

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WIRRAL HOSPITALS' SCHOOL and HOME  
EDUCATION SERVICE**

Solar Campus, WALLASEY

LEA area: WIRRAL

Unique reference number: 105139

Headteacher: Mr I Price

Reporting inspector: Adrian Simm  
21138

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 223640

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	3 – 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Solar Campus 235 Leasowe Road Wallasey Wirral
Postcode:	CH45 8RE
Telephone number:	0151 737 6310
Fax number:	0151 637 6287
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Muspratt
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Adrian Simm	21138	Registered inspector	Design and technology Modern Foreign Language(French)	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements
Moira Kerr	19694	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Sue Hunt	27409	Team inspector	Geography History Religious Education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Sharon Jefferies	31167	Team inspector	English Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
Gordon Gentry	17855	Team inspector	Science Information and communications technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Jan Pollard	15292	Team inspector	Art Music Foundation Stage Special Educational Needs	
Judith Jones	8212	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical Education	How well are the pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was: Chase Russell Limited  
85 Shores Green Drive  
Wincham  
Northwich  
Cheshire  
CW9 6EJ

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

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wirral Hospitals' School and Home Education Service is a co-educational Community Hospital Special School for pupils aged 3 to 19 years, who are unable to attend their school for health reasons. The school serves the Wirral and surrounding areas, which include areas of considerable social deprivation. Twenty one students at the Community base are eligible for free school meals. The school operates on three sites at Arrowe Park Hospital, Adcote House and the Solar Campus. The Headteacher also manages the Home Education Service, which includes pregnant schoolgirls and schoolgirl mothers. This part of the service is funded centrally by the Local Education Authority and was not part of this inspection. The school receives a budget based upon a nominal roll of 80 students but the actual number on roll varies throughout the year. One hundred and fifty eight students were on roll in January 2000 with over 50 per cent of these having started or left the school during the school year. At the time of the inspection, 56 boys and 35 girls were registered at the school. All of these students came from homes where the first language is English. Twenty three students were subject to a Statement of Special Educational Need. Sixty of the students remain on the roll of other schools. For those students who attend the school for longer than very short-term support or assessment periods, the attainment on entry is well below average. A new classroom is being built at Arrowe Park Hospital. There were no foundation age children on the roll of the school during the inspection. Students will be admitted as soon as the new classroom is ready.

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

Overall, this is an effective school. Students' attitudes to school, and their personal development and relationships are very good. Teaching and learning during the week of the inspection were good at the Solar Campus at Key Stages 3 and 4 and satisfactory elsewhere. Whilst the school had insufficient evidence of students' past work for achievement to be judged in a number of subjects, it is very high in English, mathematics, science and art. The number of students gaining passes in GCSE or other accredited courses is growing. On balance, these strengths outweigh important areas still for development in leadership and management, particularly those connected with the academic and strategic development of the school. The school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Develops very positive attitudes, relationships and moral and personal development in students across the school.
- Educates students to very high levels in English, mathematics, science and art at the Solar Campus.
- Ensures very effective links with parents.
- Operates excellent procedures for monitoring and improving students' attendance.
- Governors ensure that they have very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.

#### **What could be improved**

- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching so that advice can be offered to staff about how to improve.
- The use and range of assessment to inform teachers' planning to raise academic standards.
- The clarity of the timescales for the school's priorities for development over the next three years, the expected costs of these, how the school will put these into action and know if the costs involved was money well spent.
- Increase in the length of the taught day for those students able to benefit from this.
- The use of the staff's strengths across the whole school.
- Students' spiritual and cultural development.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in April 1997 and on balance, has improved satisfactorily since then. Amongst a range of improvements, the school now clearly links its curriculum more closely to the National Curriculum, monitors the balance of resources given to subjects and has improved the content and use of students' individual education plans. Steps have been taken to improve students' attendance,

introduce support teaching and improve the availability to students of information and communications technology and library resources. However, priorities for development are not currently planned for in a clear way so that over a period of time, everyone is clear about how and when they are going to be tackled, what is expected of everyone to achieve them, and what needs to be planned for within the school's budget. Subject co-ordinators do not yet have the opportunity to be involved across the whole school. Students still have insufficient opportunity to extend their spiritual and cultural development and inconsistencies remain in the way the school assesses students' attainment and progress. Students still do not have the opportunity to join in with a daily act of collective worship. The opportunity for students to shower following physical activity is still unsatisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 16	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	Very good	A
Reading	B	Good	B
Writing	B	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	A	Poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B		

All students are currently in part time attendance at the school. The length of their stay on roll at Arrows Park Hospital is generally very short and as such, the school has little evidence of students' academic achievement over time. Whilst the students at Adcote House are on role slightly longer, academic achievement is currently balanced with the assessment of their broader mental health needs, and evidence of academic progress provided for the inspection was very limited. The school is not required to set statutory targets. However, it does set non-statutory targets aimed at raising levels of attendance, particularly at the Solar Campus, and consequently in enabling students to achieve increasing levels of accreditation. Targets are appropriate and include the attainment of at least one GCSE for all students and at least four GCSE's for 20% of the students. Since the last inspection, the school has searched for different courses more appropriate to students' needs in some subjects, particularly in English. Whilst this has in some way contributed to a fluctuation in the level of percentage passes in GCSEs since 1997, there is an increasing trend in the number of subjects offering accreditation and an upwards trend in the success level of those students taking GCSE and other courses. In particular, results in mathematics have increased progressively from the last inspection. In 2000, 82 per cent of students gained a GCSE pass.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Students are very positive about school. They listen to their teachers, concentrate and make an effort in class.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Students are attentive and polite. Within lessons they follow teachers' requests and are helpful and orderly outside the classroom.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Students relate very positively to the adults who educate them and show concern and consideration for each other. Students benefit from responsibility placed upon them, but this is not yet sufficiently developed.
Attendance	Whilst attendance is well below the national average for all schools and as such is unsatisfactory, attendance is slightly above average for similar schools and has improved since the last inspection.

Throughout the school students display a very positive attitude to their learning. They listen carefully in class, respond sensibly to questioning and on the whole, are eager to contribute in lessons. The school is very successful at building up students' self esteem and confidence. Some students who never attended their main stream school, achieve 100% attendance at the Solar Campus. Behaviour throughout the school is very good, students relate well to one another and to adults and are friendly and helpful to visitors. Most students show consideration for each other and there is a very happy atmosphere throughout the whole school. At the Solar Campus, whilst students have a designated area in which to meet, listen to music and have soft drinks, the school recognises that increased independence still needs to be encouraged amongst the older students.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils and students:	Aged 5-11	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 91% of lessons seen. It was good or better in 75% and very good or better in 46%. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The best teaching and learning takes place at Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus, particularly in English, mathematics science and information and communications technology. Only three lessons were observed at Key Stage 2, and overall teaching was satisfactory. Effective teachers give students clear instructions, which ensure that they know exactly what is expected of them and allows them to consider and follow through with the ideas presented. In English for example, by the end of a lesson, students had clearly understood that good stories have a setting, plot, theme and characters. Encouraging questions and appropriate use of praise help to sustain their concentration and interest in their work. Teachers recognise the importance of a positive beginning to lessons. Mental 'oral starters' in mathematics and recapping on previous work in science establish good learning habits, which are sustained throughout the lessons. Challenging questioning by the teacher encourages students to make suggestions about the best way to proceed, which increases their confidence and independence. In lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, classroom management and organisation did not meet the needs of all students where there was a very broad age or ability spread within the class. As a consequence, learning opportunities were missed, particularly for the lower and higher attaining students. The English teacher and literacy specialist have emphasised the importance of literacy since the last inspection and this is having a direct and beneficial impact on students' progress. Regular assessment, clear cross-curricular literacy strategies, sharing of methods and detailed planning are raising literacy standards across the curriculum at the Solar Campus. Teachers are beginning to plan activities, which require students to use numeracy across the curriculum. This is particularly strong in science, design and technology, information communication technology and personal, social and health education.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is satisfactory within the time available. The school takes account of statutory requirements and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for students' moral development is very good and social development is satisfactory. The school does not yet ensure that the students are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop both spiritually and culturally.
How well the school cares for	The procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the students are good, although written risk assessments are not yet fully in place.

its pupils	Academic assessment is still not consistently applied across all subjects.
------------	--

All staff know the students very well and are aware of their needs. The school has very close links with both community and acute services within the health authority and through regular meetings, work hard to address both the health and educational needs of the students. The school's links with parents are very good. Parents are concerned that the extent of students' curricular opportunities, and subsequently their achievement, is restricted by their part-time attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has clear ideas how the school should develop but detailed planning to achieve these developments is not fully in place. Senior staff are not yet fully effective as a team. Whilst responsibilities are delegated to staff, they do not always have the time available or the guidance to fully carry them out. Despite some strengths, overall, leadership and management is unsatisfactory.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and are well aware of its strengths and areas for development. They have successfully produced plans relating to their role in shaping the direction of the school and meet statutory requirements apart from ensuring students receive a daily act of collective worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Whilst the school monitors and promotes students' behaviour and personal development very well, it is not yet sufficiently involved in evaluating itself in areas such as the quality of teaching, students' achievement and its effectiveness in meeting the school priorities set more recently.
The strategic use of resources	The school has an increasing surplus of money now equal to ten per cent of the school's budget. This is set to increase even further which is unsatisfactory. The governing body is clear what some of the money is for but because planning is not set out in a strategic way, some uncertainty exists over when priorities might be finally achieved. Also, because of income related to other aspects of the school's work funded directly by the Local Education Authority, not all governors are clear for which budget headings they have responsibility.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The governors have recently set out to ask themselves if the school could be doing anything in a better way, and to consult with others, particularly staff about how to improve students' education. Whilst governors are not yet fully clear if the school could use its finances more effectively, the school has made a sound start at introducing the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>Teaching is good.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>The school helps students to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>The school expects students to work hard and achieve their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The amount of schoolwork, students do at home.</li> <li>The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> <li>The opportunity for students to receive full-time education.</li> </ul>



