

INSPECTION REPORT

MOORBROOK SCHOOL

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119866

Head teacher: P Wright

Reporting inspector: M H Whitaker
1424

Dates of inspection: 17th-19th June 2002

Inspection number: 196943

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ainslie Road Fulwood Preston
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	K Tallboys
Date of previous inspection:	November 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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1424	M Whitaker	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it?
			Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
13462	R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22466	D Pearson	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Design and technology	
			Modern foreign language	
			English as an additional language	
23549	H Eadington	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Geography	
			History	
			Music	
			Equal opportunities	
1769	M Holohan	Team inspector	Science	
			Information and communication technology	
			Art and design	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moorbrook School is a community, day special school for boys and girls aged 11-16 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As well as their emotional and behavioural difficulties most pupils have additional special educational needs. There are currently 40 pupils on the roll of the school although only two are girls. At the time of the inspection Year 11 pupils were not in school because they were taking public examinations. All but one of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs; one pupil has been placed in the school on a part-time basis for assessment purposes. When they enter the school in Year 7 their attainment is below that expected for their age either because of the disruption to their education caused by their behaviour or because of their learning difficulties. The vast majority of pupils are of white United Kingdom origin and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils come from a wide geographical area within Lancashire and a high percentage is eligible for free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Moorbrook is a much improved school. Pupils make very good progress in science and good progress in English, mathematics and personal and social education. This is the result of good and very good teaching in these subjects and the high priority the school has, rightly, given to them. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects. The leadership and management of the school are now very good and it is very well placed to continue its improvement. The costs of the school are relatively high but it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Ensures that pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, and personal and social education. They make very good progress in science. Teaching in these areas is always at least good and often very good.
- Develops positive attitudes amongst pupils by creating a climate where high standards and effort are recognised and rewarded. Provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good. It is very good for their cultural development.
- Provides a good range of learning opportunities, including vocational and work-related opportunities and a successful inclusion programme.
- Has very good links with the community and with other schools and the local college. Relationships with parents are good and they think highly of the school.
- Is very well led and managed by the head teacher, very well supported by the deputy head teacher and governors.
- Ensures that non-teaching staff is a valued and effective part of the team.

What could be improved

- Long term planning in the non-core subjects to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is devoted to different aspects of the subjects and that pupils are able to build on their learning as they move through the school.
- Clarity of the respective roles of subject and key stage co-ordinators in monitoring the curriculum.
- The role of non-core subject co-ordinators in identifying the development needs of the subjects.
- Planned opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibilities for aspects of their learning in lessons.
- The sharpness of the targets in individual education plans and the use of these in lessons to ensure that work is well matched to the diverse needs of pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the school was last inspected in November 1999. This has built on the significant improvements made following the school being placed in special measures at the time of its first inspection in 1996. After a slow start, rapid progress has been made since January 1999. The then newly appointed head teacher has played a very important part in this, well supported by the staff, governors and local education authority. The most important change has been a shift in the ethos of the school where greater emphasis has been placed on learning and raising standards as a means of managing the difficult behaviour. This ethos is shared by all associated with the school and has led to, not only higher standards, but also better behaviour. Although pupils can misbehave the prevailing ethos is evident throughout the school. Everyone is now proud to be associated with it. There have been specific improvements in relation to the issues identified in the last report but it will take time for them to become fully embedded. As much progress as could be reasonably expected has been made and the school is very well placed to continue its improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

At the end of Year 11 all pupils attained at least one GCSE at levels A-G in 2001. Results were better than the average achieved by similar schools. Targets set for 2002 are challenging and are likely to be reached. Regardless of their attainment, compared with pupils in similar schools all pupils make good progress and achieve well in most aspects of English, mathematics and personal, social and health education; they make very good progress in science. This is the result of the high quality of teaching and the priority afforded to these subjects in recent years. It represents significant improvement. In the other subjects pupils make satisfactory progress overall although it is less secure in aspects of some subjects, for example in music and some aspects of art and design. This is because insufficient time is devoted to them or because long-term planning is not well enough developed to ensure that pupils can build on their learning as they move through the school. Achievement and progress are good in history and geography because of the quality of planning in these subjects. Pupils generally make good progress in relation to their personal targets, although when these are academic targets they are not always clear enough to evaluate progress accurately.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The majority of pupils have much improved attitudes to school. In the main they concentrate on their work and try hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is now generally good. Pupils can misbehave but this is managed well by staff. There has been a significant reduction in pupils being out of class and this clearly has a positive impact on their progress and learning. Pupils behave well when involved in the community and in mainstream schools.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Relationships are good. Opportunities for promoting personal development and initiative are sometimes missed in lessons.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is better than the average for similar schools. Unauthorised absence is still too high but the school is tackling this.

The attitude to school of the vast majority of pupils is good. This is a major factor in the improvement of the school. There is now a strong commitment to learning and as a result pupils concentrate in most lessons and work hard. Because of the earlier need to change the attitude of pupils towards learning teachers are sometimes too concerned with managing and anticipating inappropriate behaviour. Opportunities for allowing pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their learning are sometimes missed as a result.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	-	-	Satisfactory	-

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good and often very good in English, mathematics and science where largely specialist teachers have a very positive impact on the progress pupils make. It is also good in personal, social and health education. In the most effective lessons teachers have a clear understanding of what they want the pupils to learn and they share this with them so that they are able to assess their own learning. There is an expectation that pupils will behave appropriately and they are given opportunities to work together, sharing ideas and developing their personal skills. In some lessons these opportunities are missed because teachers are over anxious that pupils might misbehave. This sometimes reduces the amount of progress pupils can make. Similarly, when teachers are confident they use a wider range of resources and teaching methods and this has a positive impact on learning. Relationships are a strong feature of the teaching. The support staff play an important role in the teaching and teamwork is a real strength.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Although there is some imbalance in the attention given to some aspects of subjects, for example art and design and music, pupils receive a broad and relevant curriculum. The opportunities for pupils are enhanced through the very good links with other schools and with the community.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils has made a significant contribution to changing the character of the school. The provision for cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures in relation to monitoring personal development and behaviour are good. Those for monitoring academic progress and attendance, although satisfactory, are less well developed.

Although there is some imbalance in the curriculum, pupils receive good learning opportunities because of the additional activities it provides. These include opportunities to be included in other schools and in college and very good links with the community. Parents regard the school highly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher, very well supported by the deputy head teacher has led the school very effectively from a very difficult position. The role of subject leaders is developing well, although some are at a more advanced stage than others.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its role well. It has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has established effective strategies for supporting and evaluating the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has worked very hard to develop systems to evaluate its work and take effective action to raise standards and improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff in particular are very effectively used to raise standards. The finance available to the school is used well.

The school has a good level and range of staff available. It has been successful in developing and nurturing support staff to fulfil important roles. Accommodation is now good following refurbishment. The school effectively monitors its expenditure and evaluates its performance in relation to similar schools. As a result, it applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the progress children make• the quality of teaching and the high expectations teachers have• the information they receive• the school is approachable and supportive• the partnership they have with the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the behaviour of some pupils• the amount of homework provided• the responsibilities given to pupils

The inspectors largely agree with the positive views of the parents; progress and teaching are good in the core subjects and in personal, health and social education (PSHE). They receive good quality information which enables them to be effective partners in the education of their children and the school is very supportive of them. Although some pupils can misbehave, the behaviour is generally good. Pupils could be given greater responsibilities. The school provides a similar amount of homework to other schools of this type; it could be developed further.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Pupils of all ages achieve well and make good progress in English, mathematics and PHSE. They make very good progress in science. This represents significant improvement since the last inspection and is because of good and very good teaching in these subjects and the very effective leadership and management of the school. In most other subjects achievement and progress are satisfactory. They are good in history and geography because of the quality of planning in these subjects. The school has rightly focused its attention on raising attainment in the core subjects and in relation to pupils' individual objectives, where progress is also good. All pupils enter the school attaining standards below those normally expected for their ages either because of their behavioural problems or because of learning difficulties. It is inappropriate to compare their attainment overall with national averages. However, by the end of Year 11 pupils achieved better results than the average for similar types of schools in GCSE examinations. All pupils achieved at least one success at level A-G.

