INSPECTION REPORT

LYDGATE SCHOOL

New Mill, Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107801

Headteacher: Mr W. Goler

Reporting inspector: Sarah J Mascall
20536

Dates of inspection: 2nd-5th October 2000

Inspection number: 223679

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	For pupils with moderate learning difficulties
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 -16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kirkroyds Lane New Mill Huddersfield Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD7 7 LS
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Masterson
Date of previous inspection:	18-21st May 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Sarah Mascall 20536	Registered inspector	English	How well are pupils taught? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed?
Susan Walsh 13786	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alan Tattersall 20466	Team inspector	Science Physical education Design technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Jenny Hall 14691	Team inspector	Modern foreign language Art Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Michael Holohan 1769	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Special Educational Needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Efficiency
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REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT **6**

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? **11**

The school's results and achievements
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT? **13**

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS? **14**

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? **16**

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS **18**

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? **19**

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? **21**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS **23**

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES **27**

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lydgate is a community school for boys and girls between the ages of five and sixteen with moderate learning difficulties. Currently there are 78 pupils on roll but over the course of the year this is likely to rise. Last year numbers rose from 67 to 90 because of a number of pupils arriving in Years 7, 8 and 9. All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupils enter the school with low levels of attainment. In addition to those with moderate learning difficulties, 3% of pupils are on the autistic spectrum and although a similar percentage have statements for special educational needs for emotional and behavioural difficulties the school considers that approximately 30% of pupils display emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of pupils live within a ten-mile radius of the school and reflect the social and ethnic background of the area. There are very few pupils from minority backgrounds – only 7% and these are from Pakistani and Caribbean heritage. Two pupils have English as an additional language. 54% of pupils have free school meals, which is high in comparison with other similar special schools. Since the last inspection the number of pupils has increased. The local education authority (LEA) is at present undertaking a review of its special needs provision and proposals have been put forward by the LEA for the closure of Lydgate School.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Lydgate is a good school. The good and often very good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. The improvements since the last inspection have been brought about by effective leadership and result in the school providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching of the youngest pupils is very good and results in very good achievement for this age range.
- The good quality teaching overall ensures that pupils achieve well. Teachers are well supported by learning support assistants.
- The head teacher and senior management team provide effective leadership and have ensured there is good teamwork and support each other well.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils and as a result pupils are keen to work hard and take on responsibilities.
- Very close attention is paid to encouraging good behaviour and as a result pupils behave well both in and out of school.
- There are a good range of extra curricular activities and these support pupils' achievements well.

What could be improved

- Newly established systems for monitoring the curriculum have not yet been effective in ensuring that there is a consistent approach in aspects such as planning, reporting to parents and writing IEPs.
- The amount of taught time is a significantly short for pupils between the ages of fourteen and sixteen.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have limited opportunities to develop life skills.
- Individual education plans and procedures for assessing pupils are not sufficiently developed in enabling the school to monitor progress effectively.
- Achievements in information communication technology for pupils under the age of eleven and for all pupils in religious education are unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in May 1998 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses within leadership and management. Over the last 2½ years the school has made good improvement and has addressed many of the key issues successfully. Pupils' groupings have been changed so that they are now in taught alongside pupils of a similar age. There is good liaison between teachers of different year groups which ensures that pupils' skills are developed as they move through the school. This has also been enhanced by the development of appropriate planning for all subjects with the exception of information communication technology for pupils up to the age of eleven and religious education. School development planning is more effective and now contains success criteria. There has been monitoring of teaching and there are appropriate plans for subject co-ordinators to monitor their subjects. Child protection procedures are now good. All pupils have access to the computer suite and have weekly lessons in information communication technology. Individual education plans (IEPs) have been developed although there is need for further improvements. A policy for assessment has been established however assessment is not yet used sufficiently well to inform teachers' planning.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	**by age 11**	**by age 16**
speaking and listening	C	C
reading	B	B
writing	B	B
mathematics	B	B
personal, social and health education	B	C
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C

Key	
very good	A
good	B
satisfactory	C
unsatisfactory	D
poor	E

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

Pupils achieve well overall and by the time they leave school have gained passes in a range of externally accredited courses. For the youngest pupils in Class 1 achievement and progress are very good. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in literacy and numeracy. However they do not make the same progress in developing speaking and listening skills. Pupils, because of limited opportunities to attend mainstream schools, do not have the benefit of mixing and talking to their mainstream peers and developing appropriate vocabulary informally. Achievement in science is good for pupils up to the age of eleven. However, the lack of appropriate specialist accommodation limits the achievements of older pupils. The support provided by a professional musician in music lessons enables pupils to make very good progress in aspects of performance and overall progress in music is good. In design and technology achievements for pupils up to the age of eleven are very good. For older pupils achievements are satisfactory because they have yet to develop an understanding of the design process. In information communication technology the lack of a detailed plan of work for pupils under the age of eleven prevents them from achieving appropriately over time. Achievements for older pupils are good. In French and physical education pupils' achievements are good and in art and humanities they are satisfactory. In personal, social and health education pupils achieve well up to the age of eleven. However the lack of opportunities to participate in a life skills course because of a shortage of

time prevents older pupils from making better progress in this subject. Achievements in religious education are unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy attending school and take pride in their work. They are keen to show off their achievements to staff and visitors.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well and are aware of teachers' high expectations. All try hard to conform and as a result the school is a lively and well-ordered community. Pupils behave well on trips out of school; older pupils behave very sensibly when at college.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils clearly enjoy the many opportunities to take on responsibilities and carry out their jobs with enthusiasm. Older pupils participate in work experience confidently whilst younger pupils help in tidying and distributing equipment.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. Attendance is good for pupils under the age of eleven. There is though a high level of unauthorised attendance for older pupils in comparison to similar special schools. These figures are affected by a small number of pupils and the school having ineffective monitoring procedures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	Good	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.

The overall quality of teaching is good. During the week of the inspection 95% of teaching was satisfactory or better. 76% was good or better; 27% being excellent or very good and 49% good. Only 5% was unsatisfactory. The teaching of science, French and physical education is good and often very good. In English, mathematics, design technology, information communication technology and music teaching is good. The teaching of personal and social education and art is satisfactory and often good whilst in humanities it is satisfactory. In religious education the quality of teaching is affected by the lack of detailed planning to support teachers; pupils up to the age of eleven have an appropriate range of experiences and teaching is satisfactory. However, it is unsatisfactory for older pupils. There is an appropriate focus on developing numeracy and literacy across the curriculum. Although speaking and listening is well promoted in personal and social education lessons, opportunities for discussions and exchanges of views are limited in other subjects. Teachers' planning is good overall however it is not consistent amongst all staff and the use of assessment to support planning varies considerably.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The provision for those pupils in Class 1 is good; it ensures pupils get an effective range of experiences. For all other

	pupils provision is satisfactory overall. The many changes since the last inspection have had a positive impact on the curriculum and pupils now have access to a wide range of extra curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for the very small number of pupils who require extra support is of good quality.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Moral and social provision is good enabling pupils to understand right from wrong and behave appropriately. The good range of activities and visitors supports cultural provision well. Regular assemblies contribute to pupils' spiritual development but this is not well promoted in other areas of school life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall with good elements. Procedures for the care of pupils are good. However the monitoring of attendance and the use of assessment is unsatisfactory. Progress has been made in assessing pupils but there is still a need to improve procedures further, particularly in writing IEPs.

The school has developed good links with the community. It has good relationships with parents and provides a good range of information. Reports to parents vary in quality and not all give sufficient detail of pupils' progress. Procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are good overall although there is no formal risk assessment in some subjects particularly design and technology.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	**Comment**
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior management team have developed a staff who are committed to improving provision. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles well and staff work well together as a team. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are aware of school developments and have a clear overview of the work of the school. They fulfil their statutory requirements although targets for the head teacher and deputy headteacher have yet to be set. Plans to develop links with subject co-ordinators are appropriate.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school collates data concerning pupils' achievements and is planning to use recent information on "P" levels to compare achievements with similar type schools. Plans to use this information to set targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy are at an early stage of development. It has appropriately looked at achievements of pupils in externally accredited courses over the last few years.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The use of funding is good, however the cost of school developments is not closely linked to the budget and opportunities for subject co-ordinators to take responsibility for budgetary decisions within their subjects are underdeveloped

The provision and quality of teaching and support staff is good. There has been a clear focus on developing subject expertise for both teachers and support staff. This has contributed greatly to the achievements of pupils. Accommodation overall is satisfactory. However the lack of specialist rooms for science and art for older pupils limits achievements in these subjects. The specialist room for design technology is small particularly for larger groups as it is also used as a classroom. The shower and changing facilities are inadequate. Resources are satisfactory in the majority of subjects. In numeracy, physical education and music they are good. The library has insufficient books to meet the needs of older pupils particularly for research and study skills. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily – for example when considering the financial implications of buying in a music specialist to develop teachers' skills

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
• Their children are happy in school. • Children are encouraged to work hard. • They make good progress. • The school is easy to approach and very supportive. • They are well informed about their children's progress.	• Some parents felt unhappy at the school's arrangements for setting homework.

Overall inspectors agree with parents very positive views of the school although they feel, that in some subjects parents could be better informed about their child's progress. Inspectors agree that there are unclear procedures for setting homework and arrangements could be improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Overall pupils' achievements are good. Pupils start school with low levels of attainment and whist attending Lydgate they achieve well. This applies not only to those pupils with moderate learning difficulties but to those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those on the autistic spectrum. Pupils with additional special needs such as sensory and physical impairments also achieve well. Pupils make good progress overall in developing a range of skills. Progress against the targets set in IEPs is only satisfactory because the targets are not always clear and measurable which makes it difficult for teachers to assess progress. Where the targets are good, for example for the youngest pupils it is very evident that pupils make good progress.

