

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW FOSSEWAY SCHOOL

Hengrove, Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 109393

Headteacher: Mr. J. D. Hiscox

Reporting inspector: Clive Tombs
3055

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th November 2000

Inspection number: 223600

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	6 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New Fosseway Road Hengrove Bristol
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. M. Sach
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Clive Tombs Registered inspector 3055	Art Design and technology	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught? How well is the school is led and managed?
Shirley Watts Lay inspector 9957		Attendance. How well does the school work in partnership with parents and the community? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils?
Ivor Evenden Team Inspector 18317	English Geography	Assessment
Helen Eadington Team Inspector 23549	Mathematics Religious education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Norman Watling Team inspector 15021	Information and communication technology Music Physical education Special educational needs	Further education
Michael Kell Team inspector 13101	Science History Personal, social education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered?

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PART A : SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

New Fosseway School is a mixed day school for pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and hearing impairment. All the pupils who attend the school have statements of special educational needs. There are 69 pupils on roll – 47 boys and 22 girls. There are 3 pupils of ethnic origin but none requires English as an additional language. 33 pupils are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are brought to school in specially provided transport.

The school is housed in one building but the site is shared with an Adult Resource and Activity Centre and a Social Services Department respite care hostel. While the school and school buildings are managed by the headteacher, the Social Services Department has the overall responsibility for the site. The school aims to provide an environment, which is challenging, stimulating and supportive of pupils' development towards independence.

Since the last inspection, the age range of the pupils has changed from 2–19 to 6–19 with the Early Years department now managed by a mainstream school. As a result of this re-organisation, the school is now on one site, and organised into two departments, lower school for pupils 6 – 14, and upper school for pupils 14 – 19. Numbers have reduced by twenty. The school catchment area has increased and it now takes pupils from all areas of the city. This September, additional pupils joined from a closing school in the north of the city to form a new class in upper school. Pupils' attainment is significantly below age related expectations. The majority of pupils and students are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum and most are disapplied from National Curriculum Tests.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a very good quality of education for all of its pupils. Very good leadership by the headteacher creates an environment where staff morale is high and pupils and students enjoy coming to school. Consistently very good teaching stimulates pupils and students to high achievement. The school provides very good value for money. Areas for further development include the curriculum and some aspects of assessment and schemes of work. The school's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and senior management team give the school clear educational direction and a concern for high standards.
- Very good teaching across the school results in pupils' high achievement and progress.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and permeates every aspect of school life.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils. Child protection procedures are very good.

What could be improved

- The management and monitoring of the curriculum, to ensure breadth, balance and entitlement at key stages 2,3 and 4.
- Schemes of work need to be further developed so that pupils make better progress through and between key stages.
- Assessment and recording arrangements for all subjects.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since it was last inspected in June 1996. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues for action. Teaching is formally monitored and evaluated and, as a

result, the quality of teaching and learning is very good, at all key stages, at post 16 and in all subjects. The needs of pupils and students with severe communication and physical difficulties are more effectively met through the use of technological communication and mobility aids. Pupil groupings and the deployment of staff to meet individual needs are now much more efficient following the adoption of the Leeds Matrix. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has greatly improved and is now a strength of the school. The adoption of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. The induction of new staff is now good and school meals supervisors have training and guidance. The school provides very good value for money. Schemes of work and assessment procedures need further development, and curriculum monitoring and evaluation needs to be more rigorous. Improvements in leadership and management and the shared commitment to raising achievement, means that the school is well placed to sustain its improvements and improve still further.

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 11	by age 16	By age 19	Key	
Speaking and listening	A	A	A	very good	A
Reading	C	C	C	Good	B
Writing	C	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	A	A	A	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B		

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

Best progress takes place in:

- **English:** Pupils acquire good communication, speaking and listening skills.
- **Mathematics:** Pupils acquire and use good basic numeracy skills.
- **PSE:** Pupils acquire good personal, social and independent skills.
- **Science:** Pupils develop their scientific knowledge and understanding through investigative work.
- **Information and communication technology (ICT):** Pupils recognise that many everyday devices respond to signals and controls.
- **Post 16:** students make good and often very good progress in communication skills, numeracy and ICT and acquire relevant knowledge about healthy life styles and vocational work. They are gaining external accreditation for their achievements.

Not enough progress takes place in

- **History, geography and design and technology:** Not enough progress takes place over time because insufficient curriculum time is allocated to these subjects

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love school. They are keen to learn and eager to succeed. They show an appetite and enjoyment for learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour, in and out of the classroom, and on visits into the community, is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. As they move up through the school, they show increased tolerance, co-operation, independence and initiative. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is very good. There is almost no unauthorised absence. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very effective.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 6-11	Aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is excellent or very good in well over half the lessons, in all key stages and in Post 16. In nine out of ten lessons, teaching is at least good or better. As a result pupils achieve well and make good and often very good progress. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics and PSHE and is often very good in science. In the very best lessons, pupils are challenged appropriately with a range of well planned activities, supported by a variety of resources. There is seamless teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs), so that effective learning takes place. Teachers' high expectations that pupils will work hard and behave, and their very good management skills, create a purposeful, supportive classroom ethos, which encourages co-operation and independent learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides good learning opportunities that meet the needs of all pupils and students. Curriculum opportunities are limited however, by a lack of balance, with insufficient time being allocated to some foundation subjects.
Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs (SEN)	Very good provision exists for pupils with additional SEN through the use of a range of technological communication and mobility aids and through access to the support and expertise of the school nurses and a range of therapists.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision. This is a major strength of the school. It permeates every aspect of school life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good health and safety procedures and very good child protection arrangements, ensure pupils and students are kept safe and well. Assessment procedures and practices are underdeveloped.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. All possible efforts are made to involve them. The curriculum is considerably enhanced by a range of visits, visitors and annual residential visits, and by links with the community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team are very good, inspiring commitment to high standards and continuous improvement from all staff.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors take good care to monitor the school development plan and finances.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All aspects of school are monitored and evaluated systematically and appropriate remedial action taken. The school examines its own practice well and sets realistic targets.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are targeted well to educational need.

The quality of staffing is good and the provision of learning resources is at least satisfactory. The lack of specialist facilities for science, art and design technology, limits the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop skills in these subjects. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are a particular strength. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school • Teaching is good • They are kept well informed • They feel comfortable approaching the school with a problem • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • More activities outside of lessons • Provision for speech therapy

Parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school and the education it provides. Inspection findings support this view. The inspection team found that the setting of homework, that is anything that involves parents in the education of their children, is good. For example, home/school diaries and training programmes sent home by therapists. Extra-curricular activities are limited by transport arrangements and by the distance pupils live from school. The inspection team agree that staff shortage in speech therapy is having a negative effect on the progress of some pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Across the school pupils and students make satisfactory or better progress and achieve well in all lessons and in all subjects. In nine out of ten lessons pupils' progress and achievement is good, very good or excellent. Pupils' progress and achievement is most consistently good or very good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection and indicates improving trends over time. Pupils in upper school are appropriately and externally accredited through the Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts (OCR) Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL) and the National Skills Profile.
2. Pupils also achieve well and make good and very good progress in art, ICT, religious Education, music, physical education and PSHE. Evidence in pupils' work, records and teacher assessment documents show that pupils make satisfactory or better progress over time in these subjects, steadily building on their knowledge skills and understanding. Although progress and achievement in lessons is satisfactory, good and often very good in design and technology, history and geography, progress over time is less secure, because insufficient curriculum time is allocated to these subjects.
3. In English, pupils make good and often very good progress, particularly in speaking and listening. Pupils convey simple messages to a range of audiences. They can recall the events of yesterday or talk about the topic in hand. Five higher attaining pupils attend the school council meeting and report back to their classmates. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils read simple text or symbols with accuracy and understanding. They show confidence in predicting the outcome of a story. Lower attaining pupils understand that books convey meaning and listen attentively. In writing, higher attaining pupils communicate through simple words and phrases showing an awareness of full stops and capital letters. Others copy from models or over-write. Many have no independent writing skills. The school has successfully adapted the National Literacy Strategy. All subjects make a consistent contribution to improving literacy skills.
4. In mathematics, pupils make consistently good and often very good progress across the school. In Key Stage 2, pupils count reliably to ten. Higher attaining pupils rote count to twenty. They match number symbols to written numbers and place objects in number sequences. In Key Stage 3, pupils are aware of tessellation and higher attaining pupils name and describe 3D shapes such as, cube, sphere and cylinder. In Key Stage 4 and Post 16, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in real life situations. They explain how to calculate the total cost of shopping in the college canteen and cost and plan their own travel arrangements. The school has successfully adapted the National Numeracy Strategy and this has had a positive impact on the subject. Many subjects make a contribution to improving numeracy skills across the curriculum.
5. In science, pupils achieve well and make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experienced simple scientific investigation. They have grown bulbs and know they need watering if they are to grow. Some predict whether an object will sink or float. They have learnt how to vary the speed of a revolving chair. They increase their understanding of light by investigating different light sources. By the end of Key Stage 3, they are beginning to record what they have seen and done. They learn to understand words like 'porous' and 'absorbent' in an investigation on the waterproof capability of coats. In Key Stage 4 and Post 16, pupils and students develop their scientific

knowledge and understanding in the local community and in the classroom by working with seeds and different soils, learning to appreciate the needs of living things.

