

INSPECTION REPORT

THE LINDFIELD SCHOOL

Eastbourne, East Sussex

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114693

Headteacher: Jane Oatey

Reporting inspector: Jacque Cook
2351

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 June 2001

Inspection number: 215067

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Moderate learning difficulties |
| School category: | Community special |
| Age range of pupils: | 11-16 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Lindfield Road Hampden Park Eastbourne East Sussex |
| Postcode: | BN22 0BQ |
| Telephone number: | 01323 502988 |
| Fax number: | 01323 500433 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Valerie Belk |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1999 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 2351 | Jacque Cook | Registered inspector | Science Information and communication technology Modern foreign language Religious education | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 10329 | Brian Sampson | Lay inspector | | How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 2866 | Bob Battey | Team inspector | English Art and design History Physical education Special educational needs | How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 31963 | Malcolm Padmore | Team inspector | Mathematics Design and technology Geography Music Equal opportunities | How well is the school led and managed? |

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|----------------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 - 9 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 10 - 12 |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? | 12 - 14 |
| | |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? | 14 - 15 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 15 - 16 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS? | 17 |
| | |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 17 - 19 |
| | |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 19 |
| | |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 20 - 22 |
| | |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 23 - 32 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Lindfield School is a mixed, day special school for 78 pupils aged 11 to 16 with moderate learning difficulties. Currently, there are 57 pupils on roll and there are more than twice as many boys (41) as girls (16). All pupils have statements of special educational needs including six pupils with additional special educational needs on the autistic spectrum. All pupils are of white heritage and none have English as an additional language. Two of the pupils are travellers, who were not attending at the time of the inspection. The number of pupils, 19, eligible for free school meals is just above average at 33 per cent. Pupils join the school with low levels of attainment. The school admits pupils from Eastbourne and the surrounding area.

Since the last inspection the number on roll has fallen significantly by 14 and pupils are no longer admitted at age 10. There are 10 per cent fewer pupils eligible for free school meals. Over the past three years, the nature of special educational needs of the pupils at Lindfield has become more varied and more complex. There is an increasing number of pupils who have, in addition to learning difficulties, medical difficulties that affect their health and well being.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school where pupils make good progress, have positive attitudes and are taught well. The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures the school continues to improve and that it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress overall and very good progress in music and physical education.
- The quality of the teaching is good which ensures pupils learn well.
- The curriculum for older pupils is particularly good and ensures they are well prepared for the future.
- Pupils are helped successfully to behave well and have positive attitudes. They learn to work co-operatively with each other.
- The leadership and management of the school are very effective.
- Relationships are very good.

What could be improved

- The use of assessment procedures is not consistent and is unsatisfactory in a number of subjects.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their reading and writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in other subjects.
- Accommodation for the library, music and science are unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection took place in July 1999 when the school was deemed to have serious weaknesses. In the two years since then, there has been a good improvement. The very strong leadership, good team work of the staff and shared commitment to succeed means the school is very well placed to continue to improve. The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably from satisfactory to good, meeting part of the first key issue. However, whilst assessment procedures are now used, they are not fully effective in planning what is to be taught next in a number of subjects. This remains an issue for this inspection. The improvements in teaching have led to a good increase in all pupils' progress from satisfactory to good. All the subjects where pupils made unsatisfactory progress have improved. Pupils' attitudes, relationships and personal development have also improved well. There has been good improvement in the roles of senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators. Staff roles are now clearly defined and temporary staff are only needed to fill vacancies or cover for staff absence. Externally accredited courses have been introduced successfully and the number of courses has increased this year. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved. Whilst there have been some effective improvements to accommodation the school is awaiting a new building planned for September 2002. The inadequate library and science facilities remain unsatisfactory.

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 16 | Key |
|--|-----------|------------------|
| speaking and listening | A | very good A |
| reading | C | good B |
| writing | B | satisfactory C |
| mathematics | B | unsatisfactory D |
| personal, social and health education | B | poor E |
| other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs* | B | |

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

Pupils are achieving well and making good progress overall. The older pupils in Years 10 and 11 make better progress than younger pupils. This is partly because teachers are skilled in making links to the world of work, which is very relevant for the pupils. Pupils make very good progress in music and physical education because these subjects are taught very well. Good teaching contributes towards the good progress made in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, history and personal, social and health education. In all other subjects pupils make satisfactory progress. The school is making good progress towards the targets that have been set.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They enjoy their work and try hard. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and very good when they are not closely supervised at breaks, lunchtimes and change of lessons. |
| Personal development and relationships | Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. They develop into mature and responsible members of the community. |
| Attendance | Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. |

Pupils with difficult behaviour are helped successfully to improve partly because procedures are followed well but also because they build good relationships with the staff and want to do well for them. The absence rate is higher than usual because there is some long-term illness.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged 11-16 |
|----------------------|------------|
| Lessons seen overall | 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 was excellent in two per cent of lessons, very good in 22 per cent, good in 47 per cent and satisfactory in 29 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.

The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics and personal and social education. It is satisfactory in science. The best teaching and learning are in music and physical

education, where the quality is very good. This is partly because the emphasis is on pupils participating. This practical approach helps them to improve their skills. Teaching and learning are also good in art and design, design and technology and history. They are satisfactory in other subjects. In lessons other than English and mathematics, literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily overall. However, in literacy there is a strength in the very good teaching of speaking and listening skills but there is insufficient emphasis on teaching reading and writing. Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils are well supported in classes by teachers and teaching assistants, but teachers do not always use information gained from assessment of pupils' work to adapt activities to help pupils learn. As a result, occasionally, the needs of the less able or the more able are not met as well as they could be.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is satisfactory for pupils aged 11 to 14. It is good for older pupils because it has been made particularly relevant for life after school and includes an increasing range of accredited courses. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Moral, social and cultural provision is good and spiritual is satisfactory. This reflects the school's key word of 'respect'. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are very good. Personal development, attendance and behaviour are dealt with well by the school. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessment but they are not used consistently to plan what will be taught next. |

The school's links with parents are good. Information provided for parents is satisfactory overall, because annual reports do not give enough detail about pupils' progress in most subjects. However other information is often of good quality. Careers education and guidance are good and links with other schools or colleges are effective. Good use is made of the local community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very strong leadership and management and is ably supported by an effective senior management team and a committed staff. |
| How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities | The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have played an active part in raising the standards of the pupils' work. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | There are very rigorous procedures that are applied effectively to keep track of how well the school is doing. The governors, headteacher, senior managers and subject co-ordinators all have clear roles in the process, which raises standards significantly. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good use is made of resources, particularly staffing. |

There are adequate teaching and non-teaching staff who have good levels of expertise in many aspects of their work. The level of in-service training is good. Resources are satisfactory. A number of areas of the accommodation remain unsatisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value very well. The current large underspend, accrued over a period of time from the annual budget, is appropriately maintained to help meet some of the cost for the planned new building and provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They are comfortable asking questions or talking about problems with the school.• They feel the school has high expectations of the pupils.• The school is well managed and led and works closely with parents.• Their children are helped to become mature and responsible.• They feel well informed about the progress their children make. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five parents were concerned about behaviour.• Four were not happy with the amount of homework.• A few thought there were insufficient activities outside lessons. |

The team agreed with almost all the positive views expressed by parents. However, the information given to parents about their children's progress is satisfactory rather than good, because reports do not have enough information about pupils' progress in each subject. The team could not support the negative points expressed. Pupils' behaviour is good overall, largely because staff deal with any difficulties swiftly. The amount of homework is appropriate and it is set regularly. The type of homework being set is currently being reviewed. The provision for activities outside lessons is satisfactory taking into account the distances pupils have to travel. There are two after-school clubs and a range of sporting activities available for pupils outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. *It is inappropriate to judge the standards of the pupils for whom this school caters in relation to the National Curriculum or any other national benchmarks. The report does, however, report on the achievement of the pupils and on what they know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement take account of information in their statements, annual reviews and individual education plans.*
2. Overall, pupils' progress and achievements are good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and is largely due to the improved quality of the teaching. Particularly it is through the positive effect of the increased subject expertise of teachers as the school has changed to subject specialist teaching. Progress is more often good for pupils aged 14 to 16, than for the younger pupils. This is because what they are taught is very relevant and the teaching takes into account increased levels of maturity. There has been a significant improvement in the progress of pupils in Years 9 and 10, which was a key issue at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress towards meeting the targets on their individual education plans. Pupils with additional special educational needs, including those with autistic spectrum disorder, make satisfactory progress. They are helped effectively by support staff to concentrate on what the teacher has asked them to do. Where reading or writing requirements prove difficult, staff read or write for them. In this way they participate in all activities. Although there are far more boys than girls in the school there is no measurable difference between the achievements of boys and girls.
3. At the last inspection the only accredited course in school was the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Youth Award Scheme, Bronze and Bronze Silver award. The number of pupils gaining awards is increasing. Last year, 13 achieved the Bronze and three the Bronze Silver award. This year all pupils have gained the Bronze and are working towards the Bronze Silver award. Additional accreditation was awarded for the first time last year. Of the ten pupils that entered the Oxford Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts (OCR) Certificate of Achievement in Literacy, one gained a pass, two gained passes with merit and seven gained passes with distinction. Further, one pupil gained a C grade in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) art examination, which they studied at a neighbouring school. This year, Year 11 pupils are making good progress towards gaining the EdExcel Certificates of Achievement in literacy, numeracy and design and technology. A further improvement on the previous inspection.
4. In English pupils learn well and overall achieve at good levels across the school. They develop their speaking and listening skills very well. For example in a Year 8 poetry lesson, they give clear verbal analysis of the characters in a poem. In reading, pupils achieve satisfactory standards. Suitable texts are provided for them to read. For example, some Year 10 pupils successfully read 'Flour Babies' by Anne Fine. Many pupils enter the school with very low levels of attainment in reading. Test results show they make at least satisfactory progress. However, insufficient attention is given to their sounding letters and words to aid their fluency of reading. Pupils achieve at least satisfactory, and more often, good standards in writing. Although opportunities for them to do so are sometimes limited. The best practice shows teachers preparing very good resources, aiding their written work with worksheets giving instructions for them to read and to further add their own written comments. By age 16, most pupils have successfully completed units of work for the Certificate of Achievement (CoA) and the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme. They are on course to gain this accreditation of their work. They express opinions confidently. The range and quality of their writing is more extended and they produce longer pieces of written work.
5. In mathematics pupils' achievement and progress are good. The good progress is largely due to teaching now being carried out by specialists and to the introduction of a modified National Numeracy Strategy. This has improved the planning and teaching of mathematics in the school. At age 14, more able pupils are making good progress working with practical problems such as reporting the attendance at football matches to the nearest thousand or ways of communicating information derived from customer surveys. They are able to use the range of simple operations competently with hundreds, tens and units and are exploring the use of brackets. Many pupils learn to recognise and describe in proper terms a range of mathematical

