

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HALL SCHOOL**

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121257

Headteacher: Mrs A. Ruthven

Reporting inspector: Ian Naylor  
20906

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 197274

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	3 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hall School St Faiths Road Old Catton Norwich Norfolk
Postcode:	NR6 7AD
Telephone number:	01603 466467
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J. Wayman
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ian Naylor	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Post 16; Personal, social and health education; Art.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the school? Special educational needs; What the school should do to improve further.
Liz Halls	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work with parents? Integration; Under fives
Bob Battey	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Humanities; Under fives.	Spiritual, moral, social, cultural development.
Brian Fletcher	<i>Team Inspector</i>	Mathematics; Music; Physical education.	How well is the school led?
David Walker	<i>Team Inspector</i>	Science Religious education.	Staffing, accommodation and resources; Equal opportunities.
Gill Lawson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information technology; Modern foreign languages; Design and technology.	English as an additional language; Assessment.

The inspection contractor was:

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hall School is a Community Special School for 80 boys and girls between the ages of 3 - 19. Pupils are from predominantly white ethnic origins. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need describing severe or profound multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Twenty eight pupils have extreme or severe challenging behaviour, and some are identified as autistic. The school serves a very wide area, covering most of Norfolk. The type of learning need of pupils catered for by the school is changing. There is an increasingly greater incidence of medical care and challenging behaviour amongst new younger admissions. Teachers are trained in the Team Teach<sup>1</sup> approach for positive behaviour management. Pupils with extreme behaviour have behaviour management plans. There are many local primary and secondary schools with which the school makes arrangements for part-time integration placements, to extend the learning opportunities of several pupils for whom this is appropriate. The school is actively seeking to extend the number of such placements.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school in which the very good teaching supported by sound leadership and management, leads to the good achievement of pupils and good progress over time. There is also good progress in the self-esteem and confidence of pupils and the development of a range of social and communication skills. The school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Very good teaching;
- Achievement of pupils is good;
- Relationships are very good;
- Attitude and behaviour are very good;
- Attendance is good;
- There is high quality of support and care given to pupils;
- Good teamwork between staff;
- Good use of the local community and links with other schools for integration;
- Good communication with parents;
- Staff manage pupils with challenging behaviours very well;
- Learning support assistants give very valuable support.

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<sup>1</sup> staff working consistently together to reduce aggressive or disruptive behaviour of pupils.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Accommodation still has many poor features;
- There are too few teachers and learning support assistants;
- Subject leaders do not monitor and evaluate teaching;
- Reading is not taught consistently across the school. There are no whole school targets for reading, writing and number;
- Insufficient emphasis is place on using information technology to support other subjects and documentation for some areas of the curriculum is absent or weak.

*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

Since the school was last inspected in March 1996, there has been a range of improvements, particularly in the quality and breadth of learning opportunities available to pupils and in the curriculum for pupils with PMLD. Teaching is now very good overall and the achievement of pupils has also improved considerably and is now good.

## 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	by age	by age	by age	<b>Key</b>
	5	11	16	19	
speaking and listening	C	A	A	A	<i>very good</i> A <i>good</i> B <i>satisfactory</i> C <i>unsatisfactory</i> D <i>poor</i> E
reading	C	C	C	C	
writing	C	B	B	B	
mathematics	C	B	B	B	
personal, social and health education	C	C	C	C	
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	B	

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

The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge attainments against age-related national expectations or averages. Pupils make good progress and their achievements are good against targets set in their individual educational plans. Achievement is good in English overall. There is very good achievement in speaking and listening across the school. Achievement is good in writing, and satisfactory in reading. Achievement is good in mathematics and science. It is good overall in each of the other

subjects. Children under five usually make satisfactory progress overall. By the age of 19, students are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. Pupils with PMLD, and those with challenging or difficult behaviour make good progress. A significant number of pupils make very good and often excellent progress when integrating into local primary or secondary, mainstream schools.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils respond very well to lessons and enjoy coming to school. They are confident and willing to join in as fully as they can in all activities. They listen carefully to instructions, concentrate and persevere to complete tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good at all ages. Since the last inspection the school has successfully maintained high standards of behaviour. Pupils are friendly and well mannered, kind and considerate of others.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with one another and with staff. They work well both independently and co-operatively in groups and grow in confidence and self-esteem, making good progress in personal and social skills.
Attendance	Good. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is very good overall. In the 80 lessons observed there was excellent teaching in 5 per cent of lessons, very good teaching in 25 per cent; good teaching in 55 per cent and satisfactory teaching in 15 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Planning is good, often very good; teachers use their good subject knowledge and their very good knowledge of pupils' needs. There is very good management and control of behaviour, and in particular, the management of difficult or challenging behaviour. Lessons have stimulating activities that make them interesting and fun for pupils to participate in, therefore, pupils' learning is usually good and often very good. Learning is also enhanced by the very good team work between staff and the valuable support given to pupils by learning support assistants. The teaching of reading needs to be made more consistent.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory improvement has been made in respect of the curriculum issues raised in the last inspection. The curriculum is now satisfactory overall with some good features, such as the integration and college links, provision for careers education, nationally recognised accreditation through Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and the Accreditation for Life and Living skills (ALL) programmes, and a good PMLD curriculum based on sensory experiences. The National Literacy Hour and the National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced to the school with careful adaptations to make them relevant to pupils' needs. More work is required to extend and complete curriculum documentation and the overall statement of policy, so that the way that the curriculum supports pupils as they get older is assured. There are too few work and leisure experiences in the community for 16 to 19 year olds. Information and communications technology is not used consistently to support other subjects. Under fives should have broader quality and range of learning opportunities. The absence of key facilities such as a science laboratory, restricts teaching opportunities and denies access for pupils to some elements of the required curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils make good progress in personal development overall. By the age of 19 they are well prepared for the next stage of education or training. Spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Moral development is very good. There is a strong moral code throughout the school, which is reflected in the very good standards, relationships and behaviour. The school involves itself well in the culture of the local community with pupils having many educational and social visits to places of interest. Multi-cultural awareness is provided across the curriculum.
How effective are the school's links with parents?	There is good communication with parents. The home-school books are used well and the views of parents are listened to. Good information is provided about pupils' progress. The school has successfully built on the good relationships established with parents, reported at the last inspection and continues to promote partnership in learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very safe and caring environment. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very good. There is very good behaviour management. There is sound assessment of pupils' needs. Attendance is monitored closely. Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	There is sound leadership and management by the headteacher. A new structure for the senior management team provides better delegation of responsibilities for key areas. Job descriptions for teachers are out of date and need restructuring. Time for subject co-ordinators to discharge their duties, particularly those concerned with monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, should be planned for and allocated within the timetable.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body has well-structured procedures for making decisions on personnel, finance and the curriculum to enable it to meet requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Some general arrangements are in place to support teachers but no formal evaluation is made of the overall effectiveness of teaching. Opportunities to measure whole school rates of performance in key areas such as literacy and numeracy are not yet taken.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Accommodation has improved very little since the previous inspection. Facilities for specialist subjects such as science, design and technology, pupil toilet and shower areas and the Post 16 base are poor. There are too few staff. The school budget has insufficient funds to allow the governing body to employ the required number of teachers and learning support assistants to meet the very wide range of learning and behavioural needs of the pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is spent sensibly with sound attention to the principle of best value. There are good systems for financial administration and a very efficient office staff.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupils' progress and achievements and support given by staff who are very approachable;</li><li>• Home-school book is very helpful;</li><li>• There are high expectations and as a result pupils behave very well and enjoy going to school;</li><li>• Challenging behaviour is dealt with well;</li><li>• Good information from the school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of after school activities;</li><li>• More local visits.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with most of the views of parents. They recognise the difficulties of providing after school activities for pupils, most of whom live some distance from school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge attainments against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement, progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements and in annual reviews.
2. Standards of achievement are good in English overall. Achievement in speaking and listening by the age of five is satisfactory and in other key stages it is very good. There is very good achievement in speaking and listening at each key stage and at Post 16. Achievement in writing is satisfactory by the age of five and good in other key stages and Post 16. In reading, pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in each of these areas over time. Achievement and progress over time are good overall in mathematics and science, and in each of the other subjects, in each key stage and Post 16. Progress in personal and social education is also good across the school.
3. Children under five usually make satisfactory progress overall. Due to their severe learning needs, most have not achieved the desirable learning outcomes<sup>2</sup> in most of the areas of learning, by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1.
4. In the personal targets set at annual reviews or in individual education plans (IEPs), children by the age of five and pupils at each key stage make good progress. By the age of 19 students are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. They make good progress in the ASDAN Towards Independence programme. Students help to compile their own records of achievement and these show that they gain many personal successes in a range of work related and social skills. They are able successfully, to move on to placements at a college of further education or other adult provision.
5. Pupils with PMLD make good progress and their achievements are good against targets set in their IEPs. Older PMLD pupils work successfully using the Accreditation for Living Skills (ALL) curriculum which provides them with a rich variety of sensory and environmental experiences, during special lessons when they are withdrawn from their class. In other lessons they work successfully alongside pupils of their own age and, with the support of staff, are able to participate in many of the same activities and make good progress in the subjects, relative to their learning needs.
6. The progress of pupils with challenging or difficult behaviour is good. Some pupils learn to modify or reduce their unacceptable behaviour and learn to know how to control their feelings and emotions better. Others need continuing close adult support in order to be able to manage their behaviour.

