

INSPECTION REPORT

WINDLEHURST SCHOOL

Marple, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 131889

Headteacher: Mrs S. Woodgate

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Sue Aldridge
8810

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 May 2001

Inspection number: 230126

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	11-16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windlehurst School Windlehurst Road Hawk Green Marple Stockport
Postcode:	SK6 7HZ
Telephone number:	0161 427 4788
Fax number:	0161 484 5091
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor M. C. Ellwood
Date of previous inspection:	No previous inspection

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8810	Sue Aldridge	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Mathematics; French; Music; Religious education.	The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9895	Roger Williams	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15606	Christine Humphreys	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Design and technology; Information and communication technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27484	Ann Leontovitsch	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design; Physical education.	
21713	Chris Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History.	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Windlehurst is a relatively new secondary, day school for 42 boys and girls with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). It has 36 on roll at present. The school opened in September 1999, following the closure of an all age school that had previously been in special measures. The headteacher and deputy were appointed, through interview, to the new school, but other staff transferred from the ancestral school without taking part in a selection process.

Windlehurst occupied the building of the ancestral school until December 1999, when it moved to the present premises, a refurbished primary school in Marple. Pupils come from all over the borough of Stockport; most are brought on school transport, but some of the older ones travel independently. The school is not well served by public transport, which means that not all pupils who wish to travel independently are able to do so. The ability of most pupils is similar to that of pupils of the same age in mainstream schools, but a few do have learning difficulties. Most pupils' attainments are below those expected for their age. This is because they have experienced behaviour difficulties in their previous schools; many have been excluded and/or have not attended school regularly. All pupils are white, there are none who speak English as a second language, and at the time of the inspection there was a very small number of girls. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is roughly average. During the first year of its existence, the school admitted 33 pupils. Following the move to Marple, there have been considerable staffing difficulties. Several key staff have left and there has been substantial staff absence through illness.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Windlehurst is close to being an effective school and improving steadily. It is still relatively new and has had a number of difficulties, not of its own making, that have adversely affected the school's development. It is now well supported by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and is looking forward to a period of greater stability. Standards of achievement are satisfactory overall. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, although exclusions are high when compared with similar schools nationally. Attendance is unsatisfactory, but there are already clear signs of improvement, particularly in unauthorised absence. Most of the teaching is good or better. While there is an unacceptably high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching that results in low standards in science, music and food technology, the staff changes that are already underway should reduce this significantly in the coming term. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and staff morale is good. The school educates its pupils at a very low cost when compared with similar schools. It provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils achieve well in art and French. The oldest pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, history and in subject areas accredited through ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network).
- There are very good arrangements for monitoring pupils' behaviour.
- There is a good range of external accreditation, including GCSE and Certificate of Educational Achievement.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. There is strong pastoral support for pupils and good arrangements for their personal, social and health education, including careers education.
- There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance, and good arrangements for monitoring personal development.
- The accommodation includes good specialist rooms and spacious grounds.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- There is a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, that contributes to unsatisfactory standards in food technology, and in music and science at Key Stage 3.
- Attendance is low and exclusions high, compared with similar schools nationally.
- There is no science or mathematics specialist on the staff.
- The role of governors as critical friends is under developed.
- Resources in design and technology, religious education, music and geography are not sufficient.
- Information for parents, particularly pupils' annual progress reports, does not meet requirements.

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

STANDARDS

The table below 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	Key	
speaking and listening	C	B	<i>very good</i>	A
reading	B	B	<i>good</i>	B
writing	C	C	<i>satisfactory</i>	C
mathematics	**	**	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	D
personal, social and health education	***	***	<i>poor</i>	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

* *Individual education plans*

** Insufficient evidence to make a judgement;

*** targets are not set for PSHE

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. All pupils achieve well in art, and older pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, history, French and in the Youth Award Scheme. Better standards at Key Stage 4 are linked to better teaching, including more detailed planning and assessment. Older pupils have better attitudes to learning. Pupils do not achieve well enough in science, food technology and music. Unsatisfactory standards are associated with weaknesses in teaching, and in music they are linked to a lack of suitable learning resources.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils show interest and work well in lessons. On a few occasions, pupils are not willing to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in class and around school. Employers made positive comments about the conduct of pupils on work experience. However, a few pupils disrupt lessons, and swearing is common.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and this helps staff with the management of pupils. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Rates of authorised and unauthorised absence are high compared with similar schools nationally. In the first year of the school's life, older pupils' attendance was particularly poor. However, attendance is now improving, particularly unauthorised absence.

Pupils make good progress in the targets set to help them improve their behaviour and attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14	aged 14-16
Lessons seen overall	Unsatisfactory	Good

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

Teaching is good in English, satisfactory in mathematics and unsatisfactory in science. In personal, social and health education, teaching is good.

Staff have good relationships with pupils, which helps them to manage pupils' behaviour well in most lessons. Teaching assistants support teachers and pupils well. Reading and writing skills are taught well in subjects other than English, and there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. The support provided for pupils with literacy difficulties is good, and steadily improving. However, there is too little use of information and communication technology (ICT) in subjects other than ICT. The school meets the needs of all pupils in a satisfactory manner.

Inspectors saw 40 lessons altogether. Of these, one lesson was excellent, five were very good, 20 were good, and seven were satisfactory. However, six were unsatisfactory and one was poor. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching was at Key Stage 3, in science and food technology. Weak teaching is associated with a lack of subject expertise in science, weak planning and classroom management, and a lack of suitable resources in music. In several unsatisfactory lessons pupils were set tasks that did not interest or challenge them enough.

Pupils develop a good understanding of how well they are progressing against their behaviour and attendance targets, and in the Youth Award Scheme older pupils take increasing responsibility for their own learning. This is not the case in other areas of the curriculum, where objectives are rarely set at the start of lessons, or reviewed at the end. When this does happen, pupils respond well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Pupils are taught all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education. Planning is not fully developed in all subjects, and pupils are not taught all that they should be in design and technology (DT) and information and communication technology (ICT).
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their relationships with others, and their behaviour. There are satisfactory arrangements to develop pupils' spiritual and social awareness, and provision for moral and cultural development is good. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Staff provide good personal support, and are genuinely concerned about pupils' welfare. Arrangements for child protection are good. There are weaknesses in the assessment of science, DT, religious education and physical education.

There are satisfactory opportunities for parents to work in partnership with the school. Provision for careers education is good, and so are the school's arrangements to develop pupils' literacy skills.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher's vision of a school where pupils leave with external accreditation in all subjects is close to becoming a reality. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together, and they have complementary skills and management styles. However, staffing difficulties have limited the extent to which other staff have been able to take on management roles. Many decisions have had to be made by the head and deputy, but staff are now becoming more involved, and communication has improved. There is a sound range of strategies used to support teachers, but staff absence has limited the effectiveness of support. Monitoring of teaching has not always been successful in identifying the most telling weaknesses.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are supportive, and are beginning to raise their awareness of the curriculum by linking with subject co-ordinators. Much of their time has been spent in dealing with exclusions. Their role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work is at an early stage of development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school evaluates its success in improving pupils' behaviour and attendance well. The head and deputy have been trained in school self evaluation, and have started to evaluate teaching and learning by sampling pupils' work.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Good use is made of staffing and financial resources to support developments. However, the school development plan is not precisely costed, and there are insufficient learning resources in design and technology, music, geography and religious education.

Staffing is unsatisfactory at present as the school does not have subject specialists in science or mathematics. Staffing difficulties have affected policy development in some subject areas. The accommodation is good, and learning resources are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value in a satisfactory manner.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only 5 parents returned completed questionnaires, and two parents, representing one pupil, came to the Parents Meeting held before the inspection. There are no clear aspects that please all parents who responded, as views are mixed. However, all parents who responded disagreed with the statement that pupils get the right amount of homework.

Inspectors find that pupils do not get homework in all subjects. There has been a science homework club, and some pupils said they preferred to do homework at school. There is a homework policy; parents and pupils may request homework. Implementation of the policy is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The characteristics of the pupils and students for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge the standards they achieve against age related expectations or averages. In this report, therefore, judgements about standards of achievement take account of information contained in pupils' annual reviews and their progress towards the targets set for them. The report also gives examples of what pupils and students know, understand and can do, and it acknowledges where pupils are achieving at levels similar to national averages.

1. Standards of achievement are satisfactory overall. In general, pupils achieve better at Key Stage 4 (14–16) where teaching is better. Older pupils have more mature attitudes to learning and are motivated well by the promise of externally recognised awards. For certain pupils, achievement is adversely affected by poor attendance, including periods of exclusion. There is no discernible difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
2. Standards in English are good. Pupils achieve well in reading across the school. There are good arrangements to support pupils with literacy difficulties, and teaching of reading is good. Recent developments, including a programme of staff training and substantial investment in computers and software, have been well supported by the Local Education Authority (LEA). By the time they are 14, pupils fluently read fiction texts, using suitable expression when they read aloud. Lower attaining pupils improve their skills in decoding unfamiliar words through exercises that increase in difficulty. The oldest pupils read a range of challenging texts, including Shakespeare plays and poetry by Wordsworth. Lower attaining pupils read sufficiently well to get by socially. For example, they read instructions, social signs and simple texts.
3. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory for younger pupils and good for older ones. Younger pupils are less inclined to listen to others. By the time they are ready to leave school, pupils give thought to what they say, they listen carefully to others, and talk confidently about their hobbies, schoolwork and future aspirations. In writing, standards across the school are satisfactory. By 14, pupils write freely, and in a range of ways including poetry and prose, although some pupils have difficulty in spelling. By 16, pupils are able to write about the structure of language, commenting on imagery and rhyme. They use information technology well to present their work, but do not hand write in a cursive style, preferring to print. They continue to make spelling mistakes.
4. Standards in mathematics are best at Key Stage 4. This is linked to more mature attitudes of older pupils, who have adjusted better to a change of teacher than pupils at Key Stage 3, where standards are satisfactory. Although all Year 9 pupils have already satisfied the requirements for the Certificate of Educational Achievement in mathematics, and they have started on their GCSE (Foundation Tier) course, progress has recently slowed. Higher attaining pupils can calculate a mean, median and mode, simplify fractions and interpret information from graphs and pie charts. A few have reached Level 5 and 6. Lower attainers calculate

percentages, and carry out long multiplication. By 16, pupils are well prepared for their GCSE examinations. For example, higher attainers construct triangles, recognise the different types of these, and solve simple algebraic problems. However, a few find it difficult to recall the meanings of mathematical terms, such as median.