shapes. They work with ways of communicating numerical information such as bar charts. Less able pupils count and add and subtract numbers with up to ten objects with increasing confidence. At age 16, more able pupils make good progress working with practical mathematics problems such as route planning using timetables. They work with decimal notation and are learning about negative values in money and temperature. Pupils use the basic units of measurement. For many, their mental mathematics is not well advanced but they have a reasonable grasp of some of the multiplication tables and use them in their calculations. Less able pupils learn to tell the time and are beginning to calculate the difference between one time and another.

6. Science is taught to pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils' progress and achievements are satisfactory. Pupils learn about the need for food and what happens to it in the body. They explore the conditions necessary for plants to thrive. Pupils' understanding of environmental problems develops and by the time they are 14, many have an understanding of issues such as pollution, dwindling energy sources and the greenhouse effect. They know about the properties of some metals and have some knowledge of how the eye and the ear work. Many pupils have developed clear scientific thinking, particularly the more able, who work out why experiments may fail.
7. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in music and in physical education. This is largely because of the very high quality teaching in these subjects. Lessons are planned very well to allow pupils to have the maximum number of practical activities and in consequence they learn effectively. Pupils have good achievement and make good progress in art and design, design and technology, history and personal and social education. They make satisfactory progress in information and communication technology, geography, a modern foreign language and religious education. Pupils' progress has improved in all the subjects identified as weak in the last inspection report: design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and French. However, the use of information and communication technology in other subjects remains unsatisfactory.
8. There is good progress towards meeting the targets set for the school particularly with regard to numbers of pupils gaining accreditation. There has been a clear and effective emphasis on the target for 'improving the level of interacting and working with others', in pupils' personal and social development. Although information on reading levels is not complete until the end of the term, there are indications that these targets will be met and in many instances pupils will have done better than expected. The targets for the next academic year, based on an evaluation of these results are appropriately more ambitious in order to raise standards further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the good attitudes seen at the last inspection have improved to very good. They behave well in lessons and enjoy learning. Inappropriate behaviour is rare and quickly dealt with by the school staff. Pupils maintain good levels of concentration in lessons. They respond to the challenge of the lesson, readily contributing their ideas. For example, pupils in Year 9 contributed well to a discussion about the role of people in society. Pupils successfully strive to meet their targets, shared with them by teachers and support staff, and to do their best. They show pride in their work. For example, pupils in an art and design lesson discussed the patterns and images they had obtained from drawings and rubbings of textured materials around the school, with much understanding and enthusiasm. Although a few parents expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour, overall, the behaviour is good. During lessons, pupils take notice of comments made by staff, for example, about being too noisy and comply with requests. Pupils behave very well at lunchtimes, when moving around the school, and on visits out of school, including when they attend local mainstream schools. They are courteous, holding doors open for people to go through, saying please and thank you appropriately and are very willing to help one another and adults. Pupils seeing the difficulty an adult was having carrying a lunch tray, asked if they could help by carrying the tray. The number of pupils excluded has dropped from nine last year to five this academic year. Most are excluded for no longer than a day. Due to the immediate and effective contact made with parents and others that offer support, it is rare for a pupil to be excluded for a second time. However, where a pupil has been excluded more often this is because The Lindfield is not the appropriate school to meet their needs and they are transferred to another special school. Good records are kept informing on the reasons for exclusion and the help offered. There is little bullying and very occasional incidents are dealt with quickly and appropriately.

10. Pupils show very good attitudes towards others. In a history class, when discussing black slavery in America, when someone said 'a coloured person', a pupil was quick to exclaim 'that is a racist remark, you should say a black person'. They understood well the impact of their actions on others, quickly responding appropriately, without any malice if the need to correct them ever arises. Relationships within the school are very good. This is a big improvement since the last inspection, when relationships were satisfactory. Pupils work very well together and with their teachers and support staff. A friendly, purposeful working atmosphere is created in classes. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities offered to grow close, playing and working together very well. Pupils in Year 11 worked well in teams designing and making a sandal, making a poster and giving a presentation. The high level of discussion within the groups exploring different solutions to problems and establishing who should do what was excellent, clearly showing respect, consideration and co-operation. At an after-school club for all ages, held in the neighbouring mainstream secondary school and youth club, pupils have established very good relationships with the staff. They also make purposeful relationships with people from the community who come to work in the school. For example, pupils establish excellent relationships with students in teacher training from Brighton University in physical education lessons. Pupils are friendly and discuss their work with pride.
11. The personal development of pupils is very good. There has been a substantial improvement since the last inspection, when their personal development was satisfactory. Pupils are very willing to show initiative and take responsibility. Older pupils are keen and reliable when undertaking such activities as preparing the tables and chairs in the dining room and answering the telephone at lunchtimes. They work well with younger pupils, assisting them with their reading and writing tasks. Younger pupils help willingly in their classes, giving out work and resources and in collecting and returning registers. All pupils apply themselves very well to their tasks, organising their own work and study. They work at a good rate, with minimal supervision. Pupils are proud of their school and what it offers.
12. The increase in the number of pupils with medical difficulties over the last three years is reflected to some extent in attendance, which is sometimes adversely affected by absences for reasons of ill health. Attendance is at the average for similar schools and is satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence and punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and reflects the views of parents. There are now no lessons that are less than satisfactory and the number of lessons that are at least good has more than doubled from 31 to 71 per cent. This clearly demonstrates how effective the monitoring of teaching and learning has been. There is more good teaching and learning for pupils aged 14 to 16 than for the younger pupils. This is because the work is matched to the increasing maturity levels of the pupils and constantly makes links to the world of work. The change to teaching by subject specialists rather than class teachers has had a positive effect as most teachers are more confident and knowledgeable about the areas they teach. Similarly, the number of temporary staff has reduced dramatically. Good progress has been made towards addressing the key issue in the last report to improve the quality of teaching particularly for pupils aged 11 to 14.
14. Teaching and learning are very good in music and physical education, which are clear strengths of the school. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to demonstrate their skills and are helped to identify how they can improve. Pupils enjoy performing, for example, they practise regularly for a dance routine, seeking to perfect their timing and movements. Teaching and learning are good overall in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, history and personal and social education. In science, information and communication technology, geography, modern foreign language and religious education the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory.
15. Support staff have an important and effective role in helping pupils to learn well. This is made possible because most work in subject bases rather than move from room to room with the pupils. They have time with the teacher to ensure they are well briefed. Support staff are able to assist pupils with their work and also help them to concentrate on what they are doing such as when in a Year 8 mathematics lesson, two pupils work with a member of the support staff making mathematical sentences. The good levels of support to pupils with additional special educational needs allows the pupils to learn effectively alongside their fellow pupils. For example, pupils with learning difficulties in literacy, successfully discuss with their support staff

and complete partly prepared sentences with good levels of understanding and accuracy. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder have clear routines explained and reinforced, which gives them a firm framework where they can feel confident and succeed. Relationships between the staff and the pupils are very positive. They have very good strategies for ensuring pupils behave well. In the first place, their expectations are high and pupils and parents are aware of this. The emphasis on praise and encouragement is good and spurs pupils on to do their best. Staff follow procedures for dealing with behaviour problems very well. Only on rare occasions are pupils with behaviour difficulties able to disturb the learning of other pupils. Usually a quiet word is sufficient or, if a pupil persists they are taken out of the class for a short period. In one instance, a pupil was taken out of the class by the support assistant because he could not settle. After ten minutes he returned to the class and worked well.