2 In speaking and listening pupils of all ages make good progress. In drama for example, pupils listen carefully to each other and think of ways to work together. They use their imagination well and develop better ways of expressing their ideas. Good relationships are also promoted by this where they develop a greater clarity to share ideas and value the thoughts of others.

3 Although reading levels are low pupils make good and, some, very good progress during their time in school. This again is the result of good or very good teaching enabling pupils to achieve well often from a very low starting point. School records and assessment information demonstrate progress for all pupils.

4 Progress in writing is less secure, although satisfactory because pupils feel less confident in this area. A good emphasis is placed on grammar and spelling enabling pupils to make progress and become more confident, for example in writing answers on the board. Most pupils develop a good working knowledge of punctuation, which they use to greater effect as they get older.

5 Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics as a result of the often very good teaching. By the age of 14 pupils have made good progress in using the four rules of number; they understand place value and can convert percentages to fractions. They understand mathematical vocabulary and are able to present data in a range of ways. As a result of teaching which encourages them to "have a go" they develop confidence and independent learning skills. These skills develop between 14 and 16 as pupils follow accredited courses and they become particularly confident in handling data and problem solving.

6 Achievement and progress in science are very good. By the age of 14 pupils are able to analyse scientific evidence as well as create and test hypotheses. They apply these skills in practical investigations such as creating a formula to calculate average speed having timed themselves running over a fixed distance. They develop good observational skills and have a good scientific vocabulary. By the age of 16 they have developed good independent learning skills which they apply well in accredited course work.

7 Progress in information and communication technology is satisfactory and has accelerated because of the improvement in resources and the appointment of a specialist teacher. The introduction of a structured and clearly planned curriculum has added to this acceleration.

8 Progress and achievement in most other subjects of the curriculum, including religious education are satisfactory. They are good in history and geography. There is an imbalance in the time devoted to some aspects of some subjects, for instance art and design, music and design and technology. This results in better progress in some aspects of the subjects, where teachers have traditionally felt stronger and more confident, than in others where less time has been devoted. The school has recognised the effect of this on achievement and is now planning to tackle it.

9 Good progress is made in relation to pupils' individual targets, although they are often insufficiently specific when referring to academic development. Progress is good in personal, social and health education.

10 Overall standards have improved well since the last inspection and a clear upward trend is evident, particularly in the core subjects and in PSHE and individual targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11 Pupils' attitudes to school are good. The majority of pupils have much improved attitudes to school and in the main they concentrate on their work and try hard. They are enthusiastic communicators in lessons where they know that their contributions will be welcomed. For example in an English lesson where pupils had to write two paragraphs about their emotions on being caught up in a shipwreck, pupils were spilling over with different ideas and displayed a real sense of drama in their ideas. In a science lesson where pupils had to classify the properties of solid and liquid materials, pupils were very willing to contribute and solve awkward questions over for example whether ice was a solid or a liquid because 'when it's frozen ice doesn't take the shape of the container, but when it melts, it does!'

12 Pupils enjoy practical activities in lessons. For example in a food technology lesson where the tasks of making a cake mixture into buns was relished, but the writing up tasks approached with less enthusiasm, and in a lesson making pizzas, where again the practical activity was enjoyed, but pupils became restless when asked to write up their activity. Where pupils feel they have a good knowledge of a situation they are very eager to join in discussions. For example in a lesson discussing the effects of the drug nicotine, pupils were very articulate on their views of the effect of smoking on themselves, their families and people they knew. They voiced their feelings passionately, and were able to respect the point of view of their classmates, even when they were different. Pupils are willing to have a go. For example in a lesson judging measurements in the context of real life situations, most pupils wanted to take part and were proud of their success. They can come up with individual ideas. For example during poetry work on 'The wreck of the Hesperus' pupils could offer their own suggestions for poetry and offer similes for words in the poem.

13 Pupils' behaviour is now generally good. Quite a number of pupils do start lesson periods with a restless, disruptive attitude. Once they become absorbed in their work however, this behaviour disappears and they enjoy their work. For example in an art and design lesson where at first a few pupils showed off, made silly remarks and could not settle, once they had started practical activities of dribbling their pattern onto cloth and following drawn patterns on their work, they were transformed into well behaved, totally focused individuals.

14 Pupils' behaviour does occasionally disrupt learning, for example in a lesson where pupils were discussing the Jewish faith, their work remained unfinished, and necessitated completion of the task as homework. When pupils do misbehave this is managed well by staff and there has been a significant reduction in pupils being out of class and this clearly has a positive impact on their progress

and learning. Pupils behave well when out in the community and in mainstream schools. There were 46 instances of fixed period exclusions in the last reported school year, but the number has reduced this year.

15 Pupils' personal development and relationships in the school are satisfactory overall. Relationships between pupils can be fragile and this can promote a difficult atmosphere in a class where it is difficult for pupils to settle to work. Pupils can be easily provoked by small matters. For example if a pupil thinks that his work is being copied by another pupil, until the matter is resolved, usually by good behavioural management techniques on the part of the staff, relationships in the class can suffer. For example, in an athletics lesson where pupils were practising javelin throwing techniques, and those of mud throwing at each other, once the issue was resolved and pupils had got past the immediate niggle with each other, they worked well for the rest of the lesson. However, most relationships between staff and pupils are good and are a key factor in the improvement in behaviour in the school. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, and there are occasions in lessons when opportunities for promoting pupils' personal development and initiative are missed. There are no opportunities for pupils to formally contribute to decisions on school, such as a school council, although pupils make good use of the school tutorial system and time to bring matters to their teachers' attention. Pupils' respond well to work experience placements, for example in a local special school where a pupil helps with pupils with profound special needs, and use these opportunities to help shape their ideas about what they want to do when they leave the school. A number of pupils have taken part in a swimathon to raise funds for children in Kenya, and have collected together practical educational resources for them such as pencils and school made alphabet letter shapes. The team enterprise members running the school's Breakfast Club take their responsibilities for providing a meal for their friends, and a profit for the team enterprise company, very seriously. Their sights have been set on raising enough money to fund a pool table, and the introduction of the breakfast club has supported the school's Healthy Eating campaign by eliminating the need for a tuck Shop at break time.

16 Attendance at school is good, especially for a school of this type. The numbers of unauthorised absences are high. A significant number of pupils are regularly unpunctual to school, but this is attributable to problems with the school transport service and traffic problems in the area. One pupil travels to school independently and his attendance is very good. There are a small number of pupils who are persistent school refusers.

17 Registration time in school is generally friendly and settled, and makes a good contribution to setting the tone for the day. The afternoon registration time is used effectively to compile points earned during lunchtime sessions, and for example to praise those pupils who have earned their maximum points for behaviour.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, in English, mathematics, science and personal social and health education it is at least good and often very good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and very good improvement from the initial inspection. As a result of the good teaching standards have improved considerably in these subjects; pupils achieve well and make good and very good progress.

19 Teachers have very good subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science which they use very effectively to promote pupils' learning. In mathematics for example where the co-ordinator is a leading mathematics teacher, the teacher's knowledge is used very well to challenge pupils of different ability by phrasing questions differently to enable all pupils to contribute. In science very good teaching knowledge is used to ensure that pupils develop a knowledge of scientific vocabulary

which gives pupils confidence and improves their performance. In English the teacher uses her knowledge well to introduce words such as onomatopoeia which is then used effectively to re-inforce the concept of syllables.