2 Pupils' achievements clearly vary from child to child dependent upon their special needs. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties start school unable to hold a pencil or recognise letters or words. By the time they leave school at the age of sixteen they are able to read and write. Many achieve passes in externally accredited courses for example in English, mathematics and science. Those pupils on the autistic spectrum participate well in lessons for example joining in with their class for a dance lesson. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make good progress in moderating their behaviour and conform well to the expectations of staff. The achievements of the small number of pupils whose second language is English match those of other pupils in the school and they benefit from the extra support they get. The achievements of boys and girls are similar.

3 This represents good improvement since the last inspection. At that time progress was judged to be satisfactory overall in most areas of the curriculum other than mathematics and music where it was good; progress was judged to be unsatisfactory in information communication technology across the school, in art in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and in humanities for pupils between 11 and 16.

4 In English pupils' achievements are good. From a very low level of attainment in reading and writing pupils make good progress in developing appropriate skills. This is because the school has placed particular attention on these areas and a large amount of time has been allocated to developing skills. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory but are less well promoted and pupils do not benefit from opportunities to mix with their mainstream peers and improve their skills in a range of formal and informal situations. There are opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example in using workcards in humanities. However this is not always well promoted. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are good. By the age of seven they group numbers into twos and form patterns by shape and number. By sixteen pupils have developed their skills sufficiently to enable them to solve number problems and use a calculator. They are confident in addition and subtraction and use their timetables well. Although there are opportunities in other parts of the curriculum to use mathematics, such as in design and technology when measuring, there is no whole school policy to ensure it is incorporated in teachers' planning. Achievements in science for those pupils up to the age of eleven are good. For older pupils achievements are satisfactory because there is no specialist science accommodation and recent plans of work are only just having an impact. Year 10 and 11 pupils benefit from using college facilities and similar plans for Years 7,8 and 9 to visit a local school are appropriate.

5 For pupils up to the age of eleven achievements are very good in design and technology and good in personal and social skills. In information communication technology their achievements over time are unsatisfactory because there is no long term planning to support teaching. However pupils do make good progress in lessons. For pupils between the ages of eleven and sixteen achievement is good in information communication technology and satisfactory in personal and social education. For all pupils, achievements in music are good and satisfactory in art and humanities. In religious education achievements are unsatisfactory because planning is not sufficiently detailed to guide teachers so that pupils make progress as they move through the school.

6 Achievement is slightly better for pupils up to the age of eleven. This is mainly because for older pupils there is a lack of specialist accommodation in art and science and limited accommodation for teaching design and technology. In science valuable teaching time is lost because Year 10 and 11 pupils have to go to a nearby college to ensure they have opportunities for practical work that needs to be done in a laboratory.

7 It is not possible to compare acheivements with other similar schools. The school has been effective in collating information concerning reading tests and evaluating improvements. It has recently started collating information concerning assessment of pupils' ability based on the "P level" assessments. However no whole school targets have been set for achievement in literacy and numeracy which would enable comparisons with similar special schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Parents feel that their children enjoy school. The pupils' enthusiasm is reflected in their eagerness when they arrive at school. They settle quickly to lessons, participate in practical work and other activities both confidently and enthusiastically. Pupils work hard and show the ability to concentrate for lengthy periods. This confidence and enthusiasm is illustrated in the pride they take in their work in activities as diverse as Year 11 pupils participating in music-making sessions or a Year 2 pupil demonstrating to an inspector the ability to match and name shapes when working independently on a computer.

9 The positive attitudes of pupils are reflected in the good behaviour present in classrooms and on visits to other places such as the local college. Parents comment favourably on the improvement in their children's' behaviour during their time at school. Although there have been some fixed term exclusions from the school during the last year the figure is low given the proportion of pupils who can display challenging behaviour. In lessons, a consequence of the very good relations and the clear expectations of staff is a busy and orderly atmosphere in which pupils respond positively to the demands made upon them and the praise of staff is much valued. The pupils' desire to behave well is illustrated by the sensible and mature attitude of senior pupils when attending the local college for science lessons. On the few occasions when pupils lose concentration and behave inappropriately they quickly respond positively to staff intervention.

10 Pupils' personal development is good. The friendly and supportive atmosphere of the school encourages pupils to take on responsibility both for their work and for other pupils as they work and play together sensibly. Younger pupils help in classroom activities, such as tidying and distributing equipment and their developing self confidence is further reflected in their willingness to help in the school tuck shop where they handle money and distribute change. Older pupils show a increasing maturity and confidence in a range of activities including work experience and the management and

use of their common room area. Their maturity is also shown by their willingness to become independent. For example, older pupils are keen to take responsibility for getting to and from school on their own. They are keen to assist the youngest pupils by helping in class at lunch times on a weekly basis. Pupils have also supported local charities such as raising funds for the local hospice.

11 Attendance rates are satisfactory overall and younger pupils have good attendance. Unauthorised absence rates are high compared to similar types of school. This is associated with small number of pupils who hardly ever attend school and the school's unsatisfactory procedures for monitoring attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12 The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. During the week of the inspection 95% of teaching was satisfactory or better. 76% was good or better; 27% being excellent or very good and 49% good. Only 5% was unsatisfactory. This represents good improvement since the last inspection where 60% of teaching was good or better,10% was very good and just under 10% was unsatisfactory.

13 The improved quality of teaching and learning has been achieved through direct action by the headteacher in addressing weaknesses. The improvements in whole school curriculum planning, subject co-ordination and monitoring have also clearly had an impact in improving practice.

14 The change to teaching pupils within their own age group has enabled teachers to focus on ensuring that tasks are age appropriate. Many groups are set according to ability and teachers' planning is more effective in ensuring that the work is set at the right level for the group. Where teaching is best, for example in Class 1, there is a focus on planning for individuals and targets within IEPs are included in the planning. The strategy of teachers specialising in particular subjects for secondary aged pupils is very effective.

15 Teachers are experienced in working with pupils with special needs and as a result the diverse needs of groups are well met. The expertise of specialist staff, such as the speech and language therapists and advisory teachers for the sensory impaired, is used effectively to ensure that pupils with additional special needs make good progress. Subject knowledge is secure and enables teachers to provide tasks that are challenging and interesting. This is very evident in science where enthusiasm for the subject is shared with pupils so that they clearly want to learn more. The use of scientific terms supports pupils' learning well and opportunities for practical work ensure they are interested and enjoy the work. For example in a lesson with Years 7,8, and 9 pupils analysed food products for fat, glucose and protein. They recalled well the work they had previously done on this subject, remembering significant facts such as the use of filter paper in the experiment. They predicted what would happen and were able to show their results on a graph. In other subjects such as music teachers benefit from the support of a music specialist and where this support is available the quality of teaching and learning is excellent.

16 A strength of teaching lies in the very good relationships that teachers and staff have with pupils and their ability to manage pupils with difficult behaviour. Pupils respond well when they are corrected or reminded to stay on task and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour. There were many examples during the week of difficult pupils being brought back on task. In a physical education lesson for Years 4,5,and 6 there were 18 pupils together with one teacher and five staff. The activity was well planned to ensure that pupils were kept

busy and occupied the whole time. The group contained several pupils with behaviour difficulties and all worked well. Towards the end of the lesson when two particular pupils' concentration had been stretched to the limits it was possible to give them appropriate and sufficient scope to let off steam and rejoin the lesson.

17 Support staff are used well and contribute greatly to the achievements of pupils. In lessons they work well with pupils encouraging them to stay on task. Some take responsibility in numeracy and literacy for teaching groups of pupils. Where this was observed teaching is good. Staff show a commitment to pupils and work hard to ensure that pupils achieve well. The good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants results in a clear understanding of what is expected and this is very effective in the consistent approach of all staff to individuals. Pupils enjoy lessons and concentrate well. They are keen to please and proud of their achievements.

18 Where teaching is less effective it is often a result of a lack of detailed planning. Teachers know pupils well and rely on this knowledge for planning for individuals. However this results in previous assessments and targets in IEPs not always being referred to. Not all teachers use assessment to develop pupils' skills or revise areas that they are uncertain of. As a result pupils are set the same work and this is not always appropriate. For example in an English lesson for Year 10 pupils; the task was to look at poems but the texts provided did not challenge the more able pupils and were not age appropriate. There are examples of good and very good practice for setting work for pupils with different abilities particularly for primary aged pupils. Work in class is sometimes supported by homework to reinforce what has been learnt. Where this is used it is effective and pupils are eager to complete the work. However, there is no policy for homework and no consistent approach to providing it.

19 There were only a small number of lessons seen that were unsatisfactory. In these cases there was a lack of clear focus on extending pupils' knowledge, pupils had little opportunity to contribute and there was a limited range of tasks.

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

20 The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Curricular developments since the last inspection are satisfactory overall, and many are good. The statutory requirements for the National Curriculum are in place and long term planning is in the process of being completed in line with the programmes of study for National Curriculum 2000. Throughout the school the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good and the quite generous amount of time allocated for English and mathematics is appropriate. Provision across the school for pupils to learn about personal, social and health education (PSHE), including sex education and drugs awareness, is good overall but less effective for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Structured outdoor play, residential opportunities and extra-curricular sporting activities favourably extend the range of personal and social education.

21 The school is mainly successful in promoting good access to the full range of opportunities for all pupils. Year 10 and 11 pupils benefit from access to specialist science facilities and science teaching at a local college and plans for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 to attend a local secondary school for science are appropriate. However opportunities for pupils to learn in mainstream school settings are underdeveloped. Provision for pupils with the greatest learning difficulties, and for pupils for whom English is an additional language, are good, and pupils are well supported by external professionals for speech, language, visual and hearing impairment. Plans for subjects

vary in quality and completeness but are satisfactory overall. A well planned, and much improved, programme of extra-curricular activities extends learning opportunities. Excellent use of the skills of a professional musician enriches an exciting musical performance programme.