16. In all subjects teachers have good long-term planning on which to base their lessons. This helps them to ensure pupils' learning builds systematically on what has been taught before. What pupils are expected to learn, the 'learning intention', is established and this provides a sound base for assessing how well they have done. This is helpful for pupils because they know what they are aiming for when the learning intention is written on the board at the beginning of the lesson. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that teaching methods and resources meet the needs of pupils with additional special educational needs. In some subjects, for example, science, pupils' work shows that all pupils in the class have the same activity and a few require a great deal of support. In other subjects work is very well matched to the needs of the pupils. In a lesson with pupils in Year 10, the complexity of design of miniature greenhouses is adapted to appropriate levels to enable each pupil to construct their own model successfully. Often, very good resources are chosen which capture the interest of pupils. For example, in history Year 8 pupils watched a video of African people in their work on the slave trade. Packs of cards are used successfully by Year 11 pupils to discover different ways of making calculations. In information and communication technology a range of plastic cards including debit card, loyalty cards, credit cards and cheque cards helped pupils to understand the different functions they have.
17. Teachers use good strategies to ensure no time is wasted in lessons. They start promptly and almost always finish on time. Most lessons have a clear introduction, which sets out what is to be learnt and reminds pupils what they learnt previously. This is successful in helping pupils to link one piece of learning to another. Specific sessions towards the end of lessons are very effective as they re-cap on what has happened in the lesson, often getting pupils to revisit what they have learnt. This also provides a good opportunity that teachers take to assess how well pupils have done in the lesson. Pupils' pace of working is maintained well. Lessons have variety to maintain interest and momentum; warnings are given of time left to complete an activity. As a consequence, little time is wasted.
18. Overall, the teaching of basic skills is satisfactory. There is good emphasis on teaching the skills of speaking and listening so pupils do well in this area. Many lessons have good question and answer sessions and technical vocabulary is also taught well. For example, in information and communication technology pupils learn 'hyperlink', 'database', 'spreadsheet' and 'font'. The teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory. However, there is not sufficient teaching of reading, writing and information and communication technology skills by all teachers in their subject areas. As a result pupils' skills in reading and information and communication technology are not as well developed as others. Assessments of pupils' progress are made satisfactorily by staff. In design and technology and art and design, pupils' progress is measured successfully against three levels of ability to ensure appropriate learning is taking place each lesson. In some subjects, for example, music and physical education, information gained from assessments of pupils' progress is used effectively to plan what is to be taught next. However, in a number of other subjects, the use of assessment is unsatisfactory because the results of assessments are not used to tailor work according to the needs of the individual pupils. Too often pupils are taught as a whole class relying on support from staff for pupils to make progress. As a result, in these subjects, pupils' learning is satisfactory rather than good. The marking policy for pupils' work is followed by staff but is unsatisfactory. Pupils' work is marked regularly but comments made on work are unhelpful because, in almost all cases, they do not tell pupils how they can improve.
19. There is an appropriate homework policy, which clearly sets out what is expected. Homework is set on a regular fortnightly basis for English and mathematics and on a half termly basis for other subjects. This is satisfactory and often links with work they are currently doing in class. Sometimes the activity requires pupils to have help when they do the homework. The school

is reviewing the policy at present because a number of parents have requested work that pupils can do independently.

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

20. Since the last inspection, the quality and range of learning opportunities has improved from satisfactory to now be good. It includes all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal, social and health education. Pupils receive drug awareness and sex education lessons. All statutory requirements are well met. The teaching of subjects across all years by specialist teachers is having a good effect on the planning and teaching of the curriculum. Information and communication technology is developing satisfactorily in the discrete lessons. However, it is not sufficiently included in other subjects and not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use it.
21. The curriculum for pupils aged 11 to 14 is satisfactory. For pupils aged 14 to 16, it is now very good. In all subjects, there is an appropriate emphasis on developing numeracy and pupils' social skills. Speaking and listening skills are developed well but reading and writing do not have sufficient emphasis. The allocation of time for all subjects is now better balanced than it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to improve their achievement across all National Curriculum subjects and in nationally accredited courses, as they get older.
22. The curriculum for pupils from age 14 to 16 is partly based on the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Youth Award Scheme. The school has now introduced other suitable externally accredited courses, such as the Certificate of Achievement with the examining body EdExcel in literacy, numeracy, design and technology and next year in information and communication technology. Pupils also study first-aid awards. A further extensive range of opportunities is offered through vocational experiences, such as car driving and maintenance, how to manage finances, and through link courses with a local further education college. Here the pupils join a range of courses including cookery and painting and decorating. Good opportunities are taken for pupils to attend mainstream schools and for pupils from mainstream schools to attend The Lindfield. Last year six pupils attended the Eastbourne College of Technology (formerly Hampden Park School). A pupil in Year 10, who attends this year and studies art, talks enthusiastically about her experiences and is making good progress. Two others attend lessons in the school, one for English another for mathematics.
23. Significant developments in planning what is taught are having a positive effect on the achievement of pupils throughout the school. Good subject plans are supported by relevant schemes of work. Opportunities are taken when teachers plan their work to include areas, which will broaden the curriculum. For example, last year, pupils worked towards entering the national MENCAP photography exhibition and were successful in winning third place.
24. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for pupils with additional special needs, such as those with autistic spectrum disorder. There is no one specific teaching and learning method used but staff ensure pupils maintain a clear structure to their day and routines are established which helps to provide the security pupils need to learn. Pupils with additional special educational needs are supported effectively and mainly within their classes. Individual education plans are appropriately reviewed with good levels of input from parents and specialists from agencies outside the school and they provide a good basis for learning. There is an effective level of specialist support for the curriculum. The Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) is well taught to classes of younger pupils by members of the speech and language therapy service and is effective in improving pupils' communication skills. Individual programmes are carried out by therapists and by support staff to ensure pupils make appropriate progress in improving their speech and language skills. Seventeen pupils work successfully towards targets to improve their mobility and co-ordination during specific weekly sessions taken by the physical education teacher. Programmes and advice from the physiotherapy service form the basis of this work.
25. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, mainly within a very good physical education programme. These include a Tuesday evening club. There is a good range of opportunities to take part in a wide range of sporting events, including football coaching. Pupils preparing for a dance festival during lunchtime showed a good level of skill

development and awareness of occasion, striving to attain high standards before a public performance in front of local dignitaries. There is also a Wednesday information and communication technology club which takes place at the local college and gives pupils opportunities to extend their computing skills.

26. The provision for careers education and guidance for pupils from Year 9 upwards, has been further developed since the last inspection and is now very good. Links are very well established with the careers service and pupils are well prepared for when they leave school. The local community is used well to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils visit museums as part of their art and design course and there is also a wide range of vocational visits for pupils. Older pupils have two work experience placements. The first is usually for one day a week for a few weeks and the second for a whole week. Pupils and parents commented how much pupils had benefited from this activity. For example, one pupil worked in a local hotel and another successfully shadowed the caretaker in school. This greatly adds to the pupils' awareness and preparation for adult life.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and has considerably improved since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development has improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. A suitable range of opportunities is provided in whole-school assemblies and at lunchtime for pupils to pray and reflect. Pupils consider a range of religious beliefs and debate issues, such as how these beliefs affect people's daily lives and the symbolism and customs of a range of faiths. During music and dance lessons they have opportunities to explore their feelings when listening to great and emotive pieces of music.
28. Provision for moral development has improved. It is now good. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce positive behaviour and pupils clearly distinguish between right and wrong. Staff set clear boundaries and pupils learn that their actions have consequences. Pupils are given many opportunities to take turns and share. For example, all have choices of a range of apparatus provided by lunchtime supervisors for them to use. They are encouraged to show good levels of awareness of the needs of others. During personal and social education and religious education lessons, topics such as racial prejudice, religious intolerance, vandalism and stealing are explored to enable pupils to develop and state their opinions. The arrangements for pupils' social development have improved from satisfactory to good. This confirms parents' perceptions that their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. There is very good teamwork provided by adults in classes, which provides a very good model of social co-operation for pupils. Pupils are helped to get on well with others through playing team games and working with partners in physical education. This is extended into the classroom with teams established for work on the Youth Award Scheme and working on activities in pairs or groups in a range of subjects. Individual education plans clearly identify opportunities for developing independence and a number of pupils travel to school independently when they are older. Social skills are very well developed through the personal, social and health education programme. The visits pupils make to the local community provide very good opportunities to practise their well-developed social skills. Older pupils benefit from practising their social skills in the wider community of college and work experience. As a result, the school receives favourable comments regarding the very good ways that pupils react socially to their experiences and work within the community.
29. Pupils' cultural development, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, is now good, with many more opportunities being provided. Art and design and music make strong contributions to the development of pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils study art and music from a wide range of white and black cultures. For example, pupils learn about black slavery in history lessons. Hats from a range of cultures and ethnic masks are made in art and design and the work of many artists is explored. Visits to the school by artists and visits to local museums, theatres and concerts for cultural events, gives pupils a breadth of experience which significantly supports their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. These are both strengths of the school and have improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher is the very well trained named person for child protection. All members of staff have received their own, very rigorous, relevant training. The school has a very detailed child protection policy and maintains detailed incident books. There is very good liaison with the local social services and the police child protection team.