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<sup>2</sup> Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

7. A significant number of pupils make very good and often excellent progress in integrating into local primary or secondary mainstream schools. They succeed in adjusting their social interactions to match the different environment and usually also make good progress in their academic attainments, although these are inevitably often lower than the peer group of pupils in the classes that they join.
8. Pupils enjoy coming to school and when they arrive at school are happy and looking forward to their day. Despite their difficulties, they try very hard and work to the best of their ability. They show very positive attitudes to their learning and behave very well in and around the school.
9. At the meeting prior to the inspection, and in their questionnaires, parents were happy with the attitudes and behaviour of their children. Most pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties, respond well to the school's rules and emphasis on positive behaviour. They are able to understand the difference between right and wrong behaviours and adapt their behaviour to be more appropriate.
10. Pupils respond well to systems of reward and enjoy celebrating their successes and those of others. They are confident and willing to join in as fully as they can in all activities. They listen carefully to instructions, concentrate and persevere to complete tasks. They are friendly and well mannered, kind and considerate of others. Pupils develop good personal skills and work well, both independently and co-operatively in-groups. These aspects make a significant contribution to their progress. Pupils with PMLD respond well to the stimulus of physical activities, such as swimming, and to tasks that form part of the sensory curriculum. These pupils are valued members of every class group and enjoy the friendship and help of their peer group. Since the last inspection the school has successfully maintained high standards of behaviour.
11. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good throughout the school. Pupils respond well to the help and guidance available to them and feel valued by staff. Bullying or harassment is very rare and pupils were able to tell inspectors that incidents if they did occur were dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils were clear about what they should do if someone was unkind to them.
12. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. They are eager and willing to take responsibility in class and in activities around the school: for example, taking it in turns to give out the drinks at break-time. At lunchtimes some of the older pupils help those in wheel chairs, their active involvement helps support the school community. Every effort is made to provide pupils with the opportunity to be independent, although the current library accommodation impedes this.
13. Overall attendance is good. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. There is very little unauthorised absence and most is due to sickness, medical appointments or holidays during term time.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. Overall, teaching is very good. In the 80 lessons observed there is excellent teaching in 5 per cent of lessons, very good teaching in 25 per cent; good teaching in 55 per cent and satisfactory teaching in 15 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.

15. The teaching of English is good, overall; for listening and speaking it is very good, for writing good, and for reading satisfactory. Teaching is good overall in all the other subjects of the curriculum and therefore extremely supportive of pupil's learning and behaviour, both of which are very good. Recent changes to the format used for lesson planning and the introduction of half-term plans are good. They provide a suitable structure that enables teachers to set objectives or targets for each pupil and to measure the results of their learning against these targets.

16. Teachers have good subject knowledge and apply this well. They also have very good knowledge of pupils' needs and make a careful analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. This was seen in the carefully produced pen portraits, or profiles of each pupil that are used for Annual Review Reports and, on a daily basis, for the teaching team in each classroom. Individual education plans are similarly very well produced and used to inform teaching.

17. Lessons have stimulating activities that make them interesting, challenging and fun for pupils to participate in. There were four excellent lessons seen during the inspection and many very good ones. In an excellent lesson of physical education (horse-riding), teachers liaised very well with Riding for the Disabled Instructors to provide a stimulating and challenging set of riding tasks for pupils. Expert knowledge of riding by the instructor, allied to the excellent knowledge of pupils needs and abilities, meant that each pupil could participate fully and gain in riding skills as well as in confidence and self esteem. The lesson was great fun for the pupils and there was very evident enjoyment.

18. Teamwork is another very good feature of teaching across the school. Teachers and learning support assistants work very closely to ensure that each pupil's needs are met. Learning support assistants give invaluable support and have a significant impact upon the quality of learning and progress of pupils. This was seen in an excellent lesson, this time in an English literacy hour. Staff persevered whole-heartedly in helping each pupil to make progress using initial letter sounds.

19. There is very good management and control of behaviour, and in particular the management of difficult or challenging behaviour. This was seen across all lessons. Teachers set tasks that are interesting and appropriate. They use praise and encouragement frequently and appropriately. Staff are calm, positive and purposeful in their approach and have high expectations of participation and behaviour by pupils. Teachers use the school's 'Team Teach'<sup>1</sup> approach to management and control of challenging and difficult behaviours very effectively to support pupils' learning.

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<sup>1</sup> staff working consistently together to reduce aggressive or disruptive behaviour of pupils.

20. Teachers use day-to-day recording and assessment well and set realistic and achievable objectives for each pupil in their half-term plans, relating these to pupils IEPs. The setting of homework is spasmodic and varies from class to class so that it does not properly support pupils' progress.

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

21. Satisfactory improvement has been made with regard to the curriculum issues raised in the last inspection. The headteacher and senior staff have worked hard and succeeded in improving the quality of provision. There are better procedures than before for ensuring that policy statements are written and ratified by the governing body, and that systems for the review of the curriculum are in place. Senior staff are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and continue to address the weaknesses. They have even anticipated the Year 2000 Curriculum Orders in their school development plan. A radical change has been made in the provision for pupils with PMLD, with new organisation, so that these pupils spend most of their time in class with peer groups, but have continuing support from a specialist teacher, either in their classroom or in the special needs base. This is good provision. There is also a distinct policy and scheme of work for many subjects to meet the specific curriculum needs of PMLD pupils.

22. The curriculum now meets requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education. There is a satisfactory balance and breadth to the curriculum and this is shown in subject documentation, also by the school's own audit of the curriculum timetable. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught to all pupils, with the exception of a modern foreign language, which is taught to Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils. There is satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education (PSE), including sex and drugs education. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory, and suitably follows the desirable learning outcomes<sup>2</sup>, although the quality and range of the curriculum offered has some weaker areas. The curriculum for Post 16 students is satisfactory and has some good features, such as the links with local colleges of further education which students attend on one-day-a-week placements.

23. Current curriculum documentation is unsatisfactory; the policy statement is out of date, though it is being reviewed; there is no policy and procedure on assessment and recording; and there is no whole-school policy and scheme of work for information and communications technology and personal and social education. Such omissions and the presence of outdated documents do not do justice to the actual good practice of teachers in the school. However, even within this generally good picture there is some lack of uniformity that would be improved and supported by more clearly identified procedures.

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<sup>2</sup> Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

24. The National Literacy Hour and the National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced to the school with careful adaptations to make them relevant to pupils' needs. They are both suitably extended to pupils in the secondary phase of the school. Further work is being continued by teachers to increase the quality and impact of these sessions across the school. The approach to the teaching of reading needs to be made more consistent across the school with more attention to the use of phonics and a whole school approach to a reading scheme

25. As with many special schools, transport arrangements make activities after school virtually impossible. There is, however, a weekly youth club for older pupils. All pupils have access to a broad range of visits, trips and residential stays that enhance their learning opportunities. These are well organised and matched to the needs of pupils of all ages.

26. A good service agreement with the careers service ensures that links are sustained. Pupils from Years 9 to 13 have careers advice and guidance and parents are fully involved. Work experience placements exist for some students Post 16, but these at present are restricted to the type of work that students can be expected to help with on site, such as working alongside the school's caretaker, or helping with younger pupils in their classrooms. Work experience placements in the local community are not yet provided and would greatly extend learning opportunities. Students successfully follow a work related curriculum using the ASDAN Towards Independence programmes. This provides nationally recognised accreditation.

27. There are good opportunities for pupils to integrate into local schools. Children in the Nursery class do this each week for a few hours as appropriate. There are a number of integration placements that operate very effectively for older pupils. Currently five pupils benefit from once-a-week placements at either local primary or high schools. Arrangements to achieve this are made by the headteacher in the first instance, and sustained by other staff. There is good and successful professional liaison with other schools and the local education authority to establish the administration, staffing and funding of this integration.

28. Profound and multiple learning difficulties pupils of have good learning opportunities. They participate in lessons with other pupils of the same age. Specialist teachers provide individual extra support in the special needs classroom, where pupils are withdrawn for parts of their curriculum. There is a satisfactory sensory curriculum that has recently been augmented by the introduction of new resources in the special needs base. The ALL curriculum is followed and this gives older pupils and students good opportunities to supplement experience found in the subjects. Teachers arrange well organised visits for pupils to places in the local community as part of the ALL programme.

29. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. There are collective acts of worship across the week and their themes are suitably planned in advance. Representatives of local churches are frequent visitors to these assemblies. Opportunities are taken in classes to further develop pupils' spiritual development. An example of this was the sense of wonder shown by pupils in a history lesson as they explored the ideas about life after death of the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils develop a good awareness of other faiths in religious education.

30. Children under five and pupils up to the age of seven develop a clear awareness of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Older pupils make moral decisions and understand the reason for them. They learn the values of honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice. There is a strong moral code throughout the school, which is reflected in the very good standards in relationships and behaviour.

31. The school involves itself well in the culture of the local community and pupils have many educational and social visits to places of interest. Multi-cultural awareness is provided across the curriculum. For example, in art and music pupils experience the work of artists and musicians throughout the world. In religious education pupils study the customs and beliefs of other cultures. History and geography include studies of people in different parts of the world, their beliefs and ways of life. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the richness of their own cultures, alongside the diversity of cultures throughout the world.