6. In ICT pupils' achievement and progress are good in all key stages and Post 16. By the end of Key Stage 2, the higher attaining pupils develop good mouse control and are at the early stages of basic keyboard skills. Lower attaining pupils work on cause and effect through the use of a variety of switches. By the end of Key Stage 3, higher attaining pupils learn to word process. By the end of Key Stage 4, higher attaining pupils operate CD-ROMS, select different fonts for their word processing and save and print their work.
7. The school carefully analyses its data to check the progress of all pupils by age, gender and disability. Pupils and students with additional special educational needs make very good progress in all subjects, across all key stages and Post-16 and are included in as wide a range of activities as possible. There is no significant variations between the progress of girls and boys, or by different groups of pupils. The school sets appropriately challenging targets in pupils' IEPs, which are regularly monitored and reviewed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.

8. The parents reported that their children were eager to come to school and this view is supported by the enthusiastic way they arrive and the appetite they show for all the activities. They show pleasure and delight in their achievements, which are highlighted in the Friday assemblies. When they go out to various places they display a natural curiosity and a willingness to be involved. For example, when a group of senior pupils enjoyed a visit to the adventure course at Windmill City Farm.
9. The pupils are valued by the staff and they themselves value other people and the school. They have a deep concern for others and this was seen by their reaction to the meaning of Armistice Day. Pupils also raise money for a charity of their choice while harvest gifts are distributed locally. Pupils have an excellent relationship with adults and other pupils and are polite and helpful to visitors. All pupils develop a sense of responsibility and have the opportunity to perform specific tasks, for example, returning the register to the office, which they do with great reliability. Responsibility for their own learning and behaviour increases, as pupils become more competent and independent. There is a school council, which is democratically constituted and this enables pupils to become involved in the running of the school. The revision of the school rules and the redesigned school garden are two examples of their collective decision making.
10. The behaviour of the pupils in lessons, around the school and when on educational visits, is very good. Most pupils understand the rules and routines. When on visits, the pupils display the good manners and politeness expected of them in school. There is no evidence of bullying. All staff positively praise good, kind, considerate behaviour and a merit system is used to encourage and recognise pupils' good behaviour with the award of a certificate in the Friday assembly. This way of celebrating pupils' achievements is a positive development since the previous inspection. Over the last year there has only been one pupil excluded for one day.
11. Overall, pupils' attendance is very good and unauthorised absences are well below the national level. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when attendance was judged to be good. Absences are usually due to hospitalisation and illness, together with the fact that pupils and students attending college and on the inclusion programme to other schools are marked absent. All pupils come to school by transport, which is efficient and usually arrives punctually, thus enabling lessons to start on time. Procedures for the marking and the keeping of registers are good. The school contacts

parents/carers over absences and when necessary refer to the Education Welfare Officer.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is the most significant strength of the school. The school benefits from a skilled, enthusiastic and committed staff who make a most powerful and consistent contribution to the achievements and progress made by pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is good, very good or excellent in over nine out of ten lessons. Very good or excellent teaching is in evidence in all key stages and Post 16, and in most subjects. This represents significant progress since the previous inspection. The systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
13. Teaching is consistently good and very good in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science. The good, very good and excellent teaching includes carefully planned lessons, with clear learning objectives based on the accurate assessment of individual needs, and is linked to pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). The staff take particular care to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy in most subjects. Constant attention to teaching communication skills is a key feature. For example, some very good work takes place with the Picture Exchange Communication System for pupils with autism, as well as the use of objects of reference for those at the early stages of their development. This supports some very good communication development, aided by the effective work of the speech therapist. The consistent use of sign language in lessons also contributes to pupils' communication skills. Rhyme, rhythm and songs are frequently used to consolidate learning and are often complemented by background music.
14. The strength of teaching owes much to the seamless teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs), and teachers' knowledge of pupils' individual needs. Embracing this is a calm but purposeful classroom ethos which encourages co-operative behaviour and in which pupils feel confident and comfortable. This is particularly noticeable and important in classes for pupils with autism and those with challenging behaviour, where constant and predictable routines help them to remain calm, focus on the lesson and make good progress. Teachers' high expectations that pupils will work hard and behave are consistent throughout the school. These expectations are supported by teachers' positive behaviour management skills which maintain the learning process in the most difficult circumstances.
15. Teachers' good subject knowledge is effectively demonstrated in a lesson on Macbeth. Pupils make very good progress in understanding the deepest meaning of the play and the characters because of the patient exposition of the teacher and the planned activities that reinforce and illuminate the plot. In swimming, the teachers' very good subject knowledge extends and improves pupils' techniques and builds on prior learning, as they work towards Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) awards. In mathematics the teacher's very good subject knowledge is evident in skilled questioning and prompts so that pupils consolidate their understanding and accuracy in measurement.
16. Time, resources and support staff are used extremely well. Lessons start on time and proceed with pace, so that learning opportunities are maximised. Resources are appropriately used to stimulate and motivate pupils and students to learn. In a class with PMLD pupils, mobility aids help staff to move pupils and make them comfortable, and technological aids, including those in the light room, stimulate them to respond. In a mathematics lesson, resource boxes with games and characters for each number are used to help pupils enjoy counting or identifying numbers. LSAs are used effectively

throughout the school to maintain pupils on task or to record on-going assessments. In the PMLD class, LSAs continue the exercises set by the physiotherapist so that pupils' muscle tone and mobility are maintained. In a science lesson a microscope and various magnifying lenses help pupils observe the contents of soil more carefully. Good use is made of computers to help pupils design a pot or reinforce number concepts.

17. Teachers consistently use a wide variety of methods which enable pupils to learn effectively. For example, in a Year 4 drama group, teaching is breathtaking in its variety of activity and pace. Learning is fun. Role play with a hat that is passed around the group, marching to music, rhythmic stickwork as a man lands on the moon and dramatic reading from symbols, all reinforce vocabulary, build pupils' confidence and emphasise working together.
18. Assessment practices vary across the school but are satisfactory overall, with planned developments in hand. There are good practices to share. In English and mathematics for example, precise IEPs targets inform teaching and planning. In a Year 4 class pupils' art work is stored in a folder, dated and annotated. In a Year 9 class, photographs are used to record pupils' progress and achievement. Homework, involving parents in the education of their children, is appropriate and contributes well to their progress and achievements.
19. Pupils with additional special needs make good and often very good progress in line with other pupils because of good and very good teaching, the appropriate use of technological communication and mobility aids and because of the very good support and expertise of nurses and therapists.

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

20. Although the school has pupils with a wide range of ability and additional special needs, including profound and multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and hearing impairment, it is able to provide a satisfactory statutory curriculum. All pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 follow this curriculum and as a result the school offers a good range of worthwhile and appropriate opportunities for learning. The school is committed to equality of curriculum access and opportunity and the quality of provision for pupils and students with additional special educational needs is good, for example PMLD classes join with others for music and dance.
21. The curriculum in Key Stages 2 and 3 is very relevant to the needs of all pupils, developing their academic progress and personal and social skills, but it lacks breadth and balance. This is because the current class timetables and schemes of work do not ensure entitlement, as they do not guarantee subject coverage. Some class teachers allocate subjects very little timetable space, so that history and geography, for example, are taught for just fifteen minutes a week in a number of classes and a Year 9 class has only one mathematics lesson a week. One of the main problems is that class timetables are generally poor. They are produced in a variety of formats and are very imprecise (e.g. some lessons are shown as English / personal and social education / history/ geography) and as a result subject coverage cannot be easily monitored and analysed by the school's management team. Even though the school has made some progress in developing schemes of work, they still require further development to show clearly when different elements of the programmes of study are to be taught. Current arrangements do not ensure that pupils have a breadth of experiences as they move through each key stage and between key stages.
22. A characteristic of much of the curriculum is the consistency of carefully differentiated

work being made available for those pupils with more complex needs and for those who need to be challenged more. As a result, pupils with additional needs make good progress in lessons as differentiated tasks are available, they are managed well, and are supported effectively by learning support assistants. This is particularly evident in the school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is particularly good but both strategies are applied effectively and have been instrumental in raising standards in literacy and numeracy.