31. Health and safety procedures have a high priority in school. The health and safety representative and the relevant governor are appropriately trained. The local authority has recently completed a successful, whole school, risk assessment. The findings were as expected because the minor health and safety issues are already being dealt with by the caretaker, as part of an on-going concern, involving the future refurbishment of the school. The caretaker also ensures that emergency fire exercises are held regularly and are appropriately recorded. During the inspection, it was noted that taxis arriving in the morning used inappropriate speed on entering the premises. Appropriate action is being taken by the school to restructure the car park to ensure transport does not need to enter the playground.
32. There are very good procedures for recording and reporting accidents. There are sufficient, appropriately trained first aid personnel. Very good use is made of outside professional help such as: the doctor, physiotherapists, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist and hearing impaired services. The local police visit regularly and talk to pupils about Stranger Danger, drug and alcohol issues and the dangers of roads and railways.
33. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are completed, both morning and afternoon, in accordance with current procedures and are returned to the school office for checking. If a pupil is absent the school contacts the parents by ten o'clock of that day. Letters are regularly sent to parents concerning medical and other absences. Very good and regular use is made of the local educational welfare officer.
34. There are good procedures for both monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating any behaviour of an oppressive nature. Behaviour rewards and sanctions are appropriate and well covered in the school's detailed pastoral policy. Pupils' behaviour seldom deteriorates to unacceptable levels because staff follow procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory behaviour well. Individual pupils can be given daily charts, which are used as a means of checking and helping pupils to improve their behaviour. This works effectively, particularly as parents are asked to look at them each day. Individual educational plans contain very realistic behaviour targets, as appropriate. The points and star system of awards, allocated at the end of each lesson is appreciated by the pupils and works well to improve behaviour and attitudes to work and as a means of monitoring how well pupils are behaving. There is very little bullying. Pupils are taught to have the confidence to report any incident, no matter how seemingly insignificant, before this escalates.
35. Procedures for supporting pupils' personal development are good. The school has a good, clear personal, social and health educational programme undertaken by all pupils. Full details of what pupils study and the progress they make are maintained in the individual pupil profiles. Details are then carried forward, at Year 11, into each pupil's personal Record of Achievement.
36. Pupils' individual education plans are written and reviewed well. They are clearly based on their statements of special educational need and previous plans. Appropriate and clear targets are set in a process that involves pupils and parents effectively. Pupils often have their individual targets recorded on their books to help them remember what they are aiming for. Meeting targets provides a clear measure of success for both academic and social progress. The annual review process is carried out well with good careers service involvement for older pupils.
37. In most subjects there are satisfactory procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing which is an improvement on the last inspection where inadequate assessment was part of a key issue. In music and physical education there are good procedures that are used well to plan appropriate work to help pupils improve their performances. This is an important contributory factor to the very good progress pupils make in these subjects. However, overall, information gained from assessment is not used effectively. The school is aware that this is unsatisfactory and that opportunities to concentrate on specific areas are missed. For example, information collected on pupils' strengths and weaknesses in reading is not used to target what will be taught in additional 'booster' reading sessions. Pupils' progress in lessons is monitored well through a 'blue book' system, which collects together samples of pupils' work from each lesson during the tenth week of each term. There are plans to make more effective use of the information gathered. Similarly, the lesson by lesson grading scheme is scheduled to be modified this term to include assessment of work as well as how well pupils have worked.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Overall, parents have good views of the school. They feel that the school works closely with them and are very comfortable to ask questions or make suggestions. This reflects the improved opportunities for communication that have been developed since the last inspection. For example, there was a meeting to discuss homework and as some parents could not attend, a questionnaire was sent to gather their opinions.
39. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory, as at the last inspection. There have been some improvements, notably, parents receive more regular newsletters on a variety of subjects and copies of any new policies, for example, the homework and pastoral care routines. Additionally they now have good information on what their children will be studying in each subject and the key words they will be learning sent to them each half term. The school's prospectus and the governors' report to parents are informative and a home school agreement clearly sets out roles and responsibilities for the school, for parents and for the pupils. Where a pupil's behaviour is causing concern, parents receive information on how well their child has met targets throughout the day. Parents spoken with during the inspection confirmed that they were able to talk with the headteacher or staff easily. Parents feel well informed about their children's progress. Education evenings are arranged, via a consultation with the teacher, so that parents do not have to wait a long time to see staff. There are, other 'meet the teacher' evenings in the autumn term and opportunities to discuss the annual report in July. However, information provided in the annual reports is unsatisfactory for most subjects. There is often detailed information about what the pupil has studied and their attitudes to work but there is insufficient information on what a pupil knows, understands and can do in each subject.
40. The contribution that parents make towards their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Where they are able, parents are very involved with harvest festivals and Christmas celebrations. The school is very pleased at the high response it receives from parents attending their child's annual review. Both, parents and children make important contributions to individual education plans. As parents are well informed about what their children are studying, they are well placed to help with homework and many do so. Although, some parents expressed concerns with the amount of homework, an appropriate amount is set regularly. The school is currently reviewing the homework policy as a number of parents have asked for some work their children can do independently. Currently the Parent Teachers Association is not regularly active but meets for targeted fund raising when necessary.
41. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with its parents is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Such good links help appreciably towards the successful learning of their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good. She has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has given clear educational direction over a period that has seen upheaval in the senior management of the school. Her management of the school is purposeful and she has successfully introduced the changes called for by the school's action plan. She has changed teachers' roles to teaching specialist subjects rather than all subjects and this has resulted in improvements in overall standards of teaching and learning. Her commitment to supporting and developing teachers can be seen in the training they have been given or are planning to do. Under her, teachers and support staff work together efficiently and effectively. She gains the willing support of staff, parents and governors in working to ensure the school's aims are met. She is a major strength of the school.
43. The headteacher is well supported by her senior management team although they have been working without a permanent deputy headteacher for some time. An appointment has been made to the post for September. Their commitment ensures that the school continues to run smoothly and efficiently. The quality of subject co-ordination is good. Planning is well developed and ensures that what is taught is appropriate. The staff show a good combination of experience and expertise and are responding well to the change in structure, which has meant that they move from generalist to specialist teaching. All staff ensure that the aims and values of the school form the basis of their work with the pupils.
44. The management of the provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is good. Designated funding for these pupils is spent wisely and staff and resources are used well.

However, whilst making satisfactory progress, they do not always achieve as well as other pupils in the class. This is identified as a priority to improve by the school.

45. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is now good. This is an important improvement since the last inspection report. The school has made good use of well-targeted support from the local education authority to check on the progress they are making towards meeting priorities. The headteacher and the senior teacher monitor teaching regularly in the classrooms and also monitor pupils' learning. They look at teachers' planning and the work pupils produce, providing support and guidance wherever necessary. Co-ordinators have time set aside in their timetables to monitor their subjects. Governors also visit lessons and explore how well the teaching is helping pupils to learn. The senior management team and subject co-ordinators analyse the results of assessment tests in order to help them evaluate pupils' attainment and progress.
46. The governing body is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It is appropriately consulted and has a relevant committee structure in place. The governors are committed individuals who fulfil their responsibilities well. The chair of governors has clear understanding of current issues in education. She is a regular visitor to the school and is well known to staff and pupils. The quality of financial and strategic planning is good and best value principles are rigorously applied. For example, planned changes to cloakroom spaces and the purchase of computer equipment were thoroughly researched and costs and quotes carefully assessed to ensure the right decisions were made. The headteacher and governors check the school's expenditure at regular intervals against the planned budget. Members of the governing body use their relevant experience and expertise in financial management to plan and set the budget. Financial decisions are made according to priorities and this is instrumental in raising standards of learning. There is a high underspend amounting to nearly 20 per cent of this year's budget. However, this is money already dedicated over a period of time to the planned new building programme to improve accommodation and provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Specific grants are used effectively for their designated purposes. The day-to-day financial dealings are very well managed by the school's bursar. High quality records are kept of income and expenditure and these are available for governors and senior staff to inform their financial planning. The last financial audit effectively gave the school's financial procedures a clean bill of health. The school makes effective use of information and communication technology in financial administration.
47. The school has a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. There is a good match of experience and expertise with the specialisms taught. There is good support for staff new to the school through the information supplied by the staff handbook and the personal guidance of headteacher and senior staff. The record of recent in-service training is good for the teachers, their support staff and for the administrative and other non-teaching staff. All staff at the school work well as a team. The caretaker, for example, is involved in a wide number of activities that are beyond the normal call of duty. He visits pupils on work experience placements. He paints and decorates the school when necessary, often with pupils work shadowing, learning skills from a craftsman. The day-to-day running of the school is smooth. Administrative staff ensure enquiries and procedures are dealt with effectively. The school has improved the situation regarding temporary supply teachers criticised in the last inspection report and this is now satisfactory. Teachers have regular performance reviews that enable them to discuss their involvement in the school. This provides valuable feedback on a variety of matters including training needs but this has not been extended to non-teaching staff.
48. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. There has been some improvement in the provision for information and communication technology to enable lessons to be taught to a class. The classrooms are of a good size. However, the main weaknesses are the inadequacy of the present library, the lack of practice space for music and poor facilities for scientific investigations. Since the last inspection, the library has been moved from a very small cupboard to some shelves in a corridor. However, it does little to promote reading as an exciting and attractive pastime. Music in the school is rich and varied yet it has no extra space for pupils to go to practise. Science is taught in a classroom with no specialist facilities, which makes practical work difficult. The provision of storage space in the school is poor and this presents additional problems in a number of subjects. A major building programme is due to start in the near future and this is designed to overcome most of the problems just described which were also seen as a problem during the last inspection. Successful improvements have been made in the interim. For example an information and communication technology room

has been set up and a food technology area has been developed. These have helped improve pupils' progress significantly.

