic balance between oral, written and reviewed work. A good feature of teaching in a number of classes is the very good use of the learning support assistants to record small increases in knowledge and understanding or improvements in behaviour.

105.The previous report indicated that the subject did not meet statutory requirements and that improvements in the provision for religious education were needed. These are now in place, and more development is planned. A scheme of work is being used which provides relevance and ensures that pupils make progress between all key stages. The co-ordinator has plans to revise this in line with the recently published locally agreed syllabus. Systematic monitoring of the curriculum and teaching in this subject is not yet fully established, but a good start has been made and the co-ordinator is aware of the shortcomings. Resources are satisfactory and include a wide range of artefacts.

110.

110. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

110. Art

106.Pupils make good progress over time in all key stages. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 but evidence from pupils' work and teachers' notes shows good progress. Pupils' progress in lessons at Key Stage 2 is good. At Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils make very good progress.

107.By the end of Key Stage 1 progress is good. Pupils' work shows that they develop a good awareness of colour. They begin to match colours and use brushes and finger paints more accurately. Most pupils can make prints from tiles on which they have drawn and cut out designs. They choose colours carefully and begin to explore texture shape and form. As part of their water topic, pupils make collages in two dimensions and models of fish tanks, using salt dough and papier maché.

108.By the end of Key Stage 2 progress remains good. Higher attaining pupils pay more attention to detail in pictures and models. They have a growing understanding of pattern and shape and begin to evaluate their work carefully. Pupils make clay models of small creatures seen in the school grounds. They observe the detailed markings and features of their chosen

beetle, spider, or dragon-fly and use a variety of tools and techniques to reproduce it. Some pupils work independently, successfully replicating quite intricate patterns by using brushes and pipe cleaners. With some support, pupils make two-dimensional models of riverbanks or landscapes from card, tissue paper and glue.

109. By the end of Key Stage 3, progress is very good. Most pupils recognise how light and shade contributes to the composition of pictures and paintings, and use this knowledge in developing observational drawing skills. Higher attaining pupils show skill in techniques such as smudging and blending with pencils and charcoal in their still life and pattern drawings. Pupils learn to draw and paint from the work of artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. Pupils have a good awareness of colours, patterns and texture and can mix and apply them in the style of well-known artists, with satisfactory results. They use similar colours and produce shapes and textures which echo those of the originals. Pupils begin to research designs for the cover of the Radio Times as part of work in graphic design, exploring several different forms of lettering, including calligraphy, and computer-generated fonts. With textiles, they make soft sculpture heads showing good facial expression. Pupils become increasingly confident in selecting and using materials. Higher attaining pupils begin to develop good skills of visual analysis and understand the vocabulary of visual language. For example, they can explain terms like *medium*, *texture* and *form* clearly and accurately. Younger pupils in Year 7 develop and reinforce their drawing and painting skills. Pupils in Year 9 transfer skills learnt earlier in the key stage to building up structures and textures to produce three-dimensional forms. They make good progress in understanding the work of other artists and the technical elements of art such as line, tone and colour. They begin to use notebooks to record their designs and to research and experiment with techniques for future projects.

110. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils' progress is very good and they use a wider range of resources, materials and skills to show images in two and three dimensions. Year 10 pupils research different artists' techniques for producing portraits. Following the work of the artist Hockney, they produce their own photomontage, showing a good understanding of the technique and great attention to detail. Year 11 pupils create portraits showing facial features in good detail and in proportion. They understand and can use papier maché successfully to produce three-dimensional heads and masks, which show recognisable features and expressions. For example, pupils use papier maché, paint and glaze to make African masks. Pupils use notebooks to experiment with new techniques and designs, to research projects and to record their progress. Higher attaining pupils prepare portfolios for GCSE examinations, gaining grades comparable with those of other pupils of their age. Pupils apply previous learning to their work and build on it, working on their ideas and using techniques that become increasingly more complex. Pupils have a growing understanding of the way colour and images are used by industry to sell products. They also recognise the associations colour has with different emotions and age groups. They make very good progress in seeking out, combining and developing imagery. Higher attaining pupils develop exciting and imaginative projects for their examination coursework.