23. The school has adopted an accredited, integrated, modular 14-19 curriculum for Key Stage 4 pupils and further education students. This is very relevant to their needs and incorporates a range of activities that develop independent living skills and contribute to preparing students for leaving school. However, the school's curriculum documentation is not sufficiently explicit in explaining that Key Stage 4 pupils do not follow the separate subjects of the National Curriculum. Therefore there is no guarantee that these pupils, who are still of statutory school age, are receiving their curriculum entitlement.
24. The school works closely with other educational establishments in order to provide integration opportunities for its pupils and students. Some pupils are integrated for part of the week into local primary and secondary schools and one attends a nearby school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Although there are some curriculum links, these arrangements are primarily for social inclusion and for pupils to spend time in a more oral environment. The school's strong community link is also evident in its relationship with the local college, as groups of students visit on a weekly basis and in the good use the school makes of links with business and commerce.
25. A comprehensive and appropriate PSHE curriculum incorporates issues pertaining to citizenship, relationships, tolerance, sex education and drug misuse. This, along with regular 'circle' time, gives the pupils and students the opportunities to understand themselves, fosters co-operation, self-esteem and develops independence.
26. Careers provision for the older pupils is good. The careers officer first becomes involved in the 14+ reviews and then again at aged 16. There are consultations, planning and mock interviews prior to possible full time college placements. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in work experience and this may be done as an individual or as part of a group. This enables pupils to gain a further sense of independence and to experience the challenges and expectations of the work situation. A very good placement was observed within a tree nursery enabling pupils to experience physical work, health and safety regulations and punctuality. Students thoroughly enjoy the work so much that they are eager to continue through their lunchtime.
27. A number of activities are provided to enrich the school curriculum. Many out-of-school visits are arranged in order to broaden pupils' learning experiences and to extend their experience outside school. Pupils have recently visited places such as the Millennium Dome, and local facilities are used frequently to develop their personal and social skills. These include, a visit and workshop at Bristol City Football Club, shopping at a local supermarket in preparation for a food technology lesson and making use of the adventure course at the Windmill City Farm. Visitors to the school include a group of professional musicians, who both play and allow pupils to play their instruments, the choir and orchestra from St Bernadette school and a group of cricketers who spend time coaching the game
28. Extra-curricular activities are limited by the transport arrangements and distances pupils live from the school. However, the school organises activities in the lunchtime to compensate for this. There are as well, annual residential visits for some pupils in Upper and Lower school.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is

a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual development has improved well since the previous inspection, and the promotion of cultural development has improved significantly.

30. Religious education lessons enable pupils to consider the similarities and differences between a variety of world faiths, and the significance of symbols such as light and water. The lives and feelings of people in other times and places are discussed, as for instance, when Upper School pupils responded sensitively to poetry and readings describing the suffering of soldiers in World War 1. Collective acts of worship are well used to promote spiritual development. Pupils listen carefully to stories and poetry, say prayers, and reflect on their own feelings about the events of the day. There are many planned moments of wonder as, for example, when Key Stage 2 pupils listen to “the sea” in a large shell during circle time. The school has good links with the local church whose minister joins them for special occasions like the harvest festival or Christmas carol service.
31. In all areas of the school's life pupils are given very clear guidance about the difference between right and wrong. Rules are displayed around the school, and pupils are actively encouraged to regulate their own behaviour. Discussions in many subjects, particularly personal and social development, religious education and history, provide opportunities for pupils to explore moral values, and consider how their own feelings and behaviour affect other people. School staff are very skilled in intervention, and incidents which arise are treated sensitively in ways that further help pupils to develop a sense of justice and distinguish right from wrong.
32. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent. This results in mutual respect between adults and pupils, and between the pupils themselves. Collaborative work in lessons is carefully planned to enable pupils to develop and reinforce their social skills. Lunch times are pleasant social occasions. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements and most show care and concern for friends experiencing difficulties. They are encouraged to take responsibility and to show increasing initiative as they move through the school. The School Council actively involves all pupils in making decisions about issues such as the school's uniform and rules.
33. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about and appreciate their own culture and that of others. They learn about a range of beliefs and customs in religious education. They celebrate Christian festivals, and those of other faiths, such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. An understanding of multi-cultural issues is further promoted by having visitors to the school from ethnic minority groups, and by pupils' involvement in local festivals. Music is an integral part of many areas of the school's life, and is well used to give pupils experiences of musical styles from other countries and times. Visiting drama groups, trips to museums and work with a local artist further enhance pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The previous inspection noted that the school was a safe and secure environment with good support being provided for all pupils. The school has built upon this foundation and pupils' welfare, personal guidance and development are areas of considerable strengths.
35. The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. All staff knows the pupils well and show genuine warmth towards them. Records held by staff indicate a depth of knowledge encompassing both social and medical needs. Additionally, the school works closely and effectively with the nurses and therapists and with other visiting professionals. All contribute information and advice into the planning for individual pupils.

The procedures for child protection are very good and all staff have received training. Links with Social Services are good. There are good systems in place to monitor attendance.

36. Health and safety and school security are very good. The caretaker of the site is responsible for monitoring the hydrotherapy pool and swimming pool and regular checks are made around the school and grounds in respect of health and safety. This includes regular electrical checks, risk assessments and fire drills.
37. The school is a caring community, with a very supportive ethos, and pupils are well supervised throughout the day. There are many opportunities for staff to encourage good attitudes and personal development in different settings, and these opportunities are well taken. The quality of care for PMLD pupils who have additional health care needs and severe communication difficulties is exceptionally good, keeping them at ease, comfortable and ready to learn when appropriate. Lunchtimes too, provide examples of high levels of care, with trained meal supervisors carefully feeding and communicating with certain pupils while the nurse quietly and efficiently administers medication. The kitchen staff offer pupils a choice of meals while providing appropriate meals for those on diet. On trips out in the community and at playtimes, staff make good use of the opportunities to develop pupils' personal and social, and independent skills and their understanding of the world. Pupils' personal development is monitored through targets in their IEPs, and through their progress in the PSHE curriculum.
38. Provision for pupils and students with additional special educational needs is very good. There is now a wide range of mobility and communication equipment, including switches for ICT. Therapists, in conjunction with teachers and assistants, regularly review the use of equipment and aids to ensure that the needs of pupils and students are met. Very good use is made of radio aids for those with hearing impairment. A technician is effectively employed to service and maintain computer hardware.
39. The school has spent considerable time establishing good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. A good document describes the school policy and procedures. Good records are kept in every classroom. The needs of all pupils and students as expressed in their Statements of Special Educational Needs are very well addressed. Teachers are very knowledgeable about the pupils in their care and collect information in very accessible files. These are of two kinds: the first is a record of progress containing all the assessment data; the second is a record of progress with examples of what pupils have actually achieved. A feature of the second files is the considerable number of photographs that provide a visual record. There are, however, some shortcomings in the use of assessment. All record files contain full information about progress in English and mathematics. Some subjects are not currently included in the classroom files, although there are exceptions, and there are some significant differences in how each teacher keeps the class record. Appropriate examples of written work are included in the files.
40. The school is currently planning to improve the system for annual reviews and to ensure more consistency in the production of IEPs. On entry to the school, the pupil's statement is carefully considered and an IEP is written. The IEP is then used as the guideline for progress for each pupil. They contain attainable academic targets and these are checked off against linked lists as progress is made. Targets for personal development are less precise and are therefore less easily subjected to similar progress checks. Annual reviews are held in accordance with the Code of Practice and clear guidelines have been set. The IEPs are modified at the annual review to take account of targets that have been achieved. Teachers meticulously do this on a day-by-day basis. Often, especially with those who make the slowest progress because of multiple disabilities, the gains recorded are very small steps that accumulate over time. There are also clear

procedures to ensure that all annual reviews are properly prepared and that up-to-date information is available. The school makes every effort to encourage parents to attend the review of their child's education plan, writing to those who have not attended to express concern and to stress the importance of the occasion.