20 In these subjects teachers have high expectations. Pupils are expected to behave and to want to learn and they respond accordingly. This allows teachers to make lessons more interesting, using a wider range of teaching materials. This in turn, motivates pupils, they have positive attitudes and there is no longer a need for a 'safe' approach. Pupils develop independent learning skills, learning becomes enjoyable and pupils have fun. Where teachers are less secure a narrower range of teaching methods is employed and this sometimes reduces pupils' learning. There is an over-emphasis on managing behaviour and opportunities for independent learning and personal development are missed.

21 Support assistants make an important contribution to teaching throughout the school. In some subjects, such as physical education and PHSE they take the lead role. Relationships are very good and when two adults work together they have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.

22 Assessment is not yet used as effectively as it could be to inform teaching. The school is aware of the need to sharpen academic objectives in individual education plans so that teaching can be more closely focused and progress more easily judged.

23 Literacy and numeracy are taught well within the subjects and within the additional lessons provided but as yet are not sufficiently re-inforced throughout the curriculum.

24 Homework is used appropriately to support learning but the school acknowledges the need to develop this further as more pupils become involved in a wider range of accredited courses.

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

25 The quality and range of learning opportunities within the curriculum have improved since the last inspection particularly in mathematics. The curriculum is now broad and relevant but not yet balanced across all subjects. Good opportunities are provided to meet the interests and needs of all pupils. The core subjects of mathematics, English and science together with personal, social and health education are successfully taught. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective but requires a systematic approach across all subjects. In other subjects certain elements are not taught and these need to be developed and monitored by the curriculum co-ordinators. By the time they are 16 pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and reading, and satisfactory progress in writing skills. They make good progress in mathematics, personal and social and health education and in their personal targets set at annual reviews. Individual educational targets require a sharp focus in order to show progress in basic skills in all subjects.

26 The school's provision for PHSE is good. The school has an effective overview of how the subject is delivered to the pupils; for example recognising that some aspects of the Key Stage 3 curriculum are not suited to them due to levels of understanding and maturity, and that repetition and consolidation of PHSE for Key Stage 4 must be age appropriate. PHSE in Key Stage 3 has been formulated and is delivered by the subject co-ordinator to all classes and in Key Stage 4 incorporated in aspects of vocational education and careers guidance and citizenship. The issues of health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse are thoroughly taught. Form time, lunch time

and group time make an appropriate contribution to PHSE. Good use of the community and local environment enhance pupils' learning.

27 The school has a clear and comprehensive policy on equal opportunities and anti discriminatory rights and practices. Although the school has pupils of both sexes with a wide range of ability and many additional special educational needs (SEN), all have equal opportunities of access to the curriculum and the facilities available. There are no significant variations between the progress of boys and girls, or by different groups. Specific learning difficulties are recognised and monitored by the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO). Where appropriate pupils receive additional support for literacy and numeracy. Reports are comprehensive and targets are discussed with parents. The emphasis on academic performance rather than behavioural objectives encourages and interests pupils in learning. All pupils have individual education plans; these require more focus in order to successfully meet the diverse needs of all the pupils in all subjects.

28 There are successful links with three mainstream schools where four pupils attend for lessons in food technology, art, French and design and technology. Year 10 pupils attend Preston College for vocational experience in motor maintenance with a college instructor. The careers officer works closely with staff and pupils; a variety of work experience placements such as a garage and food outlets successfully prepare pupils for college, examinations and work. The provision of a day a week work experience is linked well to work related learning which makes a positive contribution to learning and work ethos. The local community is used very well to compliment learning for example a football tournament with local schools, a visit to a Hindu Temple, the Blue Aquarium, residential opportunities at a YMCA centre on Lake Windermere and a whole school picnic and fun day at the beach. Year 9 pupils assist a local special school with individual swimming sessions as well as a work related and community based experience at the same school. Extra-curricular clubs include library skills, fishing and football with exciting quad biking after school. Representatives from local industry, work experience placements and business partnership all support the school well and compliment the pupils on their positive attitude to work. A choice of activities on Fridays also provides pupils with time to complete missed work and homework.

29 The school makes very good use of the outside community to support the curriculum. For example the English co-ordinator arranges theatre and cinema trips which link into work being studied and participation in poetry readings in media events. Connexions, the career service provider, offers pupils opportunities for mentoring and advice on career and further education choices. The Education Business Partnership supports the school's mentoring scheme for pupils and provides a wide range of approved work experience placements for pupils. Pupils' personal development is supported by the strong vocational expertise identified by staff in the community. For example, a prison officer recently came into school to give a talk entitled, 'Prison. Me. No way' that graphically illustrated for pupils what life in a prison entails. The school has very close links to other educational establishments in the area. The school's inclusion project works hand in hand with a number of mainstream schools and is an exciting provision for the school and its pupils. College links for pupils in Year 10 and 11 provide pupils with a good range of vocational experiences.

30 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and has improved well since the last inspection. Opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development are good and those for cultural development are very good. The culture of the school is now one of valuing individuals and their efforts and seeking to achieve high standards in behaviour and work. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to school, and their behaviour, have improved well.

31 The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness and to consider their own feelings and those of others. Assemblies focus on themes such as helping others

and this is given practical expression through links with another special school whose pupils are helped during swimming lessons. Religious education lessons widen pupils' knowledge of major world faiths including Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. They begin to understand that different faiths have implications for many aspects of believers' lives. Pupils' efforts and achievements are celebrated in assemblies, and a motivating system of rewards promotes the development of self-esteem and confidence. Pupils know they are valued. They benefit from opportunities to discuss their problems with a counsellor, and begin to empathise with the difficulties of others through moments of reflection, such as the Remembrance Day silence, or by considering the suffering caused by the slave trade.

32 Provision for moral development is good and enables pupils to have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong behaviour. The school's Code is prominently displayed in classrooms, and adults are good role models of fair, courteous behaviour. The school actively encourages pupils to regulate their own actions through on-going consideration of their progress towards personal targets. When they do not achieve their goals, pupils understand where they have gone wrong, and are usually given clear guidance and support to improve. They also deepen their moral awareness when they discuss major issues such as drug abuse, abortion and euthanasia, and consider the effects these can have on individual and family life.

33 Pupils benefit from good opportunities to enhance their social skills. The inclusion project is proving very successful in enabling them to work with mainstream college and school students in lessons, sporting activities and social events. Pupils behave well during these visits and are proud of their involvement and success. The daily breakfast bar contributes positively to social development and to improving pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils talk to adults and each other in a polite and friendly manner during these sessions. They are learning to consider other people's needs and feelings and consequently older pupils help younger ones during activity sessions such as pond fishing, and others show concern for friends who experience difficulties. Residential visits and other trips into the community give pupils chances to work together and take responsibility. However, within lessons, there are insufficient planned opportunities for working cooperatively and showing initiative, and this restricts the further development of pupils' social skills. Pupils learn they can help people less fortunate than themselves, through their involvement in national appeals such as Children in Need, and by raising money to help a Kenyan village.

34 Pupils' cultural development is very good. Understanding of the life and traditions of people in other places and times is effectively promoted through many curricular areas including geography, history, literacy, religious education, art and music. Pupils develop an understanding of their own culture, past and present, and the cultures and traditions of others, including, for instance, North American Indians and people in medieval Britain. They enjoy visits to theatres, museums and poetry readings and gain experience of many forms of literature, art and music, including examples from Africa, Australia and China. All these opportunities widen pupils' understanding of how others live and express themselves.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35 The school's arrangements for the care of its pupils and to ensure their well-being are good.

36 Health and safety arrangements in the school are very well organised. The school makes good use of outside agencies to call in expertise on assessing any health and safety issues, and is auditing all areas of the curriculum to make sure that its health and safety procedures are safe. There are three trained first aiders on the staff, and very competent procedures in place to administer any medication prescribed to pupils. The school nurse has a good oversight of any health issues and is respected by staff and pupils for her advice. The recent involvement of a learning mentor for

pregnancy and parenthood, has enabled the school to be able to offer to all pupils the salutary experience of caring for a baby through the 'Baby Think It Over' project, and learn about positive parenting. The result has yet to be evaluated. Transport arrangements for pupils are generally satisfactory; however no member of staff is actually present on the road to supervise pupils getting into the taxi transport.