32. Pupils are given every encouragement to develop very good social relationships and to work together co-operatively in lessons. Older pupils help younger ones, for example, at lunch times. They respond well with a good awareness of the needs of others. The vocational courses, arranged in Key Stage 4 and for the Post 16 students, play a significant part in the development of pupils' social awareness.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

33. The school makes very good provision for the welfare, support and guidance of all pupils, in a caring and supportive environment. A strong emphasis is placed on the welfare of pupils and this has a beneficial effect upon their learning and gives them the ability and confidence to cope very effectively with school life. Parents expressed the view that the school provides consistently good support for their children, and that it is a caring place in which their children feel happy and safe. Inspection evidence confirms these opinions. The school is a very orderly, caring and sharing community, which abides by a few simple rules. These enhance the pupils' development of self-discipline, personal and social skills and result in very good standards of behaviour. All staff set very good role models and have a very good knowledge of each pupil, which they use well to meet individual care and social needs.

34. The support provided to pupils with special educational needs is good and the school works closely with other agencies and specialist teachers where necessary. Pupils with complex or profound learning needs are integrated well into classes, and, where appropriate, given in-class support in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, with effective help from teaching, learning support assistants and specialist staff.

35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. Generally parents are conscientious in notifying the school when their children are absent. Staff make further enquiry about any pupil absences, where no notification has been received from parents. Punctuality is monitored carefully and transport arrival times are monitored closely; there is rarely a problem caused by lateness of transport. This is an improvement since the previous report.

36. There are good procedures in place for child protection and promoting the well being and health and safety of all pupils. Staff have a high awareness of these procedures. The school has very close links with other agencies and deals effectively with any concerns they may have. The school nurse draws up care plans for pupils with medical needs in conjunction with staff and parents. The nurse visits the school regularly.

37. The school is clean and well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff and health and safety checks are carried out regularly. The school has been awarded the *Healthy Norfolk 2000 Award*, and provides a comprehensive programme, which promotes healthy and safe living.

38. The school has very good procedures to promote and maintain good behaviour with a reward system that pupils understand and value. There are clear guidelines for staff that are consistently implemented throughout the school. Appropriate procedures are in place for dealing with bullying and any incidents that arise are taken very seriously. Staff take appropriate action for these promptly and effectively. This is confirmed by reports from parents. Pupils with behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviour are managed well and realistic targets are set in individual behaviour plans to help to improve behaviour.

39. Overall, assessment procedures are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements. Pupils with PMLD are now accredited through the ALL programme. Students at Post 16 attain accreditation through the ASDAN Towards Independence modules. Teachers use baseline assessments, and assessments on entry and subsequently, measure performance on the 'P' scales (Pre-Level 1 National Curriculum) to assess pupils' attainment. These, together with standard procedures for teacher assessment in English, mathematics and science, are effective in guiding pupils' IEPs. Procedures for IEPs and annual reviews are well established and are of good quality. Targets are specific and measurable, for both academic and personal and social development. They are set and reviewed every six months, informed by the pupils' annual reviews and are valuable in assessing how well pupils are achieving.

40. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science, where clear recording systems are also in place to monitor progress and inform planning. Some of the other subjects, however, give information about the experiences pupils have undertaken, rather than what they have learned in the year. The school keeps good evidence of achievements in pupils' files, or records of achievements, and in photographs, well annotated to demonstrate experiences and achievements.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

41. The school's relationship with parents is good and benefits from the commitment of staff to working in partnership with parents. From the response to the parents' questionnaire, and at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, it is apparent that parents are supportive of the school. Parents comment very favourably on the openness of the school and say that they are made to feel welcome and that all staff are very approachable. The school has recently introduced a 'Home-School Agreement' that all the parents have signed. Parents are encouraged to attend parents evenings and annual reviews and there is good attendance at these.

42. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Parents are kept well informed through regular letters about school life. The school prospectus and governors' annual report provide up-to-date information about the school. Annual written reports and reviews are generally good and provide helpful information on the work that has been covered, and pupils' progress. However, they sometimes lack detail on what pupils know and can do.

43. Individual education plans for pupils are drawn up to provide appropriate targets, which are shared with parents at reviews and their comments and observations are included. Home-school books are provided and these are a useful method of communicating to parents, what pupils have been learning, and how they, as parents, can help. Good communication is maintained between home and school and parents can email or telephone the school. The escorts on school transport also provide a valuable link between parents and the school.

44. The school has successfully built on the good relationships established with parents reported at the last inspection and continues to promote partnership in learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

45. The school is effectively led and managed by the headteacher who works with commitment and energy for the welfare and progress of all the pupils at the school. She sets a good example to colleagues and is always available during the day to assist them and pupils alike. The headteacher has the full support of the governing body and the staff. Very strong teamwork has a very positive impact upon the learning and general well being of all pupils. The school is a happy and purposeful place.

46. Since the previous inspection the headteacher has improved the management structure so that all staff have the opportunity to take part in the decision-making process. The deputy headteacher and the co-ordinator of the key stages are effective managers and play a significant role in the day-to-day organisation and smooth running of the school. The middle management structure has recently been further extended to include the Post 16 co-ordinator, which will bring greater coherence in overall planning and will allow the headteacher more time to plan ahead.

47. In the previous inspection the role of subject co-ordination was judged to be weak. Although some improvements have been made, there is still a need to strengthen these roles further. Subject action planning is not fully in place. Job descriptions are in most cases out of date. They lack reference to specific areas of responsibility and need to be reviewed. Time for subject co-ordinators to discharge their duties, particularly those concerned with monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, should be planned for and allocated within the timetable.

48. The governing body gives very good support to the staff of the school and is proud of the pupils and their achievements. Many governors take an active interest in the school's progress and development and each of them has a responsibility for a subject of the curriculum, such as literacy or numeracy. Each year governors make at least one visit to the classrooms. They sit in on lessons and get first hand knowledge of the teaching and learning that takes place. In this way, governors become more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They put this knowledge to good use in their extensive committee work and are beginning to develop a long term strategy for the school. They have kept a watchful eye upon the progress of the Action Plan following the previous inspection.

49. Through the finance committee the governing body is closely involved in the budgeting of school expenditure and has played a significant part in ensuring the prudent management of the school's finances. The chair of governors meets the headteacher for a business meeting in school on a regular basis to exchange information and to share in the school's successes. Teachers welcome the support offered by the governors. The headteacher encourages and appreciates the contributions that governors make to the life of the school. Governors meet all their statutory obligations. Indeed, the annual report to parents was singled out for special praise by a local newspaper for its clarity and accessibility. The governors are part of the team effort that characterises all aspects of school management and organisation.

50. The school's vision for pupil achievement is clearly set out in the school development plan. It is aptly summarised in the words: '... to promote individual development, independence, tolerance and equality'. Inspectors found that this aim was very much in evidence throughout the school. The school continually seeks new and imaginative ways of providing for pupils in its care. Equality of opportunity underpins all that the school does and is present in every classroom. Realistic opportunities are provided for all pupils to enjoy success, thereby raising their self-esteem. Whole school targets are not established beyond those required for SATS and GCSE, and these are set at 0 per cent. Opportunities to measure whole school rates of performance in key areas such as literacy and numeracy are not yet taken.

51. In response to the recommendations of the previous report, the school development plan now contains targets, and how much they will cost to implement, worked out over a five-year period. This means that the headteacher and the governors can plan strategically, using funding from all available sources. The plan sets out an extensive list of priorities and targets for future improvement. The style of the previous one-year plan, however, was better, as it had more detail. Progress could be seen at a glance. It is the school's intention to revert to this format in future plans. The progress of the plan is regularly monitored and updated. The process for setting and subsequently monitoring the budget is good. Alternatives are

considered when allocating funds based on the priorities in the SDP, and the governing body appropriately questions decisions prior to spending. Best value is sought when deciding how funds will be spent. Long-term development planning is more secure than at the previous inspection. The budget is now prudently managed and the school's account is in credit by a modest amount, reversing the debit balance of three years ago.

52. Good use is made of the various additional grants that the school receives and their use is carefully monitored and recorded. The school enthusiastically enters local competitions in order to improve its finances and enhance provision for the pupils. During the inspection week, for example, the school learned that it had won a minibus. The school administrator keeps all accounts meticulously and provides good quality information for the headteacher and governors. Effective use is made of new technology in school administration. The administrative staff of the school are hardworking and a valuable part of the school team. They deal promptly and efficiently with all routine business, enabling the headteacher and staff to maintain a strong focus on teaching and learning.

53. Although there is no systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching at this time, there are satisfactory informal procedures, so that the teaching of all staff has been observed, and an assessment given, by both the headteacher and a local education authority adviser in the past year. The formal professional appraisal of staff is unsatisfactory, having been suspended for some time, but training needs are linked to priorities in the SDP. All members of staff have benefited from the training provided for the literacy and numeracy strategies. The co-ordinator of information and communications technology also gives appropriate training, so that all staff are competent and confident in using computers. The induction of new staff is satisfactory, though there is no written guidance to supplement the informal mentoring assistance given, other than the good general staff handbook.