41. Overall the use of the records is satisfactory. At present, the progress of pupils is not sufficiently monitored in all subjects. The provision of clear learning objectives for all subjects in the curriculum would, however, make it possible to improve these assessments, their use and the quality of the records kept. This provision of objectives should be an important part of the work of subject co-ordinators as they gain information from regular review of the schemes of work. The school is aware that this is an area for further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

42. Overall, the parent's views of the school are very positive. Responses to the parental questionnaire, as well as attendance at the pre-inspection meeting, indicate the good will and warmth that parents have for the school. Parents feel that the school takes very good care of their children. One parent gave an example of the excellent care taken over her daughter when she was involved in an accident. The nurse was immediately at hand, she was telephoned by the headteacher and her child was accompanied to hospital. Parents noted the improvements since the last inspection and were appreciative of the work of the staff. Parents felt that the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies had impacted positively on school practice, that pupils' achievements were more publicly acclaimed and that the school enjoyed a higher profile in the community.
43. A monthly newsletter is sent to all parents, which is very well presented. Pupils' annual reports and the annual report from Governors are detailed and informative and meet statutory requirements. When pupils are admitted to school they enter into a home school agreement which enables parents to enter into a partnership with the school. The local nursery school sometimes use the school's facilities thus allowing some children to become familiar with their possible future surroundings. Parents meetings are held regularly and there are open afternoons to allow parents to see the work the pupils are doing. Generally the annual review meetings and parents' evenings are well attended. The school has an open door policy and in addition, invites parents in to special assemblies.
44. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. Home/school diaries, timetables, termly topics and menus inform parents of what is happening to their children and this contributes to pupils' learning. In cases when a pupil is undertaking therapy or treatment, parents are instructed how to continue training programmes at home. A core group of parents help in swimming lessons or on major trips. The Parent/Staff Association, though now small in numbers, still continues to raise money for the school to use to improve resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are very good and promote high standards and very good teaching and learning. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when leadership and management were judged to be good. Leadership is characterised by a calm, committed, collegiate approach in which all staff, teaching and non-teaching, and all pupils, are valued and respected. There is a climate of self examination, a healthy outlook towards re-organisation in the near future, and a

continual striving towards improvements. This is evident in the very good improvements in all aspects of school life.

46. The management of the school is very effective. Good documentation is supported by regular meetings and effective training and ensures good communication and a shared sense of purpose. All staff have job descriptions and are clear about their roles in promoting the aims and values of the school. The excellent teamwork between teaching and all non-teaching staff is the most potent factor in influencing the quality of education. There is effective delegation as well, and a strength of the school is the quality and competence of members of the senior management team and some subject co-ordinators.
47. The governing body are supportive and some are regular visitors to the school. Governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities and are conscientious in fulfilling them. Along with the headteacher they carefully monitor the school development plan, which has set appropriately costed targets and priorities in response to clearly identified needs. Governors, because of their small number, operate as one committee and share together the different aspects of the work of the school. They are over-reliant on information from senior staff and systems to evaluate school practices for themselves are underdeveloped.
48. The governing body has an active role in guiding and monitoring the school's financial affairs. This it does prudently and well, and with future changes in mind. The considerable under-spend, for example, is deliberate and in support of the school changing to a secondary provision in 2002, when modifications to the accommodation will be needed. Additional money is also necessary to match NGfL funding this financial year for the networking of five computers, and to employ a part-time technician. The principles of best value are well applied as for example, with the adoption of the Leeds Matrix as a model of assessing pupil needs and matching this with staffing. However, the current practice of delegating curriculum funds should be reviewed, to make subject co-ordinators' planning more effective.
49. Teaching is effectively monitored and support for staff development given. This is another significant improvement on the last inspection. As a result teaching is consistently good and most often across the school. Arrangements for performance management are in place. However, the monitoring of the curriculum is insufficiently robust and does not ensure access to all the National Curriculum Programmes of Study as pupils move through and between key stages. Teachers' timetables should more accurately reflect the subjects being covered. The new responsibilities given to co-ordinators to monitor their own subjects is a positive move and should result in a further evaluation of standards and improved subject planning. However, co-ordinators will need training and cover to fulfil their roles effectively.
50. The school aims are concerned with the ethos, fulfilling pupils' and students' potential, including self-advocacy, and providing equalising opportunities. The attractive learning environment, good achievements by pupils and concern for equal opportunities are examples of how well the aims have been implemented. Relationships between staff and between staff and pupils are excellent and this helps promote learning. Staff are encouraged to contribute to policy development and pupils are listened to through the findings of the school council. Parents expressed their full support for the school's aims and values.
51. The overall provision of staff is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. All staff have clearly defined roles, and the school follows formal procedures to allocate appropriate staff to classes. Not all co-ordinators are qualified in the subjects they lead, but most are appropriately experienced. The majority of teachers have a qualification in teaching pupils with special educational needs, and two have completed a

course on teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

52. The school makes very effective use of a range of therapists including physiotherapy, speech therapy and music therapy. The school has two part time nurses who provide full-time support between them with time for hand-over and discussion. Since the last inspection, communication, planning and developing programmes for pupils and students with additional special educational needs have very much improved as a result of much more effective liaison between medical, therapy, teaching and support staff. All staff now contribute to all annual reviews either in writing, by attendance or both. Therapists and nurses feel that they are valued team members in the school.
53. At the time of the inspection, there was a staffing shortage in speech therapy provision. Only one and a half days per week were provided from an allocation of two and a half days per week. The school and health authority have tried unsuccessfully to recruit a therapist. Parents have expressed concern about this situation. The shortage of provision is having a negative effect on the progress of some pupils who need higher levels of support than they are currently receiving.
54. The school has a well-organised system of professional interviews to identify priorities for staff development. In-service training is linked to the school's aims and priorities, but, with the exception of literacy and numeracy, there is insufficient emphasis on improving teachers' expertise in specific subject areas. Learning support assistants follow the school's training programme, and as a result, the quality of the support they give to pupils is very good. They make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and achievement. Performance management procedures are underway. The school has a good staff handbook, and good induction procedures for new staff. The school is well served by the administrative staff. Their unobtrusive efficiency contributes to the smooth running of the school.
55. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there are a number of unsatisfactory features. Since the last inspection the school has greatly improved the use it makes of its grounds. Playground and school security have been improved with better fencing and an entry system. Most specialist facilities are well used to enhance pupils' learning. However, the current use of the hydrotherapy pool is neither efficient nor effective in terms of the use of physiotherapy time. Additionally, the lack of specialist facilities to carry out practical investigative science, art, and design and technology restricts the learning opportunities of higher attaining pupils. The internal appearance of the school is enhanced by good quality displays of pupils' work, and photographs which celebrate events and activities. However, both internally and externally there are many areas of chipped and peeling paintwork, which detract from the school's appearance.
56. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and are good in English, mathematics, history, art, music and religious education. Provision has improved in geography, history, information communication technology and religious education. The good improvement in the quality and use of switches and mobility aids, has resulted in improved progress and greater independence for the pupils involved. The good provision of materials to support the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies makes a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make. Religious education and music resources are well used to promote multi-cultural learning. There has been no recent audit of resources, and the school is aware that this is an area for attention.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- **improve the balance of the curriculum by:**
 - providing a common timetable format which clearly shows subject areas to be taught;
 - more rigorously monitoring the curriculum and what is delivered;
 - providing co-ordinators with sufficient release time to carry out their new monitoring role and to attend relevant training. (Paragraphs 21 and 49)

- **build on current schemes of work to indicate when the content will be delivered, how and by whom.** (Paragraphs 21, 70, 76, 82, 88, 93, 97, 101, 105, 111, 119 and 122)

- **improve whole school assessment practices by:**
 - producing clear learning objectives, related to schemes of work in all subjects;
 - assessing and recording pupils' achievements in relation to these learning objectives;
 - using the information to inform teaching and planning. (Paragraphs 18 and 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
16	40	36	8	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	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	69
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	33

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	6.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	-
Indian	1
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	66
Any other minority ethnic group	-

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y2 – Y14

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.75
Average class size	6.9

Education support staff: Y2 – Y14

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	572

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	769779
Total expenditure	771827
Expenditure per pupil	10431
Balance brought forward from previous year	71268
Balance carried forward to next year	69220

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	69
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	10	-	-	-
My child is making good progress in school.	70	25	-	5	-
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	35	-	5	-
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	20	5	15	35
The teaching is good.	90	10	-	-	-
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	80	20	-	-	-
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	10	5	-	-
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	35	-	5	-
The school works closely with parents.	70	25	5	-	-
The school is well led and managed.	80	15	-	5	-
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	25	-	5	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	25	-	15	-

Summary of parents' and carers' responses:

Thirty one per cent of parents returned the questionnaires and five attended a meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection. A few parents expressed concern over homework and the range of activities outside of lessons.