Whilst inspectors judge the school to have some strengths in the area of leadership and management, there are also significant weaknesses particularly in how senior staff plan their work and that of others in raising students' academic achievement. Inspectors agree with all other views of parents in what pleases them most and what they would like to see improved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. All students are currently in part time attendance at the school and a large majority remain on the role of other schools. The length of stay of students on role at Arrowe Park Hospital is generally very short and as such, success of the provision is not currently measured in students' academic achievement over time. Whilst the students at Adcote House are on role longer, the majority for up to eight weeks, academic achievement in this time is balanced with the assessment of students' broader mental health needs and as such, evidence of academic progress provided for the inspection was very limited. The school does not enter students for national curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of key stages one, two and three; neither are teacher assessments undertaken.
2. The school is not required to set statutory targets. However, it does set non-statutory targets aimed at raising levels of attendance, particularly at the Solar Campus, and in subsequently enabling students to achieve increasing levels of accreditation. Targets are appropriate and include the attainment of at least one GCSE for all students and at least four GCSE's for 20% of the students.
3. At the time of the last inspection in 1997, 22 students had gained GCSE passes in the range A–C, which represented about 27 per cent of students, with a further 22 per cent gaining passes within the range D-E. During the period from the last inspection, the school has searched for different courses more appropriate to the needs of some of its students, particularly in English. Whilst this has in some way contributed to a fluctuation in the level of percentage passes in GCSE between 1997 and now, there is an increasing trend in the number of subjects offering accreditation and an upwards trend in the success level of those students taking GCSE and other accredited courses. In particular, results in mathematics have increased progressively from the last inspection to where in 2000, 82 per cent of students gained a GCSE pass.
4. At the Solar Campus students' achievement in English is very good. Insufficient evidence was available from Arrowe Park or Adcote House to make judgements about students' progress. At the Solar Campus, attainment on entry is well below average. At Key Stage 3, some students are unable to use capital letters correctly and spelling is not always phonetically plausible. Some students use a joined script but the majority, choose to print. Lower attainers guess at spelling words and make few attempts to self-correct unless helped directly by adults. Whilst students listen with interest to text read to them, and answer questions accurately, they are unable to use reference books successfully. Throughout Key Stage 3, lessons apply guided and shared reading strategies from the National Literacy strategy well to students' learning. Students know that a serpent is like an eel; that Saint George slayed a dragon and that monsters can appear differently to different people, especially when you use your own imagination. At Key Stage 4, students understand why scenes from 'Macbeth' would need to be staged differently 'today' compared to how they were staged for Jacobean audiences. They discuss reasons for who should be chosen to survive a nuclear holocaust, and the importance of having food producers, fertile people and skilled medical staff amongst those given space in 'the

bunker' for the future survival of the world, is appreciated. In poetry, students read with growing confidence. Students in Years 10 and 11 recall technical vocabulary like genre, sonnet, ballad and alliteration. Students of all abilities make gains in speaking and listening, reading, writing and handwriting. Their progress over time is very good, with many achieving good grades at GCSE and Certificates of Achievement.

5. Overall students' learning in mathematics during the week of the inspection was good throughout the school. However, there was insufficient evidence from teachers' records or students' work to make a judgement about achievement over time. Students at Key Stage 3 at Solar Campus, show an understanding of place value and percentages, and use them in complex calculations. They calculate in metric measurement the area of irregular shapes using grids and tracing paper. At Arrowse Park Hospital, students draw triangles with a  $90^{\circ}$  angle and identify the hypotenuse. Through practical work they develop an understanding of Pythagoras' Theorem. Lower attaining students develop an understanding of place value, the value of digits and simple numbers to one decimal point. They understand the metric system, which they relate to real life experiences. At Key Stage 4, students develop sound skills in number, shape and space, and in handling data. Higher attainers round numbers to two and three significant figures and show the relevance of this to a population census. They make good progress in algebraic manipulation, finding common factors and multiplying out expressions with one or two brackets. Lower attainers interpret pictograms and bar graphs and complete tally charts independently. An increasing number of students are being entered for GCSE qualifications at foundation and intermediate level, achieving grades in the G to C range.
6. Achievement in science is good overall. Early in Key Stage 3, students name the constituents of a balanced diet and know about the use of nutrients in the human body. They list foods that are rich in nutrients, develop their investigative skills and record their results in a clear and appropriate way; although this is limited for some students by poor literacy skills. By the end of Key Stage 4, students have learnt about reproduction, growth, respiration, excretion and nutrition. They understand the differences between living and non-living things. There is a notable advance in the ability to understand concepts. Year 11 students have a good knowledge of plant structures. They know about the need for light to promote certain growth. They can carry out a practical investigation to confirm a hypothesis. Students studying for GCSE work on chemical reactions and the rate at which they take place, make predictions about the likely rates of reaction and what might occur. They distinguish a fair test from an invalid one. There is a growing use of numeracy in recording and presenting results in graph form.
7. Overall achievement in information and communications technology (ICT) is very good. At Key Stage 4, there is a wider range of achievement between the lower and higher attainers than at Key Stage 3. Although the internet has been installed for only a fortnight, students at Key Stage 3, already have a sound grasp of accessing it. They move from one site to another and print information, which they have been asked to retrieve and download. They use word processing skills for a variety of tasks, some of which support other subjects. At Key Stage 4, the work is similar to that at Key Stage 3 because of the recent introduction of the internet. However, exercises become more demanding and, in general, students have progressed more rapidly. Many students exceed the targets set by the teacher, particularly where speed of accessing information is concerned. They display high confidence levels and this is especially noticeable with the higher attainers who have moved on to work on databases and some are performing simple tasks with spreadsheets.
8. Religious Education is taught to Key Stage 3 students only at the Solar Campus and during the inspection to just one group owing to the 'carousel' arrangements of the humanities timetable. It was not taught during the inspection week at Arrowse Park site but was observed twice at Key Stages 3 and 4 at Adcote House. However, students' overall achievement cannot be judged due to the lack of available records and portfolios of students' past work. This is also the case for design and technology, French, geography, history, music and physical education.
9. Student's achievement in art is very good and is a strength of the school. At Key Stages 3 and 4 on the Solar Campus standards have risen since the last inspection and of the small GCSE

group of seven students, six achieved grades A\*-C with two of these achieving A\* and A. This shows very good progress since the last inspection. Some Key Stage 3 students use textured shapes as stones and lines to develop good imaginative work about flowing water. They use the work of Hiroshige as a stimulus and show confidence in the good control of brush strokes. Other students at Key Stage 3 learn about composition and the arrangement of shapes, colour mixing and collage with the works of Van Gogh as a focus for their work. At Key Stage 4, students show increasing skills and confidence in understanding how to use light, shade and tone. Landscapes, taken from three different artists, Monet, Cezanne and Dali give the students a wide range of ideas to develop their work.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

10. Throughout the school students display a very positive attitude to their learning. They settle well and listen carefully in class, respond sensibly to questioning and are, on the whole, eager to contribute in lessons. They respect staff and their classmates, and allow each other to get on with learning. They have a broad experience of life, which they are eager to use in lessons. During a religious studies lesson at Adcote House, a Year 9 student discussed sensitively the issue of marriage between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. In a food technology lesson at the Solar Campus, a Year 10 student readily described his culinary success at home at making Chinese stir-fry.
11. The school is very successful at building up students' self esteem and confidence. Some students who never attended their main stream schools achieve 100% attendance at the Solar Campus because of the support they receive. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Students are friendly and helpful to visitors. They respect the school building both inside and outside. It is free of graffiti and they take care of the resources available to them. There is a behaviour policy which is adhered to by staff and students and although there are no Individual Education Plans specifically for behaviour, each member of staff can set targets which are stored on the school's computer system. These are available to all staff.
12. Students' personal development is very good. All show consideration for each other and there is a very happy atmosphere throughout the whole school. At the Solar Campus, whilst students have a designated area in which to meet, listen to music and have soft drinks, the school realises that increased independence amongst the older students still needs to be encouraged. Owing to the nature of many of its students the school can be over protective at times. Members of the Senior Management Team are well aware of this and are hoping to devise schemes to address this. A tuck shop and a students' reception desk are only a couple of ideas being circulated at present. This is an important issue considering students are staying for longer sessions during the day and some students are at the school for years rather than months.
13. Students attending the Solar Campus and Adcote House have often got a long history of very poor attendance in mainstream schools and great progress is made in raising the attendance levels of many of the students. Whilst attendance in the last academic year was well below the national average for all schools, and as such is unsatisfactory, attendance is slightly above average for similar schools and has improved since the last inspection. Continuing medical needs of some students, account for some periods of absence.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 91% of lessons seen. Teaching was good or better in 75% and very good or better in 46%. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was good in over half. The best teaching and learning takes place at Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology. Only three lessons were observed at Key Stage 2, and overall teaching was satisfactory.