49. Learning resources are overall satisfactory and there are no significant shortfalls in equipment and consumable items. The newly acquired electronic whiteboard is not yet being used, as staff have not received appropriate training. There are plans to use this equipment in many aspects of the school, for example, in assemblies and as a major tool to teach information and communication technology. The school makes little use of the grounds for scientific investigation, for example, there is no wild area or environmental area.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, senior management team, staff and governors should:

- Ensure assessment procedures are used effectively to plan what is to be taught particularly to ensure the needs of the less able, and, in some instances, the more able, are consistently met. (paragraphs 16, 18, 37, 56, 57, 64, 65, 74, 75, 79, 82, 83, 94, 95)
- Improve pupils' opportunities to use their reading and writing skills in other subjects by:
 - ensuring teachers plan to include opportunities for pupils to use these skills more effectively in subjects other than English;
 - monitoring this area of planning and teaching. (paragraphs 4, 18, 21, 54, 55, 78)
- Increase the use of information and communication technology in all subjects by:
 - improving levels of staff expertise and confidence in using information and communication technology;
 - developing common practices in the use of technology equipment;
 - monitoring lesson plans and teaching to ensure information and communication technology is being used effectively. (paragraphs 7, 20, 55, 64, 79, 80, 88)
- Improve accommodation for the library, music and science. (paragraphs 48, 57, 64, 65, 88)

All of these areas are identified by the school and are included in the current school improvement plan.

51. The governors in drawing up their action plan may wish to consider the following points relating to minor weaknesses identified in the report:
- The environment round the school is not used sufficiently to enhance the teaching of science; (paragraphs 49, 65)
 - The marking policy is unsatisfactory. (paragraph 18)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 57 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 34 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2 | 22 | 47 | 29 | 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 | Y7 – Y11 |
|---|----------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 57 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 19 |

| Special educational needs | Y7 – Y11 |
|---|----------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 57 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 57 |

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

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 3 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 0 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data | 8.81 |
| National comparative data | N/A |

| Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data | 1.96 |
| National comparative data | N/A |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year | 2000 | 9 | 3 | 12 |

| Test results | Percentage of pupils attaining levels | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Level 1 and below | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
| English | 82 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Mathematics | 64 | 9 | 27 | 0 |
| Science | 54 | 18 | 18 | 9 |

| Teacher Assessment | Percentage of pupils attaining level | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Working towards level 1 | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
| Design and technology | 0 | 36 | 18 | 9 | 36 |
| Geography | 0 | 0 | 36 | 18 | 45 |
| History | 0 | 0 | 36 | 9 | 54 |
| Information and communication technology | 27 | 18 | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| Modern foreign language | 0 | 45 | 54 | 0 | 0 |

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year | 2000 | 11 | 3 | 14 |

General Certificate of Secondary Education

One pupil gained a GCSE grade C in art and design.

Oxford Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts Certificate of Achievement

Ten pupils gained a pass in the literacy examination. Seven gained a distinction and two gained a merit.

Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Youth Award Scheme

Thirteen pupils gained the Bronze Award.
Three pupils gained a Bronze Silver Award.

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 57 |
| 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 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 12 (9 pupils) | 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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 6.1 |
| Average class size | 11.4 |

Education support staff: Y7– Y11

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 9 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 191 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 2000/01 |
|----------------|---------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 605077 |
| Total expenditure | 568392 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 9633 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 120545 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 157230* |

* This money is appropriately earmarked for building work, which has been rescheduled for 2002. In the next financial year the percentage of the total income is estimated to drop to about 20 per cent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 57 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 17 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 47 | 29 | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 35 | 53 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 12 | 59 | 29 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 12 | 53 | 18 | 6 | 12 |
| The teaching is good. | 29 | 71 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 47 | 53 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 82 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 65 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 59 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 65 | 29 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 35 | 53 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 24 | 35 | 12 | 6 | 24 |

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

ENGLISH

52. Achievement and progress in English is good across the school. Pupils consistently achieve targets set for them. Standards have improved since the last inspection. They are supported by the successful way the school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the careful thought given to relevant resources and good teaching materials to support pupils' learning.
53. Pupils make very good gains with their speaking and listening skills. They develop their use of language very well. For example, a Year 7 class widened the range of descriptive words they understood as they built up descriptions of different pets and compared tame, wild and cyber pets. Pupils improve their skills through responding to the effective questioning of teachers and support staff. This was seen in a Year 9 English lesson where the pupils were conducting an analysis of the two poems, 'Song of the Battery Hen' by Edwin Brock and 'Battery Hen' by Pam Ayres. Pupils readily stated their opinions, showing a very good analysis of the main aspects of the poems. They worked well in pairs and small groups, identifying words and sentences that indicated cruelty towards the hens. Using this information, they clearly articulated their reasons, adapting talk to purpose, talking and listening with assurance. The involvement of the speech and language therapy service in teaching the Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) to pupils in Years 7 and 8 is effective. For example, pupils are made aware of the need to look at someone when they are talking to them. By the time they are 16, pupils communicate well. More able pupils make confident presentations, speaking clearly and to the point. All pupils listen carefully to others and will take into account what they are saying in their replies. In all subjects teachers develop the use of speaking and listening skills very well. Most lessons include question and answer sessions and pupils are expected to listen carefully to the staff and to other pupils' responses. They are given many opportunities to recall facts, describe events and talk about their own feelings and opinions. Subject specific vocabulary is taught well and pupils are encouraged to use the correct terms when discussing their work.
54. Achievement across the school in reading is satisfactory. Youngest pupils identify words and are matching words to sentences. In a Year 7 lesson, pupils successfully picked out words, reading them and matching them to sentences. By the time pupils reach the age of 16, higher attaining pupils can read independently the suitably modified texts they are given for their work, as well as books. In Year 10, about half of the class could successfully read 'Flour Babies' by Anne Fine. Progress for those who found the text difficult was well aided by the teacher providing, for these less able pupils, a modified text with symbols to aid their understanding. Pupils in Year 11, working on an accredited course for the Certificate of Achievement, could read a worksheet supporting their analysis of naming an advertised product. They successfully commented on who the advert was focused on and the message it was carrying. Teachers well prepared printed materials at the levels of competence of the pupils to aid their understanding of texts such as 'Macbeth' by William Shakespeare. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn word sounds at an early stage to assist their building up of words and their fluency. Key words are used and learnt in other subjects, but pupils are insufficiently encouraged to use these words in their written work. In all subjects, teachers rely too much on the pupils' well developed listening and speaking skills. Pupils do not always get sufficient opportunities to read and research texts as part of their studies.
55. Pupils' achievements and progress in writing are good overall due to the careful preparation by teachers of writing frames, which give pupils an opportunity to complete sentences by adding words and sentences to a given text. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, after a recap of a poem, 'Timothy Winters', pupils used their verbal abilities very well to ask questions of members of the class, who played the role of characters in the poem. This gave them the information to complete a very carefully structured writing frame. Pupils' then drafted ideas and were further aided to complete their work through the very good levels of individual support given by the teacher and support assistant. Due to the good initial verbal analysis of a text by the teacher, pupils' understanding is improved. For example, following such an analysis of 'Theft in the High Street', pupils in Year 11 class gave a clear, verbal analysis and comprehension of the story and began to use their developing skills of writing to produce a developed, written answer. However, in subjects other than English, there is insufficient emphasis on developing report writing. Pupils are often given too little time in lessons to write about their findings. Where time is given, many pupils achieve well but work is sometimes

incomplete. There are too few opportunities for pupils to draft work and to redraft to final copy, supported by the use of information and communication technology.

56. The overall quality of teaching and learning for pupils by the ages of 14 and 16 is good. This has improved since the last inspection. There is very good teamwork in classes between teachers and support staff. This supports the pupils' good progress well. Lessons are well prepared and based on good long and mid-term planning. However, information gained from what the pupils can and cannot do as the lesson progresses is insufficiently used to plan future work. Teachers give very good levels of support to raise and enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills. Reading levels are suitably assessed, but there is an insufficient analysis of the skills pupils need to acquire in lessons to further develop their competences. Sometimes, too much time is given to the introduction of a lesson, which relies upon pupils listening and speaking. Too little time is sometimes given for pupils to have individual and collaborative work for reading and to complete written tasks. The best lessons achieve this balance. Writing tasks are well prepared, with the teacher providing the pupils with a structured resource that asks them to read and then complete a written response to a carefully prepared worksheet. This is very effective. Samples of previous work, however, show occasions when all pupils in a class have the same activity, irrespective of their abilities. Where work is modified and prepared to meet pupils' individual levels, the teaching and learning is invariably good. This was seen in a Year 10 lesson, when opportunities were provided for more able pupils to use computers. They worked with another teacher to assist them to word process an analysis of the characters in a story. Here the pupils made good progress in completing a number of written sentences. Lessons proceed at a good pace, are very well managed and pupils' comments are well followed up. A very good working atmosphere pervades all lessons. Pupils respond very well to this. They show high levels of interest, quickly and readily settling down to their tasks, concentrating very well and trying their best to succeed.
57. The co-ordination of English is good and the purchase of new and relevant resources is improving pupils' standards well. Teachers give good thought to the preparation and presentation of resources for work in class, but they are not always matched to the individual needs of all pupils in the class. Resources are satisfactory overall. Despite recent developments concerning the school library, by moving it out of a very small, unsuitable room to a corridor outside, provision is still unsatisfactory. There is no space for pupils to work together using the library resources, and to conduct independent research. The accommodation for the library is unsatisfactory and there are too few non-fiction books to support pupils' work across all subjects. There is provision within the planned building project to relocate and enhance the library. Pupils' work in English, from the ages of 14 to 16, is now well supported with the use of externally accredited courses.