Other issues raised by parents:

Parents expressed concern over the shortage of speech therapy.

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

ENGLISH

58. Pupils' achievement and progress in English are very good in all key stages and in Post 16. This represents a good improvement on the previous inspection. The school has successfully adapted the National Literacy Strategy. The scheme of work is satisfactory.
59. There is considerable and appropriate emphasis on speaking and listening. Pupils have established routines, often enlivened with rhymes, that promote language and there are many opportunities for pupils to answer well-framed questions, to talk about the topic in hand and to say what they think about what they are doing. They do this well under the guidance of good teachers. Typical lessons were that where a Year 11 group were asked to make predictions about the next day and another with a Year 8 group who were asked to recall the events of bonfire night. In both lessons the teachers skilfully probed the responses to expand the pupils' vocabulary and to encourage confidence and fluency. Signing to aid communication is a feature of English teaching and learning. Makaton signs increase understanding in conversation. Rebus symbols are also extensively used to help pupils' reading skills.
60. Teachers have risen to the challenge of the Literacy Hour and praise the effect it has had on English teaching in the school. Cautious optimism characterised a lesson with a Year 11 group, where pupils played roles in a newspaper office to write the 'Monday News'. While some pupils were interviewing others about their weekend activities, one listened in role as photographer and selected his subject before taking the picture to be digitally transferred to the text. Meanwhile, one boy, who had extremely limited skills, obtained great satisfaction from typing up the newspaper's title, one letter at a time.
61. A Year 4 group spent most of one hour in the hall in a drama lesson. A wide range of demands was made, some physical, some verbal. The result was confident self-expression, a lack of inhibition, prompted by teacher and assistant, and good structure that helped pupils respond. Many of the routines had been already established and the emphasis throughout was learning through fun. The verbal routines were supplemented by complementary music. The careful planning promoted a successful lesson that also aided personal skills in working together.
62. In some cases, English teaching emerges from other lessons. The history lesson about poppy day provided opportunities for increasing vocabulary, demands for responses about the pictures shown by the teacher from an old book, itself a feature, as well as listening to part of a Rupert Brooke poem. A Year 12 group was able to appreciate much of one of the witches' scenes in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. They imitated with hag-like sounds and movements as they chanted most of the spell. They also watched a video extract and were able to extract information about the predictions made by the witches. An impressive part of that lesson was the large amount of re-call that enabled them to re-construct the plot so far, remembering names like Banquo and Duncan as well as the story.
63. Very little writing work is undertaken at present. Most is either over-written or under-written from a teacher's text. Some pupils can write their names independently. A small number can do more than that but the majority has no independent writing skills. The school has a reading scheme and reading is included incidentally in many lessons. It does not, however, feature sufficiently in the balance of English studies. The reading

scheme does not recognise the growing maturity of the pupils and that regular reading on a daily basis is essential to maintain progress. 'Big books' for class reading are used appropriately. There has obviously been significant improvement since the last report. Teaching ranges from good to excellent. Classes are lively and conducted with appropriate pace. The excellent relationships enable risks to be taken without losing control. The co-ordinators are making progress in developing effective strategies and a common approach. They need, however, to give careful consideration to both reading and writing skills, bearing in mind the long-term needs of its pupils in line with the expressed aim of the school to prepare them for adult life.

MATHEMATICS

64. Pupils' achievement and progress in mathematics are very good throughout the school. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils make very good progress as a result of very good teaching, and because they are set challenging targets. Day-to-day assessment is well used to identify learning objectives, and work is carefully matched to pupils' abilities, and planned to ensure their success.
65. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy in Key Stages 2 and 3 and plans to extend this to Key Stage 4 in the near future. The lower school mathematics co-ordinator is a leading numeracy teacher, and she and her upper school colleague support staff well with clear advice and guidance. Staff subject knowledge is good and this is a significant factor in the very good teaching throughout the school. Teaching has improved well since the last inspection. Numeracy skills are effectively reinforced in many areas of the curriculum, especially design and technology, geography, history and physical education.
66. Most Key Stage 2 pupils count objects reliably to 10. Higher attaining pupils rote count to 20, match number symbols to written numbers and place objects in number sequence. Pupils are becoming confident about addition and subtraction within ten. They are particularly motivated by the briskly paced mental number sessions, and are keen to contribute and demonstrate their learning. They know the primary and secondary colours and are learning about symmetry through pattern-making with two-dimensional shapes. They learn about volume through filling and emptying containers of different capacity. Their understanding of time has progressed, and they recognise there is a regular sequence to the day's activities. By the end of the key stage they know there are several forms of measurement and with the help of skilful questioning by the teacher, can judge length, height and weight, using appropriate words, such as longer, shorter, taller, smaller, heavier and lighter.
67. In Key Stage 3 pupils continue to build well on the skills and knowledge they have acquired. By the end of the key stage they are aware of tessellation, and high attainers name and describe simple three-dimensional shapes such as cube, sphere and cylinder. Trips to the local supermarket provide opportunities to handle money in practical situations, such as buying ingredients for a food technology lesson, and working out the change from a set amount. Pupils are learning to collect and handle data through the use of bar charts. Well-organised group work using a range of resources such as information communication technology, pegboards and solid shapes, enables pupils to understand patterning. Pupils with complex difficulties make very good progress in holding a drumstick with help and beating to three. Their progress is very good because teachers' expectations match their needs, and teaching and support staff demonstrate patience and understanding in allowing pupils sufficient time to respond.
68. During Key Stage 4 and at Post 16, the mathematics curriculum is formed around the syllabus for the numeracy module of the accredited course in Life and Living. Pupils are

given many opportunities to apply their numeracy skills responsibly in life beyond school, as when they explain how they calculate the total cost of buying items in the college canteen, and plan their travel arrangements for trips into the community. Their accuracy in calculating and measuring improves significantly. The very good progress most pupils make over the four key stages and in the Post 16 department results in most being functionally and socially numerate when they leave school.

69. Pupils throughout the school are eager to learn in mathematics lessons. This is because they are highly motivated by the wide range of methods and the exciting resources which teachers use, and by the success they experience when they learn new skills. Pupils are given very good opportunities to recognise their own progress, and this reinforces their confidence and self-esteem. Relationships are excellent and most pupils are pleased with other's success when they answer questions. They maintain their interest well because teachers ensure that lessons include a variety of tasks, such as class discussion, working in small groups with support, and working individually or in pairs using information communication technology. The support pupils receive from learning support assistants is of very high quality and makes a significant contribution to their progress.
70. Subject co-ordination is good overall. Planning documentation for mathematics, including the upper school scheme of work, the targets in pupils' individual education plans and lesson plans, are detailed and provide good support for teachers. However, the lower school scheme of work is insufficiently linked to the National Numeracy Strategy and requires further development. Baseline and other assessment procedures are used consistently throughout the school, and assessment information is effectively used in teachers' planning. Resources to support teaching and learning are good in range and quality, and teachers also create very good resources to match work to pupils' specific needs. Discussion and small group activities make a good contribution to pupils' social development and to their speaking and listening skills.

SCIENCE

71. Teaching that is generally good, and sometimes very good, and highly effective learning support assistants mean that pupils and students achieve well and make good progress. Lessons are well planned and prepared with a good range of activities, and as a result pupils show interest in the subject and have a positive attitude towards it.
72. All pupils have experienced simple scientific investigation by the age of eleven. They have grown bulbs and learnt that they need watering, and some are able to predict whether objects will sink or float. They have studied push/pull forces through using wheels dipped in paint and moving them across paper and some explored other forces during a visit to Techniquist in Cardiff. There they learnt how to vary the speed of a revolving chair by leaning towards the centre or away from it. A group of ten and eleven year olds increased their understanding of light by investigating different sources and what they could see in a variety of light intensities. As one group walked around the school looking for light and dark areas, higher attaining pupils examined light sources and they were able to suggest the sun, fire and candles. Pupils' achievements are very good when teaching is of such high quality. Teachers in these lessons use activities that promote very good learning opportunities for all pupils and methods that match individual needs. They do this by making skilful use of targeted questions and having a good mixture of description, discussion and investigation.
73. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have extended their understanding of themselves and the world around them. They are beginning to record what they have seen and done, such as drawing crocus bulbs that they have planted, and activities such as this help

pupils appreciate the differences between living and non-living things. Pupils' observational and investigative skills are also developed through studying different materials and their properties. Good teaching encouraged the development of these skills in a lesson examining the waterproof nature of different materials. Pupils examined a number of coats and predicted whether the coats would be waterproof. The teacher sprayed pupils' arms with water as they wore the different coats and they then checked to see whether the water had gone through to their skin. During this activity the teacher involved all pupils and took advantage of every opportunity to develop vocabulary, as words like 'porous' and 'absorbent' were introduced. Pupils were also encouraged to examine the materials very closely and one described the water on a wax jacket as 'sitting on the top'.