15. Good teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge, knowledge of pupils' individual needs and the quality of relationships built up with pupils. Good lessons are planned accordingly, enabling pupils to make progress and become more confident learners. In lessons that are good or better, learning is well organised with activities chosen to support the learning objectives. Pupils are clear of teachers' expectations, both in their learning and behaviour.
16. Effective teachers give students clear instructions. This ensures that pupils are clear about the tasks set and are able to follow through ideas presented to them. This was evident in an art lesson with Year 11 students studying landscapes. The work of Dali was used to illustrate the use of light, shade and tone which students then applied to their own work. In English at Key Stage 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus, the teacher's enthusiasm and excellent delivery fully engage students' interest in lessons. In a lesson with Year 10 students, the teacher carefully chose tasks to stimulate and support work on story structures. By the end of the lesson, students clearly understood that good stories have a setting, plot, theme and characters. Encouraging questions and appropriate use of praise helped to keep pupils' concentration and interest in their work.
17. In mathematics and science lessons, teachers recognise the importance of a positive beginning to lessons. Mental oral starters such as multiplication bingo and 'I am' cards, quickly engaged Key Stage 3 students and established good learning habits. These were sustained through the lessons. Science lessons at Key Stage 3 and 4 frequently begin by the teacher recapping on previous work. This helps students to place current learning in context. Through teacher led discussion, students revealed their level of knowledge and understanding of the effects of light on the growth of plants. Challenging questioning by the teacher encouraged students to make suggestions about the best way to proceed with the experiment.
18. In lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, classroom management and organisation did not meet the needs of all students where there was a very broad age or ability spread within the class. As a consequence, learning opportunities were missed, particularly for the lower and higher attaining students. This was evident in a Modern Foreign Language lesson with Year 9 students where a number of students responded with limited enthusiasm or interest. It was also the case in an English lesson at Arrowe Park Hospital. Hurried or unclear explanations at times result in students being unable to complete tasks satisfactorily. Two physical education lessons at Year 11 did not provide students with opportunities to describe or evaluate their own or others' performance, in relation to the skills and techniques they were developing. Neither were there warm up or cool down activities. As a result, no connections were made between the games they were playing and fitness and health.
19. The best teachers use questioning and prompts effectively to secure individual student's involvement, and also as a means of both checking students' understanding and challenging them to reflect upon, and extend their learning. Teachers take such opportunities to check that students are grasping and remembering the main points of the lessons and whether they are ready to move on. This was evident in a Year 11 mathematics lesson when homework was being checked. Students had made some mistakes in rounding up whole numbers to 2 or 3 significant figures. Examples were worked through on the board, the teacher continually questioned students and prompted them to go through appropriate stages of calculation until they were secure in numerical operations. This form of ongoing assessment was used well in a French lesson with Year 11, to improve their recognition and pronunciation of words about jobs. However, the use of this type of information to assess and record progress over a period of time, and to subsequently report that progress to parents, is not consistently applied in all subjects on all sites of the school. The lack of precision in the academic targets in Individual Education Plan's currently hinders their use in identifying progress and identifying students' weaknesses where support is required.
20. Regular assessment, clear cross-curricular literacy strategies, sharing of methods and detailed planning are raising literacy standards in science, mathematics and English at the Solar Campus. The English teacher and literacy specialist have emphasised the importance of literacy since the last inspection. This is having a good impact on students' progress. At the Solar Campus, teachers are beginning to provide activities, which require students to use numeracy across the curriculum. This is so in science, design and technology, information

communication technology and personal, social and health education.

21. The quality of the displays in most classrooms and corridors is good and enhances the learning environment. Homework is given, marked regularly and is well supported by families. Teachers and learning support staff at Adcote House and Arrowe Park develop very positive relationships with individual students. This helps to alleviate the stress of either hospitalisation or attendance for assessment purposes.

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

22. The school takes account of the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Students are provided with a satisfactory range and quality of learning opportunities, that reflects the school's aims. However, provision is restricted overall because the school only provides part time education and is unable to offer students sufficient time in all of the subjects. Students also have little time to socialise.
23. Since the last inspection a satisfactory whole school curriculum policy and individual subject policies have been written or revised. All policies and schemes of work are satisfactory in meeting the curriculum requirements as far as they are offered, except for physical education. Here, the scheme of work is too narrow and is limited solely to games. There has been minimal investment in the subject since the last inspection.
24. The senior management team does not yet monitor and evaluate the curriculum at all three sites consistently and effectively. This results in curriculum strengths and development needs not being sufficiently identified and little time being made available to enable individual staff's skills to be shared.
25. The curriculum opportunities developed at the Solar Campus have made very good progress since the last inspection, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Subject specialists deliver all subjects, and plan for the use of literacy, numeracy and scientific concepts in a range of other subjects. Subject leaders collaborate informally in their own time to ensure that the needs of individual students are addressed. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced and there is very good practice at Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus in teaching literacy.
26. Curriculum co-ordination does not take place and any subject development generally occurs in isolation; both by subject and site. This results in missed opportunities to use the very good subject expertise of staff to support the school as a whole. Many teachers have part time contracts and little non-contact time. This prevents them from having a more active role in sharing their good practice across the curriculum, the key stages and the sites.
27. At both Adcote House and Arrowe Park, curriculum opportunities are satisfactory. The part time attendance, the individual medical needs of the students and the distance between sites impinges upon the quality of the curriculum that the school can offer. At Adcote House, where appropriate, staff incorporate into their approaches work brought by some students from their mainstream school. This is good practice for maintaining strong links between the schools. During the week of inspection, staff at Arrowe Park were working in a temporary classroom which restricted what they could offer. Much effort, by both education and health staff had gone into making the classroom as welcoming as possible for the students. Nevertheless, it was too small to accommodate the wide range of ability, ages and medical needs of the students and both the quality of the curriculum and teaching were affected adversely.
28. Since the last inspection the provision for students' social and moral development has progressed but the school does not yet ensure that the curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for students to develop both spiritually and culturally. The school gives priority to providing good adult role models that address the students' individual needs and helps them to

develop skills to manage their anxieties and frustrations. The school enables students to experience mutual respect and unconditional regard for themselves and others. The initial 'home school agreement', which is signed by parents, students and school, clearly highlights the primary goals of the school. These are to feel safe and secure, to be valued and to be treated with respect. Students are clearly developing very good relationships with all of the adults in school.

29. Provision for students' moral development is very good. The school is a very moral community. Students are encouraged to discuss and resolve with their tutors, any difficulties that they are facing. All staff provide good role models for students. This boosts the development of their attitudes to themselves both as individuals and as learners. Students are given constant and consistent reminders about their study skills which are both age appropriate and within their ability to understand. The school is good at celebrating achievement and success. Students have to make their own way into school and attend lessons. In the main, they do this willingly. There is a reading award scheme where pupils can win bronze, silver, and gold certificates, and corresponding gift vouchers for reading books. There are many very good examples of individual art work, which can be admired around the school and a reading wall where individuals recommend books that they have read. In many lessons teachers set high personal expectations and praise individuals for their success.
30. Social relationships in the school are satisfactory given the time students currently spend in the school each day. There are few opportunities to socialise in after school clubs, and extra curricular activities due to the part time nature of the education offered. At the Solar Campus, there is a social area used by students before lessons begin and an opportunity for those at Key Stage 4 to play football at lunchtimes. This is open to both boys and girls, but only taken up by the boys. There is no alternative lunch time activity for those for whom physical exercise is not an option or a preference. There are some opportunities to demonstrate social skills during visits within the local communities. Students have visited the Liverpool Philharmonic, the Merseyside Police Stables and a chocolate production company. Plans to train pupils as librarians will enable greater opportunities to develop responsibility to the school community.
31. The arrangements for students to develop spiritually are unsatisfactory. Although the locally agreed syllabus for religious education has been adopted since the last inspection, some students do not have opportunities to take part in an act of collective worship regularly. Students at Arrowe Park have a weekly act of collective worship. The hospital chaplain and class teacher combine well to provide the students with an opportunity to link their current classroom work with worship. Some Key Stage 3 students at the Solar Campus met together to consider 'harvest and famine' and although time was made for reflection whilst listening to music, there were missed opportunities to share reflections and develop a sense of spirituality. Students have too few opportunities to understand religious festivals associated with the major world faiths. The interaction between adults and students reinforce the dignity, worth and value of individuals but the curriculum, restricted by time, does not enable students to have supported opportunities to reflect on their own spirituality.
32. Overall the cultural development of pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils are insufficiently helped to appreciate their own cultural traditions and that of others. Visits to places such as art galleries, museums and concerts, and by workshops such as 'artists in residence', are insufficiently planned for to extend students' understanding. They have too few opportunities to handle religious artefacts, visit religious buildings or consider the major world religions. Whilst in English, students study Shakespearean times; in art, different artists are the focus their work; and French lessons offer a regular opportunity to compare two different cultures, planned opportunities in other subjects are limited.
33. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is at least satisfactory. Pupils are greeted on arrival to school by senior managers and seen safely off the premises at the end of their allocated school time. At the time of inspection, temporary timetabling and staffing arrangements were in place while the school appoints a teacher for PSHE. Too few lessons were timetabled during the week of inspection to make a judgement about students'

achievement. However, from the policy document, schemes of work and planning records, provision is satisfactory. There is a satisfactory substance abuse policy and sex education is taught within science and health education. The school's careers education programme is very good. Collaborative work between careers and school staff ensure that pupils are offered very good support, advice and opportunities to have purposeful work experience and further education opportunities. The school has adopted the Personal Effectiveness Programme Initiative (PEPI). This is working well in motivating students to increase skills for everyday life and to identify skills and qualities needed for employment and citizenship.

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

34. The procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the students are good. The headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff know the students very well and are aware of what might indicate that a student is at risk and what action they should take. The school has very close links with both community and acute services within the health authority and they work together, through regular meetings, to ensure that both health and educational needs of the students are met. The consultant paediatrician and the consultant child and family psychiatrist together with nurses and various therapists speak highly of the vital services being offered by the school. At Adcote House health and educational professionals work together in the classrooms in a shared assessment scheme where education and therapy take place at the same time. The school nurse is involved in routine health screening and immunisation programmes, as well as health education. The school also has positive working relationships with organisations such as the Police and Social Services. There is a welcoming and safe environment provided for the students to work in, although, as yet there are no written risk assessments for the school building or its procedures. There is a good system of supervision at the beginning and end of each day to ensure the safety of the pupils arriving at and leaving school.
35. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. This is an improvement since the last inspection when registration procedures did not meet legal requirements. The electronic system for monitoring attendance can identify patterns of absence and the system is used to record all contacts with home or outside agencies regarding the attendance of pupils. Parents are expected to inform the school on the first day of an absence and if they fail to do so the school contacts them. If no contact can be achieved or if a satisfactory reason is not forthcoming then the Educational Social Worker will visit the home. Prizes are awarded termly for excellent attendance. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour and personal development are very good. The attendance database is also used to monitor behaviour and pastoral concerns and again the school is able to track patterns of behaviour through this system. The behaviour policy is based on valuing the student and in consistent approaches to pastoral care. At the Solar Campus students are divided into four pastoral groups each led by a member of the senior management team who endeavours to make contact with each pupil in the group every day. This pastoral system has been put in place since the last inspection. Personal interviews take place on a half termly basis. At the Arrowse Park and Adcote House, education and health staff take joint responsibility for the pupils and the high staff to student ratio and active concern of all the staff make this very effective.
36. The school carries out statutory requirements in holding annual reviews of students' statements of special education needs. Reports to parents about students' progress are often not dated and describe the experiences of students rather than what they have learnt and can do. Individual education plans (I.E.Ps) are in place. However, these mainly concentrate on the attendance, and personal and social skills of the students. The academic targets when present are too vague and as a result of their lack of precision, they do not provide specific information which can fully inform teachers' planning.
37. Whilst there is a whole school policy on assessment, recording and reporting, the policy bears little resemblance to what is actually taking place in the way of assessment throughout the school. Certain departments on the Solar Campus carry out good assessment. It is good in

English, art and science where the results of assessment are used to help plan the next set of teaching. In mathematics it is good on a day to day level and teachers encourage students to self evaluate and assess their understanding of the topic in the lessons, although information is not always used in the long term to inform future planning. This is the same in music, history, geography, food technology and design technology. Assessment in French and information and communications technology is satisfactory, but is not carried out at all in religious studies and physical education.