54. As reported in 1996, staffing levels for both teaching and support staff continue to be unsatisfactory, both in comparison with national guidelines and when compared with that of similar schools. There are too few staff. The school budget has insufficient funds to allow the governing body to employ the required number of teachers and learning support assistants to meet the very wide range of learning and behavioural needs of the pupils. This shortfall in staff numbers has considerable impact upon the level of support available to the pupils and the non-contact time available to subject co-ordinators for lesson observation. There is a high proportion of staff with a special needs qualification. The lack of sufficient numbers of learning support staff is particularly noticeable in the nursery, where it significantly impairs the quality of their learning experiences.

55. Accommodation has not improved since the last inspection and remains poor. The local education authority has notified the school that it has authorised a redevelopment, to be completed by the end of the financial year 2001/2, of the toilet and changing areas around the hydrotherapy pool. This still leaves important facilities that are unsatisfactory, such as those for science, design and technology, music, indoor physical education (including the storage of large equipment) suitable for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. The classroom accommodation for the Post 16 students is crowded and inadequate. The school has devised, adapted or constructed appropriate areas for a medical room, art room, information and communications technology suite and the central storage of curriculum resources, from within its own budget. Staff and pupils make good use of the facilities available and all classrooms and corridors have attractive displays of the pupils' work. Overall, resources are satisfactory. There has been a

satisfactory improvement in resources for most subjects, particularly in English and mathematics - a consequence of the two initiatives - but resources are unsatisfactory in physical education at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in information and communications technology generally. The library does not have satisfactory resources.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

### **56. In order to sustain the school's many strengths and to address the weaker areas, the school and the local education authority should:**

- Improve the facilities at the school. The local education authority should make the necessary improvements to pupils' toilets, changing and shower facilities without delay. Other facilities such as those for science, design and technology, and the base for Post 16 students should form part of future planning for development and improvement;  
*(Paragraph: 55)*
- Ensure that a sufficient number of teachers and learning support assistants are provided to meet the curriculum needs of all pupils;  
*(Paragraph: 54)*
- Review job descriptions, so that they include reference to responsibilities of subject leaders for subject action plans as part of the school improvement plan and for monitoring and evaluating curriculum and teaching;  
*(Paragraph: 47)*
- Continue work to ensure a consistent approach across the school to the Literacy Hour and in particular to reading and set whole school targets in reading and writing to extend opportunities for learning and progress;  
*(Paragraphs: 72, 69)*
- Continue to address improvements to the curriculum documentation by ensuring that there is a whole school curriculum and assessment statement, that schemes of work are completed where there are gaps, and that the schemes of work for all subjects have specific reference to the use of information and communications technology.  
*(Paragraph: 23)*

### **57. Other weaker areas that the school might wish to include in its action plan:**

- The provision for children under five should be enhanced by planning for the introduction of the new curriculum for the foundation stage at the earliest opportunity;  
*(Paragraph: 66)*
- Opportunities for students Post 16 to have work experience and to use local leisure facilities should be increased.  
*(Paragraph: 26)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	134

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
5	25	55	15	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils on the school's roll	77
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	20

#### **English as an additional language**

	<b>No of pupils</b>
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	<b>No of pupils</b>
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	1

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.49

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.18

*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	2
Chinese	0
White	75
Any other minority ethnic group	0

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes:**

##### **Y N – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.75
Average class size	8

##### **Education support staff: Y N – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	13.2 FTE
Total aggregate hours worked per week	471

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	<b>1999/2000</b>
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	<b>£</b>
Total income	710734.00
Total expenditure	696042.00
Expenditure per pupil	8924.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	15234.00
Balance carried forward to next year	29926.00

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	77
Number of questionnaires returned	39

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	79	18	0	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	64	26	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	29	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	54	15	0	8
The teaching is good.	82	15	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	82	13	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	90	10	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	18	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	67	31	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	13	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	19	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	32	6	6	9

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION AGE**

58. Children under five in the nursery and reception class. At the time of inspection there were seven children who varied in age from three to five. Three children attend full time for five days a week. Three children attend for four days a week, and one for two days a week. Children's attainment on entry is very low they have severe or profound multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), and some have autism with challenging behaviour. When children transfer into Key Stage 1, and they attend full time, they are well prepared for their new class and they are able to take a full part in the life of the main school. However, due to their severe learning needs, most have not achieved the desirable learning outcome<sup>2</sup> in most of the areas of learning.

59. Children make satisfactory progress in their personal and social development. The teacher and nursery nurse have very good relationships with the children and this has a significant impact on the children's sense of security and their quality of learning. Not enough distinction is made at times between the structured play needs of autistic children and the freer choices that should be made available to the other children.

60. Children make at least satisfactory and often good progress in speaking and listening. They listen with interest to stories, songs and rhymes and most can follow a story, responding to the pictures, and show awareness that print has meaning. When spoken to, higher-attaining children respond readily, using words and sentences. All children understand what is said to them and try to make appropriate responses. Staff address the needs of children by using the information from the assessments they make and by successfully adapting their approaches to provide effective teaching at the level of each child. Staff help children to make marks, by tracing the form of letters, and by prompting them how to sound words. In reading some of the higher-attaining children know that illustrations and pictures can help them to build stories. Children respond well to stories and rhymes, with lively interest and enthusiasm.

61. By the time they are five, children count up to five. They understand 'more or less' and 'big and little'. Children sort numbers of objects into colours or by type and some have an awareness of the number symbol. They join in number rhymes such as *Five Currant Buns*, make models of buns out of play-dough and match with items one-to-one.

62. The progress of children in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world is unsatisfactory. Planning does not provide for a wide enough range of activities. There is not enough opportunity for children to explore the use of information and communication technology.

63. The planned curriculum for creative development has a realistic range of opportunities to support the children's development. However, too much is done for children and they are

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<sup>2</sup> Desirable learning outcomes – these are the goals for learning for the children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

not given sufficient opportunity to experiment with a wide enough range of materials. An example of this was seen in a classroom display of a collage of birds, butterflies and bees and a display of aeroplanes, where too few opportunities had been allowed for the children to be self-creative or expressive. The analysis of children's work shows that they have good opportunities for finger and foot painting and for sticking, tearing and cutting tasks.

64. Children's progress in physical development is satisfactory, but more opportunities for children to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing self-control and co-ordination could be created, and less time spent sitting, listening to the teacher. A good lesson with the children playing with a parachute provided a good example of what should be done more frequently. Here the children responded well, showing a keenness to hide and to take their turn in being lifted up. They were having fun. The assistance of a parent helping the staff with the parachute game aided children's learning and progress, and the teacher used relevant mathematical language, such as 'up' and 'under'. The half-term plan allowed for only two such activities.

65. The quality of teaching for the under fives is at least satisfactory and has some good features. The last inspection did not report in detail on the curriculum or teaching for the under fives. It is not, therefore, possible to draw comparisons. Expectations are sometimes too high, but the planning and teaching of basic skills is effective. The management of children is satisfactory, and teachers make good use of support staff and resources. Teachers use assessment satisfactorily to inform planning. There is very good collaboration with the speech and language therapist who has direct involvement in some lessons.

66. There is a need to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum for under fives, particularly in respect of knowledge and understanding, creative development and physical development. The present quality and range of learning opportunities across all the areas of learning are sometimes limited. However, the co-ordinator is planning to introduce the new Foundation Curriculum for the under fives, starting in September 2000. Resources are satisfactory.

## **ENGLISH**

67. Achievement is good overall. In relation to their individual targets at the end of Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 and by the age of 19, pupils make very good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Their progress in reading is satisfactory across the school. Progress in writing is good in all key stages.

68. Since the last inspection, the emphasis, across the curriculum, on developing and supporting pupils' understanding and use of the spoken word has led to good progress and an improvement in standards. This is suitably reinforced by the use of signing (a manual means of communication) across the school. Signing is used consistently and well by staff to help pupils' learning. Pupils listen with interest and are eager to express themselves, verbally or non-verbally. Good use of questioning by teachers ensures that pupils are involved and given good opportunities to contribute their own ideas. Pupils express their thoughts with enthusiasm, using as far as they can a verbal, spoken means of communication. An example of this was seen in an excellent literacy lesson to improve the pupils' literacy and communication skills in Years 5 and 6, with lower-attaining pupils. The teacher supported pupils'

understanding when introducing the characters in a 'big book', very well by helping them to match the characters to living animals. Staff recorded the progress of the pupils. Pupils were communicating well verbally or non-verbally. They named dolls accurately.

69. The progress that pupils make across the school in reading is satisfactory. The high standard reported in the last inspection has not been sustained. This partly because there are more lower-attaining pupils, but also because the development of early reading skills is not consistently organised for pupils as they move through the school. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular in Key Stages 3 and 4, read and understand simple passages from books. The school has recently started to use phonics and this is having some success especially for pupils from the end of Key Stage 1 onwards, who are starting to recognise words in simple reading matter. When reading aloud, with assistance, they employ the knowledge of sounds associated with letters to enhance meaning. Older pupils express an appreciation of stories and identify their favourite characters. The school has a wide range of reading schemes. These need organising so that there is a closer match to pupils' reading levels. Teachers select pupils' books at random or allow pupils to choose their own book, which is sometimes unsuitable. There is no scheme of work to support the development of reading across the school.

70. The school library is inadequately stocked and has too few fiction and non-fiction books to help pupils with their learning. It does not provide pupils with opportunities for choosing appropriate reading materials to help their learning.