5. Standards in science are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3; no judgement could be made at Key Stage 4 because all the pupils' coursework had been sent away for moderation and could not be seen by inspectors. Low standards are associated with frequent changes in staffing, weaknesses in planning and the present teacher's lack of expertise in the subject. As pupils in Year 9 approached the national tests, and whilst they were taught by a subject specialist, they made satisfactory progress. However, progress has slowed since there has been a change of teacher. Although there is evidence of pupils developing knowledge and understanding across the attainment targets, planning is not of a good enough quality to ensure that they continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, they learn in a haphazard way.

6. Standards of achievement in art and design are good. High standards are associated with good teaching and a broad range of well planned learning experiences. When pupils enter the school standards are well below those expected for pupils of their age, but by the time they reach school leaving age, several achieve well enough to gain Grade C passes in GCSE. Pupils enjoy art, and are proud of their achievements; displays of their work in corridors are unprotected yet remain unmarked or damaged.

7. At Key Stage 3, standards in geography and history are satisfactory. Geography is not taught at Key Stage 4. High standards in history at Key Stage 4 are linked to good teaching that includes challenging content and good assessment practice. Teaching inspires pupils to be confident learners. In religious education, standards are satisfactory. Limited learning resources and weaknesses in record keeping at Key Stage 3 limit the progress that pupils make. Standards in physical education are satisfactory at Key Stage 3; no judgement could be made on standards at Key Stage 4 because there were no lessons timetabled during the inspection period, and no teachers' records to indicate how well pupils are progressing.

8. In French, standards are good at both key stages. High standards are associated with good teaching, particularly good planning and detailed record keeping, which ensures that pupils who miss lessons through absence are enabled to cover the necessary work in subsequent sessions. Most of the pupils in Year 11 have satisfied the requirements for a Certificate of Educational Achievement in French.

9. Standards of achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory. Since the school acquired its good resources, which provide great motivation, pupils have made rapid progress from a low baseline, and many are now confident users of computers. However, there is little use of computers and software to enable pupils to learn in other subjects of the curriculum, and this limits pupils' progress in ICT itself.

10. Standards of achievement in personal, social and health education are satisfactory at Key Stage 3, and good at Key Stage 4, where many aspects are accredited through the Youth Award Scheme. At both key stages there is a well planned programme of experiences, but better standards at Key Stage 4 are associated with greater involvement of pupils in their own learning, and with the motivation that comes from the promise of a nationally recognised award. The present Year 10 pupils have all completed the Bronze Level of the award and Year 11 pupils are set to submit their evidence for the Silver award.

11. In design and technology and music, standards of achievement are unsatisfactory. In music this is associated with a lack of suitable resources, which results in activities that are repetitive and do not motivate or engage pupils for long. Pupils soon become bored with these and their behaviour deteriorates. In design and technology, although pupils make better progress when using materials other than food, the emphasis when they use food is on cooking rather than on designing and making. Teachers who teach different aspects of the subject do not plan together, so pupils learn in a haphazard way, and design skills are not promoted across a wide enough range of materials.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Most pupils have a positive view of the school and are usually interested and involved in their lessons. This does depend on the quality of teaching, however. For example, in a lesson in Year 7 on verbal and non-verbal communication, for their personal, social and health education, all the pupils participated, and enthusiastically discussed their photographs showing different facial expressions. In contrast, during a Year 8 science lesson on the classification of animals, pupils were noisy and inattentive due to unsatisfactory teaching.

13. Behaviour at the school is satisfactory overall. A few parents expressed concern about behaviour before the inspection. The inspection found that most pupils were relatively well behaved whilst at school, except when lessons did not interest and stimulate them. Some of them do use swear words commonly. This was not consistently challenged by all staff, although the practice is discouraged. However, most pupils make good progress with their personal targets for behaviour. Older pupils were seen to remind younger pupils of the appropriate behaviour when returning to classes after break.

14. The behaviour management policy at the school is a positive one, and the emphasis is on rewards and praise for pupils' achievements, which are celebrated at the Monday assembly. Pupils have contributed significantly to school rules. These are negotiated with them annually. The school has high expectations for good behaviour and ensures its policy is carried out consistently and fairly. This has led to an above average level of exclusions over the past year but this has now stabilised. Exclusions are no longer rising and, by the time they enter Key Stage 4, most pupils are aware of the importance of self-discipline. All the proper procedures are followed and the school, prior to and during periods of exclusion, involves parents, governors and appropriate agencies.

15. Pupils' personal development and relationships are satisfactory. Staff and pupils relate well to each other. Sometimes, pupils do not relate quite so well with each other due to their behavioural problems. Nonetheless, pupils were seen playing pool amicably during their lunch break. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are generally mature and responsible in their outlook. They have developed satisfactorily whilst at the school, despite the instability they have experienced through staff changes and relocation. Several spoke in a sensible manner to inspectors about their time at the school, and their aspirations for the future. They appreciate the support they have received whilst at school, and one was particularly pleased to have had the opportunity to attend the homework club, set up to support those entering for GCSE science. Several Year 11 pupils volunteered to attend school, full time, during the inspection

week, to support the school, despite the fact that they could have been on study leave. Older pupils were seen to take responsibility for helping to clear the hall after assembly and to offer assistance to visitors. However, there are few opportunities for younger pupils to take on extra responsibilities. The school is aware of this, and the formation of a school council is a target in the current school development plan.

16. Attendance is below the average for similar schools nationally, and is therefore unsatisfactory. The school works hard to improve pupil attendance and has achieved some success since last year. So far this year, attendance has improved by 2%, and the rate of unauthorised absence has been halved. However, improving the level of authorised absence is proving more difficult, due to the special circumstances of some pupils. It is directly affected by a variety of factors, including pupil exclusions, involvement with the criminal justice system, prolonged illness, and its aim for inclusion. The poor attendance of a small number of pupils adversely affects the school's overall attendance statistics.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. There is an unacceptably high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the school. This is not spread across subjects, but occurs mostly in science and food technology. Altogether inspectors saw 40 lessons. Of these, one was excellent, five were very good, 20 were good and seven were satisfactory. However, there were six unsatisfactory lessons and one poor one. Whilst 65 per cent of lessons are good or better, there are 17.5 per cent that are less than satisfactory. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching was seen at Key Stage 3.

18. Teaching is good overall in the subjects of English, art, French, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). It is satisfactory in mathematics, geography, physical education, and religious education. Teaching is unsatisfactory in science, design and technology and music.

19. The most telling strength of teaching is the good relationships that staff have with pupils. This is an important factor in managing pupils' behaviour. When it is coupled with the setting of interesting and challenging tasks, pupils are usually well motivated and keen to tackle their work. In many respects, teachers have suitably high expectations of work and behaviour. In English, ICT and art, teachers make their expectations clear, and pupils respond well. However, in some other lessons, swearing went unchallenged.

20. Planning varies from subject to subject. In English, ICT, art and French planning is detailed. In design and technology two teachers share the teaching of the subject, yet there is no joint planning, and so pupils learn in a haphazard way. In mathematics there are good schemes of work, but teachers take no account of pupils' numeracy targets from IEPs when planning lessons. This means that pupils have no identified opportunities to work on their targets, and their progress towards these is not systematically assessed and recorded. Pupils do not know what their numeracy targets are, yet they are absolutely clear about their behaviour targets and how well they are progressing towards these.

21. All pupils take responsibility for their learning when they work on challenges in the Key Steps programme and Youth Award Scheme. Both of these provide recognition of pupils' achievements in personal and social development. Pupils plan tasks, carry them out and review their learning. Their folders are very well maintained, with clear evidence of their

achievements, including indications of when they have demonstrated or used a key skill. In a few lessons, such as ICT, teachers share objectives with pupils, and review these at the end of a session. This good practice, which appeals to pupils, is not reflected in other areas of the curriculum.

22. Support staff play an important part in keeping pupils engaged. They support teachers well, particularly where their roles are clear. For example, they may take charge of a pupil who exhibits behaviour difficulties, enabling the teacher to carry on working with other pupils in the class. This ensures that behaviour does not disrupt teaching and learning for others. Some teaching assistants take pupils for individual sessions, to work on literacy targets, and this works well. Their support is often empowering to pupils, giving them confidence and enabling them to tackle work. For example, one lesson was seen where a teaching assistant assisted a pupil in reading an examination paper. With this support the pupil was able to tackle the mathematical content himself. In most lessons seen, teaching assistants gave finely judged support, using their good knowledge of the pupils, their needs and moods. However, in a food technology lesson, too much had been planned for the time available, and staff ended up doing too much for pupils, who would have been quite capable of carrying out the task independently, if there had been more time for this.

23. Most teachers are skilled in engaging pupils in discussions, which supports the development of their communication skills. Particularly good examples were seen in PSHE, religious education and history. Good choice of topics, based on pupils' interests and experiences, was successful in securing their attention. Skilful questioning drew pupils in and helped to ensure that all made a contribution.

24. Questioning is also used well to check pupils' understanding. Teachers use a variety of methods of assessing pupils' achievements, but record keeping is not consistently well developed in all subjects. Accurate and detailed records in English, mathematics, French and ICT help teachers to identify gaps in learning, including where this has been caused by absence. However, in science, physical education, music and religious education at Key Stage 3 there are no records showing what pupils have covered or how well they have done. This is a significant weakness, especially in a school where there have been so many staff changes.

25. Staff reinforce literacy skills well in subjects other than English. For example, in PSHE, pupils were challenged to spell key words, in religious education pupils were asked to write their own notes, using prompts written on the board during the preceding discussion, and in science, geography and history there are opportunities for extended writing. However, in music, pupils were given sheets with lyrics on them and some could not read these.

26. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use and acquire numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, in ICT, pupils were recalling the use of percentages, and in science they were constructing graphs from data. However, a significant weakness of teaching is the limited use of ICT in other subjects. Computers were not seen in use in any lessons other than ICT and individual literacy sessions during the inspection, yet pupils are highly motivated by the use of computers. Otherwise, teachers use a satisfactory range of resources. There is good use made of the local environment in geography and history, but in general, teachers make little use of visits to give pupils first hand experiences.

27. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and training has helped to promote more consistent management of pupils. Teachers have good subject expertise in English, art, history and music but a lack of subject expertise in science has an adverse effect on standards in the subject.

28. Unsatisfactory teaching in music is directly related to a lack of resources in the subject. A peripatetic teacher has to bring resources into school each week, and he teaches three classes one after the other. In effect, pupils in all three classes end up doing a similar activity each week, and they soon tire of this. Their behaviour deteriorates, and little learning takes place.

29. In science and food technology, weaknesses in teaching include low expectations, weak planning and loose classroom management. In science lessons, pupils were often set tasks that did not challenge them enough. They were aware of the fact that they had covered the material before and saw little point in covering it again. In food technology, tasks were not well planned; pupils were given tasks that could not be carried out in the time available. Staff gave help to ensure that pupils experienced success, but pupils could have done the work themselves if they had had more time. Year 9 pupils were given the same task as Year 7 pupils, and this was not challenging enough for the older ones. On occasions, there is no clear start and end to the lesson, pupils are not clear about what they are to do, and their behaviour deteriorates.