22 The curriculum is most effective in for the youngest pupils. Here a stimulating range of good quality learning opportunities provide a very effective base for the consistently high standards of teaching and learning prevailing at this stage. The curriculum is generally satisfactory for those pupils between the ages of seven and fourteen. The re-organisation of pupils into classes of a similar age has resolved some of the weaknesses in curriculum planning reported at the last inspection. Curriculum plans for Years 7,8 and 9 are now better matched to pupils' stages of development, and transition to the Year 10 and 11 curriculum has improved. The amount of taught time for pupils from seven to fourteen, however, falls below national guidelines. In Years 3,4,5 and 6 the time for English and mathematics is above average, provision for literacy and numeracy is good, and pupils achieve well in the development of their basic skills. In Years 7, 8 and 9 the continuing high percentage of time allocated to English and mathematics, above that found in similar schools, is time well spent. In Year 9 pupils receive support from the careers service at the time of their transitional reviews, but no planning is in place for careers education and guidance for this age group.

23 The curriculum for Year 10 and 11 pupils is satisfactory overall. Strengths lie in the continuing good provision for the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy; wide ranging opportunities to study externally accredited courses; and improved provision for work experience, where support from local employers is good. Almost all pupils are entered for Entry Level Certificates in English, mathematics, science, ICT, geography, design and technology (courses in food technology and resistant materials), and French. Art and religious education have been added to the list of accredited courses being studied this year. Higher attainers progress to GCSE work, in mathematics, for example.

24 The amount of taught time for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is significantly lower than is recommended nationally, with the effect that the personal, social and life skills programme is too narrow for the thorough preparation of pupils for leaving school. The time allocated for personal and social education for this age range is well below the amount found in similar schools. The quality of vocational education this year is poorer than in previous years owing to difficulties encountered in securing the formerly well-established college based vocational programme. The careers education and guidance programme is well planned in Years 10 and 11. By the time pupils leave school in Year 11, they have good quality records of achievement. These contain certificates and awards that have been achieved and provide a photographic and written record of pupils' experiences during their time at the school.

25 Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Although there is still no overview or monitoring of these educational opportunities, the head teacher together with individual teachers ensure that these important aspects of education are well addressed.

26 Spiritual education is no longer unsatisfactory. Although the contribution of the religious education programme to spiritual development has not been fully exploited many other subjects make up for this short coming. There is a significant spiritual element to the way music is taught, for example, pupils are encouraged to close their eyes and to lose themselves in the rhythm of the music. After physical education pupils are helped to cool down and relax using techniques associated with yoga. They are taught how to

become calm by imaging peaceful scenes. Assemblies make a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Themes for assemblies with a strong moral or social theme are well directed at younger pupils but many older pupils remain relatively uninvolved. There is a strong sense of right and wrong in the school and moral education is good. The school has a well thought out and highly regarded system of rewards for hard work and good behaviour. Rewards for good behaviour include many exciting trips and activities which make a good contribution to social education.

27 The school has good provision for social education. There are many activities planned for the youngest pupils which contain a strong element of social education. Pupils are encouraged to take turns, develop good manners and act in a socially acceptable manner. They are very actively encouraged to concentrate, pay attention and to develop the skills which will allow them to learn. Lunch times are particularly valuable for younger pupils who are taught how to use a knife and fork correctly, and to sit at the table and eat a meal in a family atmosphere. Pupils' ideas are valued and are sometimes taken up. For example, the impetus to introduce basketball on to the school curriculum came from pupils. The programme of personal and social education has a strong social element especially for pupils aged 11 to 14. Independent travel is encouraged. A weakness in social education is the lack of opportunities for pupils to integrate with their mainstream peers.

28 The school has good provision for cultural education. A significant feature is the excellent quality and range of musical activities. Pupils experience a very wide range of music from many cultures including Africa, South America and Asia but they get more limited experience of other cultures in other subject areas. There is a lively French day where younger pupils imagine going on a ferry to France and eat breakfast in a French café served by older pupils speaking French.

29 The school has good links with the local community. The school attends local church services, for example when celebrating the millennium and pupils participate alongside mainstream pupils. The school makes good use of the local resources; older pupils go sailing, canoeing, cycling and windsurfing. In Class 1 good use has been made of local transport such as buses and trains and pupils have been able to experience exciting journeys. There is very active participation in many local sports events and members of the local football and rugby clubs come into school and offer coaching.

30 The school has satisfactory links with other educational establishments. There is a warm relationship between Lydgate and other local schools. Staff are very willing to offer help and support to other schools when they need advice concerning pupils with special educational needs. The school is an active participant in the local pyramid of schools and is leading a music and drama project. Unfortunately there are no opportunities for integration for any pupils at Lydgate school at present and this restricts the range of educational experience available to pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31 The school is a very caring environment and makes every effort to ensure pupils' needs are well met. Pupils benefit from the support of a wide range of specialist staff including the advisory service for sensory impairment, the occupational therapist, school nurse and speech and language therapists. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and procedures for child protection are now good. IEPs are now in place and there is a policy for assessment, however these aspects still require development.

32 There are good procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour. The school places a strong emphasis upon appropriate behaviour and holds weekly staff meetings to discuss all pupils' conduct. There is an impressive range of systems of rewards and merits to reward good behaviour and these have a significant impact upon promoting the high standards of behaviour evident in school and the environment. Good individual behaviour plans are in place for pupils who have challenging behaviour. All staff follow these plans consistently and they are effective in managing incidents of inappropriate behaviour and in promoting good behaviour. The senior management team provide good support for teachers. This enables lessons to run smoothly and ensures that disruptive behaviour does not impede pupils' learning. Staff guide pupils well to monitor and control their own behaviour. Pupils understand the need for good behaviour and will apologise when they have misbehaved.

33 The school's procedures for monitoring attendance are unsatisfactory. Although registers are usually well kept and meet legal requirements they have not been regularly monitored. The school was not aware of large differences in unauthorised absence rates between classes and has not always been rigorous enough when investigating short absences. The school has procedures to ensure that reasons for absence are sought and to make sure that parents are aware of the importance of regular school attendance. However systems for following up absences when parents fail to respond is not effective. The recent appointment of an educational and social worker should provide support for the school in addressing these shortcomings.

34 The caretaker discharges his responsibilities for health and safety rigorously. The school benefits from high quality surveys of fire and environment risk assessments from outside bodies and takes appropriate steps to rectify shortcomings. Consequently, the school is seeking to rectify the lack of stair rails and safety barriers at the school entrance. Governors undertake some good surveys of health and safety, since it is a school aim to provide a safe environment. Risk assessment is particularly good in science lessons but there is a need to assess risks more rigorously when the small design technology room is being used including the operation of the kiln.

35 During the last inspection, assessment policy and practice and the quality of individual education plans were identified as areas of weakness. However, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing these issues. Overall, procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are now satisfactory. However, although improvement has been made, further development is required to ensure that they are effective and consistently implemented throughout the school.

36 On admission to Class 1, all pupils are appropriately assessed using the Local Education Authority's materials for the assessment of children on entry to nursery and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) 'P' level assessment criteria for English, mathematics and personal and social development. Pupils who join the school at a later stage are assessed against the 'P' levels and National Curriculum levels if appropriate. The assessment is updated annually and a standardised reading test is also administered. This enables the school to monitor pupils' progress. However, assessments are not moderated and there are no collections of assessed work in each subject to help teachers make consistent judgements.

37 The recently introduced format for setting and recording annual targets in English, mathematics and personal and social development is appropriate. However some targets are too narrow, for instance in mathematics, where targets may only relate to counting. Targets for personal and social development are frequently imprecise which makes it difficult to accurately measure progress. Staff are aware that targets need

refining and there are appropriate plans to address this issue and develop a system for recording progress made in the target areas.

38 All pupils have individual education plans based on the targets agreed at the annual review. However, whilst there are examples of well written plans, with clear and measurable targets, this is not the case throughout the school. At the present time individual plans do not incorporate targets for information and communication technology. Although targets are usually evaluated termly, the evaluation is often not dated so that it is not clear how long a pupil took to achieve a particular target. The school is committed to improving the quality of individual education plans through staff development utilising the expertise that already exists in the school.

39 The school is beginning to introduce a system of identifying individual learning targets for each subject area. These will be evaluated to monitor pupil progress in reaching the attainment targets set by the National Curriculum. When properly established, this will enable teachers to use information gained from assessment to guide curricular planning. However, at the present time, the planning for some subjects does not include assessment opportunities and the system is not yet implemented by all teachers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40 The school has good relationships with parents who value the support provided by staff. Parents are confident that their children are happy and make good progress with their school work. They appreciate improvements in their children's behaviour and their positive attitudes towards school. Parents find the school very approachable and staff very willing to listen and help. The school has maintained standards in this area since the last inspection.

41 The school has worked hard to ensure that parents get a good range of information about the work of the school and their own child's progress. In Class 1 home school diaries are well used to ensure that is good communication between school and home. Parents receive a very welcoming letter when their children start school together with well presented booklets about how the school works. The governors' report to parents is of good quality and gives a good flavour of the work of the school.

42 Written reports that are associated with the annual reviews are usually good. However the quality can vary from subject to subject. For example, reports on progress in English are often of very good quality telling parents exactly what their children know, understand and can do whilst reports about children's progress in religious education can be woolly and confused. Reports for science are good when written by the teacher specialising in science but sometimes somewhat brief when written by others. In addition to this report parents receive a brief report at the end of the school year which contains much of the formation required by law. There are several parents' evenings every year and parents are always welcome in school.