38. Pupils at Adcote House assessment unit are assessed medically and socially upon entry, although there is little evidence of any academic assessment taking place. At Arrowe Park, assessment is carried on in a very immediate manner bearing in mind the short time the majority of pupils are in hospital. If a pupil is at Arrowe Park for any length of time, their main stream school provides the necessary work and this is returned to their school for assessment.
39. Adequate records of achievement are produced for Year 11 students each year although this is not yet normal practice in earlier year groups. Although there are many incidences at the Solar Campus of good practise, there is still no overall strategy for assessment. Assessment is a weakness of the school as it was in the last inspection.

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

40. Parents' speak very highly of the school and the positive impact it has had on their children's lives. Parents of students at the Solar Campus believe that the school has turned around the lives of young people who had previously been afraid of or too unwell to attend school. Many now enjoy coming to school. They find the headteacher and staff approachable and understanding and always able to find time to talk with them about any concerns they may have. They have seen their children grow in confidence and self-esteem and be given a chance to succeed academically. Some parents would like there to be the possibility of full time education for those able to benefit from it. Parents of students at Adcote House believe they are given insight into the behaviour of their children and good advice to enable them to make appropriate decisions about their children's future education.
41. The school's links with parents are very good. Before admission, students and parents are interviewed together when they are given very good information about the school and what it has to offer. The headteacher and deputy headteacher go through written documentation about the school, including the home school agreement, to ensure that parents and students are clear about the commitment they will be making if they accept a place. Parents get very good quality information about the school through the Governors' Annual Report, the Prospectus and regular newsletters. They are well prepared for the termly review meeting so as to encourage them to make their own input. Whilst the annual reports on students' progress give very good quality information on their personal development they are not yet satisfactory in the quality of information about students' academic work and their levels of attainment.
42. Parents' involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. The very good relationships they have with the staff and the knowledge they have about the aims of the school, enable them to encourage their children to make the most of their time in school. The temporarily reduced accommodation in the classroom at the Arrowe Park makes the inclusion of parents difficult during lesson time. Homework is set as is considered appropriate, though some parents believe their children would benefit from more work to do at home. Many parents support their children in achieving the tasks set. The Friends of the Wirral Hospitals' School meets as an informal support group for parents.

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



43. The leadership and management of the school has some strengths but there are also some significant weaknesses. Overall, it is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff are not yet fully effective as a team. Responsibilities are delegated to staff but at times, without the time available or the guidance to fully carry them out. Individually the staff at the school are very focused on the needs of the students. This is evident in the work of all staff. Whilst very good progress is being made by students in their personal development, there is a lack of direction in fully supporting their academic potential. In many respects, subject areas develop on their own, lacking overall school systems in important areas such as curriculum development and assessment practise. Although staff meet regularly at the Solar Campus to discuss curriculum matters, much very good work in developing curriculum and teaching approaches depends on the initiative of the individual teachers.
44. Whilst the headteacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school, this is not yet shared fully with key staff in a way that will ensure it will happen. The day to day management of the Solar Campus, which is by far the greatest part of the service, is delegated to the deputy headteacher. He is an extremely hard-working and dedicated member of the team. However, his wide range of responsibilities makes it very difficult for him to cover them all adequately. He also has a substantial teaching commitment. The failure to have a successful school curriculum policy and whole school system of assessment and recording can be partly attributed to this workload. Also the headteacher or senior staff do not yet monitor the quality of teaching in a structured way. This prevents them from finding out at first hand, how subjects are developing and offering advice to improve teaching even more. The headteacher recognises the need for this although the time to carry it out has not yet been fully scheduled. Whilst time is at a premium for many staff, the headteacher currently carries out some administrative tasks, particularly related to day to day control of the budget, which could be effectively carried out by an experienced clerical administrator. The Headteacher recently commenced a programme of staff appraisal and performance management. This is to be based largely on an annual interview with each member of staff and a consideration of their own individual needs. This is in its infancy and it is not possible yet to make a judgement on its effectiveness.
45. The overall work of the school is wide ranging and on different sites, and approaches to this are not yet fully integrated. The frequency of visits to Adcote House and Arrowe Park by the head teacher is insufficient to enable fully effective integration of the service as a whole. Some subject co-ordinators at the Solar Campus have job descriptions giving them responsibilities at the other sites but there is no allowance of time to do this. Whilst the academic curriculum at the Solar Campus has developed well since the last inspection, opportunities to extend this across the whole school are very limited. Even though relationships between the professional disciplines at the sites are very good and the needs of the students are fully recognised, the overall outcome adds to less than satisfactory integration of the educational work of the three units.
46. The school enjoys the support of a very hard working governing body and of health professionals directly involved in aspects of the school's work. Governors have an excellent relationship with the staff and students. Their contribution to the service is very good. Governors visit all three sites frequently and this helps them to have an overall idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a range of relevant sub-committees, which meet regularly and report back to the main body. The various elements of the school development plan have the potential of being an effective way of planning. The very detailed action plan from the last inspection has moved the school forward although not all priorities have yet been met. However, this style of planning has not progressed into an ongoing three-year plan for moving the school on further in a way that everyone is clear about the priorities, the costs of developments, the success criteria and when these are planned for. The governing body of the school has produced its own development plan for the current year, which relates well to the school plan. It is demanding and realistic.
47. The school has an increasing surplus of money that grew to £49,162 by the end of the financial year 1999/2000, and is set to increase even further. This is unsatisfactory. The surplus is currently 10 per cent of the school's budget. The governing body monitors closely the day to

day financial control of the school. They seek comparisons and more detailed quotations when carrying out major purchases; they have implemented the recommendations of a recent auditors' report, which were few in number, and have a clear idea why they are saving money to spend. However, because all of this is not set out in a strategic way, some uncertainty exists over when priorities might be finally achieved. Also, because of some income related to other aspects of the school's work, which is funded directly by the Local Education Authority, not all governors are clear for which budget headings the governors have responsibility.

48. There are sufficient teachers with appropriate expertise to deliver a curriculum designed for the part-time education of the students. Staff qualifications generally match the responsibilities they undertake. There are sufficient and suitably qualified support staff who provide good support and work collaboratively with staff on a regular basis. Whilst evaluation of whether support staff are deployed effectively has not yet been carried out, inspection findings point to this being an issue for consideration. Arrangements for staff development are satisfactory, with appropriate procedures in place for monitoring and recording courses attended, such as recent literacy and numeracy training, and Threshold and Performance Management courses. Staff at Arrowe Park and Adcote House go on courses relevant to their needs and that are run by the relevant health services. There is a satisfactory programme for the induction of new teachers and the staff handbook covering all aspects of working practice is currently being updated.
49. Overall the school's resources to support learning are satisfactory. They are good in science, in information and communications technology and design and technology, but inadequate for physical education. There is a new library stocked satisfactorily and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are sufficient books in each subject except English Literature. Pupils use the library regularly in groups and as individuals. The resources are accessible and in good condition. The headteacher has made an analysis of resource usage and there is a system for identifying needs. Clear records of spending in each subject are kept and the governors' Finance Committee reviews resource allocation spending on an annual basis. The system works well and is efficiently managed by the secretarial staff.
50. Overall the accommodation at the three sites is satisfactory. The accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory at the Solar Campus and the large gymnasium is in disrepair. The changing rooms are not used; they are sealed off waiting for conversion into a showering area. This was an issue in the last inspection. There is a large field and pupils have access to this for lunchtime football. There are three general classrooms and four specialist rooms supporting English, information and communication technology, and science and design and technology. However, art and food/textiles share accommodation, which without a detailed risk assessment linked to cleaning procedures, is unsatisfactory. Storage for science is unsatisfactory and there is no preparation room. There are good facilities for teaching mathematics. The facilities at Adcote Assessment Centre are satisfactory overall but lack any specialist facilities. Currently the temporary classroom at the Arrowe Park site is cramped and although the staff have made it very attractive, there is not enough space to use all of their equipment or to teach the Foundation Stage children. Everyone there is looking forward to their new purpose built classroom.
51. Displays for learning and of pupils' work are of a high standard on the three sites and make an attractive, stimulating and welcoming learning environment for the pupils.

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

52. To further improve the academic strengths and the leadership and management of the school, the school should,
  - (1) Monitor the quality of teaching in a structured way, across the whole school and use the information gained to further raise standards.  
( Paragraph 44 and 71 )

- (2) Ensure assessment procedures are used consistently in all subjects so that the school is clear about what students know and understand, can evaluate progress in learning and take steps to improve this where necessary. \*  
( Paragraphs 37, 43, 44, 72, 91, 96 and 129 )
- (3) Reintroduce at three-year planning for the whole school so that everyone is clear about priorities, how and when they are going to be tackled, what is expected of everyone to achieve them, and what needs to be planned for within the school's budget. \* ( Paragraphs 46, 47 and 113 )
- (4) Extend the opportunities for students to improve their achievement by extending the length of the school day and offering full time education. \*  
( Paragraphs 22, 40 and 80 )
- (5) Use staff's strengths and knowledge more effectively to raise standards by involving staff in supporting priorities for development, regardless of the school site at which they are based.  
( Paragraphs 24, 26, 43, 45, 64, 71, 80, 91, 100 and 119 )
- (6) Include more opportunities in lessons for students to extend their spiritual and cultural development. \* ( Paragraphs 28, 31 and 32 )

\* These issues have already been identified in the school's own development planning.