30. Provision of homework is satisfactory. The school's policy indicates that both parents and pupils can request homework. Inspectors saw pupils asking for, and being given work to do at home. The school has also run a homework club to support pupils who are to be entered for science GCSE examinations. Pupils appreciated this, and one said how much better it was to do homework at school, rather than at home.

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

31. The curriculum is broad, with all National Curriculum subjects and religious education represented on timetables in suitable proportions. The school provides a satisfactory range of worthwhile opportunities that meet the particular needs of pupils at both Key Stages 3 and 4.

32. The recent changes to the planned curriculum are successful in meeting the needs of all pupils. Extraction from lessons is kept to a minimum but in some cases does impinge on pupils' opportunities for learning. Catch-Up sessions, held in pupil's own time, are very good and successful in providing for pupils who, because of their behaviour, miss learning opportunities in lessons. These sessions can involve the use of information technology to support and inform their learning in different subjects.

33. The head teacher has responsibility for monitoring curriculum planning through the medium term plans. In most subjects, planning is sufficiently well developed to ensure that pupils continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding. Planning is well developed in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, art and French. However, there are weaknesses in science and physical education, where schemes are not yet in existence.

34. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are offered a range of accreditation, including GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) and Certificate of Educational Achievement across all subjects except history, geography and physical education. Accreditation is planned for information communication technology. There is also the opportunity to achieve the Bronze and Silver Awards of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN's) Youth Award Scheme. The provision for careers education and guidance, including work experience, is good. The programme is well planned and taught through personal, social and health education. It involves very good support from the careers service. Work experience is accredited through the Youth Award Scheme. The school and careers service go to considerable lengths to ensure that work placements are sought according to the individual pupil's interests and abilities. Pupils in both key stages are identified for integration to mainstream schools. The school is keen to support them but the constraints of availability of places and getting the right options for pupils, with appropriate support, limits the extent of placements. At the time of the inspection, no pupils were integrated into mainstream schools. However, last year, the school was successful in reintegrating one of its pupils into a mainstream secondary school.

35. Equal access to all areas of the curriculum is provided for all pupils. Where pupils do not complete work in lessons, because they have been unable to remain on task, the school provides Catch Up sessions at lunchtime, when pupils may complete work and discuss their difficulties with a teacher. There is good provision for pupils with literacy difficulties, including one-to-one support, specific literacy programmes and access to suitable ICT software. Many aspects of the school's daily life are organised to foster equality and promote positive images and expectations of all pupils. However, there is no system for reviewing subject documentation, displays and working methods to ensure that they are free of bias or tokenism. Boys and girls in Year 11 work together unselfconsciously.

36. Provision for special education needs is satisfactory. The school's provision meets the needs specified on most pupils' statements of special educational need. However, there are a few pupils whose statements name a different school, and one whose statement specifies a residential special school for pupils with EBD. A few pupils' statements describe additional provision, such as intervention from child and mental health professionals. The school has done what it can to acquire this, by liaising with the health authority, but has not been successful.

37. Provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory. The school is not well served by public transport, and many pupils come from a considerable distance away. Activities have included visits to the theatre and the Liverpool Maritime Museum, and photographic evidence seen in school suggests a good range of sporting, indoor and outdoor activities. The homework club for Year 11 was very successful, and appreciated by the pupils. All pupils go off site to go shopping, to outdoor pursuits, and on visits as part of the reward programme. However, visits are not yet systematically planned as part of the teaching programme. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in school residentials and a significant number take up the offer. In order to develop good relationships with the local community in Marple, the school has established links by taking part in a local carnival and participating in a local history project.

38. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. This is taught through a commercial programme in Years 7, 8 and 9, and the ASDAN programme for Year 10 and 11 pupils. The programmes cover all the required elements, such as sex and

drugs education, and principally seek to underpin all that the school aspires to achieve for the pupils. Links with Social Services, the police, and personnel from a drugs awareness programme support pupils' personal development. Relationships with partner institutions, colleges of further education and link schools are beginning to develop.

39. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school has a strong behaviour policy, which has been developed with pupil involvement. Pupils show a rapidly developing sense of right and wrong as they progress through the school. Teachers take every opportunity to discuss the way pupils' actions affect others, and encourage pupils to reflect on their own actions. An example of this is the way pupils are encouraged to follow the rules of the game in physical education and to accept decisions against them. Lessons of personal, social and health education, and ASDAN challenges make a substantial contribution to the development of the pupils' moral awareness. For example, in a Year 9 lesson pupils were preparing to give a talk about their beliefs; in so doing they were considering what they believed to be wrong and giving reasons for this.

40. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to learn about their own and others' cultures. Good examples of this were seen in art, geography and history. An example would be the way pupils were asked to consider the meaning of Ramadan to Muslims in a religious education lesson and to empathise with the citizens of Queen Elizabeth I, during a history lesson. In art lessons they have studied art from the western European tradition and compared and contrasted it with art from Aboriginal tribes, Africa and with Celtic design. Pupils have taken part in local events, such as the carnival, and older pupils undertake work experience but there are few other opportunities for pupils to interact with the local community or other schools.

41. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. A substantial contribution is made by religious education lessons, where pupils consider complex issues such as mortality. The worth of each pupil is promoted throughout the school day by all staff. Pupils are encouraged to wonder at the complexity of the world and to reflect upon it. In subjects such as art, pupils are encouraged to develop their own personal response to the world by close observation of nature and of manmade artefacts. However, the school does not use the daily assembly as an act of corporate worship and grace is said very quickly, before lunch, with no time for reflection.

42. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' social development. Behaviour targets are carefully planned and all teachers check the progress on these in each lesson. The rewards system is motivating for the pupils. As pupils progress through the school their social skills increase. Year 10 and 11 pupils undertake work experience and are well received because they behave well in the workplace. Teachers use lessons to discuss behaviour with pupils and to encourage them to share and take turns with each other. However, there was some inconsistency of approach, during times when the pupils were changing rooms and having lunch, when pupils were heard to swear loudly at others and to be rude to members of staff without challenge.

43. There are a few opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility. For example, as part of their work in the Youth Award Scheme, older pupils took younger ones on a narrowboat trip, and they also organised the school's Christmas celebration. However, the school's policy of locking all doors, including the toilets, does not encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions. Opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility are not fully exploited. Pupils do not have the opportunity to act as monitors at lunchtime nor

to take care of the common room, by washing their own cups for example. The school's development plan formally sets out plans to develop a school council, to increase pupils' ownership and sense of responsibility.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Overall, the arrangements for the welfare of pupils and for supporting their academic and personal development are satisfactory. Staff know individual pupils and their particular needs well, and respond to them in a calm and supportive manner. Pupils have good relationships with staff, which has a significant impact on their behaviour, development and learning.

45. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' behaviour are a strength of the school. All pupils have behaviour targets; they carry a sheet on which these are written to each class, and staff record their performance against the targets. This information is then entered into a software package that enables it to be represented graphically. Improvements, or deterioration, in behaviour can then be seen at a glance. The information is used well to support pupils and to generate scores that are used as currency in the rewards system. The system is well designed to encourage and reward acceptable standards of behaviour, as well as good and improving attendance.

46. Procedures in the school for promoting acceptable behaviour are good. The five school rules have been set with the agreement of pupils. A system of rewards, given for individual pupil's success with their behaviour targets, encourages good behaviour. Equally, if behaviour is poor then sanctions apply. Sanctions are incremental and include the withdrawal of privileges, exclusion from class, and catching up with work during lunch-time. For serious transgressions, transport is cancelled for the next day and parents are asked to bring the pupil in to school at the usual time. The system monitors targets that are designed to reduce disruptive behaviour, walking out of lessons, bullying and violence. The behaviour strategy has exclusion as a final deterrent. Most staff make their expectations of good behaviour clear, but there is some inconsistency in their response to swearing. Some tolerate this, whilst others do not.

47. Appropriate records are kept of incidents and exclusions. At present, all incidents are logged in a loose-leaf file. It is recommended that such records be kept in a bound book. Records are also kept of restraints. There has not been an undue number of occasions where staff have had to apply restraint since the opening of the school. Given the very challenging behaviour of some pupils, this demonstrates the growing effectiveness of the present behaviour programme and the good relationships between staff and pupils.

48. Staff monitor and support pupils' personal development well. All students have a mentor with whom they can relate. The mentor is either the teacher or teaching assistant (TA) in the class. Issues relating to students' welfare, progress and behaviour are regularly discussed at staff meetings and daily briefings. The school has proposals at present to extend the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator. This initiative is to try to facilitate the reintegration of several students to mainstream schools, with interim support from the special school in the first instance.

49. Pupils' attendance is monitored well. The arrangements for recording attendance are computerised and pupils and their families receive regular information regarding attendance if there is a problem. The school has targets for improved attendance by 2002, and is motivating pupils to attend through providing rewards for improved attendance as well as for good attendance. The educational welfare officer (EWO) co-operates well with the school and undertakes formal and informal visits to families. Necessary action is taken with families that do not encourage their child's attendance. On occasions, the headteacher visits families to discuss these issues herself.

50. The school's procedures for ensuring child protection and welfare are good. They are adopted from the LEA's regulations, and are strongly led by the headteacher who is the designated person in the school for child protection. There is a team of experts from social services, the LEA and the Area Health Authority to support the school. All staff are aware of the procedures and guidelines, which are published in the school handbook. In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher is responsible for ensuring child protection procedures. Pupils are aware of their rights under child protection legislation and discuss child protection issues, such as the nature of inappropriate touching, during PSHE lessons. All matters relating to child protection are securely held in the school to ensure confidentiality.

51. Overall, health and safety arrangements in the school are satisfactory. Staff supervise pupils' arrival and departure closely. The headteacher and building services supervisor "walk the school" on a regular basis to check aspects of health and safety in the building. The results of these checks have meant that laminated glass has recently been installed in the building for safety purposes. New security arrangements were introduced when the building was converted and there is a high level of control in the building to ensure pupils whereabouts and safety. Toilet doors are locked throughout the working day, and classrooms locked when not in use. The governing body has adopted the LEA's policy on health and safety. There is a designated governor with responsibility for this issue and the deputy headteacher represents staff. The headteacher reports regularly on health and safety issues in her report to governors. PE equipment is regularly checked. Arrangements for pupils' safety within the building are satisfactory.