43 There is satisfactory involvement of parents in pupils' learning. Parents are informed about annual review targets and are fully involved in the annual review process. The school has considered the setting of homework but does not have a formal homework policy and some parents are concerned about this. Younger pupils are encouraged to take books home. Parents, however, become less involved in the teaching of reading as pupils get older. There is a minimal amount of homework for older pupils. The school has sought parent's views about welfare issues such as bullying and the induction programme. Some parents provide valuable help in school and the "Friends of Lydgate" fundraising and social group continue to flourish.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44 Leadership by the head teacher and the senior management team is good. There is an effective focus on ensuring clear educational direction for the school. Many aspects of the school's provision have been developed appropriately over the last 2 ½ years. The headteacher together with his senior management teamwork closely together and they have been successful in developing a team spirit amongst all staff. There is a clear commitment to providing pupils with a good standard of education, staff are very supportive of each other and clearly focussed on improving provision. As a result the recently established aims of the school are met well. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when leadership and management were judged to have serious weaknesses. The improvements have been made through very hard work on the part of the head teacher, governors and staff. The weaknesses in the roles of the senior management and subject co-ordinators have been addressed and governors are now more aware of what is happening in school. The school's aims have been revised and are now appropriate.

45 School improvement since the last inspection has been good overall. In some areas it has been very good. The school has worked hard to ensure all the key issues have been addressed but has also adopted national initiatives such as the numeracy and literacy strategy. Curriculum provision has strengths particularly in terms of teaching literacy and numeracy and the provision for work experience and extra curricular activities are good, as is provision for those pupils with additional special needs. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is now good whilst spiritual development has improved to being satisfactory. Aspects of care for pupils, including child protection procedures are now good.

46 The governing body is well led by the Chair of Governors who has a good understanding of the work of the school. Governors have been active in monitoring policies and development planning. They recognise the need to have a better overview of what is happening in school, as too many are reliant on the head teacher's reports. In the past staff have joined governors to talk about the curriculum and plans to reinstate this process and visit school more regularly are appropriate. Links with curriculum areas such as numeracy and literacy have been recently developed. Minutes of meetings show that there are discussions concerning the school's provision and how best to move forward in the light of possible closure. As yet there are no whole school targets for achievement and due to a misunderstanding with the LEA, targets for the head teacher and deputy head teacher have yet to be established.

47 The monitoring of teaching is satisfactory. Since the last inspection there has been a clearer focus on developing the roles of subject co-ordinators in monitoring delivery of the curriculum. The school has used its finances well to enable staff to have more non-contact time in order to monitor the work in their subjects. This has already started in mathematics and there are appropriate plans established for all co-ordinators to go into lessons next term. The role of the deputy headteacher as curriculum co-ordinator has been recently established. Although systems have been put in place for monitoring the curriculum, for example planning records are checked by the deputy head and headteacher, there is a recognition by the senior management team that these are not yet effective. The school recognises the need to monitor planning more closely to ensure that it is reflected in the teaching in lessons. This would also ensure more consistent approach across the school so that the good practice of some teachers, for example, in writing detailed reports and IEPs, is shared with all staff.

48 The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all staff. However there is a need to use this information better so that it can be used to support and improve teaching where there are weaknesses. The headteacher has also been successful in encouraging teachers to teach the full age range and this has been effective in sharing expertise but has also been good professional development. Teachers admit that it has been a challenge but one they have enjoyed and which has given them an opportunity to develop their expertise further. These initiatives have been successful in improving the quality of teaching overall so that it is now good.

49 School improvement planning has improved since the last inspection and staff have worked hard to turn the process from a paper exercise into a useful one that guides the school forward. The plan now clearly recognises areas for improvement both within subjects and overall areas including teaching and monitoring pupils' progress. A strength lies in the school's efforts to expand its provision such as considering ways it can operate as a resource centre. Taking into consideration the strengths in teaching and methods used for improving pupils' behaviour this is appropriate.

50 A time scale for the completion of improvements has been established within the school improvement plan and governors have appropriately drawn up a time schedule for reviewing progress. Although many areas are costed some of these are vague and there is a need to prioritise more clearly and ensure subject co-ordinators have a better understanding of budgeting. At present the allocation for spending on budgets is not clear and co-ordinators do not prioritise developments in order to bid for monies to support their plans.

51 The school has made effective use of the issues identified in the previous report as a basis for expenditure. Consideration has been given to maintaining high staffing levels, which are appropriate to the needs of a school population with a wide range of abilities and pupils with challenging behaviour. Similarly, efficient use has been made of the school's financial reserves to support staff in their development of the curriculum and the provision of specialist teaching areas for design technology and food technology. Specific grants from the Department for Employment and Education (DfEE) have been used well. Standards in English, mathematics and information technology have risen as a result of targeted expenditure on resources and staff training in these areas. Good use has also been made of the Standards Fund to give pupils access to high quality musical tuition and a stimulating range of musical experiences.

52 The procedures for recording expenditure are good and the school has extended its use of information technology to record expenditure and other budgetary information as well as producing information for the headteacher and governors. Day to day administration and the operation of the school office is efficient. Appropriate inventories are kept and the school has very recently successfully completed a LEA audit.

53 The provision of teaching staff is good and their experience and qualifications match the needs of the school well. The provision of staff who support individuals or assist in class is very good and they undertake a wide range of responsibilities. Staff have undergone an impressive range of training, for instance to enable them to lead literacy and numeracy groups. The excellent relationships between staff and strong sense of teamwork, makes an important contribution to promoting pupils' progress. Staff support each other well and this, together with induction arrangements and the staff handbook, means that induction procedures are good. There are good arrangements to determine training needs and staff receive good opportunities to attend training to meet the personal and school priorities. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

54 Classroom accommodation is satisfactory overall and there is an appropriate social area for senior pupils. The grounds provide a good location for pupils' recreation, with play areas and good places for pupils to sit, relax and talk. Maintenance staff keep the building clean and this further promotes pupils' respect for their school. There is a lack of a science and art room for older pupils, evident during the previous inspection. The design and technology room has improved but the space for practical work is too limited because of the joint use for class lessons. The library although a suitable room for primary aged pupils is not designed or resourced to meet the needs of older pupils. These shortcomings in accommodation adversely affects progress. The shower and changing facilities are inadequate. The school plans to create appropriate shower rooms soon but is at an early stage of investigating how to develop satisfactory facilities for art and updating accommodation for food technology. There are appropriate plans to explore the feasibility of pupils receiving science lessons within the specialist facilities of a nearby school. The school makes very good use of the environment, including museums and sports facilities to enhance pupils' learning.

55 Resources for learning are better than at the time of the previous inspection, particularly for computers. There are good resources for numeracy, music and physical education. The range of library books for older pupils remains limited. Subject leaders do not have budgets for their subjects to plan improvements. The limited accommodation and storage for science and art limits the provision of learning resources.

56 Whilst the unit cost per pupils is high in comparison with schools of similar types issues from the previous report have been effectively addressed and both pupils' achievements and teaching have improved since the last inspection. Consequently, the school now provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

- **Improve the procedures for monitoring the curriculum so that standards are consistently good by:**

Carrying out present plans for subject co-ordinators to monitor the work in their curriculum areas (paragraph 47);

Evaluating planning and the reports to parents and sharing good practice with staff (paragraphs 42, 47).

- **Improve opportunities for Year 10 and 11 pupils to have a wider curriculum by:**

Increasing taught time up to recommended levels (paragraph 24);
Providing opportunities for them to undertake courses, which will develop life skills and prepare them for life after school (paragraph 24,109).

- **Improve achievements in ICT and religious education by:**

Developing appropriate planning which will ensure that pupils' skills are developed as they move through the school and enable teachers' to monitor progress more effectively. (paragraphs 5,95,119);
Developing targets for information communication technology and ensure that ICT is better promoted in all subjects. (paragraphs 38,84,94,104).

- **Improve further the quality of IEPs by:**

Using the examples of good practice within school to ensure that the targets set are clear and measurable in terms of pupils' progress (paragraph 18,37,38,112);

Developing procedures to ensure that IEPs are evaluated on a regular basis and that this is dated. (paragraph 38).

- **Improve the quality of assessment by**:

Instigating a process by which work can be moderated to ensure consistency amongst staff when assessing pupils work (paragraph 18,36,84,94).

In addition to the above key issues the school should also consider including the following in its action plan:

Ensure there are formal risk assessment procedures for all subjects particularly design and technology (paragraph 34,89).

Set whole school targets for achievement in numeracy and literacy and ensure targets are established for the head teacher and deputy headteacher (paragraphs 7,46).

Improve the monitoring of attendance so that there is more awareness of pupils' absences across the school (paragraph 33).

Re-establish opportunities for pupils, particularly those between the ages of five and eleven to have opportunities to attend lessons and mix socially with their peers in mainstream (paragraphs 4,21,30,57).

Establish a homework policy which will ensure that all pupils receive regular homework that will support their learning in school (paragraphs 18,43,76,84,104).