74. Science is not taught as a separate subject in the upper school. It forms part of the curriculum core area of Life Studies, which is taught mainly through the two themes of the environment and health and survival. Pupils and students develop their scientific knowledge and understanding in both the local environment and the classroom. A group of students visited a local tree nursery as part of their work experience links and collected a variety of seeds, which they sorted into different categories. A group of sixteen year old pupils were seen working with seedlings in the classroom, when the teacher's very good use of whole class and group activities, and her very high expectations, enabled them to appreciate the needs of living things.
75. A significant feature of science is the teachers' determination that pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with autistic spectrum disorders should still have opportunities to experience the delights associated with finding out about things and the world around them. Pupils are able to do this because teachers and learning support assistants are creative in arranging for them a range of sensory activities and experiences. Many examples of this were evident during the inspection. Six and seven year old pupils got enormous pleasure from exploring potting compost through observation, smell and touch as they planted bulbs. Others began to appreciate the concept of wet and dry as they felt different materials on the desk and in water. Pupils and students are able to appreciate the beauty of living things as they visit the school garden and pond and go out on visits to local farms and woodlands.
76. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in ensuring that all pupils now make good progress. The systematic monitoring of classroom practice has had a clear impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. However, there are still some aspects of the management of science that need developing. Resources are still not used efficiently as they are not properly catalogued and are dispersed between classrooms. Co-ordination of science remains the responsibility of two teachers and individual roles and responsibilities are not clear. There is insufficient time for the two co-ordinators to meet and they have not yet met during this school year, even though one of them is newly in post. The lack of a single co-ordinator inhibits development of the subject. In addition, the scheme of work needs further development to ensure that all pupils receive a breadth of experiences as they move through the school.

ART

77. Pupils' achievement in art is very good across the school and in Post 16. Pupils and students make good and often very good progress in lessons and good progress over time. This demonstrates significant improvement since the previous inspection when achievement and progress were judged to be satisfactory. This improvement is a result of teaching that is consistently good and often very good, and because sufficient time is allocated to the subject to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
78. In Key Stage 2, in a Year 4 class, pupils develop their fine motor skills of folding,

pressing spraying and squeezing to create a picture to celebrate bonfire night. They work with a range of media, powder paint, poster paint and sparkling glitter. They choose and identify the colours for their picture. Others build fireworks from constructional material. Teaching is dramatic and exciting. The lesson is well introduced so pupils know what to expect and this encourages independent learning. Thorough preparation beforehand, ensures that the lesson runs smoothly and learning opportunities are maximised. Literacy skills are reinforced with the language of instruction and the use of adjectives to describe the colourful scenes. Pupils are given a good level of independence in creating their pictures and this encourages responsible behaviour. They are co-operative eager and attentive. There is a moment of surprise and wonder when one pupils realises that by folding his picture carefully, the pattern is repeated. "The same!" he cries in delight.

79. In a Year 6 group, in a cross curricular reference to history and remembrance day, the teacher encourages pupils to closely study a picture of poppies painted by Monet. She introduces them to the works of this famous artist, through books showing landscape paintings and the portrait of his wife and son. In doing so, she develops their appreciation and awareness of the richness of our diverse cultural heritage. As pupils paint in a similar style, she provides patient and evaluative comments, encouraging them to think about light, shade, tone and colour. The pupils successfully incorporate these aspects into their work and the paintings are particularly effective. Next day they have been carefully mounted and displayed.
80. In Key Stage 3, art is used as a therapy and to help PMLD pupils make sense of their environment. They experience the touch, the feel and the smell of a collection of autumnal materials. With support they make random arrangements and collages of leaves, bark and twigs. Pupils are happy and responsive. They show their enjoyment of their experiences with gestures, smiles and laughter. Teaching is characterised by the excellent teamwork of the teacher and LSAs, which maintains pupils on task and by the quality of care taken throughout the lesson. Communication skills are constantly reinforced.
81. In Post 16, students choose the colours they like, to produce a firework picture and some identify their own pictures when displayed afterwards. They are beginning to understand the concept of heat and hot. One pupil for example goes around the school with a LSA taking digital pictures of objects that give out heat. The teacher and LSAs provide a good structure for learning, with firm, sympathetic handling of pupils and an insistence on maintaining the learning process. A very good plenary session reviews progress and celebrates achievement.
82. The teaching of art has a very positive impact on the life of the school. The accommodation is considerably enriched by display material in classrooms and corridors showing a range of media and techniques. Many indicate cross curricular links to other subjects, for example, the Diwali display, which shows patterns, fabrics and food. There are works of famous artists, marbling and paint/wax work and footprint patterns on the ceiling. The PMLD classroom is an Aladdin's cave of visual stimuli. All pupils enjoy their art lessons and these make a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject is led by two enthusiastic co-ordinators, recently assigned to the role. Some art work is saved in folders or photographed so that pupils can see the continuity of skills. While much work has gone into developing schemes of work since the last inspection, there is a need to clearly identify what is being taught, to whom and when, and to support this work with whole school assessment practices. Subject planning would be more efficient if co-ordinators had an annual designated budget within which to plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. The standards pupils achieve in design and technology are good. Progress in lessons is very good but is less secure over time. It is not clear from the timetable, whether sufficient curriculum time is allocated to the planned development of pupils' design and technological skills, knowledge and understanding in key stages 2 and 3.
84. It was not possible to see a discrete design and technology lesson in these key stages. Evidence is taken from the scheme of work, teachers' planning and from a display of pupils' work in classrooms and the corridors. A Year 4 class, for example, consolidate their learning following a trip to the Millenium Dome, with a beautiful working model of the Dome including men on stilts and acrobats. Photographs help pupils recall the occasion. Their work shows evidence of good planning, designing and recording. On display also, are Halloween masks, workings of musical instruments, and a range of constructional toys and transport vehicles which pupils have designed and made. Teachers' planning indicates that food technology features regularly, and in withdrawal groups, where the focus is on exploring and combining ingredients and building independent skills in preparing simple snacks. It is judged that teachers provide at least satisfactory design and technology opportunities but the present arrangement, whereby design and technology is taught as part of a topic, needs careful monitoring to ensure pupils' progress through and between key stages.
85. In Key Stage 4, pupils make very good progress in designing a pot to house hyacinth bulbs. They communicate and develop their designs through drawings and with the use of a computer Art Package. They make choices about size, shape, colour and pattern. They display a variety of fine motor skills as they paint, with brushes and sponges, and use glue to apply shapes. Teaching is very good. The lesson is clearly introduced so pupils know what to expect. The teacher allows pupils to touch, feel and smell the materials and this builds up their confidence. Very effective and appropriate support is given to targeted pupils by the LSAs to maintain their concentration. Step by step instruction and good demonstration maintains the pace of the lesson. Good questioning and evaluative comment challenges pupils to think about what they are doing. A calm purposeful ethos encourages co-operation. Pupils work hard and persevere with the activity.
86. In the Post 16 classes, students use a variety of media and techniques to make their own printing blocks or to design a framed picture of leaves. They develop their ideas through shaping, assembling and rearranging materials and respond well to the teacher's suggestions about their design. In a lesson on building brick walls students compare a tower to a wall from the aspect of stability. They explore the different materials for building walls and understand the methods for making them strong and secure. In a food technology lesson aimed at improving independence skills, students weigh ingredients, follow a recipe, learn about utensils and oven temperature, and are reminded of health safety and hygiene practices. They clear away efficiently at the end.
87. Teaching is consistently good and often very good in Post 16. Teachers have good subject knowledge, so that instruction and demonstrations are good. They have a good understanding of the students' special needs so that work is appropriately challenging. The quality of relationships is excellent and students feel secure and are eager to please. Judicious use of praise encourages the pupils to try hard. Behaviour is well managed and as a result is very good. Pupils' positive attitudes to the subject enhance learning. There are good and deliberately planned links to numeracy and art, as well as reinforcing speaking and listening skills, in the development of a technical language.
88. Since the last inspection, pupils' progress in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 has improved and