52. The school has a detailed policy and guidelines for off site visits. For residential trips and visits where adventurous activities are involved the governors' approval is sought. This is good practice. Fire drills are held twice each term and properly recorded. However, during PE and games in the small dining hall, chairs and tables for dining are stored, and these create a potential danger to pupils.

53. There are regular medicals, dental checks, and suitable arrangements for inoculations. Ritalin, antibiotics and any other drugs are kept locked away in a secure cupboard in the office. The school has a qualified first aider who administers medicine, tends to minor injuries and keeps suitable records. The system was observed working well when one pupil had an accident and fell down some stairs. The accident was duly entered in the book and parents informed. Confidentiality is well observed, with pupils medical and personal records locked securely away. The school receives good support from the drug-counselling unit to support its work on drugs awareness.

54. Standards of hygiene are good overall. In the kitchen they are very good; regular checks are made on safety, cleanliness and food preparation. Pupils wear protective aprons in food technology but no protective clothing was seen for pupils during science lessons. Eye visors are available in the school if required.

55. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Before entry pupils and parents benefit from having the behaviour system explained thoroughly to them. Pupils' behaviour targets are formulated and set on the initial assessment prior to entry. On arrival, pupils are paired with an existing student to assist their placement in the new school, and baseline assessments take place in literacy. All students have an IEP with three targets that relate to behaviour, literacy and numeracy. Behaviour targets are reviewed at the end of each lesson. This is exemplary practice in the regular monitoring of progress.

56. The review of academic targets is variable across subjects. Targets in literacy skills are reviewed following a baseline assessment on the new literacy programme and a reading test. This ensures the school has sufficient information to plan appropriate work and adaptations to teaching programmes. Assessment also guides planning in art, French, ICT, history at both key stages and geography at Key Stage 3. However, numeracy targets from the IEP are not reflected in the planning of work, there are no records showing whether pupils have achieved their numeracy targets, or reference made to these in annual reviews. In science there are no records beyond pupils' behaviour target sheets. In design and technology there are records of work completed but no assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. In physical education, music and religious education at Key Stage 3, there are no records kept showing what pupils have attempted or achieved. At Key Stage 4, the ASDAN framework allows for recording some achievements in religious education.

57. Pupils' English achievement is recorded in reading tests and the core subjects are assessed in the Standard Assessment Tests at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4, pupils' achievements are reported through the newly established examination courses of the Associated Examining Board (AEB) Basic Tests, CoEA (Certificate of Educational Achievement) and GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). In addition, ASDAN also provides an assessment framework at Key Stage 4 for aspects of pupils' achievement in literacy, numeracy, design and technology, science, careers, religious education and PSHE.

58. Annual reviews are held as recommended in the Code of Practice. At the time of the pupils' Transitional Review, the educational psychologist attends the review on behalf of the LEA.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. Most parents view the school positively and consider its provision for their children to be satisfactory.

60. Links between the school and parents are satisfactory, but parents do not show a lot of interest in becoming a governor. There is no parents' association attached to the school. The fact that the school has been relocated further away from most parents' homes is a likely factor in this. Contact between parents and staff is effectively maintained by use of the telephone. The head teacher and Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) also visit pupils, parents and carers at their homes.

61. Most parents are fully involved in their child's educational plan and its review, and they meet with teachers to discuss the detail and hear about progress and problems. The school follows up parents who do not attend reviews and encourages their involvement. A good proportion of parents, (almost seven out of ten), do attend the reviews and a few have been to open meetings held by the school. There is a home school agreement, which most parents have signed.

62. Although the prospectus is well written and presented, the overall quality of information the school gives to parents is unsatisfactory. Annual reports on pupils' progress contain good information on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, but they do not describe what pupils know, understand and do, or identify the progress made in the past year. As such, they do not meet requirements. The governors' annual report to parents does not provide all the information it should. It omits information on the implementation of the school's special educational needs policy, security, admissions and facilities for those who are disabled, and teachers' professional development.

63. Parents' contribution to their children's learning at home is satisfactory; but some parents expressed concerns over homework. The inspection found that the school's homework policy is implemented in a satisfactory manner. The school ran a homework club for a while, to give additional support to pupils entering science examinations. Pupils appreciated this, and some said they prefer to work there rather than at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's clear vision for a school that provides its oldest pupils with a range of external accreditation in all subjects is close to being realised. Some pupils receive external recognition for their achievements at an early stage. For example, a particularly capable group in Year 9 have satisfied the requirements for Certificate of Educational Achievement in mathematics, and started on their GCSE Foundation course already. The headteacher has set out to build positive relationships with the local community, with some success. Not all members of the community welcomed the arrival of a school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in its midst.

65. Since the school was formed less than two years ago, there have been considerable staffing difficulties. These have adversely affected the school's development and staff morale. In this period, nine staff have been appointed and four have left. There has also been substantial staff absence.

66. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have provided continuity in leadership in the period since the school was formed. Their skills and management styles complement one another well. Inevitably, many decisions have had to be made, and procedures put in place, without consultation with staff. Since autumn 2000, and in recognition of the school's particularly difficult circumstances, the Local Education Authority (LEA) has supported the school with additional advice and financial resources. Implementation of the joint action plan, that supplements the schools' development plan, has been effective in involving staff in decision making and has raised morale. Staff now look forward to greater stability. There is considerable commitment from staff to improving the provision further, and a sound capacity to succeed.

67. Staffing difficulties are satisfactorily explained. When the school moved to its present site, only the head and deputy were appointed through a selection process. Other staff simply transferred from the ancestral school, which had been an all age school. Some of the teaching staff were not well suited to teaching subjects to examination level. Several staff faced lengthy journeys to and from school and they have left to take jobs closer to home. Other staff have left for promoted posts or for family reasons. There have been some unfortunate appointments of staff who appeared to be well matched to the demands of the school, but were not. Staff absence has been a significant feature too. This is closely monitored by the headteacher, and is satisfactorily explained, most being due to illness of a small number of staff. On their return to school after absence, staff have an interview with the headteacher to discuss additional support needs.

68. The provision of teaching staff is unsatisfactory. At present the school has no permanent science or mathematics specialists, although interviews are to take place shortly. The lack of a science specialist has had an adverse impact on standards in the subject, and although the mathematics specialist left a firm foundation on which to build, and two teachers have willingly taken on the teaching of mathematics, younger pupils' progress has slowed. Provision of teaching assistants is good; they often provide continuity for groups of pupils, and have strengthened the staff team.

69. Staffing difficulties have limited the school's capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The head and deputy have completed a course in school self-evaluation and used their skills to begin monitoring by sampling pupils' work. Teachers have been given written feedback on aspects such as the level of challenge in work planned, and areas for improvement have been clearly identified. Where weaknesses in classroom management have been identified, teachers have been allocated smaller groups, and additional teaching assistants have been deployed to their classes. A science specialist has been employed on a temporary contract to support the non-specialist teacher during lessons. Advisers have held discussions with teachers, and given advice on teaching strategies. They have identified specialist teachers in mainstream schools who are prepared to link with teachers at Windlehurst. However, there has been little time for direct observations of teaching and so the most telling weaknesses have not always been identified. Support has been less effective in improving teaching where there are frequent periods of staff absence.

70. Staff have been well supported by the provision of training in behaviour management. This has been offered to all staff, including part-time teachers, and has been largely effective in promoting good relationships between staff and pupils. Most staff manage pupils well.

71. The governors as a group are relatively inexperienced, but more experienced individuals have been supportive, in personnel matters for example. They meet with sufficient frequency, have established a committee structure, and have started to link with key co-ordinators to increase governors' understanding of the curriculum. Much of their additional time has been consumed in dealing with exclusions. However, they have yet to develop a strategy for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Few of them visit the school other than for formal meetings. The most recent governors' annual report to parents omits some of the information it is required by law to contain.

72. The school has clearly stated aims and values, and these are reflected in much of its work. All policies required by law are in place, but others have not yet been developed, particularly where there are no subject co-ordinators. Most policies are faithfully implemented, but some pupils have been admitted to the school who clearly do not meet the

criteria stated in the admissions policy, and whose needs are not met well. As part of its behaviour policy, the school uses exclusions as the ultimate sanction. This practice is not inclusive, and has resulted in rates of exclusion much higher than in similar schools nationally.

73. School development planning is largely linked to establishing a new school, and accurately reflects the school's priorities. Much has been achieved, but inevitably development has been curtailed by staffing difficulties. Despite its changing constitution, the senior management team has kept school development under review, evaluated the success of new procedures, and acted accordingly. As a result, improvements are made. For example, the Catch-Up sessions are seen as suitable for certain pupils and not others, so alternative strategies are being considered.

74. The accommodation is good. Classrooms are spacious, there are good specialist areas that enable teachers to provide a suitable range of learning experiences for secondary pupils, and the grounds are extensive and securely fenced. However, the hall is not well suited to secondary pupils, and there is no suitable room in the school where pupils can go to bring their emotions and behaviour under control. In the previous building, such an area existed, and some pupils have found it difficult to adjust to the lack of a time-out area. The move to the new building has effectively reduced the number of possible strategies staff have at their disposal in managing pupils' behaviour. Although the appendix to the school development plan identifies this as an area for development, there is no such suitable unused space in the existing building.

75. Learning resources are satisfactory. They are good in English, ICT and history, but unsatisfactory in music, geography, design and technology and religious education. In music, the lack of suitable learning resources has a clear impact on standards in the subject, as there are not enough varied resources to engage and motivate pupils in lessons.

76. Financial planning is satisfactory. There are budgetary controls in place; but the school has no cheque account yet, and payments are made through the local education authority systems.

77. The head teacher, together with her senior management team, plans and manages the budget. However, links to the school's development planning are not fully in place, as plans are not fully costed. A financial audit took place the week before the inspection, and has not yet been reported. The finance committee meets once per term, at least. They are properly informed by the head teacher on budgetary matters, and they fulfil their monitoring function adequately.

78. Due to the school's recent inception, there is not a great deal of data for the head teacher to use for comparative purposes, such as the previous year's budgets. The school is also the only one of its type in the local education authority area. Consequently, the head teacher draws comparisons with other similar schools nationally. There has been limited use of the information available in the special schools PANDA. The extent to which the school applies the principles of best value is satisfactory.

79. Specific grants made to the school are used satisfactorily to improve the curriculum. Two subject areas, design technology and science, have received extra funding this year, and the English department received extra funding to develop provision to support pupils with literacy difficulties.

80. There is good day to day management of school finances, and of administration generally. Most procedures are in place; but there is no written description of financial systems. The periodic review of main budget headings has yet to be implemented fully and become an integral part of the school's planning process.