37 The school's procedures for raising the awareness of child protection issues and meeting the referral requirements of outside child protection agencies are satisfactory. The school has a detailed child protection policy, and procedures, that have been approved by the local education authority's child protection co-ordinator. However, training requirements for the designated persons identified in the policy, and all staff, have not yet been fully met. Information sheets that refer disciplinary and pastoral issues to the head teacher on a daily basis highlight any potential child protection issues.

38 There are secure procedures in place for if a pupil chooses to abscond from school, which include a rapid link to police and parents to let them know that a pupil is missing. These procedures date from when absconding pupils were a regular feature of the school. The school's data shows that very few pupils now choose this route out of school. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. There are sound administrative procedures for recoding messages from parents and escorts and keeping letters that explain why a pupil has been absent from school. Weekly meetings with the education welfare officer, follows up pupils whose absences or pattern of attendance is giving concern. Form tutors ring pupils' homes on the first and subsequent days of their absence from school, and transport escorts are an immediate source of information where there is no reply to their call at a pupil's home in the morning. The time that taxis arrive is monitored by a transport co-ordinator at school, and nearly all pupils' lateness to school is attributable to the late arrival of transport. However, the school registers themselves are not monitored in school and there are a number of inconsistencies in marking registers, including no registration at all for the current Year 11 who are on study leave and no marking of a pupil's attendance in another educational establishment for a considerable period of time. The school rewards pupils with good and improved attendance, and for example, the certificate that pupils gain from college for their courses, is based on attendance at the college, and not on achievement. The school is working with the small number of pupils who are persistent school refusers, to reduce their number of unauthorised absences by offering them individual timetables to attend school and improve their attendance.

39 Procedures for monitoring pupils' oppressive and challenging behaviour are generally good. Detailed records of incidents are kept and provide useful information for the subsequent analysis of any pupils' behaviour that may have led to an exclusion or sanction. The school also has a very systematic approach to analysing when pupils are out of class and uses these sources of information, frequently in conjunction with the educational psychologist, for setting individual targets for pupils' behaviour and personal development. The school has very close links to Youth Offending and police services in the community. In providing information and advice to the pupils on their own personal safety, they hope to extend pupils' views of their own contribution to the community by not getting involved in crime. The school also makes good use of its own counsellor who provides a significant level of support for pupils with behavioural difficulties. The school's reward system, based on points for good behaviour throughout the day, is a very effective enticement to pupils to behave well. The school's ethos that every day is a fresh one for good behaviour makes an effective starting point for pupils to behave well. The end of the day makes a satisfactory contribution to the area of reviewing pupils' personal targets, but is often rushed through, in order, for example, to make sure that pupils get to their taxis on time. Pupils respond well to the school's arrangements for an informal, family grouping at each table for lunch. They enjoy talking to each other, staff and visitors, and are happy to take time over their meals rather than rush off once their plates are cleared. Pupils feel safe in the school and a number commented on the fact that there was 'always someone you can talk to'. They

especially value the informal arrangements provided for them by the counsellor and school nurse when they are in school and two pupils said 'if it wasn't for the fact that we were given time to talk through our problems, we would have been out of here in a few weeks'.

40 The school's inclusion project offers pupils very effective learning opportunities in selected mainstream schools. The project has been so successful that pupils are now asking to be considered in the next round of the inclusion selection and referral process, and are identifying themselves as being able to benefit from inclusive opportunities. Participating mainstream schools appreciate the good practice that they can observe in the management of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

41 The provision for academic assessment is developing well and has improved since the last inspection. There are good examples in mathematics, English and science but this is not consistent across all subjects. All pupils have statements; base line assessments are carried out on entry to provide additional support to pupils. Individual education plans and targets require more focus in order to ensure work is matched to the needs of each pupil across all subjects. Good progress is recorded in numeracy and literacy. Each pupil has a comprehensive record of achievement with a wide range of certificates and awards, for example good attendance, sporting achievements and personal safety issues.

42 Most work is marked with informative comments but this is not consistent across all subjects to inform learning. Pupils contribute to their reviews and reports and parents are involved in discussing targets and progress. There are two parent evenings held each year and parents are represented by representatives on the governing body. A very good emphasis is placed on exam and course work for certificate of achievement awards, GNVQ and GCSE. The high expectation of staff encourage pupils to achieve as much as possible in end of term and unit tests and standard assessment tests. Homework is not yet established throughout school, however a few pupils complete work and all have the opportunity to borrow books from the library. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly, although little evidence was seen during the inspection of use across subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43 Parents' views of the school are good. All parents that offered their views felt that the school worked closely with them and that they felt comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. One parent said that it was the first school that her child had actually wanted to come to and that before it used to be a battle to send him to school. Many parents have struggled to find a suitable school for their children and feel relieved to see changes in their children's behaviour, a development in their self-esteem and work geared to the needs of their children. A parent said 'I feel that the pressure has been taken off us as parents'.

44 Parents feel that the attitudes the school develops are very good. Their children want to come to school and work hard in school, and respond well to the reward system and are proud of the rewards they receive. They are especially pleased to observe good attitudes in the care that older pupils take care of younger pupils. There are a few concerns perceived by parents about their children being bullied in the school transport and that this matter is not dealt with as effectively in the transport as it is in school. A few parents do have concerns over the behaviour of pupils in the school and with the arrangements that the school makes for helping their child to become mature and responsible. However, where pupils' behaviour is concerned, they do not feel that their children pick up bad behavioural examples at school.

45 Parents feel they have good links to the school. They quickly learn if there is anything wrong at school, for example if a child has gone missing, is not well or has had behavioural difficulties. Parents feel well informed and enjoy the newsletter that is sent to them through the post and not reliant on pupil post. Telephone contact is good and staff are quick to ring them up and talk through issues. They especially appreciate the efforts the school makes to help them attend annual reviews, for example by helping with transport, and in involving them in setting their children's targets. Information that parents receive through annual written reports is good and gives parents an informed, consistent and individual view of their child's progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report. The school prospectus and governors annual report to parents both meet statutory requirements and give a satisfactory amount of information about the school, although neither are particularly lively documents. Parents are not involved on a day-to-day basis with the school, but their attendance at annual reviews, sports days and school performances is good and improving.

46 The small number of parents whose children are taking part in the inclusion project work closely with the school, often after staff have visited them at home, to support their children's targets. Participating parents sign Inclusion Contracts, take part in evaluation exercises on the progress of the project and share the expectations of their children on the success of the project. Parents are positive about the improvements the school has made. The building is now much better and the inclusion project is successful in offering their children an opportunity to experience a mainstream culture and education. A parent said at the meeting 'Facilities are now first class'.

47 Parents appreciate the fact that the school is very responsive to their suggestions. 'They do not sweep concerns under the carpet. It is like an extended family where the parents, as well as the pupil, are supported'.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48 The leadership and management of the school is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when it was judged to be good. The high quality of leadership provided by the head teacher has been successful in changing the atmosphere of the school to one where pupils learn well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and there is a strong sense of community reflected in the supportive relationships between staff and pupils.

49 The head teacher's clear vision for the school as a place where pupils achieve is shared by all staff and is helped by an effective senior management team. The inclusion of a senior teaching assistant as a member of this team is indicative of the head teacher's determination to create a shared sense of purpose. The shared vision of the head teacher and the senior management team has resulted in improved behaviour management and a range of curriculum developments such as links with further education colleges and the raising of standards in literacy, mathematics and science. Pupils are also able to take a range of external examinations. However, successful as these developments have been, there is a need to ensure that members of the management team give a greater focus to the delivery of the non-core subjects by improving their curriculum planning and teaching.