## 53. PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	65

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	37	29	16	8	1	

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	91
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals at the Solar Campus	21

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	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	17	School data	8.5

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

GCSE Results for the Year 2000. ( 97% of students gained a Grade A – G. Listed per subject.)

Art	8 (5)
English	10 (5)
English Speaking and listening	10 (5)
Science	9
French	4 (9)
Mathematics	23 (19)
English Literature	2
Geography	1
Design and technology	2

GCSE results for the Year 2000. ( 50% of students gained a Grade A – C. Listed per subject.)

Art	6 (5)
English	8
English Speaking and listening	9 (4)
Science	7
Mathematics	4 (1)
Design and technology	1

( Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.)

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	91
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: YN – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8.9
Average class size	8.3

#### **Education support staff: YN – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	6
---	---

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	493112
Total expenditure	487212
Expenditure per pupil	3583

Total aggregate hours worked per week	100
---------------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Balance brought forward from previous year	43262
Balance carried forward to next year	49162

## 54. Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	42

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	31	2	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	74	19	2		5
Behaviour in the school is good.	76	21			2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	26	5	5	10
The teaching is good.	88	12			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	79	19			2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	12		2	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	12	2		
The school works closely with parents.	86	14			
The school is well led and managed.	93	7			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	19			2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	19	12	2	40

### Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting with inspectors, those parents present expressed strong views that the school should offer full time education to those pupils able to benefit from it.

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

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

55. There is normally provision for children in the Foundation Stage at the Arrowe Park Hospital site. The usual classroom has been closed because of redevelopment in the hospital. A new classroom is being built but it is not yet ready. The temporary classroom is small and there is insufficient space for the Foundation Stage children and the appropriate equipment for them. There were no foundation age children on the roll of the school during the inspection. Students will be admitted as soon as the new classroom is ready.

### **ENGLISH**

56. At both Adcote House and Arrowe Park, insufficient lessons were seen during the week of inspection to make a judgement about students' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning.
57. At the Solar Campus students' achievements in English are very good, in terms of GCSE results. Since the last inspection more students are taking GCSE's and Certificates of Achievement than before. Although assessment is used to identify needs and inform planning, it is not used reliably to target progress and thereby predict and target attainment.
58. At the Solar Campus, attainment on entry is well below average at Key Stage 3 and below average for some students at Key Stage 4. Some students at Key Stage 3 were unable to use capital letters correctly and spelling was not always phonetically plausible. Some students use a joined script but the majority choose to print. There were few higher attainers although some are working at level 4 of the National Curriculum in reading and writing and at level 5 in speaking and listening. Lower attainers frequently guess at words and make few attempts to self-correct. On entry many students at Key Stage 3 are unable to use reference books successfully, but if the text is read to them, they listen with interest and answer questions accurately. Throughout Key Stage 3, students learn well from guided and shared reading lessons as part of the school's literacy strategy. Students in Years 8 and 9 are assessed and if needed, receive additional individual support. Some with specific learning difficulties take part in a 'Units of Sound' programme. Students of all abilities make gains in speaking and listening, reading, writing and handwriting. Their progress over time is good, with many achieving good grades at GCSE and Certificates of Achievement.
59. Students at Key Stage 3 at the Solar Campus were interested and enthusiastic; reading stories like the 'The Voyage of the Dawn Treader' by C.S. Lewis and 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes as part of a series of lessons on imaginary beasts. They were able to identify words like 'big' and 'enormous' in preparation for homework where they were to use words to describe how a monster feels, sounds, smells and looks. Students know that a serpent is like an eel, that Saint George slayed a dragon, and that monsters can appear differently to different people, especially when 'you use your own imagination'.
60. At Key Stage 4, students understand the importance of having to stage scenes from 'Macbeth' differently in order to appeal to Jacobean and today's audiences. They are able to discuss reasons for 'who should be chosen to survive a nuclear holocaust' and can see the importance of having food producers, fertile people and skilled medical staff amongst those given space in the bunker for the future survival of the world. In a poetry lesson one student read, with growing confidence, in 'Search for my tongue' by Sujata Bhatt which is written in Devanagari. Students in Years 10 and 11 recalled technical vocabulary like genre, sonnet, ballad, mnemonic,



alliteration and onomatopoeia. During the week of inspection many students in the current Year 11 are achieving standards in line with national expectations in both speaking and listening, reading and writing. They respond to the high expectations and individual challenges set by the teacher. Trends over three years indicate standards are rising, although they vary year on year.

61. Teaching and learning of English at the Solar Campus is a strength of the school. It has improved since the last inspection. During the inspection at Key Stages 3 and 4, it was never less than good with 80 per cent very good and 10 per cent excellent. It was consistently very good at Key Stage 4. Where teaching is very good or better, there is very good planning, high expectations and high levels of individual challenge set along with good behaviour management. This very good teaching has improved opportunities for all students including those with low attainment or special educational needs. Very good teaching and good behaviour management with raised expectations and clear concise learning goals, along with good use of additional literacy strategies, is raising standards. Students are encouraged and enthused by motivating and inspirational teaching. Low attaining readers have been identified and follow a highly structured reading programme working individually with a trained teacher who has highly developed literacy skills. Regular assessments, clear cross-curricular literacy strategies, the sharing of methods and detailed planning are raising literacy standards in other subjects such as science and mathematics. The English teacher and Literacy specialist have emphasised the importance of literacy since the last inspection. This is having a direct impact on students' progress.
62. Since the last inspection very good progress has been made. A new library has been opened and resourced and there are plans to train students as librarians, thereby giving them more opportunities to take on responsibility. Although marking takes place there is no overall school policy to ensure consistency.
63. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These students are withdrawn and work with the literacy specialist. They are individually challenged and are highly motivated. The pace of individual work is very good. Records show that attainment on entry is well below average and a significant number of students make substantial gains. Very good teaching inspires students who enjoy the new-found pleasures of reading and writing.
64. The English teacher, literacy co-ordinator, mathematics teacher and science teacher have plans and identified methods to improve literacy skills across the curriculum at the Solar Campus. The English teacher and literacy specialist, are very effective and enthusiastic contributors to literacy in school and are committed to raising standards. They manage their responsibilities very well given that they are part time teachers. They do not monitor planning across the three sites but have been instrumental in encouraging and supporting some staff to become confident teachers of literacy within their own subjects. They do not have time currently to work alongside colleagues on all sites to help to raise standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65. Overall, students' learning in mathematics is good throughout the school. There is insufficient evidence from teachers' records or students' work to make a judgement on their achievement over time. During the week of the inspection, lesson observations provided evidence of progress at Key Stages 3 and 4, at the Solar Campus and Arrowe Park Hospital. Students become progressively more confident with numeracy and in the use of mathematical language. As only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2, there is insufficient evidence to make judgements related to teaching and learning.
66. Students at Key Stage 3 at Solar Campus, show an understanding of place value and percentages. They can use these in complex calculations. They calculate in metric measurement the area of irregular shapes using grids and tracing paper. At Arrowe Park, students draw triangles with a  $90^{\circ}$  angle and identify the hypotenuse. Through practical work they develop an understanding of Pythagoras' Theorem. Lower attaining students develop an

understanding of place value, the value of digits and a decimal point. They understand the metric system, which they relate to real life experiences.

67. At Key Stage 4, students develop sound skills in number, shape and space work and are able to handle data. Higher attainers round up to two and three significant figures and show the relevance of this to a population census. Good progress was seen during a lesson in algebraic manipulation, finding common factors and multiplying out expressions with one or two brackets. Lower attainers interpret pictograms and bar graphs and complete tally charts independently. An increasing number of students are being entered for GCSE qualifications at foundation and intermediate level, achieving grades in the G to C range.
68. Teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Over half of lessons were very good and one lesson was excellent. Two lessons observed at Adcote House were unsatisfactory. A strength of the teaching is sound subject knowledge and a good understanding of the needs of the students. In the best lessons teachers skilfully use questioning to develop thinking and improve understanding, sensitively targeting individuals to ensure their involvement. Praise and feedback are used well, successfully encouraging and motivating students. Mental oral starters, such as 'multiplication bingo' and 'I am' cards successfully engage students' interest at the beginning of lessons. Teachers have clear aims, and precise lesson planning includes appropriately challenging expectations and opportunities for reinforcement. A good range of activities and resources in the main part of lessons help to develop students' confidence and support learning. At the end of most lessons, teachers recap on the main teaching points and ask students to assess and evaluate their own understanding of the lesson topic. This, supported by teachers' own judgements, is used well to inform planning. In the two unsatisfactory lessons observed, hurried unclear explanations and digression from lesson plans limited pupils' learning experiences. At the Solar Campus, homework is used well to consolidate and revise students' knowledge and understanding. Parents support the school well in this respect.
69. As a result of good teaching, students make good progress in lessons. Well-balanced and structured lessons enable them to recall earlier learning and extend this to new skills. Students in Year 10, work well together in problem solving activities such as selecting appropriate units of measure for calculating perimeters or ordering decimal cards. They put considerable effort into their work and apply themselves conscientiously to tasks. This was evident in a Year 11 lesson, when the students were required to produce a scatter diagram to demonstrate any correlation between their own hand spans and length of feet. Students are well behaved in lessons, teachers successfully employ a range of strategies to ensure high standards of discipline and instil a clear understanding of right and wrong.
70. The Key Stage 3 teacher at the Solar Campus is working with colleagues in other subjects to provide activities that require students to use mathematics across the whole curriculum. Mathematical concepts and language are reinforced in other lessons, particularly science and information communication technology, food and design and technology and personal, social and health education. In science, students display information in tables, graphs and pie charts. When making a wall shelf in design and technology, students have to ensure the accurate measurement of materials.
71. The co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. As at the time of the last inspection, there are no effective arrangements to co-ordinate and monitor planning, teaching and professional development across the three sites. There is an appropriate policy and scheme of work which is used well to support long and medium term planning at the Solar Campus and Arrowe Park Hospital.
72. There is no whole school policy for assessment. Teachers at Solar Campus work well together to ensure a consistent approach to planning. They are making effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy in lessons and planning. They have developed baseline and ongoing assessment procedures, which have not yet been developed in order to demonstrate individual student's progress and attainments over time. Resources are adequate although insufficient

use is made of information and communication technology to support mathematics.