MATHEMATICS

58. Pupils' progress and achievements in mathematics are good overall. The improvement there has been over the past few years is largely due to two factors. Firstly the planning and co-ordination of the teaching of mathematics is carried out mainly by the one teacher who has had the benefit of an extensive programme of in-service training to prepare and develop her role. She also teaches the bulk of the classes. Secondly the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively adopted and the planning and rigour associated with it have meant that what is taught is now more focused on the needs of the individual pupils in the school.
59. At age 14, many pupils are identifying mathematical patterns in nature such as the hexagons in a honeycomb. They learn to use co-ordinates and can recognise symmetry in the examples they are given. More able pupils are using a range of operations competently. They are beginning to use brackets to solve mathematical problems. When they work with practical problems such as calculating the attendance at football grounds they round up numbers to the nearest significant figure. Pupils write simple problems in full sentences. They learn simple terminology associated with angles and are able to describe direction in terms of the points of the compass. Less able pupils often need support, for example, to make sense of the bar charts the class use to communicate the findings of their surveys on preferences for cakes or television programmes. At age 16, many continue to have problems with completing simple number sequences, but they know basic units of measurement and the frequently used mathematical terms. They count small amounts of money using mental calculation and can use the names of basic shapes such as rectangle and triangle. More able pupils are developing strategies to work with practical mathematical problems such as planning a journey using a bus timetable. They add and subtract using decimals. Pupils have a suitable grasp of

the two, five and ten times tables and use this in their mental work. With the help of constant reinforcement, less able pupils calculate very simple addition and subtraction problems and learn to tell the time using model clocks.

60. Numeracy is used satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, pupils count the beat in music when they listen to or perform the 12 bar blues. In geography they learn about measurement and scale. They estimate height and length when they compare tents in a project about structures in design and technology. They also estimate and then measure how far they have thrown their foam javelins and time their runs round the athletics track. Pupils use tally charts in customer surveys to find out about customer preference. Opportunities to count are constantly used, such as counting in French.
61. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' knowledge of mathematics is good. The co-ordinator has attended a good number of recent courses to update her knowledge and understanding of the subject and this has had a beneficial impact on the planning and on the teaching. Teachers plan well for the needs of all pupils in the classes they have. This ensures the pupils with additional special educational needs make the same good progress as other members of the class. The match of work to ability levels is good. Teachers introduce a good range and variety of activity designed to make work suitably difficult for all pupils. The co-operation between teachers and support assistants is good and teachers and assistants' efforts are well targeted to areas of need. This ensures pupils are taught individually when necessary. Pupils make progress at the pace that is right for them. Relationships are good and make learning enjoyable. Teachers and assistants use praise and encouragement well to promote learning and pupils develop a pride in their work and a sense of gratification about achievement. Teachers make good use of the whole class session that often ends a lesson to go over what has been learnt in order to reinforce it. Records are good and give a clear picture of progress that can then be used in future planning. The information from learning support assistants is good and makes a valuable contribution to this process. Homework is regularly set and marking of work is thorough and helpful.
62. The leadership of the subject is good and has led to the improvement in progress that has happened since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has adapted the National Numeracy Strategy to the needs of the pupils in the school. She has also helped to introduce the Certificate of Achievements as an externally accredited course that provides greater benefit to pupils who formerly left the school without any formal qualifications.

SCIENCE

63. Pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory in science, which reflects the quality of the teaching and maintains the standards achieved at the last inspection. One significant change is that science is no longer taught to pupils in Years 10 and 11 as they now study an appropriate work-related curriculum. Pupils in Year 7, learn about food, a healthy diet and what happens to food in the body. They know how plants grow and reproduce. Most develop a clear understanding of the need for animals to adapt to their surroundings. During Year 8, pupils explore metals discovering the effects of magnetism and what causes rust to form. Their awareness of environmental concerns is developed through looking at pollution and the greenhouse effect. More able pupils quickly identify examples of light sources whilst other pupils take time to understand the difference between the switch and the bulb as the source of light. By the time they are 14, pupils have learnt about different types of forces and the effects of friction on movement. They are beginning to understand a range of physical processes, for example, how the eye sees images, the effects of sound and vibrations on the ear and what makes an electromagnet work. Pupils continue to increase their understanding of environmental problems by looking at alternative energy sources. More able pupils' skills in scientific thinking are developed well. For example, they offer sensible reasons why the match does not make the expected loud noise when it is heated in an environment where air has been excluded. All pupils put together equations to show how energy changes successfully. The more able make more complex equations and the less able require help to understand the process. Pupils with additional special educational needs make satisfactory progress but often require specific help with activities particularly if they involve reading or writing.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Previously the area of scientific enquiry has not been sufficiently taught, partly because of lack of facilities and pupils' skills in this area are unsatisfactory. At present, however, there is a temporary teacher who has good levels of subject expertise and ensures pupils have opportunities to learn through investigating for

themselves. Questions are carefully phrased to help pupils understand and to check their understanding. They learn technical words well because they are specifically taught during the lesson. Overall plans of what is to be taught provide a sound basis for lesson plans. Support staff are very effective in helping pupils to understand what they have to do. They also prompt pupils to keep their concentration going. At times, however, work is not pitched at an appropriate level for all of the pupils and time has to be spent ensuring less able pupils understand what they have to do. Occasionally, work is too easy for more able pupils, for example, several pupils quickly identified the items on their worksheets, which were light sources. Too much time was then spent cutting them out and sticking them in their books before they started an additional sheet. Apart from a microscope attached to a computer, information and communication technology is insufficiently used to help pupils with their science.

65. It is recognised that some changes are needed in science to improve pupils' achievements and a new science co-ordinator is scheduled to take up post next term. The policy is due for review and is currently unsatisfactory. Assessment of pupils' work and progress are unsatisfactory and does not give sufficient information to record in reports. The way the subject is planned to be taught is unhelpful, for example, a pupil will only learn about life processes and living things in Year 7 rather than throughout Years 7 to 9. The potential of the school grounds as a resource for teaching science has not been realised and, as a result, valuable opportunities are missed for pupils to learn about the natural environment at first hand. The accommodation for science, as at the last inspection, is unsatisfactory. It is not a specialist science room and Bunsen burners have to be powered by gas canisters. This limits the range of experimental work undertaken. However, there are plans to include a new science area within the proposed new building for September 2002.

ART AND DESIGN

66. Pupils' achievement in art and design are good by the ages of 14 and 16. This is a good improvement from satisfactory since the last inspection. This is partly due to the careful preparation of lessons and resources to match the needs of the pupils by the specialist art teacher and learning support assistants. They provide pupils with a good range of activities, evaluating and supporting pupils' learning and aiding their progress very effectively. Pupils respond in a very good manner to this high level of support and complete their tasks with good levels of understanding.
67. By the time they are 14, pupils use a good range of skills and techniques with confidence. They make printing blocks and use them to make pleasing patterns and model according to their own carefully worked out sketches, attractive and intricate designs from rolled clay. Pupils in a Year 8 lesson achieve very well using images they make from drawings and rubbings on textures from walls and surfaces around the school. They work at a very good rate, combining their drawn images with photographs made by a digital camera, to produce a finished picture. All pupils use sketchbooks well, trying different approaches and developing their work effectively. Older pupils achieve similar high standards, for example, pupils in Year 10 examine work by the artist Giuliano Mauri, from his book 'Art in Nature 81 – 93'. They construct irregular shaped containers around a balloon, using glued string in the style of the artist. The teacher encourages high standards by providing illustrations for each pupil, showing the main elements of the construction. By age 16, many pupils have developed their sketching skills well, using shading skilfully. They have carefully analysed the colours and shapes of landscape and how to draw a portrait. The three-dimensional work continues to improve as they use papier-mâché to make exciting masks. Pupils discuss their work and its development with high levels of understanding.
68. Teaching and learning are good overall and are sometimes very good. The specialist art teacher has developed a good policy and scheme to meet the present requirements of the National Curriculum. Very good thought is given to the preparation and development of lessons. Each lesson has clear targets that are matched to pupils' competencies at different levels and shared with them. Pupils know what they have to achieve and this gives them a goal to work for. The range of activities and resources used and the enthusiasm of the teacher ensures pupils are very stimulated by their work in art and design. They quickly apply themselves to their tasks, with high levels of enthusiasm and interest. The teacher and the support assistant give the right amount of support, which ensures pupils are able to rise to the challenge of the activity successfully. This also ensures that pupils with additional special educational needs make good progress. They are constantly given praise and encouragement

to continue with tasks as much as possible, unaided. There is an emphasis throughout the teaching on valuing and celebrating individual's work and the work of others and this is seen in the positive way pupils behave and respond in their art and design lessons.