81. Information technology is used well for managing the school. As well as being used for financial management, it is used to monitor attendance and behaviour to good effect.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. The headteacher, governors and staff should

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in science, food technology and music by:
 - * increasing the use of ICT as a learning tool across all subjects;
 - * taking account of pupils' mathematics targets in lesson planning, and assessing and recording progress against these;
 - * sharing lesson objectives with pupils at the start of each lesson, and reviewing these at the lesson end;
 - * ensuring that assessment and recording are of a consistently high standard in all subjects;
 - * using a greater variety of resources in music;
 - * improving classroom management in science and food technology;
 - * ensuring that teachers are guided by policies and schemes of work in all subjects.

(paragraphs 20, 21, 24, 26, 28)
- Improve attendance and reduce exclusions by:
 - * reviewing the school's policy on exclusions;
 - * pursuing plans for the establishment of a time-out room;
 - * setting targets for attendance that reflect national averages for similar schools;
 - * ensuring that the admissions policy is implemented.

(paragraphs 14, 16, 72, 74)
- Ensure that suitably qualified teachers teach science and mathematics;
(paragraph 68)
- Develop the role of governors as critical friends;
(paragraph 71)
- Improve resources in design and technology, religious education, music and geography;
(paragraph 75)
- Improve information for parents, particularly pupils' annual progress reports by:
 - * ensuring that the governors' annual report to parents contains all the required information;
 - * ensuring that pupils' annual progress reports contain information on their attainments and progress.

(paragraphs 62, 71)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.5	12.5	50	17.5	15	2.5	

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	36
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	36
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	36

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	15.4
National comparative data	11.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	10.9
National comparative data	8.8

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

Attainment

Although there are National Test and Examination results these are not published because there were fewer than 10 pupils eligible in each of the key stages.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	36
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	39	4
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.9
Average class size	7.2

Education support staff:

Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	197

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	217964.00
Total expenditure	211007.00
Expenditure per pupil	5862.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	0.00
Balance carried forward to next year	6957.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

36

Number of questionnaires returned

5

As there were fewer than 10 questionnaires returned. The results are not recorded at this time.

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents' views of the school are mixed. On only one matter were parents unanimous, and that was on the subject of homework. Written comments indicated that one parent felt this was now enough, but that it had come too late, because the habit of doing homework had not been established earlier. One wrote of parental concern about the lack of subject specialist teachers in mathematics and science.

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

ENGLISH

83. Pupils' achievements in speaking and listening improve as they move through the school. At Key Stage 3 they are satisfactory, and by Key Stage 4 they are good. Achievements in reading are good. The new computerised literacy programme, supported by the LEA, is a powerful motivator for pupils. Achievements in writing are satisfactory at both key stages but there are improvements by Key Stage 4. The recent progress in this subject means that the school has reached the point where pupils are now able to sit a variety of examinations in English. The school has also challenged pupils in all years above year 7, by entering them for AEB Literacy tests when they feel ready to do so; several have achieved Levels 1, 2 or 3.

84. At Key Stage 3, speaking can be rushed and the emphasis by pupils is on speaking rather than listening. However, the majority of pupils can speak confidently and are acquiring extended vocabulary skills, using words such as *luxurious* and asking for the definition of the acronym DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid. At Key Stage 4, older pupils speak in a more temperate and thoughtful manner. They are able to talk freely about their hobbies, interests, schoolwork, college courses, work placements and future employment. They converse easily and politely about the workings of the school computer system and historical events. The latter are related to contemporary issues such as the function and role of the Royal Family. Older pupils listen attentively and ask if they do not understand the meaning words: *abdicate*, for example. This is good practice and demonstrates their development as interested, independent learners.

85. Pupils' achievements in reading are good. There are good readers at both key stages. Equally, there are pupils at both key stages that have literacy problems. The school has recorded the clear link between these difficulties and behaviour difficulties. Following the introduction of a new computer system for individual literacy tuition, improvements are beginning to be seen at both key stages in spelling and reading. Weaker readers are improving their skills in decoding unfamiliar words through graded phonic exercises, and more able readers read fluently, and with confidence, from a variety of English texts. They are also able to read non-fiction and interpret data, graphs, keycodes and information technology (IT) symbols. At Key Stage 3, several pupils can read aloud fluently. When reading fiction, such as *Matilda*, they read with expression, changing the inflexion of their voices to underline the meaning in the text. Other pupils read in a halting manner, but have sufficient skills to recognise and break down words in order to make the text understandable. At Key Stage 4, able pupils read fiction of a challenging nature including authors such as Shakespeare and Wordsworth. They also read non-fiction material for information. Lower attaining pupils at this key stage are provided with appropriate texts and are able to read for social purposes. The school has introduced a new system of recording reading ages, but only a baseline of information is available at present.

86. Achievements and progress in writing are satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 3, higher attaining pupils write freely, although in some cases spelling is weak. Pupils write prose and poems. Higher attainers write with increased accuracy about texts they have studied, such as *Macbeth*. At Key Stage 4, higher attainers write about the structure of language, commenting on the imagery and rhyme in Wordsworth's poetry, for example. Work is written in clear

sentences, correctly constructed and punctuated. Spelling is satisfactory and IT is used to produce a finished copy. Pupils are able to set out a formal letter correctly, with suitable presentation and a clear style. At both key stages there are pupils who experience difficulty with writing. Some copy text, or receive support from teaching assistants, which promotes progress. Teaching assistants are specifically designated in certain lessons to help with literacy. For these pupils there were continued problems with spelling at Key Stage 4 where they confused double and single consonants in the middle of words. Examples include, *sherrif* for *sheriff*, *robed* for *robbed*, and *robbin* for *robin*. Overall, handwriting is clear but pupils do not develop a cursive script at either key stage. The result is that pupils print their text, which is clear in many cases, but slows down written communication. By 16, more able pupils' punctuation is improving with lower attaining pupils writing in simple sentences with the correct use of capitals.

87. Teaching in English is good across the school. A calm, well-planned and purposeful approach in all lessons ensures that pupils are able to express themselves clearly. Teachers ensure that all pupils are equally involved in lesson activities, taking turns at speaking and listening or reading from texts. Lessons with younger pupils are well prepared and paced to challenge, but not to deter, pupils' powers of concentration. There are high expectations of behaviour and involvement in work. No one pupil is allowed to dominate proceedings. Although there might be a good reader in the group, everyone is given the opportunity and encouragement to read. Good questioning elicits pupils' responses and keeps them focused on the task in hand. Inappropriate language is corrected and praise is used effectively to motivate pupils, particularly the less co-operative. As a result of well-paced activities within lessons, pupils are able to learn for significant periods of time. At Key Stage 4, the same strategies apply. However, at this stage, older pupils' behaviour has improved and the teacher is able to interact with students in a quiet and confident manner, correcting their spelling and discussing the content of their writing. Progress for these pupils is good.

88. Lessons are well planned at both key stages, with regular changes in activities to sustain pupils' interest. For example, following a period of group reading with younger pupils at Key Stage 3, the overhead projector is used briefly to allow them to identify adjectives and their use in a work of fiction. Any work that is unfinished is completed in the pupils' time. Awards are made to pupils not only for good behaviour but also for their success in work. Staff enjoy good relationships with pupils and are able to encourage learning in some of the most disturbed and disruptive pupils. Good use is made of support staff to assist literacy in English lessons and in other lessons across the curriculum. This promotes concentration and good behaviour.

89. The pupils' attitudes to work are mixed, with notable improvements at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3, younger pupils can behave in a very challenging manner, swearing, wandering around the room and in certain instances leaving the room in a temper. The teaching of English is structured in such a way that interruptions, if they occur, are dealt with calmly allowing those pupils on task to complete their work, and giving time for pupils who have missed work, due to behaviour problems, to catch up later. Teachers insist on the targets for behaviour being reviewed at the end of every lesson. This approach encourages pupils to stay on task and motivates them well. At Key Stage 4, a greater maturity and self-control is evident in most pupils' behaviour. They approach their learning with interest, and interact well with the teacher. Thus there is a learning partnership, which supports comprehension and correct spelling in written activities for pupils' examination work.

90. The planning of English is good. Long-term plans are based on the National Curriculum programmes of study, the Literacy strategy for Key Stages 1 and 2 and the new Literacy strategy for Key Stage 3. There are also appropriate medium term plans. The teacher is well advanced in adopting the new Key Stage 3 literacy strategy into English work to ensure that the formalities of language work, grammar, punctuation and spelling underpin the pupils' studies. This is good practice.

91. Targets are set in English in the pupils' individual education plans. These are to be found in the literacy teaching and there are current, accurate and detailed records of all the pupils' competencies in English work. Assessment in literacy reviews fluency in reading, phonic skills, use of intonation, recognition of punctuation, use of contextual cues and information on speaking and listening.

92. Two strands are developing in the English work. The first is the development of literacy through an audio-visual literacy programme, Units of Sound, and through spelling and reading. The second is the provision of more texts for pupils, including challenging worksheets on classic authors and poets such as Jane Austen and William Wordsworth.

93. The school has recently invested significant resources in the new literacy centre and written materials. This is to be increased with the arrival of further computer software, and an associated programme of staff development. Parents were invited to the opening of the centre, which is housed in the school library. The equipment and programmes were explained and demonstrated. The school's library is satisfactory and is stocked with reference and fiction books. It also has facilities for access to the Internet for further information.

94. Reading ages for the majority of pupils exist but comparisons are not yet available to show progress, although the Unit of Sounds scheme gives evidence of improvements in phonic skills and reading. The reading test, presently in use, does not test reading comprehension or speed of reading, only accuracy in decoding words.

95. Reports to parents are too brief and do not reveal the areas of study covered or the pupils' developing skills in the subject. At present, the school has no policy for the teaching of English. This would help to identify the overall strategy for the teaching of this subject. Further work in English and literacy across the curriculum is planned. This will build on the good start that the new English co-ordinator has made in a very short period of time. English and literacy is an emerging strength in the school and is beginning to influence other areas of the curriculum significantly.

MATHEMATICS

96. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory overall, they are satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 3, and good for pupils at Key Stage 4. Until the start of this term, a specialist mathematics teacher taught all classes. It is now taught by two teachers, neither of whom is a specialist, although both are enthusiastic and committed to maintaining the standard of provision. Teaching and pupils' attitudes are better at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. Pupils at Key Stage 3 have found it more difficult to adjust to a change of teacher, and progress has slowed somewhat. Since the previous teacher left, all pupils' records have been

mislaid, and this has not helped teachers to plan suitable work. At Key Stage 4, pupils have continued to make good progress, and those in Year 11 are preparing well for their GCSE (Foundation Tier) examination. For a few pupils at each key stage, sporadic attendance adversely affects progress.