71. Pupils make good progress with their writing skills across the school. This progress is supported well by the good teaching of the use of symbols. Lower-attaining pupils write by copying under a teacher's model or by hand-over-hand copying. Higher attaining pupils learn to shape letters and words, match pictures to words and copy-write these words. Many pupils at each key stage work very hard at copying letters, words and sentences. They use key word lists and associated pictorial symbols to help them with spellings. Older pupils in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 can write simple sentences, for example when writing about their college placements.

72. The quality of teaching is generally good across the school and is very good in Key Stage 2. Effective use is being made of the guidelines for the National Literacy Strategy and this is being successfully adapted for the needs of pupils in the school, although teachers are aware that they need to make further adjustments. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and create a positive working atmosphere to which pupils respond well. The management of pupils is consistently good and pupils generally work hard and try their best. For pupils with challenging behaviour, teachers use very good management techniques following school guidelines and this helps these pupils to make progress. Pupils show very good levels of interest in their work and an enthusiasm for learning. Many concentrate well, listening and following instructions, and put great efforts into their work. Learning support assistants are experienced and knowledgeable and work as part of a team to support pupils' progress. The behaviour of pupils is very good overall, due to the good teaching and very good levels of learning support which they receive.

73. One factor under-pinning the quality of the teaching in Key Stage 2, is the very good use made of assessment procedures. Teachers are making the best use of the recently introduced daily recording of the objectives for each pupil. They make accurate assessments

of progress and make good use of them to set objectives.

74. Across the school, procedures for the assessment of English are generally good. There is evidence that some teachers are using information from their recording and assessment of pupils' attainment to successfully modify their teaching, as a result of their raised awareness of pupils' needs.

75. The co-ordinator is very aware of the developmental needs for the subject. However, as she works part time, for three days a week, no allowance has been made for her to have time to discern the strengths and weaknesses of the subject's provision across the school. The use of information and communication technology could be extended further. Resources are satisfactory, but need organising better and matching to pupils' needs, in particular to support reading. Further work is needed to complete the overall scheme of work and this should include assessment and show the approach to the National Literacy Strategy.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. Achievement in mathematics in all key stages is good in relation to pupils' ages and abilities. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and at all stages they are given the opportunity to apply what they know to everyday problems, in number and in shape. This enhances the quality of learning and, by the end of Key Stage 4, enables pupils to see the usefulness of what they have learned. In turn, this improves motivation and self-esteem.

77. By age seven, most pupils can count to five. Pupils sing the song *Five Little Ducks*, take away a duck at each verse, and count slowly down to one. They joint five dots in numerical order to sketch the outline of a tent. Pupils count the spots on dominoes and, with utmost concentration, add 3 to 2. They know the names of coins and can make up simple amounts of money. Pupils use a hand span to measure furniture in the classroom. They record the hair colour of their classmates and with the help of the teacher illustrate the information on a simple chart.

78. By age 11, pupils extend their knowledge of shapes and identify a circle and a square. They make and wear a conical hat made from a semicircle. Pupils play a game, timed against the clock, where they match shapes and try to beat the fastest time. Pupils count in unison to six and some to ten, and then apply what they know to counting the leaves on a twig. They use a timeline to plot the main events of the day. Most can tell the time to the hour. In most exercises, pupils are encouraged to sing an appropriate song to confirm their learning.

79. By age 14, pupils join 20 consecutive numbers to form a shape. They find the missing number in a sequence. Pupils learn more about shapes and, for example, identify a cylinder and a cube by appearance and touch. They sort and match shapes by completing puzzles of increasing difficulty. Most pupils in one class were able to draw the other half of a symmetrical shape and some were able to demonstrate their skill on the blackboard.

80. By age 16, pupils measure classroom items by the use of a metre rule and compare the results of similar measurements taken in hand spans. Pupils estimate lengths and check by measurement. They know the names of all coins and can make simple purchases and check the change. By age eighteen, pupils use their number skills to plan a leavers' party and work out in how many ways it is possible to combine four colours-prior to making jellies, which

they then eat.

81. Pupils know how to use number in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in food technology they measure out the correct ingredients to make a cake. In art, they use their knowledge about shapes to draw regular patterns, suitable for home decoration. In music, they use their knowledge of number to sing action songs and in information technology they use programs for addition and subtraction and matching numbers to objects.

82. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and it has very good features. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Of all lessons seen, eighty per cent were good or very good; the remainder satisfactory. Lessons are very well planned and very carefully matched to the needs of the individual pupil. This means that pupils are able to progress at their own rate. Pupils' motivation is high because they are able to achieve. Teachers manage their classes very well. They are kind and sensitive in their handling of the pupils' complex needs and if they are sometimes exhausted by the demands placed upon them, they do not show it. Relationships are excellent; pupils and teachers like each other. This is fundamental to learning and to progress and motivation. In turn, pupils are eager to learn. Many concentrate well. Those who do not are sometimes frustrated by their inability to progress and find it hard to contain the emotions that this engenders. These pupils are helped through difficult moments by the sheer constancy of the care they are offered.

83. Teachers expect a lot of their pupils and this encourages positive attitudes and good progress at all key stages. Teachers assess the work of pupils more consistently than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers are well aware of what pupils know, understand and can do and use this to plan individual work programmes. A portfolio of mathematics work is being developed as an aid to assessment. The quality of teaching is greatly enhanced by the close understanding between the teacher and the learning support assistants. The quality of teamwork is excellent and pupils benefit immensely from the easy rapport and the positive approach to learning. Overall, mathematics is taught in an environment that provides well for individual progress and for the application of knowledge to everyday life.

84. There is much better management than at the time of the previous inspection, although insufficient time is allowed for the co-ordinator assess the contribution of other teachers. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented and forms the spine of the scheme of work. All pupils have individual numeracy targets. Progress towards their achievement is monitored at the annual review. There are bright and stimulating displays, which encourage number development. Resources for mathematics are good and are very well used to stimulate and retain pupils' interest. There is too little computer work planned on a regular basis for all classes.

## **SCIENCE**

85. Overall, pupils' achievements in science are good. In lessons, pupils' progress and achievement range between very good and satisfactory. Pupils make good progress over time throughout all four key stages; Post 16 their progress and achievements are satisfactory. No post-16 lessons were observed, but discussions with teachers, evidence from teachers' records and reports, and pupils' work and attitudes support this judgement.

86. By age seven, most pupils show a reaction to hot and cold water. Lower attaining pupils follow bubbles through water. Higher attaining pupils can tell the difference between a wet and dry cloth and sign their answer. By age 11, the majority of pupils can successfully demonstrate changes in movement by pushing and pulling. Higher-attaining pupils know how to light a bulb using a battery and wires and can add a switch to the circuit. Lower attaining pupils show enjoyment in using a switch to light a bulb or turn a fan on and off.

87. By age 14, higher-attaining pupils are able to describe the different aspects of the change in the appearance of water by temperature with prompts from teacher. They are able to predict whether an object will float or sink and check and then tabulate the results. Lower-attaining pupils are able to show their response to the different experience in sensation between ice and water. By age 16, most pupils have some concept of what scientific observation and experiment entail and meet the objectives set for them. They can name some things that are soluble in water, write simple words or short sentences and draw sketches to summarise the activity. They learn and use the new word 'soluble'.

88. Post 16, pupils compare the differences between themselves and their friends, such as height, colour of eyes and hair. They are able to practise personal hygiene and talk about the care of plants and pets. Pupils complete the scientific elements of the ASDAN Scheme.

89. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Planning is consistently very good and systematically details a range of carefully graded objectives and activities that will lead to the achievement, over time, of greater understanding. Teachers have very high expectations of both work rate and behaviour, which, together with the judicious use of praise and encouragement, enables lessons to move along well, with great effect. Pupils have a good rapport with their teachers and work in a mutually supportive atmosphere, which assists learning, as do their attitudes and behaviour, which are generally good and often very good. Continual challenge is offered by the introduction of increasingly demanding exercises, through carefully structured small steps. The majority of the teaching is oral and experimental. Some opportunities, in the classes for older pupils, are therefore missed. Not enough is done to encourage them to extend their writing and numeracy skills by the frequent recording of their observations. However, teachers' use of, and insistence upon, subject specific language is very good. Teachers record and assess pupils' learning well.

90. There has been a good improvement in science since the last inspection. Subject leadership is good and the scheme of work, which is being revised, is satisfactory. There is some informal monitoring of the curriculum by the co-ordinator and of teaching by the headteacher and a local education authority adviser, but this is not yet established as routine. Resources for learning at Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory, but the lack of a suitable science laboratory with its associated equipment prevents the full development of the subject at Key Stages 3 and 4.