## SCIENCE

73. No teaching of science was seen at Key Stage 1 and only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2. At these key stages the subject is mainly incorporated as an aspect of a topic or theme. There is no students' science work to scrutinise although there is some evidence of it in displays. The lesson seen at Key Stage 2 took place at Arrowe Park. It was connected with healthy eating and care of the teeth. Students' discussion was good. They named constituents of foods such as fat, starch, nutrients and proteins and distinguished between them. They knew which foods are healthy, discussed first and second teeth, decay and plaque, and established connections between these and eating. Most students work well independently when required. Progress in learning in the lesson was satisfactory. Attitudes towards work are good. The teacher's planning and organisation of the lesson was satisfactory with appropriate learning outcomes.
74. At Key Stages 3 and 4, students' learning is at least good overall. In some lessons, where teaching is best, it is very good. The science teacher is very well aware of the needs of individual students. Lessons are planned accordingly with a clear differentiation for lower and higher attainers. The lesson plans identify appropriate learning outcomes for each class group. With a considerable range of abilities to cater for, the teacher observes what each student knows, understands and can do. This information is recorded and used effectively to enable the teacher to build on students' attainments both within their group and individually. There is no whole school system of assessment and recording. The science teacher has established her own system of recording on a daily basis together with a system of regular testing. These results are combined with good ongoing personal pupil records in their exercise books or folders. The system works well in science but it would be more effective if a whole school system gave consistency in assessment and recording across all subjects. This would enable more precise targets to be set for individual students.
75. The curriculum in science at Key Stages 3 and 4 is well established. It works from the 'Wirral' model, which relates very well to the National Curriculum. The school schemes of work are thorough and enable good sequential progress. Most lessons are delivered in a shared science and design and technology room. A smaller number of lessons in another classroom focus on topics where there is less need for practical facilities. It is not an ideal situation but investigative skills develop very well at these key stages. Opportunities in the subject are satisfactory in terms of the timetabled allocation. Greater opportunities would be available if the approach to part-time schooling was changed. This is being partly addressed by the introduction of extra lessons for Year 11 GCSE (Single Science) group.
76. Three double lessons were observed at Key Stage 3. In every case students commence with a discussion of earlier work. They demonstrate satisfactory oracy skills. They can name constituents of a balanced diet and know about the use of nutrients in the human body. They can list foods that are rich in nutrients. They develop their investigative skills and can record the results of their findings in a clear manner. They are seen carrying out tests for starch and proteins. Some are able to make simple predictions about likely outcomes of a test. These are based on knowledge of food contents. Standards of achievement are good and sometimes very good. Scrutiny of students' work over time shows that, by the end of this key stage, students have a satisfactory grasp of the contents of all the science attainment targets in the National Curriculum. A minority of students are limited in their recording by poor literacy skills. The teacher works hard to incorporate literacy and numeracy development in all lessons. This is a strength in this subject.
77. Seven double lessons were observed at Key Stage 4. Students continue to take part in very good discussion and recap sessions at the outset of every lesson. They have progressed well in their oracy skills and show a satisfying grasp of the subject knowledge. Year 10 discuss a series of life processes. They have already learnt about reproduction, growth, respiration,

excretion and nutrition. They understand about the differences between living and non-living things. There is a notable advance in the ability to understand concepts. Year 11 display a sound knowledge of plant structures and functions of the parts. They know about the need for light to promote growth. They can carry out a practical investigation to confirm a hypothesis. The GCSE (Single Science) group are working on chemical reactions and the rate at which they take place. They investigate this practically and some students make predictions about the likely rates and what might occur. They can distinguish a fair test from an invalid one. Investigative skills have developed very well. There is a growing use of numeracy in recording and presenting results in graph form, for instance. Every opportunity is still taken to reinforce numeracy and literacy skills. By the end of the key stage there is a sound knowledge of all attainment targets in the National Curriculum. The levels reached vary across the groups. A number of students are above the national average.

78. Teaching is very good overall. Of the ten double lessons observed, two were good, six were very good and two excellent. Excellent opening discussions soon get the students on task and illustrate gains that they have already made. These discussions help considerably with confidence building. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and answers all queries posed by students. She has a first class rapport with students and good relationships underpin very good behaviour. Planning is very good and encompasses a thorough understanding of the needs of the individual students. Differentiation is a normal process in lessons. The pace in lessons is very good and challenges are set which are realistic. Ongoing assessment and reinforcement in lessons is a strong feature. Students benefit in numeracy and literacy, a gain brought about by a close working relationship of the science teacher with colleagues responsible for these. Homework is set regularly, is completed and encourages students in their motivation within the subject. The teaching style in this subject goes a long way in contributing to the personal development of the students. Health and safety issues are thoroughly addressed and applied in all lessons. Students have a high awareness of these.
79. Science lessons capture the interest of all students. They display great enthusiasm and participate fully in the work. They are co-operative and display commendable levels of concentration. A number of students have behavioural problems but in no lesson was this seen to detract from learning. Peer relationships are very good and it is not unusual to see students helping those less able than themselves. Excellent staff-student relationships cause potential problems to be defused. In the ten lessons observed, attitudes were good in two, very good in four and excellent in four. This is very commendable. Moral and social development is noted in all lessons. The students clearly know the difference between right and wrong. From time to time a little spiritual content is present in terms of wonder and excitement.
80. The management of the subject is very good indeed. The teacher competently covers areas such as resourcing, record keeping and liaising with colleagues. Unfortunately this cannot be carried from Key Stages 3 and 4 to Key Stages 1 and 2 because of time restrictions. This is a matter for attention. External accreditation has improved considerably since the previous inspection and the science teacher is looking at other ways of broadening this, possibly by using GNVQ. There is an improvement in resources, which are now good and still improving. Compared with the previous inspection report, where teaching was generally good, the standard of teaching has improved. This brings with it better learning and higher achievement. Outstanding weaknesses already identified are the shortage of non-contact time, especially in respect of liaising with the other sites, and the absence of a dedicated science budget. Currently time and staff constraints prevent an adequate number of visits to outside places of scientific interest, commerce and industry. This needs attention in order to give added relevance to the subject in the eyes of the students.

## ART

81. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson with Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about achievement.

However, taking into account a scrutiny of students' previous work and in discussion with staff, art is well planned for in the curriculum.

82. At Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus, standards have risen since the last inspection and of the small GCSE group of seven students, six achieved grades A\*-C with two of these achieving A\* and A. The GCSE group will be double the size this year. This shows very good progress since the last inspection. Art on the Solar Campus is a strength of the school.
83. Key Stage 3 students currently work on collage using textured shapes to represent stones and lines to develop good imaginative work that depicts flowing water. They use the work of Hiroshige as a stimulus and show confidence, good control of brush strokes and the development of skills. Other students at Key Stage 3 learn about composition and the arrangement of shapes, colour mixing and collage, with the works of Van Gogh as a focus for their work. Some of the work showed very good skills in the use of light and shade, tone and subtle use of colour, whilst the collage work, undertaken with care, showed good imagination and skills in the way flowers were developed. Two students collaborated on their painting and worked out together the most appropriate colours. Skill development is good and provides a clear foundation for the work undertaken for the GCSE examination. Scrutiny of student's work in their comprehensive folios, shows very good development of knowledge and skills over time.
84. At Key Stage 4, students show increasing skills. They work with confidence and understanding in how to use light, shade and tone. Landscapes, taken from the three different artistic styles of Monet, Cezanne and Dali give the students a wide range of ideas to develop their work. Students use their skills well in drawing and painting, and their knowledge of colour ensures good quality work. Previous GCSE examination displays show the good and very good progress that students make over time to achieve the high standard of work seen. Some of the work is impressive and well deserves the high grades achieved.
85. The quality of teaching is good overall on the three sites with some very good teaching observed with the Key Stage 3 and 4 groups on the Solar Campus where the teacher has a high level of subject knowledge both theoretical and practical. Support is always available to help the students meet the high aspirations and expectations set for them. The planning of the curriculum, long term, medium term and individual lessons is excellent. The teaching methods take account of the students' individual needs. The use of methods and strategies, time and resources are very effective and all motivate students to achieve very well. Students are very well managed and they are well focused on their work for the entire lesson. Their attitudes and behaviour during the lessons are good. Monitoring and the supporting of students during lessons, with regular marking of work, provides feedback for them. They are well aware how to develop their work. Information and communication technology is available for the students to use for experimental work, extending the range of media available to them. Homework is set regularly and is always something that students can use in subsequent lessons.
86. Resources are satisfactory and extended by good use of the Library Service. Accommodation is shared with the food/textiles area. Although the groups are not timetabled together, it is not satisfactory for health and safety reasons. No written risk assessments are currently in place, particularly to do with cleaning regimes.
87. Art at the Adcote House with the older students is designed to encourage a relaxed approach, and to give students opportunities to talk and interact with their key worker and each other during the sessions. Students maintain their interest in their chosen tasks and respond well to the sensitive way the key worker supports the group. Collaboration between the sites does not yet ensure a whole school approach, which would be of mutual benefit.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. Design and technology was not timetabled at Adcote House or taught at Arrowe Park during the

week of the inspection. Whilst pupils' learning during the inspection was at least good at the Solar Campus, additional information from teachers' records and portfolios of pupils' work was insufficient to allow a judgement to be made on pupils' progress and achievement since they started at the school. As such, comparisons in pupils' standards cannot be fully made with the last inspection although accreditation has been introduced and the number of pupils gaining passes at NVQ level 1 has increased significantly in the last two years.