50 The role of subject leaders is more variable. An appropriate emphasis has been placed on developing the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This has been successful in both improving management and raising standards since the 1999 report. However, the role of subject managers in non-core subjects is less well developed. There is a need to improve curriculum planning and management so as to raise standards and ensure the delivery of a balanced curriculum.

51 The school's finances are effectively managed and closely linked to the educational objectives identified in the development plan. Expenditure is efficiently monitored by both senior staff and the governors. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value in its spending plans and is aware of its importance. This combination of well planned expenditure and careful monitoring results in the school's money being well used and the annual carry forward is maintained at an appropriate level.

52 The role of the governing body has been much enhanced in recent years. They share the head teacher's vision for the school and benefit from the strong leadership provided by the Chair. The governors work hard to fulfil their roles and the successful participation of the parent governors emphasises the shared sense of purpose which characterises the life of the school.

53 The school is well funded with an income which is significantly above average for a school of this type. However, there is strong and effective leadership combined with pupils making good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Overall teaching is satisfactory and pupils benefit from a broad range of learning opportunities. Consequently, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

54 There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants to provide the required curriculum for the school. Staffing levels have improved well since the previous inspection, and the number of staff with temporary contracts is reducing. Although a significant minority of the teaching staff has been appointed during the past three years, the good arrangements for staff induction, training and management ensure that they work closely together as a team. Not all co-ordinators are qualified in the subjects they manage but the majority are appropriately experienced. The role of subject leaders is developing well, although some are at a more advanced stage than others. All members of staff have clear job descriptions which are reviewed annually in line with the performance management process.

55 Newly appointed staff undertake a carefully planned programme of induction to ensure they understand their responsibilities to the pupils, the school's strategies for behaviour management, and procedures which must be implemented consistently. Newly qualified members of staff also receive very good support, and have many opportunities to review their progress with a senior member of staff. The staff handbook provides further useful guidance for all staff.

56 Classroom support staff work closely with teachers and make a very positive contribution towards pupils' achievement and progress. There is a commendable commitment from these staff to improving their qualifications. For instance, five teaching assistants have recently worked, under the guidance of the co-ordinator for mathematics, towards gaining accreditation in the General Certificate of Secondary Education in mathematics, and others are working towards achieving qualified teacher status.

57 Arrangements for staff development are good. All staff have received training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and in behaviour management. Performance management has been introduced, with targets identified for the head teacher and all teaching staff. Objectives are also determined for teaching assistants through a series of professional development interviews. A relevant staff development programme is planned in relation to the school improvement plan and the priorities identified through the performance management cycle. A timetable is in place to evaluate training courses, and their impact on teaching practice and the raising of standards will be carefully considered.

58 The administrative, maintenance, domestic and catering staff make a good contribution to the life of the school and feel valued for their efforts.

59 The school's accommodation is good overall and much improved since the previous inspection by the addition of specialist classrooms and administration offices. A major problem is the persistent vandalism of the school's site. The school caretaker makes a daily check of the playing fields and playground areas, and an outside contractor is used regularly to remove broken glass and sharp objects from the school site. The small size of the school's hall restricts the delivery of the physical education curriculum. Resources are satisfactory overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60 In order to improve further the head teacher, staff and governors should;

(1) Improve the overall curriculum by;

- (a) ensuring that planning for non-core subjects demonstrates progression in learning as pupils move through the school; (paragraph 25)
- (b) ensuring that an appropriate amount of time is devoted to all aspects of subjects. (paragraph 25)

(2) Improve the overall management of the school by;

- (a) clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of subject and key stage co-ordinators in monitoring the curriculum; (paragraph 50)
- (b) developing the role of co-ordinators for non-core subjects in relation to planning the development of the subjects. (paragraph 50)

(3) Improve the overall quality of teaching by;

- (a) providing greater opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibilities in lessons; (paragraph 20)
- (b) improving the quality of targets in IEPs; (paragraph 22)
- (c) using these more effectively in lessons to ensure a closer match to pupils' needs. (paragraph 22)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	22	16	0	1	0
Percentage	2	15	47	34	0	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	40
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	17

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	14.1	School data	5.7

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	37
Any other minority ethnic group	3

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	45	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.4
Average class size	8

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	241

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	595,476
Total expenditure	629,435
Expenditure per pupil	15,736
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,736
Balance carried forward to next year	22,777

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	40
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	18	71	12	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	59	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	12	59	24	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	0	53	35	6	6
The teaching is good.	53	35	6	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	24	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	0	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	29	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	24	0	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	53	24	18	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	18	18	0	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	24	12	0	0

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

ENGLISH

61 The provision for English is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and uses a wide variety of work to interest and encourage pupils. Teaching to all year groups is good with some very good features and pupils make good progress over time and during most lessons. The scheme of work is comprehensive and includes literacy work for Years 7, 8 and 9. A senior teacher assistant successfully provides additional literacy classes for a few pupils. The library is well used with an interesting collection of new books. The display of poetry interests pupils and provides a good talking point. Pupils borrow videos and tapes to support their learning and course work, for example the Shakespeare play of Macbeth. Literature links are supported well by visits to a theatre in Blackpool to see 'Kes', media studies in Manchester and poetry reading with other pupils with an opportunity to meet poets and hear poetry read. Pupils in all year groups make good progress in reading and speaking and listening, and satisfactory progress in hand writing skills. A good emphasis is placed on grammar and spelling and reading; however it is necessary to monitor literacy across all subjects to ensure similar expectations. Although reading levels are low, pupils make good and very good progress in their reading skills during their time at school compared to when they started.

62 Year 7 pupils are making good progress to listen to each other and think of ways to work together in a drama situation. The teacher encourages them well to use their imagination to solve problems and express their feelings more clearly. For example a group discussed what they would save in a shipwreck in order to survive such as lifejackets, flares and food. The pleasant purposeful atmosphere encourages good relationships to develop where pupils listen well and share ideas. There is a good emphasis on grammar at the start of each lesson such as the use of an apostrophe. Pupils are growing in confidence to write answers on the board. Most pupils know that a paragraph contains full stops, capital letters and spacing. Pupils write with a sense of drama about the shipwreck, a few are more confident and express themselves well, others need support to construct sentences. Year 8 pupils have fun with the word onomatopoeia. The teacher emphasised the six syllables and the meaning by reading the poem 'I like noise'. The pupils soon recognised the word sounds like it is and were able to underline the 'sound' words. With encouragement pupils are beginning to work more independently, they give good examples of noises around school which they attempt to put into their own poetic form.

63 A few pupils from Years 7,8 and 9 have additional support for literacy. The good introduction with a game where pupils remember letter shapes and words to play 'what is in my basket?' encourages them to listen and speak in turn. They are introduced to phonemes and know they have to listen to the different vowel sound; most find this difficult. As pupils are treated with politeness and courtesy they in turn behave well, concentrate and are pleasant.

64 Pupils in Year 9 settle to work quickly and quietly with the teacher's expectation that they will. Good use of examples using spider diagrams shows pupils how to set out their work. The teacher gives praise and picks up on pupil ideas which in turn encourages them to contribute and speak more freely. Work books and pens encourage neat work and show how pupils gradually improve in their presentation. The good use of the poem 'Clouds' by Stanley Cook illustrates well the use of similes. One girl recognises two similes from the poem for example 'colourful like a rainbow' and 'angry like a pack of dogs'. When illustrating their own poem about a beach most pupils give good examples such as rough as rocks and sand as smooth as velvet. Pupils are developing a good understanding of discursive text and concentrate well to give sentences with connectives. Pupils make good progress in finding opposing arguments.