## ART

91. Achievement is good overall. Pupils make very good progress over time in each key stage. Pupils learn a good range of skills and explore colour and medium.
92. By age 7, pupils explore the use of colour and different ways of making patterns on paper. Higher-attaining pupils hold a paint brush and make marks on paper or blow through a straw to make patterns. Lower-attaining pupils do similar activities but need hand-over-hand support from staff.
93. By age 11, pupils make 'bubble' prints. They choose their own colours and bottle shapes for blowing and creating bubbles of different sizes and shapes, and make a picture from them. Higher-attaining pupils work independently and have their own ideas. Lower-attaining pupils need individual adult support. They use symbols to identify colours and shapes. Most pupils begin to understand how different colours, textures and mediums can influence their work.
94. By the age of 14, pupils achieve a far wider range of skills. They explore, experiment and develop ideas using natural resources and materials. Higher-attaining pupils make rubbings using a variety of raised surfaces of every day objects to create patterns. They say whether a surface is rough or smooth, and understand *pattern*. They thread a needle and make patterns in thread or rushes to make a simple tapestry table mat. Lower-attaining pupils thread a shoelace through a board to improve their hand-eye co-ordination.
95. The analysis of pupils work in their folders, and of work displayed, shows good progress over time across a range of skills. These include, stencil drawings on mirrors, modelling figures in clay, making patterns with tessellated tiles, using textiles in collage work and in simple weaving, making silhouette paintings with colour wash and cut out shapes. Many of these activities are linked to work in other subjects such as history- drawings of Roman artefacts, religious education - making a clay, Buddhist-style offering bowl.
96. In each key stage, pupils with PMLD make good progress in exploring sensory activities, and share in experiences alongside other pupils. For example, holding a battery driven bubble machine to make bubbles.
97. Teaching is good overall and frequently very good. Lessons have very good planning and organisation and use a wide range of relevant activities to capture pupils' interest and imagination. The subject knowledge of teachers is very good, they have realistic expectations of pupil involvement and performance and make good use of praise and encouragement. This creates a good climate for learning and consequently the management of behaviour is also very good. An example of how all these qualities help to support good learning and progress was seen in a very good lesson in Key Stage 3 on printing and pattern making. The teacher had a calm purposeful approach, gave clear demonstrations and instructions to pupils and worked as a team with learning support assistant and a voluntary helper. The outcome was a lesson in which pupils were inspired and challenged to do well. They showed evident enjoyment and pride in what they were doing and produced very good results. Pupils met their individual targets, such as to talk about their work, or to print using different processes.

98. Learning is good. Pupils understand what they have to do to succeed in tasks and follow instructions well. They work hard and enthusiastically. Many can make their own evaluation of what they have achieved by the end of the lesson. Behaviour and attitude are equally good.

99. The new co-ordinator manages the subject well. Revision and extension of the scheme of work is being made, although the current one is satisfactory. Resources are good and there is now a classroom that is designated as the art room, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is no subject action plan and no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the work of others teaching the subject. The subject makes a significant contribution to spiritual and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. Standards of achievement in design and technology are satisfactory at all key stages.

101. By the age of seven, as part of their topic work, pupils work with card, balloons, straws, boxes, pipe cleaners and clay to build models of aeroplanes and helicopters. Higher-attaining pupils join paper, card and cloth with glue, paste and sticky tape. They fold paper into shapes and patterns and lift flaps or work levers in books or displays and begin to use simple tools. Lower-attaining pupils and those with more complex needs handle different materials and textures. They make choices and show preferences through gesture, eye-pointing and vocalisation. A few sign to show their understanding.

102. By age 11, pupils develop an understanding of the materials they work with. In one lesson, as part of an *Air and Bubbles Project*, pupils used reclaimed materials to make model washing machines. Higher-attaining pupils could clearly explain what they had done and why they had chosen the materials used. They show good dexterity and can mix and cut materials and become more skilled at joining some materials.

103. By age 14, pupils develop concentration and improve their cutting, joining and folding skills. Higher-attaining pupils use small tools, scissors, spoons and rollers skilfully to manipulate different resources. Pupils select highly appropriate materials to make up their chosen designs. For example in a class where a boy was making a bag using 'dishcloth' weaving, he chose with enormous care a mixture of wool, cotton, plastic and thread to ensure the correct textures to make his prepared design.

104. By age 16, most pupils can follow design and pictorial instructions to make an article or understand the processes and skills used in simple construction. They make masks and costumes for the Chinese New Year and make aeroplanes as part of a wind project. Higher-attaining pupils can plan work and talk about the sequence of their activity. Pupils with more complex needs choose from a selection of materials and designs and give a range of positive responses to work undertaken. Pupils with the most complex learning difficulties show obvious enjoyment in handling materials or mixing ingredients, for example in making healthy meals. They show extended eye contact and concentration when making their choices and preferences clearly known.

105. Older students Post 16 plan and research their work with appropriate support. In a project which entailed designing and making a bin for an office, kitchen or flat, they considered and tested several materials, giving due consideration to the eventual use of the product. Students evaluated their finished bins and explained clearly why some were lined and some had lids. They re-tested their bins for durability and strength and offered sensible and useful suggestions to others in the class.

106. Overall, teaching is good; it is good in Key Stage 2, very good in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key stage 4. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1. Teachers provide a good range of materials and resources, pupils develop an understanding of the materials they work with and develop skill in the use of small tools to manipulate them. Skills are taught and demonstrated well and higher-attaining pupils make rapid progress in using new techniques. Teachers manage behaviour well, through excellent relationships and a firm belief that pupils will do their best. They are skilful at bringing pupils with challenging behaviour back on task and they make good use of individual education plans and behaviour strategies. Pupils, in turn, are aware of behaviour that is acceptable in the classroom and try hard to follow classroom routines. Good attention is paid to the management and needs of pupils with more complex learning needs and autism, and this enables these pupils to function well in the classroom. Teachers work particularly well with learning support assistants, delegating successfully.

107. Learning is good overall. At all ages, pupils learn to listen to instructions and follow them carefully. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 work very well in groups, value each other's work and are respectful to the teacher. They are encouraged to clear away carefully after the session and they share materials sensibly. Lower-attaining pupils are very enthusiastic and co-operative. They are proud of their work and are pleased to show it to visitors. Attitudes and behaviour are very good because teaching is enthusiastic and motivating, and staff use very precise and clear explanations so that pupils know exactly what they need to do in order to be successful.

108. The subject co-ordinator, although new to the post, has very clear ideas on the development of the subject and is making effective changes. This, together with a good spirit of co-operation between staff, has led to satisfactory improvement in the organisation and teaching of the subject since the last inspection. The design and technology curriculum has been mapped and there is an up-to-date policy. The department is using the most recent curriculum materials and half-term plans contain pupil achievement objectives, which are tied in to targets in individual education plans and annual review targets. All staff use these consistently. Appropriate resources have been built up for the present situation of the school, however, there is no specialist room for secondary age pupils, who miss opportunities to experience a wide range of materials and resources, for example, large projects using power tools.

## **HUMANITIES (HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY)**

109. History and geography are taught together within a carefully planned curriculum that offers a good range and balance of learning opportunities from each subject. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement in the curriculum and teaching of these subjects.

110. Achievement overall is good. By the end of Key Stages 1, 3 and 4 and Post 16, pupils and students make good progress. In Key Stage 2, they make very good progress. This very good progress is supported by a suitable scheme of work, which is in place for Key Stages 1 and 2; as yet, there is no whole-school scheme for Key Stages 3 and 4, although planning by individual teachers is sound.

111. The analysis of pupils' work in Key Stages 1 and 2 reveals good examples of pupils studying weather and the local environment. Younger pupils, study the school grounds and older pupils study the local community immediately outside school. They make maps and weather charts. They examine the lives and clothes people wore in Victorian times, and the life styles of ancient civilisations, such as the ancient Egyptians. Very good progress in understanding about the lives of people a long time ago, was seen in an excellent history lesson. This involved pupils in Year 5 taking part an exciting role-play about the life of the ancient Egyptians. The teacher had prepared a very carefully structured range of resources matched very well to pupils' needs. Very good team work with learning support assistants helped to make this possible. There were excellent demonstrations by the teacher and very careful explanations. Consequently pupils showed high levels of involvement, interest and enthusiasm.

112. In Year 8 and 9 pupils make good progress with their understanding of direction, left and right, and of the use of the main points of the compass, north, south, east and west. Pupils successfully give each other directions to move along a marked course, moving so many points to the left or the right. When asked by the teacher to move to a point of the compass, they did so with high degrees of success.

113. Good display of pupils' work around the school further celebrated pupils' good progress overall. For example, a display about going to school in Roman times and maps of the local area in Norwich, of Norfolk and of places in India.

114. Learning is good. Pupils are enthusiastic and highly motivated. They show good concentration, interest and apply themselves well to tasks.

115. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 1, 3, 4 and for Post16, is good overall. In Key Stage 2 it is very good. Teachers plan effectively and show a very good awareness of pupils' needs. Teachers use a wide range of resources well. Relevant visits to museums and local historical sites, such as castles, further enhance pupils' learning.

116. There is a satisfactory scheme of work for Key Stages 1 and 2, but this needs extending to include Key Stages 3 and 4 and Post 16. A good range of relevant resources, including artefacts and CD-ROMS is used to support teaching.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Pupils' achievement in information and communications technology is satisfactory, and most pupils make sound progress in relation to their age and ability at each key stage.

118. By age seven, pupils use computers to listen to stories, choose colours, and match numbers, objects and symbols on computers in lessons. A few higher-attaining pupils establish mouse control, move the cursor on the screen with reasonable accuracy and use the space bar and arrow keys. Lower-attaining pupils, using a touch screen, recognise that they can cause a reaction on-screen by touching it. Pupils with the most complex needs use simple switch systems to change images on the screen.