111. Pupils, at all key stages, enjoy art. They are proud of their work and excited by learning new skills. They follow instructions and demonstrations of techniques closely, and use their creativity and imagination to practise these skills. Pupils use to good effect the stimuli provided by visits and visual resources, including the work of well-known artists. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 show excitement and a sense of discovery when they start a new project. Higher attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4 have a growing ability to

work independently and they establish sound work habits. For example, in completing their portfolios for GCSE most Year 10 and 11 pupils know exactly what they want to achieve. They use their notebooks well, get out their folders, and start work immediately. They are pleased with their finished pieces and can clearly explain their projects. Higher attaining pupils use words such as *line*, *tone* and *texture* effectively.

112.No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2, and very good at Key Stage 3 and 4. A few lessons were satisfactory. Where teaching is very good, teachers have very good subject knowledge, a clear demonstration of technique, and a good balance of praise and challenge. These teachers have high expectations and lessons are run at a brisk pace. They use visual imagery and objects of reference to ensure that all pupils understand precisely what is meant. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to experiment and evaluate their work. Generally, teachers have clear objectives and ensure that pupils understand exactly what they have to do. Very good use is made of learning support assistants. Good relationships and the use of humour help to motivate pupils and help them make progress. Where teaching is satisfactory, despite careful direct teaching of new techniques, there are some missed opportunities for assessment and individual evaluation of pupils' work. The subject specialist teacher teaches Key Stage 3 and 4, with highly successful results, and pupils consistently make very good progress.

113.Since the last inspection pupils are making better progress, and teaching and standards in the subject have improved. More pupils at Key Stage 4 are taking the GCSE examination and the results are in line with national expectations. Overall, The subject is very well organised and effectively led. The policy document and scheme of work are now in place and provide good coverage to achieve a balance of activities and materials. Assessment is generally good and draws from a range of evidence over time, including pupils' folders and portfolios. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The accommodation is well organised and reasonably sized. However, it is shared with another subject, which is unsatisfactory. There are good resources to cover the National Curriculum and to allow for the use of a variety of genres, styles and cultures. The school welcomes visiting artists and their work is displayed alongside that of pupils around the school. Pupils make frequent visits to galleries and exhibitions.

118. **Design and technology**

114.Pupils make good progress in design and technology throughout the school. It is evident from pupils' work that is displayed that pupils build steadily upon their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils in the junior department make push-and-pull puppets, and a jack-in-the-box. Pupils in the senior department make wind -powered boats designed to carry an egg across the local pond, and brightly coloured boxes for storing audio-tapes. Pupils are beginning to understand that a good product needs a good design.

115.At Key Stage 1 and 2, progress is good. Pupils construct a paper face that has moving parts to change its expression. They make a model of an adventure playground with construction straws. They use quick-drying clay to sculpt mini-beasts. In food technology they make, and consume, mouth-watering cup-cakes. At Key Stage 3 and 4, progress is good. Pupils design and make earrings and key tags in acrylic. They construct a simple shelter

inspired by news items from Kosovo. In food technology, pupils enjoy making healthy sandwiches, smooth textured '*melting moments*', fruit salad and pizza. In preparation for national examinations, pupils in Years 10 and 11 design and make a simple switched circuit, and work in wood and plastic to make pencil cases and storage shelves.

116. Pupils' response to design and technology is good and sometimes very good. They are fascinated by the properties of different materials and enjoy experimenting, both with food and resistant materials. They become steadily more aware that they can influence the end-product by careful design. They enjoy the practical nature of the subject. They are proud of their work, and are very pleased to show and explain it to visitors. They work well together, take their turn, and show interest and appreciation of the work of others.