Improve accommodation particularly for science, art and the library to enable pupils to have access to better resources (paragraphs 4,6,54,61,74,118).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	24	48	20	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	78
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.39

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	5.43

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Only a small number of pupils were assessed at the end of Key Stage 1 and all were working towards Level 1

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

There have been no statutory tests carried out at the end of KEY Stage 2. Teacher assessments were:-

JUNE 2000	W	Level 1	Level 2
English	5	1	
Mathematics	5	1	
Science	6		

Attainment at the end Key Stage 3

Test Assessment

June 2000	W	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
English				
Mathematics				3
Science			2	2

Teacher assessment

June 2000	W	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
English		6	4	
Mathematics	1	5	1	3
Science		5	5	

Examination Results Key Stage 4

NEAB/AQA Certificate of Achievement

English 8 distinctions
Mathematics 12 distinctions
Science 11 Distinctions and 2 merits
French 10 Distinctions
Geography 9 Distinctions and 1 merit
ICT 2 Distinctions

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	68
Any other minority ethnic group	1

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other	2	
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	5	
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: Y1 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.8
Average class size	9

Education support staff: Y1– Y11

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	267

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99-00

	£
Total income	510099
Total expenditure	484291
Expenditure per pupil	5632
Balance brought forward from previous year	34364
Balance carried forward to next year	25808

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	78
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	23	0	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	40	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	33	10	13	13
The teaching is good.	77	20	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	37	3	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	17	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	17	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	53	30	13	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	60	30	0	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	37	0	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	23	7	7	10

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were positive in their views about the school. The only concern raised at the parents' evening was about homework and the lack of clarity concerning this. A number of parents did express concern about LEA plans to close the school.

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

ENGLISH

57 Overall pupils' achievements in English are good. Pupils start school with few skills in reading and writing and by the time they leave at 16 they have made good progress. In speaking and listening pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However there are limited opportunities in English lessons and the lack of opportunities for mixing with their mainstream peers reduces pupils' abilities to develop their skills further. Pupils benefit from good teaching overall and learning is good as a result. The focus on the literacy hour has enabled teachers to use appropriate strategies in introducing and reinforcing the work taught.

58 For pupils in Class 1 achievement in speaking and listening is good. They benefit from the very good teaching and enjoy lessons. For example on Monday morning they talk about the events of their weekend and explain what has happened. The teacher's skills ensure that pupils are confident to contribute and her knowledge of the pupils enables her to direct questions appropriately. They listen well and do not interrupt when each is talking. By the age of sixteen pupils have developed confidence to talk to visitors and chat happily with each other. Lessons are well structured but pupils do not respond to questions in any detail. Brief answers are accepted and teachers do not always focus on encouraging pupils to expand on their ideas. In personal and social education speaking and listening is better promoted but again pupils are often happy to give brief responses. Where teachers use questioning well pupils talk more freely and expand on their ideas. For example in a Year 9 personal and social education lesson pupils spoke openly about special needs and disability; their comments showed depth and understanding and they listened well to each other's points of view. Opportunities for discussion, are sometimes missed, for example in a lesson for Year 10 pupils when talking about "Mice and Men". The views of pupils about Lennie and George's dream were not developed sufficiently to give them an insight into why this is an important aspect to the story.

59 Pupils in Year 10 and 11 benefit from opportunities to participate in drama lessons. They are developing an understanding of altering the tone and volume of their voice and using this to express emotion. The teacher's knowledge of pupils together with an age appropriate approach and use of humour gives pupils confidence. Their contributions, for example suggesting they highlight their parts on the script, are valued. Through the skills of the teacher pupils lose their self-consciousness and enjoy the work they do. They have an understanding of the importance of punctuation in scripts and concentrate well in order to follow and participate in the reading.

60 Achievements in reading are good. This judgement is well supported by the school's own records which show that the focus on the literacy hour has enabled the majority of children to develop in their reading ages by at least 6 months to a year overall a full year. Very few can read when they start school at the age of five and even those who join the school when older have very limited skills. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' understanding of text and there are specific lessons for reading and literacy. By the age of seven pupils are showing an understanding that words go from left to right. They recognise some sounds and understand that words have meaning. By the age of eleven pupils identify letters in the alphabet by sound and name and are growing in confidence in reading. They benefit from the support of teachers and support staff, enabling literacy sessions to be taught in small groups which are matched to ability. Teachers are secure in teaching through the literacy strategy and pupils gain from this

structure. For example the story of Red Riding Hood was used well to encourage Year 6 pupils to use descriptive words and think about the characters in the story. The familiarity of the text gave lower attaining pupils more confidence to complete the task and enabled the more able ones to develop a clear understanding of adjectives and characterisation.

61 The range of resources, including a large number of big books, helps pupils' learning further. Some read simple text with confidence whilst others can do so with support. By the time they are sixteen pupils are confident in reading simple texts and respond to questions about books they have read. They benefit from a studying a range of books including "An Inspector Calls", "The Hobbit". There are appropriate plans to extend these experiences still further. There is a good number of reading schemes that ensure teachers have a good choice of texts and age appropriate materials to work with. Although the library is well resourced with books for younger pupils it is not used well as a teaching resource. The school recognises that both the room and resources for older pupils need developing.

62 Literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers use a range of resources in lessons and pupils are encouraged to use information from different sources. For example, in humanities workcards provide information which pupils have to read in order to answer questions. However in a small number of lessons there is not a clear understanding of the range of ability in the class and worksheets are not adapted to enable all pupils to read them. This was very evident in a religious education lesson where a worksheet about Islam was too difficult for even the most able pupils to read. Opportunities are missed for pupils to find information or become independent learners. For example in home economics pupils are given the recipe but staff do not encourage them to refer to this and though there were good examples of staff developing pupils' vocabulary with words such as "ingredients" and "recipe" this was not part of the aims of the lesson.

63 Pupils' achievements in writing are good. They are very good for those in the youngest class. There is clear evidence of progress for these pupils. For example one pupil over a period of six months has gone from forming letters with support to writing a sentence unsupported. The majority of pupils at this age can form letters and copy over teachers' writing. By the age of eleven they are gaining in confidence and most write short sentences with only a small amount of help. Pupils are still developing spelling skills but teachers encourage them to use spelling books and to attempt to spell the words phonetically. Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures that the work is matched to ability and support provided, for example in copy writing for those who need it. For older pupils up to the age of sixteen teachers have clear expectations that they will respond in writing to questions about texts they have read. Pupils are encouraged to write letters, for example, when describing their weekend and there is an appropriate focus on poetry which pupils clearly enjoy. Teachers ensure that pupils hear a range of poetry and pupils recognise where poems rhyme. They use appropriate vocabulary commenting on long and short verses when comparing different poems. Within the accredited course followed by Years 10 and 11 there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' skills in writing imaginative stories. However it is recognised that there is a need in developing this skill further for pupils particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9.

64 Much work has been done to develop the subject since the last inspection and the two co-ordinators work closely to improve provision. The subject development plan appropriately recognises where there can be improvements. There is good recording of the work that has been done, however, there is a need to ensure assessment is consistent and there is recognition for pupils' work to be collected and collated so that it

can be moderated to assist in assessment. The targets set in individual education plans in English vary considerably and this makes the monitoring of progress difficult.

MATHEMATICS

65 Pupils' achievements and learning in mathematics are good as a result of good teaching. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy has been well adapted to meet the range of abilities and special needs in the school through a range of methods such as discussion, use of number lines and group activities.

66 Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they are confident to make lessons fun. For example the teaching of mental arithmetic use of a game for younger pupils in activities such as identifying and naming number cards in a Year 2 class showed, by the laughter and excitement, the enthusiasm this creates amongst pupils. By the age of seven lower attaining pupils add number values up to 2 and can match numbers of higher value. They also confidently form patterns by both shape and colour. Higher attaining pupils count up to 5 and recognise numbers up to 10. Their ability to recognise and name shapes is also well developed and they use a computer to match a circle, triangle and square.

67 Teachers' questioning develops pupils' ideas to give them opportunities to explain their methods of calculation. An example of this was seen in a class for Year 3 pupils where they had to both count and select when asked "how many white bricks are there?" Work is also well adapted to ensure that individual pupils are effectively challenged. By the age of 11 all pupils show a developing confidence in their use and understanding of money. This is aided by exercises such as buying vegetables from the "school shop." By the age of 11, lower attaining pupils match groups of objects of the same value and count by rote up to 10. The classroom environment is used imaginatively by staff to enable pupils to identify shapes such as squares and circles. Higher attaining pupils make good use of a number square to undertake addition and subtraction. Cutting and shading exercises show that they understand the value of half of a shape

68 Teachers' knowledge of pupils ensures that questioning is matched to ability and enables pupils to respond appropriately. For example in a Year 8 class pupils were asked how they could make a total of 6 and were able to state that "5 and 1 is the same as 1 and 5." The most effective teaching occurred where the Numeracy Strategy was fully implemented; there was an introduction at the start of lessons so that pupils knew what they were to do and a summary at the end. The quality of the final part of lessons is good and used well, for example with Year 8/9 pupils who were asked to explain their achievements. Through this process they realised how much they had learnt about number bonds. By the age of 14, lower attaining pupils are beginning to understand the process of subtraction and have a good understanding of the use and value of money. Higher attaining pupils are developing effective mental arithmetic skills and can apply them to addition and subtraction problems, such as calculating the change from shopping.

69 Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. By the age of sixteen pupils have attained a range of units the Certificate of Achievement examination in areas such as the application of number to problems and the use of the calculator. A few are following a GCSE course. Pupils' knowledge of addition and subtraction is secure. Use of multiplication tables is well established with low attaining pupils being able to use the 3 and 4 times table and higher attaining pupils going up to 10. The good use of calculators also enables higher attaining pupils to work with both positive and negative numbers. High expectations are reflected in the work set. An example of this took place in a Year 11 class when higher attaining pupils were asked to explain their

method for calculating 2000 pence into pounds. This they were able to do by explaining that “I have moved the decimal point two places to the left”.

70 The organisation of pupils into ability groups and the setting of different activities are an important element in improving pupils’ learning. An example of this was seen in a class for Year 2 pupils where one pupil worked on matching a range of plastic shapes with teacher assistance and another pupil undertook a similar exercise but worked independently on the computer. Whilst pupils’ work in class is monitored well there is not yet a consistent approach to assessment.