65 Year 10 pupils respond well to structured GCSE coursework. The text about 'Jazzy B' interests them and a few boys produce very neat writing, although a few have difficulty in expressing themselves when writing. The good range of work shows what the boys can achieve for GCSE course work, for example facts and opinions to extract information in order to put text into their own words. The good use of ICT work using 'Bite Size' for GCSE revision shows boys are competent in using the programme to revise and test each other. The good use of correct terms such as 'emotive' with a good explanation introduces pupils well when revising GCSE test papers. All pupils have completed the certificate of achievement this term. The good range of books in the classroom and well displayed work encourages a good working atmosphere. Year 11 pupils have finished their exams. The work sample shows the Internet is used to gather information. One piece of course work is word processed. Pupils have studied Shakespeare plays such as Macbeth and Romeo and Juliet. The teacher has emphasised how language has changed when sharing poetry with pupils from the writers' time such as the works of Milton and Chaucer.

66 Pupils are interested in the wide variety of books and try hard when reading. One girl likes 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe' and can say which characters she likes. A few pupils like to read poetry; one boy especially likes poems about Dinosaurs. In other subjects a few pupils have difficulty in describing the texture of their scones and thinking of the correct words and spellings to express the making of their pizzas. Although a few pupils make slow progress with their reading, most pupils make good progress in their time in school in reading which is carefully monitored and nurtured.

67 The co-ordinator shares information with colleagues from other schools. Assessment is very detailed in order to give a clear example of progress and areas in which to develop.

MATHEMATICS

68 Pupils of all abilities achieve well and, overall, make good progress in relation to their previous learning. A significant minority makes very good progress. Pupils' good progress is the result of teaching which is always at least very good and occasionally is excellent. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils enter the school with much ground to make up in numeracy. Teachers use the information from the good systems of assessment to set targets and plan work which ensures pupils achieve success. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, and this is having a significant impact on improving pupils' numeracy skills, particularly in mental calculation. The brisk mental sessions which begin all lessons, make a valuable contribution to improving pupils' speed and accuracy. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 who require additional support, benefit from sharply focused extra lessons which help them to improve their basic mathematical skills. Their achievements in these lessons also develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, the subject.

69 Between the ages of 11 and 14, pupils make good progress in using the four rules of number. By the time they are 14 years of age, they understand the principles of place value and learn to convert percentages to fractions, and imperial measures to their metric equivalents. Higher achieving pupils make good progress in naming the different angles within two-dimensional shapes. Because teachers explain mathematical principles and use the subject vocabulary very well, pupils are able to use appropriate language when discussing their work. For instance, lower achieving pupils in Years 7 and 8 could describe two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes sufficiently clearly for others to identify a rectangle, a circle, a cylinder and a cube. Pupils are learning to present data in a range of forms, including bar charts, pie charts and graphs. Teachers and teaching assistants persistently challenge pupils to extend their thinking, and are skilled at encouraging them to 'have a go' before stepping in with help. This helps pupils to develop independent learning skills.

70 The oldest pupils, between the ages of 14 and 16, make good progress in lessons that prepare them for accreditation. Opportunities for accreditation have improved well since the previous inspection, and all pupils achieve success in external assessment procedures. Pupils continue to build on their earlier learning, particularly with regard to their verbal reasoning skills and data handling.

71 The previous inspection report identified a number of shortcomings in mathematics. Progress and teaching were inconsistent, short-term planning did not clearly identify pupils' needs, and a proportion of pupils were reluctant to engage in lessons. Much work was unfinished. During the inspection the standard of presentation in pupils' individual files was consistently good. Almost all work was completed, and teachers' marking was positive and helpful. This reflects the high standards set by staff, and pupils' pride in their own achievements. Behaviour in lessons is always at least good, and frequently very good, because teachers manage classes calmly and firmly, a brisk pace is maintained and work is carefully planned to match pupils' needs and to provide challenges for them to make good progress.

72 The subject co-ordinator, appointed two years ago, has made a significant contribution to the very good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. As a leading mathematics teacher she provides high quality training and support for teachers and teaching assistants, and shares her expertise with staff of neighbouring schools. Priorities for future development have been identified. Resources are improving and teachers themselves create some very good resources to meet particular needs. Good examples were seen of the use of ICT to support learning. However, whilst mathematics is effectively used to support pupils' work in science, geography, ICT and design and technology, there is insufficient planned use of the subject in other areas of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

73 The quality of the teaching combined with effective curriculum planning results in pupils achieving very well and standards have improved since the last inspection. The emphasis on developing pupils' experimental skills combined with a well equipped science laboratory means that science is taught through an interesting range of challenges.

74 By the age of 14 pupils have learnt to analyse scientific evidence as well as to create and test hypotheses. In a Year 9 lesson, for example, pupils timed themselves over a fixed distance and then used formulae to calculate their average speed. This practical approach to applying scientific theory is a major factor in the very good progress made by pupils. The structured development of a scientific vocabulary and the development of observation skills are successfully taught from an early age. This is demonstrated by the comment of a Year 7 pupil in a lesson on liquids and solids when he said "have you noticed that if you leave the top of the liquid it drips". The teacher makes good use of discussion to help pupils learn as in the same lesson when pupils devised tests to distinguish between liquids and solids; the liquid test being "does it pour?" and the solid test being "does it take the shape of the container?" This effective use of discussion means that the practical work is well supported as in a Year 8 lessons on fossil fuels where a practical lesson was followed up by pupils' consideration of the efficiency of a range of fuels as well as their consideration of wider issues such as their effect on the environment.

75 The teaching of the older pupils is characterised by equally high expectations. Strong relationships with the pupils combined with effective behaviour management techniques creates a very positive learning atmosphere. In their work towards success in external examinations pupils demonstrate skills of increasing sophistication. Their ability to form a hypothesis, such as the comparison of the heat produced by two Bunsen burners or how far a ball will roll on different surfaces, are well developed and enable them to produce some sophisticated conclusions. An example

of this is in a Year 10 lesson where pupils were considering factors which would inhibit the rolling of a tennis ball. Pupils recognised the importance of a “fair test” and were able to give reasons why performance might vary, such as the wind, and were able to produce tables and graphs of their results. This encouragement of independent learning combined with the motivation of achieving examination success are significant factors in explaining pupils’ interest and concentration. However, the use of computers is restricted to word processing and there is a need to further incorporate their use into the teaching of science.

76 The clear vision of the subject co-ordinator is illustrated by the improvements since the previous inspection. The subject co-ordinator is ambitious for his pupils to succeed and demonstrates this not only through the quality of the teaching but also through the work on curriculum planning and the emphasis on external accreditation, all of which show improvement since 1999. Similarly, access to a well equipped laboratory is a significant factor in pupils’ success.

ART AND DESIGN

77 Pupils’ achievements in art are satisfactory overall and good in painting and drawing. Similarly, the teaching of painting and other pictorial art forms is good, with imaginative use being made of film and other techniques to generate ideas of shape and colour. However, the limited curriculum that is offered restricts pupils’ ability to work in other forms, such as ceramics and textiles, and also inhibits their learning of art theory and history.

78 By the age of 14 pupils are developing an awareness of shape and colour which is presented in a range of interesting forms, such as self-portraits or masks. However, they have limited opportunities for other work and their knowledge of other artists’ work and of art history is limited. Older pupils do have a wider understanding and have an awareness of a range of styles as well as an appreciation of how colour and shape can be used to generate an effect. An example of this understanding is given in a lesson for Year 10 pupils when a video of the film “Dick Tracy” was used to illustrate both 1930s art deco style as well as explaining the way colour and shape is used in comic book style. Pupils showed an understanding and appreciation of these approaches, which is demonstrated in the practical work they have produced. However, again the curriculum offered is restricted mainly to representational work. Pupils lack any depth of knowledge of artists’ work or of producing three-dimensional pieces, ceramics or textiles.

79 The restriction of the curriculum limits the external examinations that can be offered to pupils and the concern is that higher attaining pupils lack the opportunities to achieve appropriate accreditation. The subject manager has been successful in raising the profile of art throughout the school through the well presented display of pupils’ work and participation in events such as an exhibition of pupils’ work.