117. The quality of the teaching is always at least good and sometimes very good. Lessons are well planned and structured. Teaching has a sharp focus and is well planned so that the pupils are clear about what they have to do. Work is carefully assessed so that skills can be developed in sequence. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work. Safety aspects are emphasised. Management of pupils is relaxed, and good use is made of humour. This helps pupils to feel confident and that it is acceptable to learn from their mistakes. All teachers have good subject knowledge and understand well the way in which pupils learn. Pupils are expected to work hard and to produce their best work. Relationships are good, open and friendly. Senior pupils are treated with respect, which has a positive effect on their self-esteem.

118. Two teachers who are new to the school manage the subject very well between them. The accommodation for technology is not yet adequate, a fact which was mentioned in the last report. Many inadequacies have been overcome by hard work and additional resources. The technology room has been greatly improved in recent months and further improvements in accommodation and in equipment are planned. This will enable full delivery of the National Curriculum at each key stage, which is not possible at the moment. However, pupils have gained Certificates of Achievement (Northern Examination and Assessment Board) in Food Technology since 1997, and are entered for the equivalent public examination in Design and Technology this academic year. There is a good scheme of work for Key Stages 3 and 4, which if extended to Key Stages 1 and 2 would improve continuity in learning and make the acquisition of key skills more secure.

123. **Geography**

119. The progress that pupils make in geography is good. In Key Stage 2, pupils show an understanding of road safety procedures. They understand that objects may be represented by symbols and begin to grasp the purpose of maps. Older pupils have simple knowledge of the water cycle and name the beginning and end of a river as the source and mouth. They can compare different styles of houses in Kenya and make reasonable attempts to describe the likely climate in which they are situated. At Key Stage 3, some pupils are able to use four-figure coordinate map grid-references to locate a place. At Key Stage 4, pupils name all eleven National Parks in the United Kingdom and distinguish between upland and lowland areas on maps. As part of their studies for the Certificate of Achievement in geography, they can suggest, with some support, some of the disadvantages of the geographical position of the National Parks to people wishing to visit them.

120. Pupils' response is nearly always good. In Key Stage 4 it is very good. Pupils are generally well motivated and can sustain concentration and interest. They are attentive whilst watching a course-work video programme and answer questions on it appropriately. They undertake collaborative work well. Pupils have a good relationship with their teachers and show respect and courtesy. A good feature is the ability of pupils to ignore a disturbance in their classroom and continue with their work.

121. Teaching is good. Teachers show confidence in managing the class and enthusiasm for the subject. Individual lesson planning is usually detailed, sometimes with clear aims for the lesson and what pupils need to learn. Lessons are generally matched well to the pupils' abilities with a variety of activities, although there is often an insufficient range of ways in which pupils may record their knowledge and understanding. Good questioning enables pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding orally, and in some classes good use of learning support assistants is made to record pupils' answers.

129 The co-ordinator is new to the post this term, so management of the subject is in a transitional stage. An appropriate policy and scheme of work is, however, in place and the curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements. Some pupils entered for the Certificate of Achievement have gained passes and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

126. **History**

122. History was observed in Key Stage 3 only. Within the junior department it is taught within a topic-based approach whose focus for this term is geography at Key Stages 1 and 2. History is not taught at Key Stage 4. Overall, the progress that pupils make in history is satisfactory. At Key Stages 1 and 2 this judgement is based upon the evaluation of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, teachers' planning and teachers' records and the very effective display of pupils' work on the ancient Greeks. At Key Stage 3 pupils are able to discuss what life was like in mediaeval Britain, particularly with regard to homes and clothes. They know the symbols of the four countries that make up the United Kingdom and are able to suggest some of the methods which the kings and queens of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries might have used to unite the kingdom. Pupils' response is satisfactory. Most can sustain concentration and interest for an acceptable time, though there is a noticeable decline towards the end of a double period. Pupils have a good relationship with their teachers. In discussions, pupils show an interest in the subject and are pleased to demonstrate their knowledge.

123. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and plan lessons well. A variety of teaching methods is used, including good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. However, there is an over-dependence on worksheets where answers take the form of one word or short phrase to complete a sentence. This tends to inhibit the progress of higher attaining pupils from doing independent work, using extended writing and does not reinforce their presentation skills. A relevant curriculum is in place, and since the last inspection a policy and scheme of work has been developed that ensures suitable progressive development of knowledge and ideas. Some oral assessment is used in the lessons, but assessment is not yet an integral part of the scheme of work. The

subject has good resources, including a range of supportive books in the library.

128. Modern foreign language (French)

124. Since the last report, the subject has gone from strength to strength. Although pupils' attainment is below national expectations, at Key Stage 3 it is far closer to national averages than would normally be seen in a school of this type. At Key Stage 4, pupils are now entered for the (Northern Examination and Assessment Board) Certificate of Achievement and so leave school with a nationally recognised qualification.

125. Pupils' progress is very good. At Key Stage 3, they participate in structured role-plays, in front of an audience, exchanging six or seven phrases without prompting. They are able to use French to discuss preferences, and ask for and give directions. They recall familiar words and phrases and learn new vocabulary rapidly. They can also read and understand short phrases and are able to use bilingual dictionaries and glossaries to look up new words. Although their skills in speaking, listening, reading and responding are better developed than their writing skills, they are able to respond to questions and statements, and write briefly on familiar topics. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 4, but pupils' work in class and for their Certificate of Achievement indicates that they develop good vocabulary, begin to apply it more independently, are able to use word-processing skills to write extended letters and lists, and make good progress.

126. Pupils' response in lessons is also very good. They are highly enthusiastic but with sufficient self-discipline to listen attentively to the teacher and each other. All pupils are keen to volunteer to provide answers and to role-play in front of an audience. They persevere, overcome self-consciousness of speaking in a different language and have the confidence to make mistakes and learn from these mistakes. Pupils support each other when working in pairs. They can also work independently of the teacher when asked to do so.

127. Teaching is excellent. It is conducted in French and is characterised by enthusiasm, well-timed lessons and the expectation that everyone can and will succeed in speaking French and enjoy doing so. Lessons are extremely well planned, with pupils constantly revising existing vocabulary and acquiring new words and phrases. Props, displays and drawings are used to support pupils' understanding. Regular use of role-play provides a practical context for speaking French. Pupils are exceptionally well managed. Those with less confidence are skillfully enlisted and supported.

128. The subject is very well managed. Short, medium and long term plans reveal a thorough understanding of the subject, the needs of the pupils, and the possibilities for development. Facilities and resources are good, with good use made of relevant information technology programs. The gain in pupils' self-confidence, the regular exchange visits, and the continuing communication with French schools, ensure that the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development and cultural understanding.

133. Music

129. At the time of the last report, pupils' progress in music was good. Pupils' overall progress in the subject is now very good, although it is better in the junior department than in the senior department. At Key Stage 1, progress is very good as pupils develop basic musical skills. Although no lessons were seen at Key Stage 1, subject records and tapes of pupils' work reveal that they treat instruments with care, start and stop playing at an appropriate time, and are able to play loudly and softly, slowly and quickly as required. These skills are sustained and progress remains very good at Key Stage 2, where pupils understand the importance of dynamics and rhythm. They can understand and read notations of musical patterns. They perform as part of an ensemble, following musical patterns by ear or by notation. They are able to identify differences in the instruments and music that they hear.

130. At Key Stage 3, progress is good. Pupils are able to select appropriate instruments and produce soundtracks that create different moods. They have a basic understanding of music from different cultures, whether Elizabethan England or India, and of different forms, whether nineteenth century classical music or the 'blues'. They use technical vocabulary well, using terms such as 'dynamics' and 'pitch' with confidence and accuracy. When working in groups, they use the rehearsal process to refine and rework and improve the music they compose. As they progress up the school, their singing goes from strength to strength: pupils sing well with each other, with confidence and, by and large, in tune. The school choir performs very well and pupils greatly enjoy taking part.