119. By age 11, most pupils are able to use a mouse or roller-ball accurately and understand the connection between the mouse and the cursor on the screen. They recognise their own work and enter words and phrases on word processing software to communicate their ideas and information in different ways. They switch on the computers with support and understand that switches can be used to operate machines. Higher-attaining pupils can change the size and font on a word processing program and can make sets from images on the screen, dragging the mouse and using the keyboard effectively.

120. By age 14, most pupils can use the mouse to drag images on the screen. They use a word processing program with symbols to record their work and know how to use icons, open a program and save their work. They understand how to open and to close down the computer. They have a wider range of keyboard skills, and most can use the shift key to produce different case letters. A few higher-attaining pupils can copy from previously written text. They use the mouse effectively to select the program of their choice. Most switch, with confidence, from one menu to another. For example, in using an art program, most pupils access and select the paint and draw tools accurately. Higher-attaining pupils change the colour or pattern, following the instructions on their work card. Most pupils can save and print their work. Pupils with the most complex needs understand cause and effect and use switching systems to change colours and lights.

121. By age 16, most pupils can use a wider range of software and do so to improve the quality of work presentation. They can organise and put data into a database and they are able to change or delete information accurately. In one lesson seen pupils completed a 'Birthday' database, having collected information, organised fields, put in and deleted information and called up records. Higher-attaining pupils worked independently while those with lower attainment worked with varying degrees of support. Pupils with the most complex difficulties use a range of simple switch systems and electronic speech devices. They persevere in their attempts to explore cause and effect and show their delight at success with smiles, gestures and vocalisation.

122. Post 16, students have a good knowledge of the main keyboard and mouse functions and use them accurately to complete projects for their ASDAN folders. They use a variety of programs to communicate and display information. They can save and retrieve their work effectively.

123. information and communications technology is used to support other subjects, for instance, in English for reading and word processing, and in mathematics to reinforce number. However greater use should be made in across these and most other subjects, and this is an area which needs more planning and emphasis.

124. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and pupils grow in self-confidence and showing delight at their achievements. Pupils enjoy using computers; they respond very well to their teachers and work co-operatively together. They are able to concentrate for surprisingly long periods of time, and they can be trusted to use the computers sensibly. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour, which, combined with the high self-motivation of the pupils in this subject, enhances the learning process. Teachers are confident when teaching information and communications technology, and are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They encourage pupils to be as independent as possible, but when explanation or instruction is necessary it is given very clearly, so that pupils are unlikely to misunderstand what they are doing, or what they are required to do. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together so that support is well targeted and is very effectively used. As a consequence, when pupils use computers, they invariably do well both in the acquisition of new skills and in extending their concentration and focus. Most pupils are working at their own level, but teachers know and plan precisely for each pupil from a range of appropriate activities and programs. Teachers make good assessments of the work completed in plenary sessions and pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their own work.

125. The co-ordinator has completed an audit of equipment and skills within the school and has made a successful submission to the National Grid for Learning. There has been sound improvement in the rationalisation of resources and the provision of new computers and software since the last inspection. Out-of-date machines have been replaced and the range of software improved to promote more effective learning. This, in turn, has encouraged the increased use of information and communications technology to support learning in some subject areas. Although resources are much improved there are still too few computers and too limited a range of software for the numbers of pupils and their range of needs. This limits their experiences in information and communications technology. There is also an urgent need for an information and communications technology technician to support new developments in the subject and to release teachers from spending time on managing machines, which takes them away from tasks directly related to teaching. In-service training has been used well to improve the competence and confidence of both teachers and learning support assistants generally; more training is needed in the use of access and switching systems specifically geared to working with pupils with the most complex needs. The policy document needs updating in line with *Curriculum 2000* and further work needs to be completed on the scheme of work.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

### FRENCH

126. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the organisation and planning of French. The pilot scheme (reported at the last inspection) has been evaluated and the French course has been extended to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4. Pupils now have their full entitlement to a Modern Foreign Language. The subject policy and scheme of work are now in place and there is better planning and this will ensure that pupils build on their skills over time and do not repeat work unnecessarily. Resources have been audited, extended and centralised within the school and more efficient use is now made of them. The co-ordinator has made links with other schools with pupils with similar educational needs to facilitate regular visits to France. These opportunities are greatly enjoyed by the pupils who enhance their knowledge and experience by the chance to practice their skills in real situations and learn more about the culture of France.

127. Overall, pupils' achievement and progress in French is satisfactory.

128. By the age of 14, pupils can find France on the map and are aware of aspects of French life that are different from their own. They can repeat words and phrases in French that are familiar to them and understand phrases and words spoken to them by their teacher. They know numbers up to ten and can count with a minimum of support. Higher-attaining pupils in the key stage remember simple phrases, for example greetings and farewells and they are able to order a drink in the school '*French café*' politely and purposefully. They begin to build up a vocabulary of French words and short phrases, which they read correctly, taking care with pronunciation. They match words with the right objects. Pupils with the most complex needs choose items from a French menu read to them by their teacher and show distinct preferences and pleasure at the range of French songs, games and role-plays. Lower-attaining pupils know names for several drinks and kinds of food and begin to build up a vocabulary of days of the week, colours and numbers. They listen carefully to one another and their teacher, and follow instructions successfully. Higher attaining pupils can answer a limited range of questions in French. Younger pupils in Years 7 and 8 are consolidate the vocabulary associated with food and drink and the home.

129. By the age of 16, some higher attaining pupils are able to speak some familiar, well-rehearsed phrases confidently. They are more confident in asking and answering simple well-known questions. For example, one pupil asked of another "Qu'est ce que tu voudrais?" They answer correctly showing good understanding. Lower-attaining pupils begin to understand and respond to words and everyday phrases, for example they understand "Fromage ou paté?" and have a developing vocabulary for words for the home, and for food and drink and for the objects they see around them. They also know phrases used when meeting and leaving people. Pupils with the most complex needs show by eye pointing, gesture or vocalisation their enjoyment of the lessons, particularly the French music and French food. They experience aspects of another culture in the sounds, sights and smells of the 'French Café'

130. Teaching is consistently good. Teaching expertise is appropriate with lessons characterised by the teacher making confident use of the target language. Teachers use their very good relationships with pupils effectively by encouraging them to participate confidently and persevere with their efforts. They are patient while pupils respond and give them good opportunities to rehearse their language and become fully involved in the lesson. Lessons are lively and exciting with a range of activities that encourage and support pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy all the activities in French lessons and the enthusiasm of both teachers and support assistants make pupils curious about France and its culture and keen to try out phrases in French. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully and persevere in their attempts to pronounce words correctly. Pupils are highly motivated and therefore they stay on task and work sensibly together.

131. Time has been provided for the subject co-ordinator to develop planning documents but little up to date training has been given to either the subject co-ordinator or other members of the French department.

## MUSIC

132. Achievement in music in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good in relation to pupils' ages and abilities. Achievement in Key Stages 3 and 4 and Post 16 is satisfactory with several good features. Most pupils make good progress and enjoy a good range of musical experiences, particularly in singing. The music curriculum is strengthened by the high musical content in assembly, a wide range of visiting musicians and a series of concerts that the school performs for charitable causes. Music in the school has maintained the high profile noted at the previous inspection. It contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and provides them with many opportunities to enjoy working together.

133. By age seven, pupils select and play a percussion instrument to accompany a song from the Caribbean. Some know the names of the instruments. All are aware of the different sounds they make. Pupils keep good time with the music and show a good sense of rhythm. They know when to stop and when to start. Pupils are excited by music and this is reflected in their body language. They make music together and enjoy the experience.

134. By age 11, pupils are beginning to understand that different countries produce different music. In one class, pupils listen to the classical guitar music of Spain. Each pupil has the opportunity to play a few chords on the guitar and to experience the pulsating rhythms of flamenco dancing. Teacher and pupils clap to the beat of the music and become aware of changes in tempo.

135. By the age of 14, pupils are visiting *Woodstock* on video and the rock music of *Jimi Hendrix*. They listen to the early songs of *Bob Dylan* and learn about *flower power* with obvious pleasure. They burn a joss stick to add atmosphere. One pupil dresses in the clothes of the day and another is adorned with beads that provide a vivid recall of earlier times. Pupils' response to the music is very positive. They tap their feet in time and one pupil describes the music as *great*.

136. By the age of 16, pupils sing well-known songs and accompany themselves on percussion. They have a good recall of songs previously learnt and know all the words. Pupils correctly identify the main instruments of the orchestra and understand the difference between brass and stringed instruments. Post 16 pupils listen thoughtfully to three pieces of music and describe what they have heard and the way it makes them feel. They practise beating a rhythm and distinguish well between loud and soft.

137. Overall, the quality of music teaching is good. All lessons have good features. Lessons are well planned and take good account of the pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to make music and to experience the pleasure of playing together. Classes are sensitively and warmly managed which encourages the pupils to take a full part. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are rarely disappointed. Pupils enjoy music and want to take part. Teachers encourage pupils to sing in all music lessons and in one class, quiet background music is played as an accompaniment to other lessons. Teachers and assistants work very well together to provide all pupils with a memorable musical experience.