teaching is of a more consistent high standard. The new subject co-ordinators should complete the planned developments in the scheme of work and assessment and check that sufficient time is allocated to the subject across the school. Accommodation and resources are limiting factors. For example the lack of a specialist room, and limited equipment and benches for work with resistant material, limits learning opportunities for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. This will become more critical, if as planned, the school becomes a secondary provision.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Geography has improved since the last inspection. The main criticisms in that report have now been remedied. The subject is now taught formally only at Key Stages 2 and 3 but some topics are covered incidentally in other areas at Key Stage 4 and Post 16. The school policy sets out to develop awareness of the environment and to promote responsible attitudes to it while involving pupils in the experience of exploration and discovery. Four geography lessons were observed and these illustrate a wide range of appropriate activity to achieve these aims.
90. Descriptions of the lessons provide a clear picture of the range and quality of the learning in this subject. A lesson with Year 8 is concerned with the plans for a house. It followed work on the plans for the corridor and classrooms area undertaken in the previous lesson. The concept of looking down from above was established and good steps were taken towards the understanding of a map. Another lesson with a different Year 8 class focuses on the weather, emphasising the part played by the wind. As the lesson develops, pupils became more aware of wind power through practical experiences by looking at streamers, air balloons, hair, fans and wind chimes. In the second part of the lesson this knowledge was transferred to recognising the wind in pictures, experimenting with blowing bubbles and observing how they float and move in air.
91. A quite different approach with a Year 5 class has two pupils making observations and recording information about the school's garden. Accompanied by the teacher, they are directed to sensory experiences: smelling and touching things. These experiences are then linked to work with pictures in the classroom. An outstanding lesson with Year 4 pupils explored the Harvest season focusing on the climatic conditions needed to grow a pineapple. The lesson is planned around an element of suspense that increases interest and excitement. A real pineapple is examined, cut up and tasted. For the majority this is a new experience. Comparisons are made with tinned pineapple rings that are also eaten and discussed. The annual return to autumn, the falling leaves, the fruit picking and the importance of weather conditions are now much more meaningful and vocabulary is extended by discussion about the look of, the feel of and the taste of the pineapple. The positive response of the pupils emerge from new experiences that guarantee that very good learning is taking place.
92. Overall, geography teaching is well planned. Its quality ranged from satisfactory to excellent and pupils are well stimulated to understand and appreciate the world around them. Their attitudes and behaviour are always good. The pupils enjoy the lessons and are making good progress.
93. A new scheme of work has recently been written. This contains an appropriate range of studies that reflect a modified National Curriculum. Attention, however, needs to be given to the more careful phasing of its content and to the establishment of criteria by which assessment of progress can be confidently made.

HISTORY

94. There is very little time on the timetable for the teaching of history in Key Stages 2 and 3 and very few lessons took place during the inspection. The limited evidence that was available from lessons and from the analysis of pupils' work shows that overall pupils' achievements are satisfactory but they do not make satisfactory progress because there is insufficient time devoted to the subject. The standard of teaching overall is satisfactory, and sometimes good, in both key stages. History is not taught in Key Stage 4.
95. When teaching is good, pupils are able to experience the sense of another time and of 'different times'. A lesson that considered the meaning of the poppy and Poppy Day caught the interest of a class of ten and eleven year olds. The teacher was able to convey the atmosphere well by describing the conditions of trench warfare and illustrating them with readings from the poetry of Rupert Brooke. The teacher's narrative style encouraged pupils to respond and become involved, which they were able to do with descriptive comments such as 'frightened soldiers'. Teachers use such opportunities well to promote pupils' spiritual development and pupils respectfully observed moments of contemplation when the teacher introduced times of reflection and thought about those who died in the war.
96. Visits to local and national sites of historical interest are used well by the school and they are very important in bringing the subject alive for pupils. For example, pupils studied the history of transport as part of the lower school topic 'On the Move'. Groups of pupils went on an open top bus tour of Bath, and to the East Somerset Railway Museum, Bristol airport, an industrial museum, the Fleet Air Arm Museum and the harbour. Whilst studying the same topic, a class of Key Stage 3 pupils spent a week on a residential visit at Bridport. They sailed from Weymouth to Portland Castle on *My Girl*, a boat that had been used in the evacuation of Dunkirk, and once at the castle pupils tried on armour and experimented with models of weapons of war of the period to knock down 'walls'. However, the teacher also used this visit very well to help pupils develop a sense of sequence and chronology as they wrote up a diary each evening. By the age of fourteen some pupils know the vocabulary of time (e.g. before and after) and of chronology (e.g. a long time ago and in the past).
97. The subject has made good improvement since the last inspection in the quality and range of resources. The school now has a range of good quality and appropriate artefacts and these are easily accessible from a central store. The subject still requires further development of the draft scheme of work and improved co-ordination. The lower school co-ordinator is on maternity leave and the upper school co-ordinator has only been in post since September and has not received any training.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

98. The standards achieved and progress made by pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) are good in all key stages.
99. By the end of Key Stage 2, the highest attaining pupils successfully work with a range of programs. They develop good mouse control and are at the early stages of keyboard manipulation. The lowest attaining pupils work on cause and effect through the use of a variety of switches, for example turning a fan on and off and making toys sound. By the end of Key Stage 3, highest attaining pupils use a range of simple word processing programs effectively. Lowest attaining pupils continue to work on cause and effect through the further use of switches and keys either by accident or with adult help, for

example to change colours on a computer screen. By the end of Key Stage 4, highest attaining pupils navigate successfully through a range of programs, for example word processing and graphics packages which they load without adult assistance. They transfer scribed work to a word processing program (Write On) where they select different fonts, use capital lock, save and print work. They operate CD-ROMs and make appropriate choices.

100. The quality of teaching is good in all key stages. Adults have very good relationships with pupils where the appropriate use of praise and encouragement enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress and to take a pride in their work. Good use is made of time and the change of activities to maintain interest. Work is well planned to challenge pupils and to ensure success. Pupils maintain concentration. Their enjoyment in the activities is evident. Consequently behaviour is good. Teachers make good use of questioning to review learning throughout lessons. Lessons end with good reviews of learning, for example summarising what pupils have learned about the use of capital letters and recognising the location of the return key on the keyboard.
101. Co-ordination of the subject is good overall. Very good use is made of ICT in other lessons, for example in mathematics where pupils use concept keyboards to extend knowledge and understanding of number bonds to ten unaided. A digital camera is used very effectively to record height comparisons. Plans are in place to provide time for in class observation of the use of ICT. The development of ICT has a very high profile in the school development plan. Resources have been earmarked for the provision of a computer suite which is planned for installation early next term. A computer technician is already in post. The increased facilities will greatly enhance the already good level of resources and ensure a very good coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum. The level of provision for communication and mobility aids and the supply of appropriate switches and large keyboards enables PMLD pupils to access the equipment fully. A policy and schemes of work for ICT are in place. However, further work is needed to ensure that details are included to ensure progressive delivery of the subject across and within key stages. Assessment and recording procedures are not securely implemented. In order to build on the progress made by pupils and students, further in-service training is needed to enhance the confidence of staff in using ICT across the school.
102. The subject makes a very significant contribution to pupils' and students' social development through enabling them to improve their communication skills. There has been very good progress in all areas of this subject since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

103. The achievements and progress made by pupils are very good in all key stages. Highest attaining pupils know how to follow rhythms by tapping out time or using percussion instruments, for example drums, tambourines and shakers. They produce original vocal music to illustrate the use of a variety of sounds, for example to represent a firework display. Pupils make good progress through the school in developing skills to produce loud and soft music, for example in responding to Vivaldi's Four Seasons. Lowest attaining pupils respond well, with adult help, when trying to conduct music. PMLD pupils respond well to music in the light room and make simple choices. They link well with a local secondary school to demonstrate wheelchair dancing.
104. The quality of teaching is very good overall with some excellent features. The very good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs ensures that activities are well matched to individuals. Music is made accessible to all pupils ensuring that they participate enthusiastically in lessons. Teachers and LSAs convey their enthusiasm to pupils and as a result, learning is made fun. The very wide range of classroom management skills

ensures that behaviour is very good and that poor behaviour is usually skilfully forestalled. Very good quality lesson planning introduces music most effectively in a variety of subjects, for example in mathematics to reinforce sequencing. It is very well used in English to illustrate stories and moods, for example night music, morning music and striking clocks in "The shoemaker and the elves". Very good use is made of singing to welcome pupils to registration and this encourages eye contact and turn taking.