80 The school benefits from the use of a specialist art room which provides an age appropriate environment in which the pupils can work. However, the use of computers is under developed which inhibits the use of computer graphics or the use of the Internet for research. Similarly, there is a lack of suitable text books to extend pupils’ knowledge of artists and techniques.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81 The provision for design and technology is satisfactory, although elements are missing and the scheme of work is not yet complete. The teacher has a very pleasant manner and the lessons are well thought out to meet the needs of individual pupils and interest them in designing and making items such as a mechanical toy. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features, and the

progress that pupils make is satisfactory. The specialised work area has machines which are not in use; these are to be removed to be replaced with more accessible resources. The teacher recognises all safety rules and pupils are conscious of the use of goggles and aprons and the care required when using a machine such as an electric drill. Textile work and ceramics are carried out in design and technology where the teacher has good subject knowledge.

82 The Batik design brief for Year 7 pupils is very interesting as the theme is a wall hanging to attract young clients to a café. Pupils are able to talk about their work, they concentrate well and use hot wax with confidence. The teacher uses correct terms to encourage pupils to understand primary colours, textures and patterns. They are encouraged well to experiment with mixing primary colours and can recognise light green, orange and dark blue. A careful study has been made of the inside of fruits which the boys copy on to material. They can dribble wax and follow their drawn pattern to choose and appreciate appropriate ink colours. The good use of correct terms challenges the boys to think about their work and to make relevant observations about the seeds in the fruit.

83 Year 9 pupils have carried out research for a humorous narrative in order to make an automata. Good use of resources books and an example of a working model helps them with this. The good use of technical language by the teacher helps to explain the working of these toys. The small models are complicated but the boys show patience supported well by the careful explanations of the teacher. One boy was beginning to understand how one mechanical action drives another and one boy used a drill machine independently and with care. Year 10 pupils were making a picture frame to frame their own art work for a certificate of achievement. The tools used were not sharp, resulting in them being rather restless, however, they can use a tenor saw, bench hook and an angle saw. The teacher gave a good demonstration of how to use a tri-square and pillar drill. The boys are encouraged to work independently but require a lot of support.

84 A project with food technology is undertaken each year. Good examples of the design and making of chocolate boxes complimented the design and making of chocolates. The teacher displays work well and will record work with a digital camera in the future.

85 The provision for food technology is satisfactory. Teaching and pupil progress in all years is satisfactory. The teacher has the good support of a teaching assistant. Pupils enjoy the practical activities of cooking but are not so keen on writing up recipes. The room is well stocked but doubles as a writing and planning area. The room is rather crowded with a full group present. Good opportunities for making choices are used, for example when the breakfast bar opened, pupils were able to cost items in a café and make decisions about what should be available. Units of accreditation are in place with entry level this year.

86 Year 7 pupils know the routine of washing hands and wearing aprons. Most pupils are beginning to follow a routine well. They can mix ingredients and place in a bun case. They choose their own flavours such as grated chocolate and sultanas. Although they have difficulty in gauging the temperature of the ovens they understand how to cream, mix, beat and fold in mixtures. They are not as keen to copy the recipe from the board and one boy finds this very difficult. The use of writing frames, word processing and smaller steps would help most of the pupils. Year 9 pupils enjoy adding interesting ingredients to their scones. They work independently and follow instructions to weigh ingredients and sequence rubbing in the mixture. One boy was able to read all his recipes and talk about his work. He has achieved bread making, toasted sandwiches, pasta dishes, apple crumble and cakes. The pupils are confident to follow a recipe and experiment with tastes. They discussed and recorded the taste of the scones as to texture and flavour such as crumbly and sweet. Key words would help them to be more fluent.

87 A production line approach encouraged Year 10 pupils to co-operate in designing and making a batch of pizzas. All had a part to play, which is good preparation for the work place. One boy chopped onions and added tinned tomatoes and tomato paste and successfully cooked them in a wok. Another boy was responsible for grating the cheese and others chopped peppers, ham and mushrooms. With support, one boy rolled out the pizza dough. Although there are bouts of restlessness in between activities the pupils achieved a good standard of work eventually.

88 A catering course is experienced at college but is not linked to school work. The design technology team plan and assess work with regular meetings.

GEOGRAPHY

89 During the inspection week one lesson was observed in each of Years 7, 8 and 9. Further evidence of pupils' achievement and progress was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, planning documents and discussion with pupils and the humanities co-ordinator. The co-ordinator teaches all geography lessons. Geography is not taught as a discrete subject in Years 10 and 11.

90 Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress overall in relation to their previous learning. This is because of the good teaching and particularly the planning. There is insufficient evidence in the previous inspection report to judge the level of improvement since then. By the time they are 14 years old pupils interpret maps, read scales and identify the continents and many countries on an outline map of the world. Higher attaining pupils know the relative positions of many major British cities and have a sound understanding of the reasons for settlements being in particular locations. Pupils understand some of the causes and effects of the different climatic conditions around the world, and recognise the interdependency of plants, animals and people. The teacher provides good opportunities for them to develop an awareness of the conflicts of interest that can arise in relation to, for example, managing national parks and between interested groups involved in the tourist industry. Pupils know that land is eroded and shaped by elements such as ice, water and wind, and understand how a river valley is formed. They understand the difference between primary and secondary industries and how these can bring about changes in local populations, and they show concern over environmental pollution.

91 Teaching is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. Good teaching is characterised by clear planning where learning objectives are made clear to pupils, organisation which encourages discussion, and firm calm behaviour management with high expectations made explicit.

92 Coordination of geography is good. The scheme of work is under review, and regular checks are made on what pupils know, understand and can do. The current assessment procedures are a sound basis for further development. Resources are satisfactory, but there is a need for more items such as globes and weather observation and recording equipment. Insufficient use is made of ICT and of the local environment to promote pupils' research and investigative skills. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

93 During the inspection week one lesson was seen in each of Years 7, 8 and 9. Further evidence regarding pupils' achievement and progress was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, planning documents and discussion with pupils and the humanities co-ordinator. The co-ordinator teaches all history lessons. History is not taught as a discrete subject in Years 10 and 11.

94 Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress in relation to their previous learning. This is because of the good organisation and planning for the subject. There is insufficient

information in the previous report to judge the level of improvement since then. Between the ages of 11 and 14 pupils build progressively on their learning, and develop an understanding of how events and individuals bring about change. They know that societies alter over time and that some, such as the Romans, continue to influence people and events for many centuries. They become increasingly aware that many facts can be interpreted in more than one way, and that facts are reported differently by people with contrasting views. Pupils understand the difference between primary and secondary sources of information. They identify similarities and differences between their own lives and those of people in medieval Britain and during the Industrial Revolution. History contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because it provides good opportunities for them to learn about the Civil War and the restoration of the monarchy, the effects of colonisation on the lives of North American Indians, and the plight of slaves caught up in the trading between Europe, Africa and the West Indies. Pupils have a growing insight into the causes and effects of both World Wars.

95 Most pupils concentrate well and, when given the opportunity, are keen to contribute to discussion. The teacher sets high standards for pupils' work and most respond positively to this and try hard to do their best. Teaching is good overall. The teacher's good subject knowledge enables her to widen pupils' understanding with background information, for example in relation to life in medieval times. When tasks are explained clearly and they understand what to do, pupils tackle work confidently. Literacy development is effectively reinforced by the use of well-prepared texts, but opportunities for extending pupils' thinking through discussion are occasionally missed.

96 The subject is well-organised. The scheme of work enables pupils to build systematically on their learning. The regular checks which are made on their progress provide a sound basis for the further development of assessment procedures. ICT is insufficiently used for research but visits to sites in the area, such as Skipton Castle and the Maritime Museum, widen pupils' experience and enhance their learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97 As a consequence of the lack of structured specialist teaching and lack of resources, pupils' level of achievement in the use of computers is only satisfactory. However, the very recent appointment of a specialist teacher and a review of resources has resulted in pupils' learning now being good.