69. Samples of work across the school show a good balance between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. However, the accommodation for three-dimensional work is unsatisfactory. The teacher overcomes this by using the available limited accommodation very well and adapting resources, such as the use of self-hardening clay, to overcome this shortfall. Satisfactory displays of artists' and pupils' work influenced by these artists further enhance provision. Pupils' cultural development is supported very well by the study of work by a range of artists including Picasso, Klee and Van Gogh. Pupils use African patterns and masks as a stimulus for their work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

70. Overall standards of achievement and pupils' progress are good in design and technology. This is largely because the quality of the teaching is good and lessons are planned well to interest pupils. At age 14, pupils are designing and making items using a range of materials. In one example of a making activity they model structures using art straws. They are learning to find ways of strengthening them. They establish the need to measure accurately and to join pieces with care so that joints will last and do what they want them to do. Pupils can explain why some of their attempts fail and say what they are going to do to make sure that next time they will work better. Their design work is mainly of a practical nature. By the time they are 14, pupils use information they gain to suggest the specifications for shelters of their design. For example, they learn about structures and materials that give shelter by erecting and critically comparing dome and ridge tents. Pupils produce guided evaluations of their work and are able to use some specialist terminology associated with the project such as rigidity and flexibility. They reinforce their numeracy skills when they produce costings of the component parts of their model vehicles. Year 10 pupils, with assistance, select appropriate tools and techniques to model a container out of card for an electrical circuit to power a bicycle lamp. Pupils offer ideas on ways of attaching the lid to the container. Drawing is used to communicate their ideas and they begin to understand the use of symbols in drawings of electrical circuits. When pupils work with food they learn about hygiene and safe practice in the kitchen. They understand the importance of conducting surveys to test customer preference through work on designing and making hats. By the time they are 16, pupils use brainstorming techniques to generate ideas about their projects. They evaluate their work and offer ways of improving for example, the performance of the small controllable vehicles they construct. All pupils document the progress of their designs from initial ideas to the evaluations that sum up their progress.
71. Teaching and learning are good overall. The co-ordinator's subject knowledge is good. Lessons are planned well taking account of the National Curriculum. This ensures that pupils work with a good range of materials including food and that they use a good variety of tools and equipment. Teachers introduce pupils to the use of information and communication technology that they use to communicate their ideas. Aspects of technical drawing are also well taught and provide pupils with skills that can be applied in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to talk about what they are doing because the teachers' phrasing of questions is good. It challenges thinking and promotes learning by getting pupils to think about different ways of tackling problems. Teachers and classroom assistants give good quality help to pupils to ensure that they all make progress. They encourage pupils and this builds confidence. Relationships between pupils and the adults they work with are good and this helps to ensure that interest and concentration are maintained. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder make appropriate progress because they are given very good levels of help and support. The well-ordered working areas and clear routines help them to succeed in their work. On occasion pupils may upset each other but these situations are generally dealt with very sympathetically and learning quickly resumes. Pupils often help each other. They are proud to show others the work they do.
72. The design and technology curriculum is interesting and relevant for the pupils. It has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection, where pupils' progress in design and technology was unsatisfactory. There is an appropriate range of tools and equipment and resources are satisfactory. The management of the subject is good and this has resulted in improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. The Certificate of Achievement has been introduced as an accredited course. One major change that has helped to develop

the subject is the provision of better working areas for food and for resistant materials. The change to specialist teaching is also a contributory factor, as is the requirement now that pupils make records of the progress of their work. Assessment comments recorded at the end of each project are good. They identify what has been achieved and communicate that clearly to pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

73. Pupils' progress and achievements in geography are satisfactory overall as a result of the satisfactory quality of teaching. Geography is only taught up to the age of 14 because older pupils follow a curriculum appropriately designed around the world of work. During Year 7, pupils gain an understanding of economic activity, in particular the world of work when they discuss the activities, which lead to the production of a packet of potato crisps. They brainstorm what they know about different jobs and write them down. They then attempt to classify them in the three categories of primary, secondary and tertiary employment although a few find this difficult to understand. Pupils learn about various weather symbols and use these to make sense of weather forecasts. Year 8 pupils gain a basic understanding of aspects of erosion such as the effects of water on rock. They cover areas of knowledge such as population change and these are recorded in their books using charts that help understanding. By age 14, most pupils know a suitable range of geographical facts and can apply a satisfactory range of geographical skills. Pupils can use simple map skills to try to locate the source of the River Nile. They develop a basic understanding of ways in which humans affect the world they live in, for example, when they look at the effects of damming water to provide irrigation for the crops they grow.
74. Teaching and learning are overall satisfactory. Teaching is planned with much detail and this ensures that the National Curriculum is well covered. The teacher's subject knowledge is good and lessons are prepared well. For example, worksheets are provided that ease some of the difficulties found with the recording of work. This allows pupils to concentrate on what they are learning. Some activities involve pupils putting a sequence of pictures that show stages in the production of a manufactured item into a correct order. This helps pupils by teaching them to think carefully about what they are doing. However the level of difficulty, particularly for the less able, is sometimes too high. The teaching features stimulating visual aids such as the packet of crisps that is used as the starting point for the study of the complexity of manufacturing processes in the contemporary world. Question and answer is used well by both the teacher and classroom assistants to test and extend understanding and to develop pupils' learning. The teacher supports individual progress well through the careful grouping of pupils into ability levels. This allows adults to pitch the amount of help they give appropriately which ensures that pupils with additional special educational needs are fully involved in the lesson. Relationships are mostly satisfactory although, in some groups, pupils occasionally call out and distract others. This is usually dealt with well but, on occasion, the teacher does not immediately apply classroom rules and allows some unnecessary noise.
75. The leadership of geography is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has developed good schemes of work that provide appropriate levels of difficulty for many pupils. This has helped to bring about the satisfactory improvement in the subject, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. However, an area for development is the level of difficulty of the work for less able pupils, which is on occasion too high. Resources are satisfactory and support the curriculum well.

HISTORY

76. History is taught to pupils up to the age of 14. Their achievement and progress in history is good, a considerable improvement since the last inspection when achievement was unsatisfactory. This is due to the subject now being taught by a specialist teacher and the careful preparation of resources matched to the pupils' assessed needs. Clear targets are set and shared with the pupils. These well support pupils' learning and progress.
77. Pupils in Year 7, learn about medieval times, finding out about King William, Simon-de-Mountfort, the Church and life in a medieval village. During Year 8, pupils develop well-applied writing skills when studying life in Britain between 1800 and 1900. Work is well related to the local area, such as the railway to Brighton in 1850. They gain factual knowledge of what

life would be like for Africans transported to be slaves in America at the beginning of the last century. Pupils in Year 9 have a good awareness of the role of Adolf Hitler leading the Nazi party as chancellor during the Second World War. Pupils show a very good social and moral awareness. For example, one asked why the Nazis executed disabled people. By the time they are 14, pupils have learnt about the Roman Empire and life in the Roman army, as well as studies on the twentieth century, such as the First World War and votes for women.

78. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and at times very good. This has considerably improved since the last inspection, where teaching was unsatisfactory. Pupils are keen to learn the subject, responding well to the good, clear explanations given by the teacher. They readily answer questions with understanding. Work is carefully planned and matched to good mid-term and longer-term planning. Pupils' learning about the slave trade, for example, was brought alive by the use of a carefully selected video and relevant worksheets. The use of a range of resources is beneficial for pupils with additional special educational needs as it helps to focus their attention. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills to complete investigative research and to write up their findings.
79. The curriculum is good and includes a wide and relevant range of studies. Assessment of pupils' work provides a basis for establishing long-term targets for pupils to achieve. It is not, however, always used sufficiently to plan lessons arising from knowledge of what pupils can or cannot do. Overall resources are just adequate, but information and communication technology is not sufficiently used to research historical knowledge.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

80. Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the teaching of information and communication technology, which has led to pupils' achievements and progress now being satisfactory. This is largely due to effectively taught discrete lessons where pupils systematically learn the skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in other subjects, so pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills. This is partly because although some training has taken place for staff, a number of teachers are not sufficiently confident to use information and communication technology creatively in their teaching.
81. Pupils improve their skills in using a word processor to write stories. A few use a program that includes symbols appropriately to help them with their writing. Pupils explore different graphs as a means of showing information. For example, to show the foot sizes of pupils in the class, or the colour of hair on pictographs, bar charts and pie charts. Many pupils learn quickly to locate key words to help them search for information on the Internet. Less able pupils need support to be successful in this activity but understand the process. By the time they are 14, pupils use font, colour and special effects to make title pages. Most know how to change information into graphs and with assistance, all, including the less able, give accurate commands to control a Roamer (a remote controlled piece of equipment). They know how to send and receive electronic mail (e-mails). Pupils build on these skills so that by the time they are 16, they know how to collect and sort information through devising questionnaires and using spreadsheets, databases and graphs. They make web pages and use the Internet more effectively, for example, when they wanted to find out more about the foot and mouth outbreak.
82. The quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology lessons is satisfactory overall. At times it is good. Care is taken to ensure the technical words the pupils are using are taught and reinforced each lesson effectively. They are also displayed on the walls which acts as a prompt should a pupil need reminding. Thus, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject vocabulary improves. Pupils' numeracy skills are improved through appropriate teaching of reading information from graphs or charts. Standards of behaviour are maintained and pupils are expected to treat the equipment with respect. This is reflected in the grades awarded at the end of each lesson. Support staff are used well to help pupils with additional special educational needs. At times the level of reading and/or writing involved in an activity is too high for some pupils and slows down their progress.
83. The planning of what is to be taught is done well to ensure pupils tackle an appropriate range of activities from the National Curriculum. The Certificate of Achievement has been introduced and it is planned for pupils to begin to study this appropriate course in full in September. The improvements in the accommodation since the last inspection are good. An

information and communication technology room has been successfully established which enables pupils to use the same machines each session and contributes to their progress. Pupils' work is assessed regularly but this information is not used sufficiently to plan the next section of work.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