97. Pupils have a broad range of learning experiences across all the required areas. Those in Year 7 have a sound grasp of the four rules of number and place value. Higher attainers know that 8.14 is 8 units, one tenth and four hundredths. All pupils can identify angles that are obtuse or acute, and can measure angles using a protractor. They convert times from a 12 hour clock to the 24 hour clock, express simple fractions in words and plot simple co-ordinates. By the time they reach Year 9, pupils can draw lines of symmetry, on Islamic designs, for example. All can calculate percentages, such as 15% of £60, and carry out long multiplication. Higher attaining pupils can calculate the average, mean, mode and median; they add positive and negative numbers, simplify fractions and interpret information from pie graphs and bar charts. Earlier this year, all pupils in Year 9 met the requirements for the Certificate of Educational Achievement in mathematics, and they have now started their Foundation GCSE course.

98. The present Year 11 pupils are preparing to sit their mathematics examination. Their previous work shows that they have made good progress, and revision lessons are effective in helping them to consolidate the knowledge, skills and understanding. Some have good mental skills. For example, they can quickly say what change should be given from £10 when a bill is £6 and 24 pence. Higher attainers can construct triangles, recognise the different types of these, solve simple algebraic problems and calculate perimeters of shapes, and the radius and circumference of a circle. A few find it difficult to recall the meanings of some statistical terms, such as median and mode.

99. Last year, the school entered certain pupils in all year groups, apart from Year 7, for the AEB Numeracy Test. Several passed at Levels 1, 2 and 3. Pupils are well motivated by externally recognised accreditation.

100. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The subject is well planned to ensure that pupils are offered a broad range of challenging learning experiences at both key stages. However, a significant weakness of teaching is that although pupils have IEP targets for mathematics, no reference is made to these in teachers lesson plans, and targets are not systematically worked on or reviewed. Most work is marked well, with helpful comments, and offers of support, but some weak marking was seen. For example, two ticks were placed on a page with eight calculations, and one was adjacent to an incorrect answer.

101. At Key Stage 3, three lessons were seen, one was good and two were satisfactory. Detailed records are being compiled and these are used well to plan future work. The teacher is gradually building up good relationships with the pupils, and her calm but assertive manner is successful in engaging most pupils in lessons. However, on occasions, a few pupils do not behave well, and they opt out of activities. In one lesson, pupils were given an appealing activity, to cut out nets and construct a cube and a pyramid. They tackled this enthusiastically to begin with, but a few became frustrated because they found the task difficult. Larger nets would have made the task more manageable for some of the pupils. Teaching assistants provide good support, dealing with those pupils who opt out of activities whilst the teacher gets on with the majority who continue to work. The teacher makes her expectations of good behaviour clear, and swearing is consistently challenged.

102. At Key Stage 4, one lesson was seen and teaching and learning were good. Pupils were working from a past paper, and pupils were clear about what they were to do. Good support was provided, one pupil needed help with reading but he was encouraged to do the mathematics himself. Both staff encouraged pupils to think, and work things out for themselves. The teacher gave good guidance about tackling examination papers. For example, one pupil was shown how to turn the examination paper to work out the order of rotational symmetry of a parallelogram. Good relationships between the staff and pupils, and positive pupil attitudes, ensured that pupils were productively engaged in effective revision. Pupils worked as independently as they could, yet asked sensibly for help when they needed this.

103. Accommodation for mathematics is good. There is a dedicated room where a satisfactory range of resources is kept to hand. The school plans to appoint a mathematics specialist, and there is a firm foundation on which to build.

SCIENCE

104. Standards of achievement in science are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. This is because of frequent changes in staffing, the present teacher's lack of subject expertise and weak planning. Together these factors adversely affect the progress that pupils make, and pupils do not achieve enough as a result.

105. When there was a specialist teacher, leading up to the national tests for pupils in Year 9, the standards achieved were satisfactory; over two thirds of the pupils achieved Level 4 or 5. These standards have not been maintained since the teacher left. Pupils in Year 11 have, for a short time, received extra support from a science specialist, in the form of a homework club, and the school's own moderation shows the standards for these pupils are satisfactory. However, at the time of the inspection, all the Year 11 pupils' coursework had been sent for external moderation, and could not be seen by inspectors. Therefore, a judgement on standards at Key Stage 4 could not be made.

106. Because there are no records and pupils' work is not marked or annotated well enough to show evidence of learning, progress is not demonstrated. However, there is evidence of pupils developing scientific knowledge across the attainment targets. For example, younger pupils know the importance of the sense of touch, and that there are different types of receptors, sensitive to pressure, temperature and pain in the human body. Pupils in Year 9 are developing an understanding of forces and circuits. Some higher attaining pupils have produced some extended writing on science topics, and used graphs, pie charts and calculations as part of their investigative work. For Year 11 pupils there is a much better balance of worksheets and pupils' own work. They have made clear progress in learning about elements, compounds and mixtures, and know how to separate mixtures into their constituent parts.

107. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Five lessons were seen altogether, two were satisfactory, two were unsatisfactory, and one was poor. The teacher, who has taken on the subject since a science specialist left the school, lacks expertise in the subject. Introductions and explanations are unclear and, in the weaker lessons, delivered at too fast a pace for pupils to understand. As a result pupils are not clear what to do. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, the content was confused, and the reading aloud was rushed. Although the learning support assistants worked hard to get the pupils to stay in the room and to focus on the tasks, pupils

were not motivated, their behaviour deteriorated, and they learned little. When the content is reduced and the pace is such that pupils have time to think about what they are doing, they can answer questions, and some begin to predict what will happen in an investigation. Behaviour is better, and the learning support assistants can keep the pupils on task and learning. Teaching of older pupils does not inspire them to learn, because they cannot see the point of revision that does not offer them a challenge. They have completed their coursework for GCSE, and this has been sent for external moderation. Literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced in a satisfactory manner in science. There are opportunities for pupils to write in an extended manner, to produce graphs and carry out scientific calculations.

108. Curriculum planning for science is unsatisfactory. There are no schemes of work to show coverage of all the attainment targets, or a system for assessment and recording. Reports do not describe pupils' attainments or progress, but focus on their attitudes to the subject. The subject lacks informed leadership. Accommodation, shared with design and technology, is satisfactory; resources are adequate. At present staffing is unsatisfactory, but there are interviews planned in the near future.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Standards of achievement in art and design are good because there is a broad curriculum in place and good teaching. Pupils make good progress in art during their time at the school. Pupils enter the school with standards of work below national averages but pupils reach national standards by Year 10. They work towards General Certificate of Education (GCSE) awards and the current examination group appear to be working at a level to achieve grade C examination passes. The pupils show enjoyment in the lessons and pride in the colourful displays of their work. This is seen in the fact that the displays of artwork, in the corridor, are not protected by plastic sheets and are very rarely damaged. Art and design is strength of the school.

110. There is a good scheme of work in place that allows pupils to explore a wide range of media. Activities are carefully chosen to appeal to the pupils and to allow them to explore ideas in some depth. There is a good use of Western art culture with pupils exploring the techniques of artists such as *Lichtenstein*, *Warhol*, *Matisse* and *Van Gogh*. There is also good use of cross-cultural art and pupils have explored Aboriginal art forms and compared them to the work of European artists from the Pointillist school. They have also studied African art and Celtic designs. The art room is well appointed and there are sufficient workspaces to allow pupils to spread out and work away from others if they desire, or the teacher feels it is appropriate. The design of the room allows for the separation of wet and electrical activities, and complies with health and safety standards. There is a good range of equipment and consumable stock. Storage cupboards are lacking in shelving, which causes them to be cluttered and untidy. Older pupils are given increasing responsibility and are allowed to enter the stock cupboard to collect equipment and to store work in progress.

111. Teaching of art is good and often very good. Of the four lessons seen, two were good and two very good. Teaching is most effective when pupils are encouraged to observe closely and to relate their personal experiences to the work in hand. There are clear expectations of pupils' behaviour in the art room; these are known by all the pupils and largely respected. Swift and effective interventions prevent any poor behaviour, and pupils are assisted to remain on task and given appropriate help and suggestions. Learning is developed through detailed planning and assessment. There are individual records which detail the progress in the

techniques experienced, and targets are set for future development. Pupils are encouraged to use project evaluation sheets at the end of topics in order to evaluate their own work. The teacher writes encouraging comments on completed work such as 'Very funny. Well drawn'. Pupils' work is valued, it is displayed effectively and older pupils have individual plastic folios in which to store their work safely. During the conversations that can accompany art work, pupils are encouraged to consider their personal response to social questions and to consider the effects their action have on others. This makes a strong contribution to the personal development of all pupils. Learning support assistants give good support to the lower attaining pupils and encourage them to complete tasks, through a mixture of verbal encouragement and practical assistance.

112. By the age of 14, pupils have developed good control of both line drawings and colour. The highest attaining pupils are able to produce work in both tempera colour and watercolour, using each medium to good effect. Pupils have used careful observations of objects to produce life studies, and are developing the use of light and shade to create three-dimensional representation. All pupils are able to do this in line drawings, and the highest attaining pupils are producing studies of apples where the fall of light and shadow is indicated by careful colour mixing of oil pastels. They have also had experience in low relief work, producing landscapes with card relief, and three-dimensional modelling in both card and plasterwork. Examples of this, based on the work of the Spanish architect Gaudi, were under construction. Pupils are able to produce oblique and isometric projections with increasing accuracy and confidence.

113. By the age of 16, pupils are working at GCSE standard. Portrait work, in a variety of mediums, has encouraged pupils to be able to produce recognisable portraits of their classmates and the highest attaining pupils have been able to produce drawings that show faces revealing a variety of emotions. Pupils are encouraged to develop a theme of work through several stages and media. They are able to scale up a design, and to work accurately with drawing and painting materials. Pupils are able to explain the development of their work from the original stimuli to completed artefact, and to show this through the work in their folders. An example of this is the textile work based on commercial logos, which have been rescaled to become abstract patterns, and then worked in hessian and wool. Pupils showed a pride in their examination work and discussed where they planned to display their work in their homes, after the external moderator's visit.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. The standards pupils achieve in design and technology are unsatisfactory overall. The design and make process is not promoted consistently across a suitable range of material areas, and there is no overall scheme of work that systematically plans the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, pupils learn in a haphazard way. Unsatisfactory standards are associated with weaknesses in teaching. However, there is evidence of pupils using materials, other than food, making satisfactory progress at both Key Stages 3 and 4 over the very short time the subject has been on the curriculum. When using food, the emphasis is on cooking, rather than designing and making.

115. Using plastics in Year 8, pupils can measure, mark and cut the component shapes for their 'Round-to-It' boxes quite accurately. Joining the parts together, they shape and finish the edges to get a very smooth result. The tasks challenge the pupils to do well and, because they are absorbed in their work, their behaviour is good. Pupils' file work is neat and the

records of work done demonstrate a good standard of presentation. They are proud of their marks and appreciate the teacher's comments. Pupils in Year 9, on a low-level task, can make a novelty cake from prepared cakes and a range of edible decorations. They contribute ideas of their own too, but too much is decided and done for them.