89. At Key Stage 3, students remember work from the previous week when they had analysed why a clothes peg was so designed. They use appropriate language such as 'component' and relate their knowledge of how to analyse products, to the good analysis of a new product. In practical work, students took the initiative to use vices, to hold their materials whilst sanding them smooth, and came to understand that vices were also useful for putting pressure on products whilst gluing pieces together. By Key Stage 4, lower attaining students use their knowledge of mathematics to find the half way point of an eight centimetre or 80 millimetre distance, so that they drill holes correctly for securing a shelf to the wall. They use tools safely including an electric screwdriver. Higher attaining students are very clear about the names and safe use of different tools such as bradawls, pliers and tenon saws, and evaluate the quality of finish of their own work and that of others. However, the school is aware that students' 'making' skills are much in advance of their design skills, and have plans to include this systematically as part of the curriculum. At Key Stage 3 in food studies, students know which weights and balances to use to measure their ingredients successfully, have a good knowledge of safe practice and exactly which utensils to use. By the end of Key Stage 4, students completing their final unit for their Certificate of Achievement know when to mix, chop, beat or shape different ingredients. They know to read labels for information and that ingredients such as flour can differ in strength and that different types are needed depending on what is being made; such as bread or cakes. Their willingness to learn is outstanding as they discuss how and why the temperature of water is critical to using yeast, and how to measure this using a probe and digital thermometer. At all times students contribute to discussions which help them to understand how the ingredients and the process used affects the final product.
90. Overall, teaching and learning are good within the curriculum offered and the time available. Some examples of very good teaching and learning were seen in both food studies and in focussed practical tasks in design and technology. On occasions it was excellent in food studies at Year 11. Where teaching and learning is very good or excellent, teachers have very clear knowledge of both the subject and the requirements of the accredited courses being followed. They arrange demonstrations so that all students have a clear view and have the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. Most students do this but where some are less forthcoming, teachers recognise this and ask appropriate questions to check on their understanding. Where teaching is at its best, this is designed to include relevant parts of students' individual education programmes as part of normal lessons. Very good knowledge of the students' individual needs is at the heart of the success in teaching and learning. Students are encouraged to learn through a constant 'adult' dialogue between themselves and staff, which both gives information and supports them in expressing their own views. They respond to this whole-heartedly. They have a pride in their work and a self-belief that their views are important even at times when these need reconsidering. This produces lessons where students are prepared to concentrate and apply themselves even when this requires much written work in what is frequently seen as a practical subject. Homework is used well, particularly in food studies to extend opportunities for students to have to consider issues and options for themselves. On occasions when teaching is less than very good, the size of class, the time available for the lesson, the need to complete a unit of work and the less than effective use of support staff, means that some students have slightly too much direct help in completing their work.
91. The subject has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection. Planning is now clearly linked to the national curriculum. Staff have an improved knowledge of students' individual education plans and put this to use in lessons. Independent learning has improved although opportunities for 'designing', as well as 'making', are still restricted. The accredited courses offered are constantly reviewed to ensure that students have the best possible chance of achieving

nationally recognised qualifications. However, design and technology at Adcote House and Arrowse Park is still not supported by direct involvement of the co-ordinator. Specific time has not yet been allocated for this by the headteacher although the expectation is in the co-ordinator's job description. Whilst schemes of work and planning are very detailed, assessment of what students' know and understand following a unit of work, is not yet fully checked to help planning for the next unit. The school is aware of health and safety issues, which are dealt with well with pupils during lessons. However, the co-ordinator is at the early stages of introducing written risk assessments for dealing with issues such as the cleaning regime for food technology, which is carried out in a dual purpose room with art, the housing and feeding of a snake in the design and technology room, and the risks involved in the use of certain machinery and processes.

92. The subject is well resourced and includes machinery for computer aided design and manufacture. This has recently been introduced. Plans are well advanced to use this in lessons once staff have developed a full understanding of its potential.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

93. It is not possible to report on the progress of students at any key stage due to the lack of available records and students' past work.
94. Overall teaching and learning is satisfactory at the Solar Campus and Arrowse Park Site. No geography was taught at Adcote House during the week of the inspection and no Key Stage 3 students were taught geography at the Solar Campus owing to the carousel system in the humanities timetable. One lesson was observed covering all four key stages at Arrowse Park site, where students were studying the wild life of Australia, using a computer and colourful picture books and posters. All students worked from age appropriate worksheets.
95. Year 10 students at Solar Campus are taught in ability groups. Higher attainers have started a GCSE course with all students studying traditional and modern life in Japan. Differentiation in work between the groups is by rate and content of work. All three groups work from the same textbook and work sheets. All students show a lively interest in the study of Japan. Lower attainers enjoy using the class computer to access information from a C.D ROM on Japanese traditional gardens whereas higher attainers enjoy using the web site independently to find out about Japanese sources of power. Students in the G.C.S.E group give good examples of power, one boy answering questions in great detail on solar and geo-thermal power.
96. Assessment at the Solar Campus in geography is satisfactory. Students self-evaluate and assess their own work. However, the information is not used in the long term to inform planning. Students undertake Certificates of Achievement units in various aspects of geography and from this September, some pupils at the Solar Campus may sit for a GCSE qualification. There is a policy and scheme of work in place, which matches National Curriculum requirements. There is no co-ordination of the subject across the three sites, although advice is available if required.

## **HISTORY**

97. It is not possible to report on the progress of students at any key stage due to the lack of available records and students' past work.
98. At Solar Campus and Adcote House, history is only taught at Key Stage 3 on a carousel humanities timetable. Students study the two world wars and a local study of Bidston Hill. History is not taught to Key Stage 4 students.
99. There is insufficient evidence on which to base a judgement on teaching and learning. It was only possible to observe one lesson of history at the Solar Campus. No history was taught

during the week of the inspection at either Arrowe Park or Adcote House. However in the one lesson observed Key Stage 3 students were learning about the importance of 'ariel' battle during the Battle of Britain. Students when asked what was meant by the saying " never was so much owed to so few by so many", a Year 9 student replied "Britain as a country owed it to a very small airforce." This showed a good grasp of the point. Another student was accessing a programme about 'Spitfires' from a laptop. Students within the group could tell the difference between primary and secondary sources from the evidence provided during the lesson.

100. Day to day assessment in history at Solar Campus is satisfactory. Students evaluate and assess their work. However, the information is not used in the long term to inform planning. No monitoring of the subject takes places on any of the three sites. At the last inspection there was no history policy, scheme of work or co-ordination of the subject. Although there is now a policy, a scheme of work in line with National Curriculum requirements and a named co-ordinator, this still does not work cohesively across the three sites. At present, each site devises its own scheme of work and possible assessment and works in isolation.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

101. No lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) were observed at Key Stages 1 and 2. It is not timetabled separately at these two key stages. Both Adcote House and Arrowe Park have adequate ICT facilities to support the teaching of a range of themes and topics both in the classroom and on the wards. Very little was seen of their use during the inspection week. ICT was used at Arrowe Park in a mathematics lesson about Pythagoras.
102. A number of lessons in ICT were observed at Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus. At Key Stage 3, standards of achievement are very good. At Key Stage 4 they are also very good overall with a wider range of achievement between the lower and higher attainers. In one lesson at each of these key stages, where the teaching and learning were best, the achievement was excellent. At both key stages the planning is of a high quality. The teacher is well informed about the needs of the students, understands them and her lessons are planned accordingly. Differentiation to suit the range of needs is a natural part of lesson planning and expected learning outcomes for the students are defined. The range of ability is considerable. Attainment levels are steadily improving for the whole student range. The subject teacher has an effective system of assessing students' progress over time. Each student builds up a work folder. A record of their day to day progress is maintained on a grid that relates to the curriculum. In-class assessment is a strong feature of each lesson. A whole school assessment system could be even more effective in enabling ICT to be placed in the overall context of students' progress.
103. The ICT curriculum is well established and has very detailed schemes of work. It is broad and balanced. Every effort is made to keep up with current developments. For instance, the internet has recently been installed and there are plans to link with other schools via email. The ICT teacher has recently applied for a grant to enable the introduction of video conferencing. It is hoped that the ongoing development will help to improve external accreditation. Pupils aim for the CLAIT (Oxford and Cambridge) accreditation, which has a high profile in education and commerce. It has the advantage of being modular to match a range of abilities in the subject. In order to get the most out of the subject, students would gain from having more time. The teacher is employed for 0.3 of the week. This is a forward move in that she now comes in for an extra session with those of the more able students who wish to extend their part time commitment to the school.
104. Three double lessons were observed at Key Stage 3. All of these were based on the recently acquired internet facility. Students show confidence in using their keyboard skills. Although the internet has been installed for only a fortnight, they already have a sound grasp of accessing it. They can move from one site to another and print information, which they have been asked to retrieve and download. They discuss the work and there are clear gains during a double lesson. Their folders show that they are progressing well over time and they use their word processing



skills for a variety of tasks, some of which support other subjects.