131. Pupils' response is generally very good. They treat instruments with respect and care. They settle quickly, concentrate well and, although keen to perform they are also able to wait their turn and work as part of the whole group. Some can work independently of the teacher.

132. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching is very good, and at Key Stage 3 it is good. Teaching is characterised by very good subject knowledge and a challenging curriculum that has been thoughtfully developed to meet both National Curriculum requirements and the needs of the pupils. Enthusiasm for making music is communicated to pupils by teachers. There are clear explanations of not just what the task will be, but why. There is skilful use of questioning to check knowledge and understanding and a good balance of whole group and small group work. Teaching at Key Stage 3, is made difficult by a room that is too small for some of the large groups. The use of learning support assistants and the planning of different tasks for pupils of different ability could be further improved.

133. The subject is well managed. The range of instruments and other resources is good. A new music room has been created since the previous inspection. Unfortunately, this room is too small for older pupils to move around when necessary and is unsuitable for an appropriate range of activities. The central role that music plays in the school community is demonstrated by the fact that more than half the pupils participate in the school choir on a regular basis. The subject makes a major contribution to pupils' social development because of the self-confidence that pupils derive from making music and the opportunities to sing together and perform outside school that the school choir offers.

138. Physical education

134. Progress is good at Key Stage 1. In swimming, pupils show confidence in entering the water and moving around the pool. Most do not need buoyancy support and a few swim several metres. By the end of Key Stage 2, progress remains good. Pupils show agility, dexterity and balance, using imaginative ways of moving across a bench or mat. Pupils understand what is expected, work hard to achieve tasks they are set, and develop body awareness and specific skills, such as being able to 'mirror' the movement of their partner.

135. At Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils participate successfully in a variety of team games. By the end of Key Stage 3 progress is good, and this increases to very good by the end of Key Stage 4. Higher attaining pupils understand and play to the rules very well and demonstrate this in their practising. They show awareness of positional play in soccer, netball and basketball, and know how to refine their skills of ball control, tackling, passing, and shooting. They make very good preparations for team fixtures against other schools. Lower attaining pupils also take part in team activities successfully and learn how to co-operate with one another. They know how to use a local leisure and sports centre, where they successfully take part in badminton, weight training and other activities.

136. Pupils work hard and with enthusiasm, and are motivated by challenging teaching to improve their skills and to succeed. Behaviour is generally good and often excellent. Occasional lapses of concentration from a minority, and some boisterousness, does not detract from the very good response overall. Relationships are very good and pupils work and co-operate successfully with partners, in groups, and in teams.

137. Teaching is good overall. It is often very good and most effective at Key Stages 3 and 4, where teachers have very good knowledge of the subject and an enthusiastic approach. These qualities, and a range of activities closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities, help to stimulate and challenge pupils. An example was seen during a lesson on soccer skills at Key Stage 3 and 4. This had very good planning and very good explanations of specific skills the pupils needed to learn. Good use was made of pupils demonstrating their knowledge to each other, and there was a wide range of agility and ball skill exercises to refine pupils' competence. This was followed by a very good team game organised to emphasise those skills in match conditions. Each pupil was challenged, involved and motivated by the teacher's detailed subject knowledge, with high expectations of pupils' participation and performance. The teaching which is not as strong has only outline planning and a less confident approach.

138. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator gives good support to other teachers of the subject across the school, and sets a very good example of teaching. The curriculum has been strengthened since the previous inspection by the introduction of detailed schemes of work and by the information gained from good assessment procedures, and is now very good. All areas of the National Curriculum are now covered in a well-balanced programme that suitably includes team games, gymnastics, athletics, dance, swimming, and a particularly strong element of outdoor and adventurous activities. The curriculum is further extended by a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities and by fixtures with other special schools and with a few mainstream schools. Resources are satisfactory and outdoor facilities are good. Very sensible use is made of provision within the local community and at other schools to provide swimming and leisure-sports facilities.