138. A very effective teacher and excellent musician manages the subject very well. He provides good support for his colleagues but has too little time allowed in which to directly monitor their teaching. Resources are good and well used. There is no specialist music room, which limits what can be achieved. However, teachers overcome this difficulty by having a stock of instruments in their classrooms. Music at the Hall School is essentially a practical activity, which is very fulfilling for the pupils. The excellent recording of the Millennium concert, in which each class sang the songs of a decade from the last century, provides the best example of this approach. At the previous inspection the strong musical tradition of the school was noted. That tradition continues into the new millennium and contributes significantly to the warm and friendly environment of the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Standards of achievement in physical education are good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All the main required areas of activity are covered. The school's provision for swimming and horse riding, as an adventurous pursuit, is very good. Swimming is given good priority for all groups and the school is very successful in developing pupils' confidence in the water and their ability to swim. Horse riding, a regular feature of the curriculum for all groups, takes place under the dedicated supervision of class teachers and volunteers from the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA)

140. By the age of seven, pupils behave confidently and safely in the water. They move freely, practising arm and leg movements. One pupil walks happily in the water without armbands, enjoying the sensory experience. Others, using floats, try a few simple strokes. Pupils' behaviour in the pool is exemplary. At horse riding sessions pupils sit well in the saddle and give simple commands like *Whoa* and *On Ben!* to an obedient horse. Pupils walk and trot the horse and make good progress in learning balance and controlled body movements while on horseback.

141. By age 11, pupils have refined and improved their swimming skills and some are able to swim the width of the hydro-pool without once touching the bottom. All pupils move easily and confidently through the water, most without armbands. Attitudes towards swimming are excellent.

142. By the age of 14, pupils are confident in the gymnasium. They know how to warm up and some are able to explain its purpose. Pupils build on previous experiences and create and development a routine of linked movements including bending and stretching. They jump safely from the apparatus and land well. Most complete a forward roll. Pupils copy a simple routine and repeat it using the correct sequence of actions. Pupils remember the routine well and are able to reverse the order of the actions.

143. By age 16, the majority of pupils are able to swim, and one pupil is competent in front crawl and backstroke. All are able to float, most without the use of armbands. All are confident in the water and hugely enjoy the experience. Many are reluctant to leave the pool when the session is over. By the age of 18, students have a good grasp of the need for a warm-up. They recall and follow simple stretch and muscle-tone exercises. Pupils run laps of the playground and try to improve upon their previous best performance. They practise throwing the javelin and demonstrate a basic understanding of the correct techniques.

144. Overall, the quality of teaching across the key stages is good although there is insufficient challenge in the range of athletic activities offered to the Post 16 class. Of all the lessons seen 80 per cent were good or better; the remainder were satisfactory. The lesson at the riding stables was excellent in all aspects and inspiring to watch. Teachers plan their lessons well and set individual targets for pupils. This means that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and they strive hard to meet the expectations. Pupils are carefully and sensitively managed. All lessons are safely taught and every effort is made to impress upon pupils the need for safe conduct. There is no formal assessment in physical education except in swimming where pupils work towards the acquisition of badges and certificates. However, teachers are well aware what pupils know, understand and can do and this informs their planning.

145. Learning is good. Pupils' response to physical education is very good; attitudes are wholly positive. Pupils are excited by the freedom that swimming brings, and enthused by the adventure of horse riding. Younger pupils are unable to express what they feel but the light shining in their eyes as the horse obeys their simple commands is a compelling picture, which will linger long in the memory. Pupils are also very caring in their attitudes to each other and often reward other pupils' efforts by spontaneous applause.

146. Physical education is better organised than at the time of the previous inspection. There is now a scheme of work of work, which provides for consistency and continuity in teaching. The next step is to ensure that pupils' skills development is consistently recorded. Time allocation for the subject is now equitably distributed and pupils have access to a similar range of opportunities. The subject co-ordinator has little time allocated to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and a valuable opportunity to share strengths and remedy weaknesses is lost. Resources are satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and are well used. The

hall, which is used for assembly and dining, is an inadequate space for senior gymnastics and there is too little storage space for equipment. The outside area is not adequate for athletics. It was reported at the last inspection that there are no changing rooms and that older pupils in particular are denied the usual privacy and comfort whilst changing for physical education. In spite of the school's efforts to expedite matters, this remains the case and is a significant obstacle to pupils' learning and progress.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147. Pupils' achievements in religious education are good overall. In lessons, pupils' progress is generally good except in Key Stage 4, where progress is satisfactory. No lessons were observed Post 16, but discussions with teachers, evidence from teachers' records and reports and pupils' work and attitudes support the overall judgement.

148. By age seven, pupils will make affectionate signs, such as kissing a baby goodnight in response to a stimulus, for example putting a doll in a cot. By age 11, pupils show an awareness of what they had remembered from previous lessons on the subject of Hinduism and the significance of sweets in Hindu lives. Higher-attaining pupils can use expressive language skills to communicate their ideas. Two pupils do so using signing. All pupils respond appropriately to music and other sensory stimuli and are able to sit reflectively enjoying the classroom ethos.

149. By age 14, pupils have some understanding of the story of Rama and Sita and Divali. Pupils dress in traditional clothing and enjoy re-enacting the story through role-play. They show some awareness of similarities and differences between Christianity and Hinduism. They know that lights and candles are special in each faith. By age 16, pupils show developing skills of description and deduction by using photographs to distinguish between rich and poor from the different circumstances portrayed in them

150. Post 16, pupils show respect to others by listening to them talk about their beliefs. Through discussion, they begin to understand commitment needed when joining groups such as a youth club or church. They understand that some clothes and gestures have special meanings. Pupils complete the faiths and beliefs elements of the Youth Award Scheme

151. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, but ranges between satisfactory and very good. Teachers have a secure grasp of the subject. Planning is generally very effective, with the main points of the lesson clearly specified, with planned, graded assessment opportunities for each lesson. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils are usually able to meet them. Teachers manage behaviour well and all have a good relationship with pupils, allowing them to express their opinions and treating their views with respect. Pupils listen to teachers and each other attentively, are interested and usually become fully involved in the lesson, which enhances learning. Pupils listen to each other's answers politely, showing good skills in speaking and listening, and demonstrate a growing independence of thought. In most lessons there is a realistic balance between oral, practical, recorded and reviewed work. However, occasionally, the pace of a lesson is slow so that time is wasted and learning opportunities are reduced.

152. Improvement in the subject is satisfactory, though there is still much to do. An appropriate scheme of work is being developed which will enable the progressive development of all pupils. Systematic monitoring of the curriculum and teaching in this subject is not established, but both the headteacher and co-ordinator are aware of the shortcomings. Resources and artefacts to support teaching have been the focus of a whole school audit and are generally good, with the deficiencies clearly identified and being addressed by the co-ordinator.

## **PERSONAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSE)**

153. There are few separate lessons scheduled on the timetable for personal, social and health education, however, from the few lessons available to be seen and from analysis of pupils work, records, IEPs and annual reports, achievement is judged to be good overall, and it is sometimes very good or even excellent. Progress over time is also very good.

154. By the age of 7, pupils listen well and respond with appropriate words, eye contact or gesture when their names are called at registration. They learn how to wait their turn for drinks and to behave in a social way during drinks sessions. By age 11, pupils change for physical education or swimming quickly and many higher-attaining pupils have become independent in their dressing skills, whilst lower-attaining pupils still need adult support.

155. By age 14, pupils understand about bullying and what to do should it happen to them. Post 16, students have learnt many social skills so that they are able to take part in work experience placements and college link courses. They understand about different types of work and state the type of jobs they like. They know their date of birth and can write their own home address. Pupils and students work successfully on the ASDAN course and gain in independence skills and self-confidence.

156. Teaching is very good overall. Most teaching occurs in informal sessions at the start and end of the school day, and before breaks and lunchtime. Routines are well established for registration, greetings, circle-time, toileting and general hygiene. Further teaching takes place before and after physical education and swimming sessions when pupils are taught skills in dressing. These sessions are well planned and organised. Staff work successfully as a team to meet pupils' social and hygiene needs. Learning is very good and pupils generally work very hard to develop their skills.

157. An example of a very good lesson on bullying had pupils using role-play. Each pupil was given the chance to act the part of a child being bullied and to express his or her feelings. There was very sensitive direction and guidance given by the teacher with excellent knowledge of pupils' social and emotional competence. Pupils were totally involved and understood what they had to do. They co-operated very well with one another in the role play and with staff. Attitude and behaviour were excellent and by the end of the lesson pupils could give simple statements about bullying and knew what to do if it should occur, showing very good learning and progress. In another very good lesson using the ALL curriculum, teaching had very carefully planned support for pupils with PMLD. A variety of sensory experiences was presented in a very stimulating manner to each pupil to remind them of the outing they had been on the previous week. These included music to set the mood; taped recordings of noises

from the visit such as the minibus, and of birdsong; actual leaves and flowers that the pupils could touch and smell, and a stuffed bird that pupils could touch and get the sensation of feathers and softness. Organisation and preparation were excellent. The results for the pupils were impressive, with very good learning seen in the interest, participation and recognition by pupils of the sounds and smells from the visit.

158. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks. She is aware of the need to revise the scheme of work and to extend it to cover a formal programme for the junior pupils as well as seniors. Most of the elements of the curriculum are present in school such as a sex and drugs education scheme of work, and the ALL and ASDAN curriculum, but these need pulling together into one whole-school scheme. Resources are satisfactory. personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution to social and moral development.