116. Year 11 pupils have the opportunity for accreditation in either food technology or resistant materials. Their drawing skills are limited, as are their experiences across a range of materials. However, they can produce finished items, such as plant holders, that show a satisfactory standard of skills and a working knowledge of the materials used. They can evaluate and suggest improvements to their work. They are very proud of their achievements.

117. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. They are unsatisfactory when pupils are using food, but good when they are using other materials. When pupils are using food, lessons lack the level of preparation needed if pupils are to come in and make a prompt start. There are limited opportunities for independent learning, and too many staff to do things for the pupils. Tasks are at a low level, repeated with different year groups, and lessons have too much content for the time given. Instructions are confusing and rushed, so pupils do not have the time to think about their work, and learning opportunities are missed. As a result of weaknesses in teaching, behaviour deteriorates, which affects the progress of others in the group.

118. There is good expertise in resistant materials, and the teacher encourages the correct use of technical terms, which are explained well. Pupils understand and use these terms when evaluating their work and keeping written records of work done. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and high standards are set for work and conduct, especially when using tools. As a result, pupils are clear about what they have to achieve in the time. Tasks are well chosen to motivate and challenge the pupils to do well. Relationships are good between pupils and all staff. Pupils appreciate help when they ask for it. However, some pupils can be impatient and become frustrated when processes like filing take a longer time to complete. Teaching assistants are informed and work well with the pupils.

119. Further weaknesses in teaching are common to both food and resistant materials. The teachers plan for their own material areas separately. There are no overall schemes of work for the subject of design and technology that pull the different areas together. This results in pupils learning in a haphazard way. Information technology is not used as a learning tool in design and technology. There is no scheme for assessment and recording and the reports to parents are unsatisfactory because they do not describe pupils' attainments or progress in the subject.

120. The specialist accommodation for food work is good, as is the area for resistant materials, but there are no resources yet for teaching systems and control.

GEOGRAPHY

121. Geography is only taught at Key Stage 3, the decision having been taken in the school to develop history as the humanities subject for study at Key Stage 4.

122. Two geography lessons were seen during the inspection. Additional information was drawn from pupils' work, wall displays and teachers' plans.

123. Pupils' achievement and progress in geography is satisfactory. Younger pupils study settlements and are aware that factories are often sited near rivers for reasons of power and transport. They recognise key codes on maps for rivers, roads and essential buildings such as post offices. High attaining pupils describe accurately, from their maps, the direction in which roads are running. For example, they could say that a road ran due Northwest from the river. They also produce neatly written, well-spelt and well-illustrated work on climate and volcanoes. Older pupils study how jobs are affected by a country's development. Pupils discuss the difference between primary, secondary and tertiary jobs in different countries of the world, commenting on the development, skill base and wealth of those countries.

124. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although in the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. Work based on the National Curriculum had been planned satisfactorily with relevant activities to develop geography skills. The teachers' insight, skill, energy and capacity to involve pupils with amusing but relevant questions, kept pupils' concentration levels high. Behaviour was good overall, any swearing was reprimanded and pupils were able to learn much from the fast pace and delivery of the lesson. Different activities, drawing maps of settlements, writing about jobs in the developing world, asking questions about the location of countries and reading maps, kept both younger and older pupils well focused on their geography studies. Assessment takes place regularly and is satisfactory. Pupils work is marked and commented on.

125. Schemes of work have been prepared for a term as the present co-ordinator is working in a temporary capacity and has only been in post for two months. They are appropriately based on National Curriculum programmes of study. A new co-ordinator has been appointed recently to take over the subject next term. There is no policy for the subject at present.

126. Accommodation is satisfactory but resources in the department are underdeveloped. There are no globes, aerial photographs or ordnance survey maps. The present co-ordinator supplements the available school materials with videos and maps from the local teachers' centre. The local environment is used to good effect to assist map work in geography teaching. However, the potential for using ICT to develop this subject has not been fully realised.

127. Reports to parents were the responsibility of the previous co-ordinator. They are not adequate, as they do not mention pupils' progress in the areas of study followed or the development of pupils' geographical skills.

HISTORY

128. Pupils' achievement in history is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3, pupils are able to act the respective roles of slaves and their owners in an empathy exercise. Younger pupils are examining the different views of Queen Elizabeth I, young and old, from original sources. They are also producing a collage picture of Elizabeth and Mary. At Key Stage 4, older pupils learn about the social and political climate for producing revolutions. They learn about the key players in the Russian Revolution and how the Czar was forced to abdicate. They also investigate the fact that there were two revolutions in 1917.

129. During the inspection, two lessons were observed at Key Stage 3 and one at Key Stage 4. Pupils' work was scrutinised, as well as teachers' plans and displays of pupils' work.

130. Successful lessons at Key Stage 3 were well paced and the focus for the lesson was established quickly'. Despite good planning and preparation, little learning occurred in some lessons due to younger pupils' behaviour. Where lessons were successful, the teacher focused pupils' attention on the topic for study early in the lesson, and involved the pupils successfully by questioning and organisation in the classroom. Where they were unsuccessful only part of the class were learning and progress was unsatisfactory.

131. Pupils enjoy their work in history at Key Stage 4. They are challenged and interested by many aspects of modern history. Some pupils compared the Czar's abdication to the abdication of Edward VIII. Several pupils displayed an interest in the House of Windsor. They borrow videos and texts from the school to pursue their historical interests outside the classroom. During lessons behaviour is excellent. At present, there are no examinations to validate pupils' good progress in this subject but it does form part of the ASDAN work.

132. Across the age range, teaching varies from unsatisfactory to excellent, overall it is good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. They have an enthusiasm for history, and a deep knowledge of the learning characteristics of the students. Pupils are strongly motivated, particularly at Key Stage 4 where the subject stimulates both learning and a confidence in learning. Assessments of work are made regularly for all pupils. Older pupils from Key Stage 4 are involved in self-assessment. Work is well marked and corrected in all classes.

133. The subject has a firm place in the new school's curriculum, contributes well to literacy and ICT skills, and is well led by the headteacher who is the acting co-ordinator. She has worked hard to produce work and resources adapted to the needs of the pupils. A new permanent co-ordinator has recently been appointed to develop the subject further.

134. Planning against the National Curriculum requires some organisation and at present there is no policy concerning history teaching. The school is ambitious for the subject to be established including the formal validation of pupils' achievements at GCSE and COEA levels.

135. The school possesses a plentiful supply of resources, films, texts, CD ROMs and encyclopaedias to support the teaching of the subject. Good use is also made of the local environment to teach the history of the Industrial and Transport Revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

136. Reports to parents are brief at present and do not reveal the areas of study covered, or the pupils' progress in developing historical skills and understanding. Standards in this subject are improving rapidly and it is an emerging strength of the curriculum, well placed both to develop humanities teaching and learning in the school, and to support the future development of citizenship.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

137. Standards in ICT are satisfactory. They are promoted well by a good range of resources, a curriculum modified to meet the broad range of individual needs of pupils and the good quality of teaching. ICT is not identified in the planning of other subjects and so its use to support pupil's learning across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. However, there are opportunities to use ICT in the Catch Up sessions when pupils work in the ICT room on a range of different subject material.

138. In the short time the subject has been resourced and taught, all pupils have acquired confidence in using the computer, mouse and printer. Younger pupils use data from their behaviour target sheets and carefully enter it onto spreadsheets. Once entered they can produce it graphically and use it to show the progress they have made over a given time. Higher attaining pupils soon learn to self correct when they incorrectly enter information, and all pupils respond well to advice and support from the teacher and teaching assistants. They are eager to get it right, and surprised when they see the results and what these show about their progress. The subject is new to many pupils in both key stages. Older pupils are sometimes given similar tasks, so that they learn the basic skills, and their achievements are extended to link with careers and the Internet for information gathering. Pupils with higher levels of capability can retrieve information about the local area, assemble and organise text, produce tables and combine images and text successfully.

139. Year 9 pupils use PowerPoint software to create presentations on 'Myself' consisting of good levels of word processing skills, importing sound and animations and using digitised images. Considering the low starting point, the progress pupils make is good. In Year 10, the most able pupils have a good knowledge of the different forms of communication. All pupils are beginning to use and understand some of the terms associated with electronic communication and one able pupil has built a variety of web sites, one of which is for the school, to go eventually on the Marple web site. Year 11 pupils do not have access to formal accreditation but they use their skills in careers and on other accredited courses such as the Bronze Award of ASDAN's Youth Award Scheme.

140. Teaching and learning are good in both key stages. Two lessons were seen and they were both good. The teacher has good subject expertise and his teaching style encourages pupils' confidence and raises their self-esteem. Technical terms are used and carefully explained. He makes the learning targets very clear to the pupils and keeps them focused by setting challenging work that motivates them well, so they concentrate for relatively long periods of time. He makes it very clear that they are in the ICT suite to do well and sets high standards for behaviour. The pupils persevere with tasks, sometimes self-correcting and, at times, helping others. Practical tasks are carefully selected to meet the individual needs of pupils. New procedures are carefully taught and good use is made of demonstration and support staff. At the end of the lesson the summary provides pupils with clear examples of their achievements and the selective use of praise is much appreciated. Lesson planning is good and a commercial scheme is used selectively at Key Stage 4 to meet individual pupil needs. The teacher knows what each pupil can do and record keeping of work covered is good.

141. The provision of software and hardware to support literacy is good and is to be further enhanced by the purchase of interactive software designed for pupils with literacy difficulties. The use of ICT in Catch Up sessions, when pupils complete work set in other subjects in the ICT suite, is successful because it motivates pupils to complete work they have missed.

142. The curriculum is satisfactory but there is no planned provision for modelling and control. It is developing well to meet the very wide range of pupil's needs and the provision is audited to inform the planning. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils learning working in harmony with the teacher and pupils. However, they do not always have the level of skills required. This training issue is to be addressed through a planned programme for the autumn term with support from the Local Education Authority (LEA). The subject is well led by an informed co-ordinator. He has been very successful in meeting the pupil's needs in the short time the subject has been on the curriculum. The accommodation and resources are good; monitoring by the senior management team has identified areas for improvement. Further development, particularly training, forms part of the school's development planning.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

143. Standards of achievement in French are good at both key stages. For some older pupils, their experience of French has been limited to the lessons they have had at this school over the past two years. A part time specialist, who is experienced in teaching pupils with special educational needs, teaches the subject to each class. Achievement in speaking and listening is best; pupils in Year 11 achieve Level 4 or 5 in speaking and listening, whereas they achieve Level 3 in reading and writing the language.