105. Music has a high profile in the school and the quality of co-ordination is satisfactory overall. The subject is well resourced including CD players in all classrooms. Resources and staff are very effectively used which has a direct positive impact on the quality of learning for all pupils. Schemes of work are in place and they address the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. However, they lack detail to determine what will be taught and when. An effective formal process for assessment and recording has been developed, but at the time of the inspection it had not been implemented. Insufficient time is allocated to the co-ordinators to improve the level of support they can provide for class teachers or to enhance their own skills through in-service training.
106. The very effective use of music throughout the school makes a very strong contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, classes joining together for singing, the celebration of Indian music for Diwali and Chinese music for New Year celebrations. Pupils have participated in African drumming and dancing during a local festival of music. They visit Bristol Cathedral for music festivals and present their Nativity play at the local church. There has been very good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. The standards achieved and progress made by pupils in physical education are very good in all key stages. There has been very good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection. In swimming, the highest attaining pupils and students achieve standards commensurate with national expectations.
108. Younger pupils of all abilities follow instructions, some with adult help. They understand or experience the concepts of "over" and "under" through good use of large equipment in the gym. They carry out brief but effective warm up exercises, for example stretching and turning exercises, before engaging in more strenuous activities. Most pupils undress and dress themselves unaided. They develop a range of ball passing skills. Over time, pupils develop an understanding of the rules of simple games, for example table tennis. In swimming the highest attainers swim with confidence both on the surface and underwater. The lowest attaining pupils develop confidence in the water through being supported by adults or by using flotation aids.
109. Older pupils progress through the skill levels of the ASA Water Skills programme. Those qualifying for level three progress from learning to swim on their backs without floats to swimming four widths without a pause. At level four they improve their stroke style on their front and back by using a float and swimming with one arm at a time. For level five, the highest attainers swim 50 metres in four minutes. They use butterfly stroke for one width. They swim 25 metres closely controlling a floating ball throughout. The lowest attainers tread water for 30 seconds, perform surface dives and swim underwater for five metres.
110. The quality of teaching overall is very good. Very good knowledge of the subject enables all pupils to make very good progress in the acquisition of swimming skills. The very positive rapport with pupils conveys enthusiasm and encourages pupils to enjoy the lessons and to develop confidence and trust in the adults. This is particularly successful

in helping pupils to accept the rules of games, for example in the game of Lifeboats accepting when they are “out” without questioning the decisions each time. The use of very effective instruction and demonstration of activities ensures that pupils of all abilities understand what is required of them. Very good use is made of time with activities changed at regular intervals to maintain interest and participation. Excellent teamwork with LSAs is most effective in preventing unacceptable behaviour and in promoting learning.

111. The subject is well co-ordinated. Assessment in swimming through graded awards is good. Elsewhere assessment and recording are at an early stage of development. Schemes of work are in place covering the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. However, further development is needed to ensure that all pupils have access to a full entitlement where possible. Overall the subject is adequately resourced. There is a good range of large equipment in the gym and a swing for wheelchairs is awaiting installation. Resources for PMLD pupils and students are inadequate. The school is aware of this omission and money is earmarked to remedy it. Good use is made of the hydrotherapy pool in providing exercise for those pupils who require it. However, the very small size of the pool leads to an inefficient use of staff as only one pupil at a time can use it.
112. Good use is made of the school grounds with suitable equipment provided to stimulate interest, for example the music sculpture. The fenced and grassed area is well used. The very effective use of a wide range of outside provision makes a significant positive contribution to pupils’ and students’ achievement and progress, for example, the on-site swimming pool and the use of the local swimming pool. Very good use is made of a local sports’ centre for badminton and trampoline instruction.
113. The subject makes a consistent contribution to pupils’ and students’ social, moral and cultural development. For example, through the very effective teaching of dance in the theme week for Diwali, in which pupils in wheelchairs take a full and active part.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Achievement is good in all key stages. Pupils make good progress because teachers plan lessons very carefully, make good use of resources and have high expectations of pupils’ work and behaviour.
115. During Key Stage 2 pupils make particularly good progress in their involvement in discussion. This is a result of teachers’ very good explanations and persistent questioning, which encourages pupils to extend their thinking. Pupils’ understanding of relationships and special occasions develops well, and they begin to understand that other peoples’ feelings are important. Calm firm behaviour management promotes a very positive response from pupils. Most are attentive and keen to contribute. By the end of the key stage pupils understand that they belong to a number of different groups, are learning the significance of celebrations and special places, and are aware of the natural world and seasonal cycles. Higher attaining pupils make their own prayers.
116. By Key Stage 3 pupils have built well on their earlier learning. They know Bible stories and the main features of Christianity. They understand that there are other religions, such as Judaism and Hinduism, which hold different beliefs, and know that ceremonies are important in all religions. Visits to local churches and a mosque increase pupils’ knowledge of special places of worship. Their understanding of a range of faiths is further extended through the very good use of resources. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to record their learning, and this restricts their ability to write for a range of purposes.

117. Pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stage 4, particularly in forming opinions and expressing their views. Because teachers' expectations are made clear and relationships are excellent, pupils understand what they have to do. They listen carefully and work hard to achieve well. Higher attaining pupils understand the main similarities and differences between the world's major faiths. Pupils become increasingly aware of the feelings of others. During an assembly about World War 1, upper school pupils responded sensitively to the plight of soldiers, and could role-play and articulate the likely emotions of wounded troops.
118. Throughout the school pupils with additional special needs also make good progress. They extend their concentration, recognise that they are part of a group, and learn to make and indicate choices. The good use of symbols and pictures enables pupils to become familiar with daily and weekly routines. Their self-esteem is very well promoted by the individual support they receive from all staff.
119. Religious education is managed well. Since the last inspection pupils make better progress and there has been a significant improvement in the quality, range and use of resources. The scheme of work, based on the appropriately modified local syllabus, is a good basis for further development to indicate when particular topics will be taught, and in what order. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PERSONAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

120. The school places great emphasis on the personal and social (PSHE) education of its pupils and it develops this very well. In Key Stages 2 and 3 PSHE is not taught as a separate subject, apart from road safety, but is encouraged and developed through the school's normal routines. Everyday activities such as going to the toilet, hygiene sessions, lunch times and drinks breaks are taken as opportunities to focus on aspects of personal care and good health. All staff make an important contribution to pupils' personal and social development and the school nurses in particular have a key role. This was demonstrated when a girl visited the nurse as part of her individual programme on social behaviour and self-image, and during this session she worked on hair care and grooming.
121. PSHE in the upper school and post-16 is taught as a number of discrete topics as pupils and students begin to examine wider aspects of their physical development and relationships as well as topics such as citizenship. Drugs and sex education also form part of this upper school curriculum.
122. As the PSHE programme has such a high priority in the school some aspects of its management need to be addressed if it is to become fully effective. The current procedure of using the personal development targets in the Individual Education Programme as the means of assessing pupils' achievements and progress is insufficiently detailed. The scheme of work needs to be developed to show clear learning outcomes and more detailed assessment procedures should be built into the programme. The roles of the co-ordinators also need clarification to ensure improved communication between the upper and lower schools.

POST-16

123. The attainment and progress made by students are very good overall. Students make very good progress academically and socially. The school is very successful in

preparing students for independence and life beyond school. The staff are extremely committed to encouraging the highest of standards from all of the students. Students make very good progress in English and mathematics, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In art, students use a variety of techniques and media to make printing blocks. In ICT highest attaining students use word processing to produce final versions of captions for photographs to be used in their record of achievement. They load programs, save work, print results and close down computer unaided. In PSHE they make good use of facilities to plan and shop for food and other items in the town. They enjoy and participate well in a link course in horticulture with the local college, although this has only recently been reintroduced following difficulties in accessing a suitable course. In an exercise to identify alternative activity venues in the locality all students contribute to collecting information from a sports centre, bowling alley and leisure centre. They take turns and contribute to discussions by indicating choices. Students take responsibility for setting tables in the dining hall. Very good use is made of work experience placements in the locality.

124. The quality of teaching at the unit is very good. This results in students making very good progress from a low base of prior learning. All adults respect and value the students. They are very aware and understanding of the needs of all students. Students relate well to adults and are keen to please. Thorough preparation of lessons ensures that they run smoothly. Challenging questions encourage students to think and to concentrate. Very good use of signing as well as verbal communication ensures that all students are given the opportunity to participate in all activities. There is a high expectation of behaviour and work with all students expected to contribute.
125. The curriculum is well balanced and appropriate to the needs of all students. All work towards gaining modules of the OCR National Skills Profile or Accreditation for Life and Learning. The unit is extremely well led with very good use of resources and staff. The quality of resources is very good and has a very positive impact on the achievement and progress made by students.