71 The lack of a whole school policy for developing skills in numeracy in other subjects means that opportunities are missed. There are though examples of pupils being able to practice their numeracy skills in other school settings, such as taking the money for the school tuck shop.

72 The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to introduce the numeracy strategy and, through classroom monitoring of teaching and the review of teachers’ planning, has given the support necessary for staff to use the strategy confidently. Long term planning has been established and is of good quality because it accurately reflects what pupils can achieve. The co-ordinator does not have control of a specific budget to ensure the inclusion of spending priorities into the long term development planning.

73 There have been good improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. Pupils’ attainments have improved and are now good, teaching is consistently good and the use of computers forms a regular part of the teaching.

SCIENCE

74 Achievements are good for pupils up to the age of eleven and satisfactory for older pupils. Pupils over the age of eleven do not achieve as well as younger pupils because there is no specialist science accommodation and this limits their opportunities to carry out experiments and investigations. The good and often very good quality of teaching and learning ensures that all pupils make good and often very good progress in lessons. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory overall and only good in Years 10 and 11.

75 The youngest pupils develop a good understanding of the subject, for example of how to describe the movement of a range of toys. They do so because teachers’ explanations are clear and interesting and pupils listen well, deciding if a toy moves by pushing or pulling. By the age of eleven pupils achieve well, investigating how forces affect everyday objects, such as a bicycle. Through teachers’ carefully planned steps, the use of labels, and skillfully directed questions, pupils identify the forces they use to ride a bicycle. All staff manage pupils’ behaviour very effectively to ensure that each has the opportunity to contribute. Planning is particularly good when there are clear objectives to guide the assessment of progress. This is evident when there is planning for higher attaining pupils to answer questions that are more challenging and use a wider range of vocabulary. Throughout lessons, teachers and support staff promote important words associated with the topic. They also encourage pupils to use language to express themselves, such as ‘enormous’, when describing a large force. Pupils concentrate well and are keen to demonstrate what they know. Higher attaining pupils can explain that one of the forces causing the bicycle to fall over is gravity. They begin to consider the transfer of force when the teacher demonstrates a bicycle pump. Planning is good to enhance learning in other subjects. Pupils explain the forces that will act when they construct cars in design and technology lessons.

76 Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and inspire pupils to share their enthusiasm for research. For example pupils of secondary age make very good progress placing foods within groups and carry out experiments to analyse different food products for fat, glucose and protein. Teachers' planning is effective to minimise risks when lessons take place in the unsuitable classrooms. This means, for instance, that the teacher needs to heat water before a lesson and ensure that it is at a safe temperature. Pupils aged over fourteen make very good progress in lessons. They receive some of their lessons at a local college since they need to use a laboratory for experiments. Pupils complete work that counts towards their accreditation. They are confident to proceed with their work because instructions for tasks and assessment arrangements are clear. Pupils work diligently, measuring the changes in a beam of light when they use a mirror. They lose a significant amount of time travelling, and this reduces achievement. The system for visiting college is on a termly rota and those pupils who remain in school co-operate well using apparatus to measure lung capacity. They measure accurately and understand the need to control the conditions to ensure that they test each person's capacity fairly. The whole morning is available for science but this period is too long. Pupils complete alternative work for one lesson, reducing progress. Pupils are given too little homework to promote higher achievement in the subject.

77 The subject leader provides very effective co-ordination. This is evident in the close co-operation of all school and college staff in planning. Teachers' planning is monitored and the subject leader is aware of the work that pupils complete. Arrangements next term for formally monitoring teaching and learning are appropriate. Assessment arrangements are not sufficiently established to be used in curriculum planning as pupils move through the school, for instance to provide a collection of assessed work.

78 There are good arrangements for the subject leader to attend suitable training and to share ideas with local schools. Accommodation for pupils over the age of eleven is unsatisfactory. The school intends to solve this problem by arrangements to share a laboratory at a local school, to complement the provision for some pupils at the local college. Resources for learning are satisfactory for younger pupils but the lack of accommodation for older pupils prevents the provision of adequate resources. The school makes very good arrangements for pupils to visit science exhibitions and use the local area to study plants and wildlife to deepen their understanding.

ART

79 Pupils' achievements in art are satisfactory overall. Achievements are best in two-dimensional projects using pencil and paints, collage and textiles. In the designing and making of three-dimensional artifacts achievements are satisfactory because, in the absence of a specialist art room and with limited storage space, projects are mainly confined to small-scale sculpture using clay or plaster. The quality of teaching and learning has improved overall since the last inspection and is now satisfactory with many good elements for all pupils.

80 The quality of teaching is very good for pupils in Class 1 and as a result pupils make very good progress. They are learning to control a pencil and paintbrush and progress from creating designs using paint and block printing techniques requiring little manual dexterity to controlling a pencil and paintbrush. Pupils learn to draw free hand and use this skill in science for work on mini-beasts, when writing and drawing stories, and when drawing from observations, for example vehicles. They learn to discuss their work, for example, when choosing the best materials to create a collage linked to the theme of healthy eating. They make choices about their designs and learn cutting and sticking techniques. Pupils weave ribbons through mesh, developing an awareness of

colour and tone. The most dexterous pupils succeed in threading a needle independently. They learn to collaborate in the construction of wall collages. The very good progress results in part from pupils' own very positive attitudes to art, their enjoyment of the activities, and very effective work by learning support staff. Crucially, however, it is also the very good quality teaching (very skilful and knowledgeable planning, creative use of resources, very well developed management skills and promotion of very good relationships) that promotes learning so effectively.

81 For pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 the good quality teaching skills help pupils to learn how to mould and shape clay to make pots; but the range of opportunities for pupils to develop drawing and painting skills are not as extensive as those in Class 1. Pupils with visual impairment generally concentrate well and persevere to succeed. Weaknesses in the progress of pupils in Year 6 stem from teaching that does not challenge pupils sufficiently across the attainment range and where the standard of discipline and management of pupils are not high enough to promote good quality learning.

82 The quality of teaching and learning in Years 7,8 and 9 is consistently good. Teachers have secure knowledge of techniques and of a variety of painting styles and traditions, helping pupils to appreciate and paint in the style of famous artists. Whole class plenary sessions at the beginning of lessons which make good use of displays and help pupils to recall painting techniques already developed. For example, the teacher creates a sense of perspective in landscape painting, to consolidate their knowledge of famous artists and to evaluate the progress they have made. Whole class reviews at the end of lessons are equally effective in celebrating individual achievements and in promoting self-evaluation skills. Pupils with the greatest learning difficulties make especially good progress because their tasks are well matched to their learning needs, whilst still having access to the same range of skills and knowledge as their peers, for example, when painting in the style of Lowry. The response to art and design is very good, pupils are interested and ask questions and are prepared to experiment with a range of painting techniques. The introduction of an accredited art course, beginning in Year 9 has ensured that pupils' skills are developed as they move into Year 10.

83 The quality of teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is mainly good and pupils now have access to an accredited course, the Entry Level Certificate for art. The planning of work for this age range, however, is not complete and this is an urgent area for development. Pupils are well taught in developing new techniques for drawing and painting self-portraiture and their achievements in this aspect of the curriculum are good. The range of the art and design curriculum for Year 10 and 11 pupils is rather narrow because of the limitations of the non-specialist accommodation which restricts achievements, especially in three-dimensional work. By the end of Year 11 achievements in two and three-dimensional work are satisfactory overall; and achievements in painting and drawing are good. Relationships are very good giving pupils the confidence to experiment with different painting techniques. Whilst the methods deployed to teach art and design in Years 10 and 11 are good, the pace of teaching can be slow and time is not well managed, especially at the start of lessons and in moving from whole class teaching to individual practical work.

84 Art and design makes a satisfactory contribution overall to pupils' cultural development, with good access to the work of famous artists in lessons. The statutory requirement for the art and design National Curriculum programmes of study is in place but the subject policy is in draft only and planning is not fully developed for the new Curriculum 2000. The use of information and communications technology in art and design is unsatisfactory. Insufficient use is made of homework to extend the curriculum. Formal assessment procedures and procedures for monitoring progress over time are

unsatisfactory; but day-to-day assessment of progress in lessons, through observation and discussion, is good. The kiln is a potential safety hazard. Improvements since the last inspection are generally satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85 Achievement overall in design and technology is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least satisfactory and is often good. As a result pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in lessons. This represents satisfactory progress since the last inspection particularly in terms of the range, and planning, of the curriculum offered to pupils.

86 Achievement is very good for pupils up to the age of eleven because teaching is consistently good or very good and there are effective arrangements for design and evaluation. There is a strong link with other subjects, where pupils deepen their knowledge of car design, studying how forces act upon vehicles. Pupils show that they understand the construction by assembling their models using a computer before designing vehicles from construction kits. Through evaluation trials in the school hall, they begin to question why their car did not travel so far and consider improvements. The subject leader works effectively with colleagues to develop new ideas, leading some lessons for younger pupils in the specialist accommodation. This promotes good progress in working with a wider range of materials.

87 Planning for lessons for pupils over the age of eleven does not always provide sufficient emphasis on design to promote good progress in this aspect. Currently pupils receive too much work that provides limited opportunities for design and evaluation and as a result opportunities to produce their own original work are limited. For instance, pupils all make the same type of wooden box or they all make scones. The subject specialist is aware of this and work is planned to enable pupils to become more accustomed to working with materials and achieve high standards of finish before making design choices. For example, one planned task provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and choose from a wide range of materials when they design and make a trophy for a chosen accomplishment.