French

84. It was not possible to observe any French lessons during the inspection but evidence gained from looking at pupils' work, and teachers' documentation, listening to tape recordings and talking with staff and pupils indicate that pupils are now making satisfactory progress. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection and reflects a priority of the school to improve standards. Pupils learn French between the ages of 11 and 14. They gradually build up a vocabulary of words and phrases they can recall. Over time, as the tape recordings show, they become more confident and articulate phrases with increasing accuracy. By the time they are 14, they use phrases, for example, to explain what they like and dislike and what they do in their leisure time using French. Although less able pupils often need prompting, more able pupils readily understand what they are saying and respond to questions. For example, when saying which is their favourite television programme they give the reason why when prompted with "Pourquoi?" by the teacher.
85. There are indications that the quality of teaching and learning are now satisfactory as pupils' work shows they are making considerable gains from the expertise of the subject specialist who has taught them for the last two terms. Lesson planning is satisfactory and shows the subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' cultural development as they learn about the customs and the ways of the French people. Social skills are also developed well through paired activities. Plans to improve pupils' learning include more emphasis on using French to give classroom directions. The co-ordinator has recently reviewed the policy, which is appropriate. Good reference is made to using information and communication technology to help pupils learn, although there is currently limited software.

MUSIC

86. The standards of achievement and the progress pupils make in music are very good and more able pupils are reaching standards that are just below national expectations. Music is studied by pupils in Years 7 to 9 and as expressive arts for pupils in Year 10. Pupils in Year 7 can identify various instruments when a recording of a fanfare is played to them. Most explore simple chords and are becoming aware of the effects combinations of notes can achieve such as when they listen to the teacher perform chords which signify the ending of a piece. They are working with a definite sense of rhythm. At age 14 most pupils are reading simple musical notation and are developing an idea of how the parts fit together as the teacher takes them through the process, step by step, of building up musical pieces. They are able to maintain their own parts when they perform a well-known canon by a classical composer. They are able to use some musical terminology such as 'chord' and 'time'. Year 10 pupils have good recall of chord sequences and individuals can perform using these in a 12 bar blues. All pupils in this class make very good progress in clapping simple repeated rhythmic patterns following the teacher's lead. All can improvise simple patterns of sound using the xylophone in an exercise that involves one pupil making a musical question that then requires a musical reply from the other. The tapes of pupils' performances kept by the music co-ordinator are a good record of the ways in which pupils make very good progress in music. For example Year 9 pupils sing in tune and play four part pieces in good time. Year 10 pupils are playing simple syncopated melodies, some using keyboards. A small number of pupils are playing keyboards using two hands. All pupils are able to perform using a suitable variety of instruments.
87. The teaching and learning of music are very good. Through very good planning and preparation pupils are all involved in a range of highly practical and enjoyable exercises. These often lead to performances towards the end of lessons that are the sum of the exercises that went before and which give pupils a clear understanding of just what they have achieved. When concentration flags a little bit, the teacher responds very quickly with an alternative approach and regains the focus of the lesson. By constantly moving around the class, the teacher provides individual input where necessary to ensure individuals make progress. Her

very good command of the subject allows her to give impromptu performances on the range of instruments to give examples of what she wants them to do. This approach helps to give pupils the confidence to improvise and to experiment. A sense of humour is used well to make lessons enjoyable. This engages and sustains pupils' interest and enthusiasm and thus promotes good learning. The teacher uses vocal skills well and sings to provide an example of a piece. Memorable nonsense words such as 'Um cha cha' are effectively used to help pupils to memorise a rhythm. This promotes enjoyment as well as understanding. Information and communication technology is used to download fragments of music from the Internet, which are played to good effect. For example, a Year 10 lesson on ragtime was reinforced and pupils calmed through listening to a slower tempo piece, which was a contrast to the highly active practical session.

88. The subject is very well co-ordinated and promoted by the music teacher. There is a suitable range of musical resources but the provision of information and communication technology is narrow and does not include sufficient scope to explore ways of broadening pupils' experiences of music. Assessment procedures produce a good picture of attainment and the use of tapes to record best work is also good. Over time this provides a clear picture of progress. Good use is made of the classroom to teach the subject but the lack of a practice room means that pupils have nowhere to go to practise and improve their instrumental skills. Improvement since the last inspection is good and achievements have improved for Year 10 pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. Pupils now make very good progress in physical education. There is a very wide range of opportunities provided by the specialist physical education teacher and the support assistant for pupils to develop their very good level of skills. These include whole school events for pupils to partake in gymnastics, dance and trampolining, a swimming gala, playing of football and cricket and an activities week in the summer, when the physical education department organises both physical and creative activities, including sporting activities and visiting artists and musicians. The school takes part in the Brighton University Dance Festival. Pupils were observed preparing for this at lunchtime. Here they were achieving high standards of dance, interpreting with appropriate and complex routines, responding very well to the challenging musical input. Once a week there is a club held in the local mainstream secondary school and youth club. Nearly half the school, including pupils of all ages, attend. These pupils have very good experiences of small games, such as table tennis and snooker and larger game activities such as football and tennis. Once a week, pupils attend a football club run at Park College by the sports development officer. The physical education curriculum takes account of all aspects of the National Curriculum and pupils show good levels of achievement across all areas. This is especially so with swimming, where many pupils successfully swim over 50 metres using a variety of strokes.
90. During the week of inspection, the focus was on developing the pupils' athletic abilities. Pupils in Year 7 achieve very well when learning how to take their position for a sprint start for running and how to high jump and to throw objects over a distance. Pupils in Year 9, building up on their successful learning from Year 7 onwards, show higher levels of ability, with a good level of control. They strive hard to improve upon their own performances. Pupils in Year 10 attend a local secondary school to use their tennis courts. They show a good awareness of hand position on the racquet and of the use of forehand and backhand stroke play. By the end of the lesson, all pupils are using these strokes on the court with a good awareness of position and net play.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There has been a big improvement in teaching since the last inspection. In every lesson appropriately difficult tasks are set which helps pupils to learn. Lessons are well planned to ensure no time is wasted and progress is very well recorded as the lesson proceeds. Standards are set arising from this very good assessment of pupils' progress. Pupils are aware of how to improve their own performances. They time each other's performance using stopwatches, and measure the lengths objects such as quoits, beanbags and shot puts are thrown. This very well supports the practical use of their mathematical skills. There is excellent teamwork between the teacher and support assistant. This is further enhanced with the involvement of students who are training to be teachers from Brighton University. Pupils relate very well to school staff and visitors, showing high levels of interest and enthusiasm, striving to do their best.

92. The teacher responsible shows a very good subject knowledge. She and the support assistant, provide an excellent team that is a major factor in the very good progress and high achievements of the pupils. Additional factors including the good level of resources and accommodation, the excellent links with and use of resources in the local community, and the very good teaching of the subject, make physical education a strength of the school. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

93. Pupils' achievements and progress in religious education are satisfactory overall. They are good by the time they are 16. This is partly because teachers are skilled in helping pupils to develop their opinions and values. Between the ages of 11 and 14, pupils learn about Christian beliefs and practices. Most know what is to be found in a church and about significant events in the life of a Christian including baptism and marriage. Pupils' knowledge of other religions grows steadily. They study the symbols of the Sikh religion and compare Christianity and Hinduism. By age 14, most recall facts, for example, remembering details of the life of Father Damien and understand that the beliefs of individuals can affect what they do with their lives. Pupils' knowledge of other religions is extended in Year 10 where they explore sacred writings including the Bible and the Koran. Their moral education is developed well. By the time they are 16, most have an understanding of different types of prejudice and have formed views, for example, about racial prejudice from reading about Martin Luther King and Anne Frank.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good and at times very good for older pupils because the work is suitably difficult for all those in the class. Care is taken to ensure they have the right level of support. For example, pupils work in pairs where at least one is a strong reader, sorting and rearranging sentences about famous people they have learnt about. They rise to the challenge of identifying the 'mystery' person they have not talked about and many guess accurately that it is Mother Teresa. A pupil with additional special educational needs is helped to sort the sentences well through responding to the pertinent questions and prompts of a support assistant. In a Year 9 class, the strategy to sort sentences works well in allowing pupils with writing difficulties to demonstrate what they know. Praise and encouragement are used well and show pupils their answers and opinions are valued. This creates a positive atmosphere where a quiet word deals well with any unacceptable behaviour. Lessons are planned appropriately although occasionally work is too easy for more able pupils. In some classes there is too great a reliance on copying work from the board and in a number of instances work is unfinished.
95. The curriculum is suitably based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and there is a clear policy document. Several staff teach religious education and at present, there is a temporary co-ordinator. However, the clarity of what is to be taught helps to ensure pupils do not repeat work. Assessment of pupils' work is against the lessons' learning objectives that are sometimes too broad for this purpose. The information gained is not used sufficiently to plan the next stage of learning. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Standards achieved at the last inspection have been maintained.