144. Pupils in Year 7 have little or no experience of French, but they soon acquire the vocabulary to give greetings in French; they understand classroom vocabulary and learn other key words such as the days, dates and numbers. By the time they reach Year 9, pupils have extended their vocabulary; they say, read and write whole sentences about a range of topics. For example, as part of their work on pastimes, a higher attaining pupil wrote the sentence, *Je regarde la télévision*. This summer, pupils in both Years 10 and 11 are submitting portfolios for the Certificate of Educational Achievement in French. Very good quality records maintained by the teacher show that three quarters of pupils have successfully completed six units on topics such as ordering food and drink, and self, family and friends. Poor attendance has prevented a few from doing this, although detailed records assist the teacher in ensuring that pupils who miss odd lessons can catch up later. Most know enough French to get by on a foreign holiday. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 11 can understand a simple telephone message written in French, stating the name of the caller, time and place to meet. They understand the names of at least seven snacks or drinks spoken in French, and several simple expressions used to describe the weather. They write sentences describing their home town and giving personal information, *Il y a une piscine à Stockport*, and *J'ai deux frères et j'ai une soeur*, for example. However, lower attainers do not always write the correct gender for nouns, or insert accents where they should be.

145. There were no lessons taught during the inspection period. However, an examination of detailed records, pupils' work, a discussion with pupils, and one with the teacher, suggests that teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is broad and well planned; it is also relevant to pupils' needs as it focuses on the language, reading and writing skills that pupils would need when visiting France. The teacher makes good use of a wide range of methods, and written evaluation of lessons shows that activities are well selected to appeal to pupils. For example, there is use of videos, games, audio tapes, and artefacts, as well as worksheets to

provide evidence of pupils having achieved the intended outcomes. Records, including attendance, show improvements in pupils' attitudes to the subjects, and regular revision of language is built into the planning. This is particularly helpful for pupils who have erratic attendance. Pupils' work is marked well, using French. Assessment is good; there are regular tests as part of the Certificate of Educational Achievement, and evidence of pupils' achievement is retained on worksheets and audio tapes. The links between assessment and subsequent planning is abundantly clear, and this helps pupils to make progress. Although there has not been an opportunity for pupils to visit France yet, the teacher has plans to provide this. A few pupils said that they do not see the point of learning French, and such a visit might provide additional relevance. At present, pupils do have contact with French students, via e-mail. There is room for further improvement in the use of information technology as a learning tool.

MUSIC

146. Standards of achievement in music are unsatisfactory because the subject is not adequately resourced. Music is taught by a peripatetic music teacher, who teaches all three year groups in Key Stage 3 on one afternoon each week. Music is not taught at Key Stage 4. The school has very few music resources of its own, and although there is a dedicated music room, it has no storage space in which resources might be kept. As the lessons follow one after the other, and the teacher has to bring in all the resources himself, this means that all three year groups do a similar activity each week.

147. Outline planning has been developed, from the QCA music scheme of work, and this plans a satisfactory range of music experiences. For example, there are opportunities to experience music from other cultures, such as Samba and African percussion. The headteacher also has a planned programme of different types of music, which are played as part of assemblies. However, resources are not varied or interesting enough to support the planning of lessons, or to motivate pupils. They soon become bored with activities, and their behaviour deteriorates. Although the teacher has some expertise in teaching pupils with special educational needs, and knows what activities are likely to appeal to pupils of this age, pupils are interested and engaged for only part of a lesson. For some pupils there is too little challenge and, for others too, much is asked. For example, in the two lessons seen, pupils were singing popular songs from sheets of lyrics provided, yet a few were not able to read these. On occasions, poor behaviour went unchallenged. For example, during a group performance, one pupil sang loudly his own lyrics to the tune of Uptown Girl, and these featured the frequent use of a common swear word. The teacher ignored this, although teaching assistants intervened successfully to prevent a repetition.

148. The teacher knows the pupils well, and attempts to ensure that they continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding from week to week. However, he keeps no ongoing records showing what topics have been covered or what pupils have achieved. This is unsatisfactory, as it would not help another teacher to plan suitable work if one needed to take over the teaching of music. Reports to parents mention pupils' enthusiasm and attitudes, but do not state what pupils know, understand and do in music, or describe what progress they have made in the last year. Thus, they do not meet requirements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

149. Standards of achievement in PE are satisfactory at Key Stage 3. No lessons at Key Stage 4 were timetabled during the period of the inspection, and there was no other evidence of achievement, so no judgement on standards of achievement could be made. Pupils have experience of the full range of physical activities required by the National Curriculum at both key stages. Gymnastics, outdoor activities, games and athletic activities are taught. However there is no scheme of work and no records of pupil progress are kept to ensure a systematic development of skills across all areas. The satisfactory standards are due to careful targeted teaching of skills.

150. Some pupils exhibit poor behaviour during games lessons, as they find it difficult to accept any failure, such as a missed catch. This behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Such incidents are used as opportunities to develop the pupils' social awareness and skills. Pupils soon returned to the planned activity. Such incidents slowed the pace of lessons slightly, but by contributing to the social awareness of pupils, the time was not wasted. The good teaching of skills, broken down into simple sections, ensures that the pupils are able to achieve satisfactory standards. Catching a cricket ball was broken down into small, achievable goals, such as the positioning of the thumbs, and the correct method of taking the pace from the ball. Pupils were able to practice these individual skills using progressively harder balls before incorporating them into a game of cricket. Good teaching ensured that the pupils understood both how, and why, to achieve the correct physical positions. By beginning with a soft ball pupil's confidence was built up. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils were able to catch, throw and bowl a hard ball. They were aware of the rules and fielding positions of cricket and beginning to be able to block balls effectively.

151. Four physical education lessons were observed. In two the teaching was good and in two it was satisfactory. During the lessons, opportunities were taken to promote the pupils' social development and pupils rotated positions in the practice games with little disagreement. Although a few pupils found it difficult to manage when caught out, most accepted the rules cheerfully. The teacher ensured that the game was seen to be fair. Teaching assistants joined in the game as extra fielders unless they saw the need to talk individually to a pupil who was exhibiting difficult behaviour. On these occasions, the assistants were successful in encouraging the pupil to return to the lesson and continue with the game.

152. The school has not yet resolved the issue of pupils wearing suitable kit for lessons. Although reminders go home regularly, pupils do not bring their kit with them. Pupils are not required to change for PE, nor do they shower afterwards, although the school has the facilities for this. Pupils were seen to take part in lessons in their normal school clothes and outdoor shoes. This presents potential for accidents, as they run about in hard shoes, and also damages the gym floor. Pupils are not made aware of the health and safety issues in the use of correct kit and the importance of showering after strenuous activity. However, by avoiding this potentially difficult issue the staff ensure that the whole of lesson times is spend on skill-based activities, and lessons do not begin negatively. It also ensures that all pupils participate in physical education activities.

153. The school hall has a triple use as assembly hall, dining room and gym. This limits the timing of physical education lessons, and the preparation of large apparatus for gymnastic lessons. The hall is too small for secondary aged pupils and the ceiling too low for most ball games. Dining tables and stools are stored in the hall, as the cupboard is too small for them, and this presents an additional hazard during physical activities.

154. Resources are satisfactory overall. There is a good range of small games equipment, but it is not stored in a manner that makes access and use easy. Most equipment is jumbled in large cardboard boxes at the back of the storeroom. Some new equipment, such as junior javelins, had not been unpacked. Some of the rackets needed re-stringing or replacing, as did many of the 'unihoc' sticks, which were cracked and splintered. There is a large vaulting horse and a selection of small vaulting boxes available for gymnastics, also a wall-mounted balance beam. However, there were no climbing bars or ropes as the ceiling is too low for these activities. The school has three good table-tennis tables, provided with the building but these were not being used at the time of the visit. There are adequate outdoor play areas, including a good hard play surface for games. The field is small but adequate and is marked for five-a-side football during the winter season. However, it is often waterlogged and cannot be used, and so football has to be played on the hard surface. The field was still very wet during the inspection and had yet to be marked out for athletics, cricket or rounders.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Standards of achievement in religious education are satisfactory; they are limited by a lack of learning resources, and weaknesses in recording at Key Stage 3. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at present, and there have been three co-ordinators since the school opened. The subject is being taught by two teachers, one of whom is temporary. Teachers draw on a published scheme of work, but it is not clear whether this links with the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. No records are kept at Key Stage 3, so there is no indication, other than pupils' own workbooks, of what pupils have actually covered, or how well they have done. This makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that they continue to build on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject. At Key Stage 4, pupils' achievements are better recorded, as they are linked to the Beliefs and Values module of ASDAN's Bronze/Silver Award.

156. Pupils in Year 9 develop an understanding of the difference between nationality, culture and religion.

157. Most can recall the six main world religions, and they are beginning to understand why knowledge of these may help them to tolerate differences between people. By the time they reach Year 11, pupils have a broader knowledge of world religions. For example, they know that Ramadan commemorates the giving of the Koran to Mohammed, and that Muslims fast from dawn until dusk during this period. They are also developing a deeper understanding of the significance of religious festivals, For example, higher attainers appreciate that festivals are part of tradition, that shared values are important, and that celebrations provide a sense of community. They show respect for the Muslim beliefs when they write (*Peace be upon him*), each time they write Mohammed's name.

158. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Two lessons were seen, and in both of these teaching was good. In both lessons staff managed pupils well, and challenged them to think. In one, younger pupils were challenged to take responsibility for their own learning; in

the other, pupils were encouraged to think about how strict adherence to beliefs and rituals may lead to fundamentalism. Learning was good in this lesson. However, in the first lesson, learning of the planned topic was limited by the need to establish clear expectations of classroom behaviour, and to spend time settling the group. Pupils arrived, from a previously unsuccessful lesson, unprepared to learn.

159. In both lessons, good relationships between staff and pupils helped to promote learning. Older pupils were able to discuss quite sensitive issues sensibly, younger ones responded well to the teachers' calming influence, and settled to the task after a while. Literacy and numeracy skills were reinforced well; in one lesson the teacher clarified pupils' understanding of percentages, in the other pupils were encouraged to write their own notes from triggers written on the board. They were also helped to achieve the correct spelling by breaking words into syllables. Teaching of religious education contributes well to pupils' personal development. Pupils clearly develop a greater tolerance of and respect for differences as they get older.

160. Teachers have too few resources to draw on when teaching the subject. There are no artefacts, few videos and few books for pupils to refer to. There are no visits to provide pupils with first hand experience of aspects of the subject. The provision of better learning resources, and the improvement of assessment at Key Stage 3 are areas for further improvement.