Personal and Social Education (PSE)

139. Progress is good at Key Stages 1, 2, and 3. It is very good at Key Stage 4, where there is specialist teaching for careers and citizenship and pupils have access to the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network) Youth Award Scheme. Pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage in their life and take full advantage of good transitional plans, very good careers education, and careers advice.

140. Pupils respond extremely well to the very good lessons and quickly develop good social skills. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all good during lessons. Parents, other professionals at the school, and visitors all comment on pupils' politeness, good manners, and consideration for others. Pupils are given the sole responsibility for showing visitors around the school. They do this very confidently and successfully, showing great pride in their school.

141. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 and is very good at Key Stage 4. Teachers have excellent awareness of needs of pupils and excellent relationships. Teaching very skilfully emphasises the importance of self-dependency and personal safety, taking care to build self-esteem and confidence. There is close teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants, particularly in the autistic classes. There is also very good team teaching for careers lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' participation, effort and behaviour. Personal, social and health education is taught well across a very good range of activities, including: assemblies which celebrate and share achievement; sporting activities; the school council; residential experiences; visits and trips; outdoor education programme; links with the local community; work experience; taster courses at local colleges and secondary schools (sixth forms); work-related projects; and community projects.

142. There is a good policy document and schemes of work. These are clearly linked to the school's aims and to the National Curriculum, and also make reference to other school policies. Some work remains to be done to achieve a comprehensive whole school approach. Personal, social and health education is appropriately considered by staff to be a major curriculum area in the school and is rightly given a high profile. Planning accurately reflects the needs of pupils, particularly in respect of forming relationships, developing independence and social skills and improving self-esteem. There is no permanent co-ordinator but the deputy head teacher satisfactorily fulfils this role at present. There are sound personal, social and health education targets set in individual education plans, and good assessment is made of pupils' achievements.

147. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

147. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

143. The inspection was undertaken by a Registered Inspector, five team inspectors and a lay inspector, between 20th and 24th September 1999. A preliminary visit was made to the school by the Registered Inspector to meet pupils, staff and governors. A meeting for parents was held and their views recorded. Parents' responses to questionnaires were analysed. Prior to the inspection, inspectors read a wide range of well presented and detailed documentation provided by the school. This included policies, the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents, staff and governors' handbooks, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors held discussions with the head teacher and staff, governors, parents, other professionals and pupils. Inspectors attended a meeting of the school council. Swimming and physical education lessons at off-site venues were observed. All teachers were observed teaching. One hundred and twenty-five lessons or parts of lessons were observed and all subjects inspected. Pupils' work was scrutinised, together with a sample of pupils' statements, annual reviews, reports and individual education plans, as well as various other pupil records. Many other observations were recorded, including those made during mealtimes, break-times, lunch clubs, and the arrival and departure of pupils. Accommodation and resources were inspected.

149. DATA AND INDICATORS

149. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Special school	157	157	157	52

149. Teachers and classes

149. Qualified teachers

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	18.20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	8.6

149. Education support staff

Total number of education support staff:	31
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	695

149. Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	1101444.00
Total Expenditure	1083045.00
Expenditure per pupil	6854.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	31444.00
Balance carried forward to next year	49843.00

149. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

157

Number of questionnaires returned:

88

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	37.5	53.4	5.7	2.3	1.1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	57.5	34.5	3.4	4.6	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	35.8	46.9	11.1	4.9	1.2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	38.6	53.4	3.4	3.4	1.1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	48.9	44.3	3.4	2.3	1.1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	41.4	47.1	6.9	3.4	1.1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	41.4	47.1	10.3	0	1.1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	28.2	44.7	17.6	5.9	3.5
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	35.2	46.6	9.1	5.7	3.4
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	45.5	39.8	9.1	2.3	3.4
My child(ren) like(s) school	64.8	26.1	3.4	4.5	1.1