105. Three double lessons were observed at Key Stage 4. The work here was similar to that at Key Stage 3 because of the recent introduction of the internet. Exercises become more demanding and, in general, students have progressed more rapidly. Many exceed the targets set by the teacher, particularly where speed of accessing information is concerned and in rapidity of moving around sites. They already display high confidence levels and this is especially noticeable with higher attainers. Discussion of work is impressive. Their folders show good progress from Key Stage 3. The more able have moved on to work on data bases and some are performing simple tasks with spreadsheets. One group is due to take an exam in a CLAIT module in November. They look forward to contacting other schools by e-mail in the future.
106. Teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 is very good overall. It is never less than good and at each key stage some excellent teaching is seen. The teacher is an ICT professional in business as well as being a qualified teacher and has a very good knowledge of the subject. This enables her to expand on any queries arising from students. Each lesson commences and finishes with a most useful plenary session where students are able to discuss what they have learnt recently and their current tasks. This initial session enables them to very quickly get back to their ongoing work. This helps to build their confidence, a key factor in lesson planning. The teacher is well aware of the individual needs of the students and differentiation is very good. The pace of lessons is good and challenging tasks are set which raise students' motivation. The teacher enjoys a pleasant rapport with the students and this helps engender good peer relationships. The students' work is regularly marked and all students grow in confidence as they receive praise for their work. There are negligible management problems with groups of students who have some potentially difficult behaviour patterns.
107. Opportunities are taken to reinforce literacy and numeracy but there is room for some structured development in this respect. Currently teachers are replying to a questionnaire, which aims to identify their ICT needs. It is planned to hold further training sessions, to enable ICT to be used more in supporting other subjects. The ICT teacher does plan for this in her schemes of work. This area of need was identified on the previous inspection and subject support is still too infrequent in the lessons observed during the inspection. The ICT teacher does not have time allocated to work with teachers at Adcote House and Arrowe Park. These staff have adequate resources but there is no monitoring of their level of use.
108. Students display a great interest in ICT. They therefore arrive at lessons with considerable enthusiasm, are well motivated and co-operate fully in their work. Most students have developed good levels of concentration and effort. Some of the lower attainers require considerable individual attention and one group has a support member of staff to help with this. Peer relationships are very good and it is quite common to see a student helping another who is experiencing difficulty with a task. Behaviour in the ICT room is very good and a high level of respect is shown for the equipment. Moral and social development is enhanced in the groups where students get on well together and show a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
109. This subject received a positive report at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching, which was good, has improved to very good overall. Improvements have been made in updating equipment, particularly the range of software. The recent acquisition of internet facilities is a major improvement and students increasingly understand the value of ICT in everyday life. The plans to use e-mail contacts with other schools are good. Although external accreditation has not been as good as in other subjects, in spite of the sound academic ability of a significant number of students, the identification and use of nationally recognised modules should bring about a considerable improvement. The application for finance to commence video conferencing is a very positive step forward. In general there is a dynamic feel about the subject and its wider use in the school is to be encouraged.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

## French

110. French was not timetabled at Adcote House nor taught at Arrowe Park during the week of the inspection. At these centres staff support students, as necessary, with work from their mainstream school. Whilst pupils' learning during the inspection was at least satisfactory at the Solar Campus, additional information from teachers' records and pupils' work was insufficient to allow a judgement to be made on pupils' progress and achievement since they started at the school. As such, comparisons in pupils' standards cannot be fully made with the last inspection although the number of pupils gaining accreditation in GCSE has increased in the last two years.
111. Students start at the school with a range of knowledge. At the start of Key Stage 3, students listen to a 'taped' voice. With the instructions pronounced more slowly by the teacher, pupils come to understand the instructions 'ecoute et complete', and words such as the colours vert, bleu, noir and rouge. Most are beginning to understand the meaning of phrases without knowing all of the words. Even at the end of the key stage, some students are new to the school and with a range of knowledge. Some students by now read and pronounce words such as billet, Londres and Marianne, have a range of knowledge of days of the week and times, and understand different types of transport such as car, bateau and avion. They link all of these in understanding questions posed to them about who is travelling where, when and how. Yet students new to the school are still in need of much adult support to help them contribute and learn from the lessons. However, by the end of Key Stage 4, students working on the second year of their modular GCSE course, prepare for and answer questions from a tape without need for any explanation in English or repetition in French more slowly by the teacher. They understand and answer questions to do with booking hotel rooms, including for how many nights, for how many people and the type of facilities required. The majority are well prepared to take part in role-play to help them use the language more confidently.
112. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Where it is good or very good, older and more advanced students are very keen to learn and want to enjoy themselves. They respond very well to teaching that is knowledgeable, humorous and encouraging for those who can be quite nervous of speaking. Lessons are clearly planned and very good use and pronunciation of the language, encourages students to 'breach the gap' between listening and speaking, and recording their answers to be marked for assessment. Homework is used well to give students more opportunity to practice the language, given the current restrictions on the timetabled time available. Where class work depends on their 'honesty', students willingly leave their page folded down the middle, and work out 'jobs' that they recognise such as agriculteur, mecanicien, medicin and secretaire despite the answers being available overleaf. This was a good example of a class, aware of the gentle but probing questioning and praise used by the teacher to support them, responding well to the trust placed in them. On rare occasions that teaching is unsatisfactory, the size of the class, breadth of ability and the approach taken makes it difficult for all students to benefit from the lesson, particularly when some students are new to the school and additional support is not available. Despite this, students behave well although some become bored. The school is currently short of approaches to deal with these types of difficulty.
113. Resources have been improved since the last inspection, particularly in support of the GCSE coursework. Planning and assessment are now in place, with end of module assessments. These clearly add to the teachers' knowledge of the students, in addition to the day to day questioning and marking of written work. The school is short of good quality artefacts to support the modules of learning, so that the teacher does not need to keep finding items from home. She also recognises her need for staff development so that she can improve her knowledge and use of ICT to improve the subject. However, she is not clear when this will become a priority for the school as the subject plan does not automatically build into the school's development plan.

## MUSIC

114. Music is not taught as a separate subject at Key Stages 1 and 2 at Arrowe Park Hospital, but singing is part of the Foundation Stage activities and students have opportunities for musical activities and use percussion instruments at festivals such as Christmas. There is no music taught at Adcote House Assessment Centre. This limits the potential for relaxation and enjoyment that music can bring. Music is taught at Key Stages 3 and 4. As only one lesson was observed, it is not possible to judge overall standards of achievement and the quality of teaching and learning.
115. Music is taught in rotation with careers and citizenship over the year and equal time is given to each of the subjects. At Key Stages 3 and 4, there is a clear curriculum overview with good use made of the local authority's curriculum and that devised by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society which culminates in a visit to hear a concert. There is a good yet succinct music development plan that highlights the targets to be achieved this year and shows how the subject will progress.
116. Resources at the Solar Campus are adequate and students have opportunities to play electronic keyboards. Some students develop skills, which they demonstrate well at school concerts. Resources are very limited at Arrowe Park Hospital. The audio equipment at the Solar Campus is well used to encourage listening and appreciation skills. It gives students opportunities to reflect and interpret musical extracts in terms of how they describe events or situations.
117. Music technology supports well the composing element of the curriculum. In the lesson observed, students were fascinated to work with a laptop, investigating stereotypes in music linked with visual elements.
118. Assessment is satisfactory. There are record sheets for students to use for appreciation and review sheets, which assist in monitoring students' achievements. There is also assessment of students' skills on the keyboard. A record sheet using the National Curriculum attainment targets that also includes some self-assessment for the students, is to be used this year.
119. Since the last inspection there has been good progress in the development of the music curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 at the Solar Campus, but no evidence of development at Arrowe Park Hospital or Adcote House Assessment Centre.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Due to a very small time allocation, it was only possible to observe teaching in two lessons at Key Stage 4. Judgements draw upon analysis of the physical education policy, scheme of work, and discussions with the subject teacher, deputy headteacher and students. Within the context of the two lessons observed there is evidence of satisfactory achievement in skill development by some students. Students are developing their techniques in volleyball; by the end of the thirty-five minute lesson almost half of the students succeed in volleying the ball over the net. Most could lob the ball to a partner. Two students observed in the other lesson demonstrated progress in their basketball tactics and ball control. There are no records or other evidence to make a judgement of progress or attainment over time.
121. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson observed and poor in the other. In neither lesson were there warm up or cool down activities at the beginning and end of lessons. As a result, no connection was made between the games the students were playing and fitness and health. Whilst the teacher evaluated students' performance, opportunities were not provided for students to describe or evaluate their own and others performance in relation to the skills and techniques they were developing. In one lesson a group of students choose to play badminton and were provided with very limited tuition to learn about the rules of the game or to improve their techniques and performance. Since the beginning of this term, due to the enthusiasm of the newly appointed teacher, pupil attitude to, and participation in lessons has improved

considerably. Students remove jewellery prior to the lesson and wear appropriate footwear. Most wear reasonably appropriate clothing. The time allocation for lessons does not allow for students to change fully for physical education or to shower. Students are active and demonstrate physical effort in games lessons, motivated by the teacher's praise and encouragement. Their behaviour is good and they work well together.

122. Teaching of the subject has been erratic over the last 18 months. During this time there has been no permanent physical education teacher. The present teacher is employed on a temporary part time basis. Consequently the subject lacks co-ordination. There are no procedures for assessment or monitoring of progress. The scheme of work is too narrow and limited solely to games. There has been minimal investment in the subject since the last inspection. This is being addressed. A range of basic equipment has been ordered which will enable the delivery of a wider curriculum including gymnastics. Accommodation is adequate for indoor work but the gymnasium has been allowed to become rundown. Students have access to a grassed area outside to place football at lunchtimes. Only boys take up this opportunity. No other activity is provided.
123. The schools response to the last inspection findings is unsatisfactory in this subject. The standards in teaching have declined. Time allocation remains low, limiting the range of activities. Equipment is inadequate and new showers have not been provided.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

124. It is not possible to report on the progress of students at any key stage due to the lack of available records and students' past work.
125. There is a policy document and schemes of work in place at both Solar Campus and Adcote House. These are consistent with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. At the Solar Campus the co-ordinator has adapted the scheme of work to meet the requirements of her students.
126. Religious Education is taught only to Key Stage 3 students at the Solar Campus and was taught to one group during inspection week. This was in line with the carousel humanities timetable. It was not taught during the inspection week at Arrowe Park site and was observed twice at Key stages 3 and 4 at Adcote House.
127. Teaching and learning in the one Key Stage 3 lesson at Solar Campus was very good, the theme of the lesson was God as a designer of the world compared to designer fashion today. One year 9 pupil made a poem up describing God's design.
128. Teaching and learning at Adcote House is satisfactory. Students are studying Hinduism and the 16 stages of life. This theme provoked some lively discussions. Students talked about reincarnation and what they would like to come back on earth as.
129. The subject knowledge of the teachers is sound and the expectations of students' behaviour and work is high. Resources and accommodation for the subject is adequate with the opportunity of borrowing artefacts from the local teachers' centre when necessary. There is no assessment in religious studies at any of the sites which is unsatisfactory. The subject is not yet co-ordinated at the Solar Campus and Adcote House in a way that ensures continuity for students moving from one site to the other.