88 The subject specialist knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject is shared with pupils and this is evident in the popularity of opportunities to continue with projects in the workshop at lunchtimes. When pupils produce effective designs, then teachers ensure that they have the opportunity to share their ideas with others. The recent establishment of accreditation for pupils is at an appropriate level and pupils are beginning to achieve well. Lessons are introduced well, ensuring that pupils know what they have to do. This, together with the good pace maintained, ensures that pupils complete their work in the time available. A significant strength in most lessons is the way that teachers ask questions and lead discussions to encourage pupils to think for themselves. Strategies to manage behaviour are effective and this ensures that pupils follow class and workshop rules. Staff share their enthusiasm for the subject with pupils. Classroom support staff know their roles very well and make very significant contributions to helping pupils to behave, guiding them to take a pride in the quality of the finished products.

89 There are good aspects to the promotion of safe practice in the workshop, such as training for pupils to spot hazards and instruction to handle machinery carefully. However, the room is too small and there are occasions when pupil movement can pose a hazard. The school understands the need to assess risks more consistently when planning activities.

90 The recent appointment of a subject specialist is having a positive affect on achievement. Pupils are now getting a good range of experiences and aspects such as design are beginning to be being promoted appropriately. The subject leader shares his high level of expertise with colleagues, affecting significant improvements to the quality of work in a short time. Planning is very good and is beginning to have a significant impact on raising standards.

HUMANITIES

91 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with good teaching in some lessons. As a result pupils' achievements are satisfactory, with the youngest pupils achieving well. This reflects the good improvement since the last inspection when teaching and progress were considered to be unsatisfactory overall. The teaching of the subject is now well matched to the age of the pupils. Up until the age of seven, they are taught humanities as part of a cross -curricular topic web. The current topic on 'journeys' is well planned and the learning objectives are very appropriate in helping young pupils to find out about their local community. Older pupils are taught geography and history as separate subjects in rotation. In Years 10 and 11, history is dropped from the curriculum and pupils follow a course leading to a Certificate of Achievement in geography.

92 Pupils under seven, make good progress. Planning ensures that pupils have a range of experiences through visiting a number of local landmarks. They record their visits through collage pictures, writing and model making and as a result understand what these landmarks are used for. Good teaching ensures that they develop skills in looking at maps; pupils have worked together to draw a map showing where the landmarks are. Resources are used well to support learning. For example in history, through studying different toys, higher attaining pupils can say how old and new toys are different whilst lower attaining pupils recognise and name the toys. By the age of eleven pupils make satisfactory progress. Support staff are well deployed and offer good support to lower attaining pupils and those with additional special educational needs. This enables all pupils to participate fully and make progress. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with pupils and high expectations for behaviour and learning. Pupils respond well to this approach and most pupils are enthusiastic and try hard. The small number of incidents of disruptive behaviour are dealt with quickly so that teaching time is not lost. Teachers' secure subject knowledge enables pupils to study different countries. They are able to identify some similarities and differences between houses in Huddersfield and a town in India. Lower attainers with help can study a picture of Holmfirth market and can locate the United Kingdom and India on a globe. Higher achieving pupils know what 'ancient' means whilst lower attaining pupils can recall some Ancient Greek sports such as 'chariot racing'.

93 Older pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. At the age of fourteen, higher attaining pupils can draw a map of Brazil which includes the main towns and rivers. They have developed some understanding of the major events in twentieth century history. Lower attaining pupils can point out some differences between pictures of the same place in different centuries and make a simple drawing of a village. Some teachers use questioning well to check for pupils' understanding and to reinforce learning. However, on occasions opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills are lost. Where teaching is less effective, it is because the pace is too slow and the presentation is dull. Consequently, pupils lose interest and this impedes progress. The oldest pupils make satisfactory progress towards completing the Certificate of Achievement in geography. Higher attaining pupils know what a temperate climate is. Pupils can understand a line and bar graph to show temperature and rainfall, although lower attainers require support to complete this task.

94 The subject is well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator who has suitable plans to develop history and geography over the next few years. The co-ordinator has worked with class teachers to develop detailed plans of work and has set time aside to monitor the curriculum and teaching in the subject area. At the present time there are not consistent strategies in place to ensure that pupils' progress is accurately monitored and that assessment is used to guide curriculum planning. However, the co-ordinator has begun to address this issue by linking assessment and planning more closely to National Curriculum and 'P' levels. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching in humanities. This is supplemented by loans from the Local Education Authority's Resource Service. Although pupils have access to a CD ROM, the use of information and communications technology within the subject is unsatisfactory. Opportunities to participate in field studies and to visit museums, historical buildings and natural features promote pupils understanding of the subject and support their social and cultural development. The work undertaken by the older pupils on India helps them to develop an understanding of life in other cultures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

95 Pupils' achievements in ICT are good for secondary aged pupils and good in lessons for primary aged pupils. Both teaching and learning are good. However, the lack of detailed planning for primary aged pupils means that their progress over time is unsatisfactory.

96 Up to the age of eleven teachers' planning incorporates the use of ICT into a range of subjects, such as scrabble games in literacy lessons and shape matching games in numeracy lessons. As a result pupils clearly gain in confidence and skill through both the standards of the challenges set and the support given by staff. An example of this was apparent in a primary class where pupils were using a program to assemble a car in support of their design technology work and where a Year 5 pupil was working independently on a numeracy program. By the age of seven pupils know simple functions, such as the ability to switch on a computer and use the mouse to click on symbols and move them around the screen. By the age of eleven pupils have developed effective keyboard skills and are able to use programs, such as Dazzle, in support of learning in numeracy, literacy and other subject areas. Basic word processing skills are established by higher attaining pupils.

97 The use of discrete lessons and good subject knowledge on the part of the specialist teacher enables secondary pupils to build effectively on their previous experiences and to learn new skills. The teaching of specific skills, such as the use of the back space and delete key in Year 7, ensures that by Year 11 pupils are able to work independently on a range of advanced tasks such as scanning photographs into the computer and altering the image. By the age of 14 pupils are making good progress both in computer usage and in the application of ICT to a range of learning situations. Higher attaining pupils can generate a spread sheet showing the school timetable, can search an established data base for information and design and print a poster using a range of decorative and lettering software. Other pupils can use clip art to design a jigsaw and all pupils can enter and edit text. By the age of 16 pupils have completed units of the Certificate of Achievement in areas such as word processing and keyboard skills. Their success in developing these skills is illustrated by their ability to create a computer image and incorporate it into their text. Year 11 pupils combine good computer skills and imaginative design. For example in their ability to scan an image from a magazine and design clothes for it or to devise an appropriate paint scheme for a racing car.

98 The Certificate of Achievement provides a good framework for secondary aged pupils but there is a need to develop detailed planning for teachers and individual targets for primary aged pupils to ensure that the good teaching and progress made in lessons is consolidated into good long term progress. The use of computers in other subject areas is making progress but there is a need for further development in a number of subject including humanities and French.

99 Much progress has been made since the last inspection. The subject is now included in the timetable and much more use is made of computers across the school and independent working, such as writing work experience diaries on computer, is encouraged. However, although there has been an improvement in staff computer skills there is a need for further training to ensure uniformity in all classes. The establishment of a computer club has also heightened awareness amongst staff and pupils alike.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

100 The quality of teaching and learning in French is good overall. A slightly higher standard of teaching is found in Years 7,8 and 9 than in Years 10 and 11. Although none of the teachers have French qualifications, commitment to staff development and to thorough curricular planning is very good, enabling pupils to achieve well in both key stages and make good progress in French. Pupils gain good results in the Entry Level Certificate for French in Year 11.

101 In Years 7,8 and 9, the quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good. An interesting range of activities is planned, well matched to individual learning needs, giving pupils plenty of opportunity to hear and speak French. Well-established, positive relationships in lessons, and good use of humour, help to promote pupils' self-esteem. All pupils, including those who have the greatest learning difficulties, develop the confidence to try responses in French, because the approach to teaching this subject is so very encouraging. Pupils enjoy their French lessons and respond very positively to teachers' high expectations. For example Year 7 pupils learn to ask questions in French whilst in Year 8 pupils learn to decline the verb `être', they use the phrase `Je voudrais' and extend their French vocabulary. However there is little evidence of extended pieces of writing using French; pupils' written work is mainly on worksheets and confined to one word or short phrases and sentences. By Year 9, pupils have made enough progress to begin the Key Stage 4 French examination syllabus, thus securing as smooth transition into Year 10 and 11 work. In their unit of work on `Ordering Food and Drink' pupils construct increasingly complex questions, for example, `Qu'est-ce que je vous sers?' (`What can I get you?').

102 In Years 10 and 11, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with many good features. There are appropriate expectations and pupils are encouraged to understand simple information written in French about food and drink, self, family and friends, their town, the weather, occupations, and home. They develop in ability so that they read, write and speak simple French phrases and understand spoken French. Pupils' response in French continues to be good and behaviour in lessons is very good. Strengths in teaching lie in the quality of planning, the management of pupils and presentation of interesting activities. However at times the pace of teaching in lessons is slow and because of this pupils' learn at a slower rate. There is less use of spoken French in Years 10 and 11 and this prevents pupils from achieving as well as in Years 7, 8, and 9.

103 Achievements in Years 10 and 11 have improved since the last inspection; and examination results in 2000 were higher than in 1999. In summer 2000, over half the pupils attained the Entry Level Certificate for French, all at the highest standard. The remaining Year 11 pupils achieved certification in some of the course units.

104 Improvements since the last inspection are good. The quality of teaching has improved and under the successful leadership of the subject co-ordinator, planning for the subject is of good quality and already meets the statutory requirements for the new Curriculum 2000. A French theme day is clearly enjoyed by all and makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and provides good opportunity to role-play aspects of French life. There is some, but insufficient, planning to include provision for information and communications technology in French. Insufficient use is made of homework to extend the curriculum.