98 The lack of structured teaching results in pupils' basic computer usage skills being insufficiently developed. During the last term the introduction of a properly planned curriculum has resulted in improvement, although there is still insufficient opportunities for pupils over the age of 14 to develop their skills as they do not currently receive timetabled lessons or benefit from specialist teaching.

99 Pupils up to the age of 14 are enthusiastic and keen to learn. The well structured teaching combined with interesting and relevant tasks results in pupils making good progress in lessons. This improvement in provision is illustrated by lessons for Year 7 and 8 pupils on developing a spreadsheet and on animation of a web page. Both sessions are well planned and the teacher provides well structured demonstrations to provide pupils with clear guidance. By careful use of the teaching assistant, pupils are provided with effective support, which is currently essential for many of the pupils as they require high levels of individual support. Pupils' frustration at the need for assistance is dealt with in a calm manner and is indicative of the good relationships being developed by the teacher after only a short time in the school.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

100 The provision for French is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features and pupils make satisfactory progress. French is taught once a week to pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a very good accent. French is spoken throughout much of the lessons, which encourages pupils to listen to and pronounce the French words. The good use of tapes ensures pupils hear a male French voice in contrast. A scheme of units 1 to 6 follow topics of shopping, counting, colours and greetings. A unit test is carried out at the end. One Year 9 boy attends a French lesson in a local school, which further compliments his learning. Oral work is given at the beginning of each lesson, followed by written and listening activities. Work is marked with pupils and homework set twice a term.

101 Year 7 pupils can name colours and recite numbers. They identify sports and sports people. Simple comprehension work sheets show pupils are beginning to understand greetings. Work is marked with relevant comments. Year 8 pupils identify shops in France with the use of pictures. Pupils repeat the French words and identify positions such as under and beside. More attention to sensible behaviour would ensure more work is achieved and more able pupils could concentrate on their work. Year 9 boys show by their answers that they know the male and female gender for family members. For example in l'arbre de famille pupils were able to identify ma and mon. One pupil recognises il and elle that the teacher linked well to English Grammar. The boys can say 'elle s'apelle ' and 'il t'apelle' to give each other's names. Pupils are rather restless but show by their answers that they have listened and understood the text. The more consistent use of exciting resources would encourage neat work and pupils could be more responsible for organising their books and pens. Teaching is most successful where work is well planned to meet the demands and interests of the groups. When this is not in place, pupils are very restless and disruptive.

MUSIC

102 During the inspection week one lesson was observed in each of Years 7, 8 and 9. A discussion was held with the co-ordinator. However, there was insufficient other evidence to make overall judgements on pupils' achievement and progress over time. In the lessons seen the achievement and progress of pupils in Years 7 and 9 was satisfactory. The achievement and progress of pupils in Year 8 was poor. This was because the pupils' behaviour was poor for the majority of the lesson time and consequently no learning took place. Music is not mentioned in the previous inspection report and therefore it is not possible to judge the level of improvement.

103 By the time pupils are 14 years old the majority follow instructions carefully in order to produce a variety of sounds on a didgeridoo. They distinguish the rhythm of the instrument, and also identify a bull-roarer, in a musical piece in which Aboriginal music is played in a modern rock style. They draw comparisons between this music and pieces they have heard from Africa and the Caribbean. Because the teacher explains the subject vocabulary clearly, pupils understand and use terms such as polyphony and polyrhythmic during discussion. A minority read music and follow notational scores to play football songs on a keyboard, paying regard to tempo and stress. A small number of pupils benefit from individual and group instrumental teaching on wind and percussion instruments and a keyboard.

104 The majority of pupils listen carefully and try to follow instructions. They enjoy listening to a wide range of music and express opinions on their likes and dislikes. Most can give reasons for their views. They are appreciative of each others' efforts.

105 In the lessons seen teaching was satisfactory overall, although one lesson was poor. Resources are chosen to interest the pupils and extend their musical understanding. However, planning does not clearly identify the skills to be taught and behaviour management is inconsistent.

106 The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge. Pupils benefit from their experience of music in many styles and from many cultures, including classical, rock, opera and choral music, and pieces from Africa and China. However, coordination of the subject is in its early stages. There is no structured programme of work which would ensure that pupils build systematically on their learning, and assessment requires extensive development. Resources are adequate to deliver the current programme, but as the curriculum develops further they will need to be significantly improved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107 During the inspection it was possible to see only two physical education lessons; one with Year 7 pupils and one with Year 10. Because of the time of year and the planned programme both were athletics lessons. No additional evidence was available on which to base secure judgements in relation to standards or teaching, except in swimming where records show that pupils are achieving standards similar to those achieved by other pupils of the same age.

108 In both lessons pupils achieved standards similar to those found nationally for 12 and 15 year olds. The Year 7 pupils were developing their skills and technique in putting the shot. Good teaching enabled them to understand the difference between a throw and putting. As the lesson developed, the teacher emphasised how the quality of the technique could be improved by tucking the shot into the neck and pushing upwards; as a result, all pupils improved their performance. Most of the pupils had very positive attitudes and enjoyed their success. Their enthusiasm carried over into 200 metres running where pupils tried their best to improve their performance. Teaching was very effective here because pupils were not clear how they could improve their technique to improve their performance. Year 10 pupils were developing their technique in throwing the javelin. Again the teacher clearly demonstrated appropriate techniques and, as pupils practised, provided coaching on how the quality could be improved to lead to better results. Learning in this lesson was less effective because of the immature behaviour of some pupils. Although their learning in relation to javelin throwing was reduced, their behaviour was managed well by the teacher and support staff and effective learning about how they were expected to behave occurred. In both lessons appropriate activities had been planned and resources were available to promote learning. The lessons moved at an appropriate base, which, apart from the immature behaviour of one or two pupils, maintained pupils' interest.

109 Although it was possible to see only athletics, the school planning indicates a broad and balanced physical education programme. Recording systems tend to consist of recording results rather than assessing the knowledge, skill and understanding developed by pupils. There is a need to develop the assessment procedures across the range of activities provided.

110 Physical education is led by an instructor, who over the past year has modified and developed the programme. He has been supported by more experienced staff. He has set about ensuring that resources are available for the planned programme but there is no forward subject development plan to carry the subject forward in a sympathetic way within the whole school plan. Resources for physical education are adequate, although there are short-comings in accommodation. Although the school has a field it is often water-logged and the hard play area often has broken glass on it as a result of external vandalism. The school hall is too small for some activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111 Pupils of all ages make satisfactory progress and achieve sound standards in religious education as they move through the school. Religious education was not commented upon in the last inspection, but this is an improvement from the school's first inspection.

112 The religious education curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus and covers all the required areas to meet statutory requirements. Teaching is sound. Lessons are thoroughly planned with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils so that progress can be evaluated at the end of lessons. The teacher has good subject knowledge. Occasionally the teaching methods used are too narrow with an over-emphasis on managing pupils' behaviour and this restricts the opportunities for pupils to show initiatives and to take some responsibility for their learning. For example, in one lesson where pupils were interested in the topic they were asked to research facts

from the Bible. They worked individually and did not have the opportunity to share ideas. Although the learning objective was achieved and pupils made progress in their knowledge and understanding, opportunities were missed for personal development, which could have been provided through group work on a wider range of resources such as the Internet.

113 Younger pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the community and explore ideas about the best way to live. They develop their understanding of Christianity through Bible stories, looking at the Gospels and considering the concept of miracles. They explore issues concerned with role models and contrast happy and sad events. Other world religions are studied and an understanding is developed of Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism. By Year 11 they follow an accredited course. They develop a good understanding of issues such as abortion and euthanasia and this links to their personal, social and health education programme.

114 Assessment is currently satisfactory and the co-ordinator is developing a more detailed skill-based assessment programme including self-evaluation. She leads the subject appropriately and has clear views about its future development. Resources are satisfactory, but the school is short of appropriate artefacts.