MUSIC

105 Pupils' achievements in music are good. The achievement of older pupils in some aspects of performance such as singing and playing together in a drumming group is very good. The teaching of music is good because of the musical expertise and enthusiasm of the two teachers. Excellent support is provided by a professional musician who works with the teachers to deliver some lessons and also runs the lunchtime music clubs. All teaching seen was at least good and most teaching was very good or excellent. Pupils make good progress in lessons and in two lessons seen progress was very good or excellent. The good standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and the school has made good progress in developing the subject further.

106 Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and good practice is shown by the fact that all lessons begin with a series of warm up exercises. The methods used are very effective in engaging pupils' interest and concentration and provide a sound basis for good learning. Good lesson planning ensures that maximum use is made of the time available. Although some activities are very challenging for pupils, good planning and very good support enables all pupils to participate fully. For example listening skills are developed very well through activities such as the pupils copying a rhythm with their eyes closed. Young pupils sing songs from memory linked to their topic on journeys. They try hard and use body actions to illustrate the songs. Older pupils can sing songs with two parts, listening to the other performers so that they join in at the right time. They can alter the tone and volume of their singing to achieve an effect and create a happy or sad atmosphere. Lessons are very lively and introduce pupils to a rich range of musical experiences. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and make good progress. Pupils develop their skills in playing a range of tuned and untuned instruments. Younger pupils can bang or shake percussion instruments in time to the beat of a song. Some older pupils have developed very good drumming skills. They are able to play in time together as a group, altering the timbre and the tempo of the sounds they are making. All staff, including support staff, relate very well to pupils in music lessons. They praise pupils' efforts and celebrate their success in developing their musical skills. This positive atmosphere develops pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. All pupils, including those with more challenging behaviour, respond very well in music lessons.

107 The school promotes music through an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils perform regularly at local music festivals and a piece of music that they played at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival was broadcast on national radio. Within the Education Authority, the school is co-ordinating the primary pyramid in the current arts project. These good links with the wider community support pupils' personal and

social development and provide opportunities for them to work with pupils from mainstream schools. The school has built up a good range of musical instruments and there are plans to develop this further by, for instance, setting up a samba band. The many opportunities to listen to and perform a wide range of music, including world music, promote pupils' understanding of their own culture and help to prepare them for living in a multi-cultural society.

108 The development of music is well managed by the headteacher with good support from the deputy headteacher. A good subject development plan has been established to guide improvements and to help monitor and evaluate the provision over the next few years. When present plans are fully established, the imbalance in the curriculum, which places insufficient emphasis on pupils developing skills in notation will be addressed. The music policy, though, is out of date and does not reflect current practice.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

109 Up until the age of eleven, pupils' achievements in personal, social and health education are good and they make good progress. However, by the age of sixteen, although pupils' progress in lessons is generally good or better, their achievements are only satisfactory. This is because the deficiency in taught time has resulted in the life skills programme for older pupils being taken off the timetable. Pupils benefit from teaching and learning which is always at least satisfactory and is frequently good.

110 The good teaching in Class 1 ensures that pupils make good progress in developing appropriate skills in personal, social and health education. Pupils in Class 1 do not have specific lessons in this subject because teaching ensures that there is an emphasis on developing good social skills, becoming independent and learning how to form relationships throughout their school day. Pupils begin to take responsibility, for instance in returning the class register to the school office. During mealtimes they learn good manners and how to use a knife and fork correctly. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of others and as a result they make good progress in learning to take turns and share equipment. They celebrate the success of other pupils and build good relationships with each other and with the staff.

111 The strength of teaching for older pupils is in the well-planned lessons which are delivered effectively because of the good relationships which exist between staff and pupils. As a result pupils develop confidence and self-reliance both through lessons, where they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, and at social times. For example, they behave sensibly when visiting the tuck shop, waiting in the queue and learning how to use money and work out change. In lessons effective planning ensures that pupils' skills develop as they move through the school. They learn what makes a good friend and about people in the community who help them. By the age of fourteen, higher attaining pupils can write a short piece about how they think others see them, and lower attainers can prepare a simple list of compliments about other pupils. Where teaching is most effective pupils have good opportunities to share their ideas and discuss issues that concern them. An example of a very good lesson was when Year 9 pupils watched a video of a play made by a disabled theatre company as a basis for discussing prejudice. The lesson had clear and effective learning objectives relating to developing pupils' confidence. Good support and very effective questioning enabled pupils to participate in a discussion and express their views about disability and reactions to the video. The oldest pupils undertake activities to prepare them for life after school. They learn about health and safety and how to be good citizens. The very good sex and drugs education which is led by an Occupational Therapist is a strength of the subject. There are some very good examples of older pupils being encouraged to take responsibility for others. They help the youngest pupils

at mealtimes and work as volunteers at a local playgroup. However there is insufficient time made available for pupils to prepare themselves adequately for life when they leave school.

112 At the present time, systems to assess pupils' progress in lessons are underdeveloped and inconsistently applied throughout the school. Targets set for personal and social development at Annual Reviews and the related learning objectives in individual education plans are often not clear or are too broad which makes it difficult to measure progress. Examples of this are 'To respond appropriately to adult interventions and requests' and 'to learn language and vocabulary associated with each curriculum area'.

113 There has been satisfactory improvement in this subject area since the last inspection. An appropriate policy and schemes of work are now in place and include very good provision for sex and drugs education. Lesson plans are scrutinised by the subject co-ordinator, and he has also begun to monitor teaching. Although annual targets and individual learning objectives still need refining, every pupil now has targets for personal and social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114 Pupils' achievements in physical education are good. They make good progress as they move through the school. The provision for physical education has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is now much better and is never less than good. Resources are good as is the provision for outdoor adventurous activities.

115 Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and ensure that there is planning for pupils to understand the effect that the warm up activity has on their bodies. Staff share their own enthusiasm and knowledge of physical education with pupils encouraging participation in energetic activity. For example in dance where pupils make very good progress, teachers' planning is detailed to ensure they develop a range of skills. Pupils work well in groups, remembering the sequences they had established in previous lessons and working hard to improve these. By the age of eleven pupils make good progress in swimming at the local pool. They enter the water or perform their swimming strokes with increasing skill, listening well to follow the guidance from swimming instructors. Lower attaining pupils develop good confidence in the water and respond well to instructions to move with swimming aids, developing early swimming strokes. School staff work effectively with the pool staff to supervise and guide pupils, ensuring that all pupils receive good support.

116 Older pupils achieve well and build upon the games skills learnt in previous years. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very good and this is an important factor in pupils' willingness to take part in activities. Pupils are aware of the high standards of conduct required and comply well with staff requirements as staff manage behaviour effectively. Planning is good to ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace, often with a sense of fun, particularly in games as part of the warm up session. There are good changes in activities and methods where, for instance pupils first practice individual skills and then try these in pairs and in small teams. This promotes co-operative skills. Pupils continue to develop individual skills in soccer and basketball. They practice shooting, listening well to advice and modifying their actions to improve their accuracy. The gradual introduction of skills gives pupils confidence and contributes well to them sustaining their physical activity for the whole lesson. By the age of sixteen they play rugby and take part in small team games; they build upon skills of running with the ball to develop tactics to avoid tackles.

117 Planning provides a rich programme of activities and reflects the value the school places on physical education. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in local sporting events, residential courses and competitions. The arrangements for local soccer and rugby league teams to coach pupils make a strong impact upon pupils' interest in sport. This encourages them to develop interest in sport beyond school. Pupils have good additional opportunities to participate during organised games of basketball at lunchtime and additional practice for the five a side soccer team. There are some good examples of assessment for monitoring individual skills. The school recognises the need to provide better assessment to monitor pupils' progress consistently to guide planning, for instance, when pupils have further lessons in a the same topic in later years. The subject leader manages effectively and has had a strong influence in promoting improvements. Although planning is monitored, the system to monitor teaching and learning across the school is not yet in place.

118 The school lacks some facilities, such as a soft landing area for jumping but makes other arrangements to use appropriate facilities at local schools to practice for a long jump competition. The shower and changing rooms are inadequate, but the school plans to rectify this in the near future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119 Achievements in religious education are unsatisfactory. Although in some individual lessons pupils' achievements are satisfactory they do not make progress over time. This is because of unsatisfactory planning for the subject and a lack of subject knowledge by teachers of older pupils.

120 Teaching is most effective for pupils of primary age when they are given opportunities for discussion. This was evident in Class 1 where pupils drew up pen portraits of themselves and develop an understanding of themselves as individuals through such activities. Resources are used well enabling pupils in a Year 5 class to compare artefacts of the Koran and the Jewish scriptures. Pupils become aware of the contributions of others to their lives by looking at the roles of "special people" both in the family and in the wider community. By the age of eleven pupils have a knowledge of the world's major faiths, such as Christianity and Judaism.

121 Pupils up to the age of fourteen continue work on the beliefs of the major faiths with a particular emphasis on themes of celebration. Comparisons are made, for example, with feast days of Christianity and the holy days of Islam. The work for pupils up to the age of sixteen is centered around topics, such as the signs of the Zodiac and areas of personal development, such as pupils' beliefs and doubts. However teaching lacks a clear focus and time is not used well. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute their ideas and enter into discussions.

122 Religious education has made only limited progress since the last inspection. The school has established links with local clergy and provided opportunities for the celebration of the Harvest Festival and participation in the Millennium Service where pupils read their poetry. However, unsatisfactory planning reduces pupils' achievements and results in a lack of clear distinction between religious education and personal and social education topics.

123 The contribution of religious education to the spiritual life of the school is underdeveloped. An example of this is the lack of links between school assemblies and the work undertaken in religious education. The school is aware of these shortcomings and is appointing a new co-ordinator to take the subject forward.