

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PITMORE SCHOOL**

Chandler's Ford. Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116603

Acting Headteacher: Mr C Lloyd

Reporting inspector: Mr Roger Baker  
OIN :19946

Dates of inspection: 14 May – 17 May 2001

Inspection number: 233530

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Residential and Day Special School

School category: Emotional and behavioural difficulties

Age range of pupils: 11 –16 years

Gender of pupils: Boys

School address: Winchester Road  
Chandlers Ford  
Hampshire

Postcode: SO53 2DW

Telephone number: 02380 266633

Fax number: 02380 267147

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms. Judith Wade

Date of previous inspection: March 1 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19946	Roger Baker	Registered inspector	Art ICT Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils or students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19557	Liz Halls	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16227	Jim Phillips	Team inspector	Geography Personal and social education Physical education Science	Special educational needs. Further education.
30175	Arlene Thomas-Ramasut	Team inspector	English History Religious education	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
21061	Mike Whitehead	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and communication technology Modern foreign language Vocational	Equal opportunities. How well does the school care for its pupils or students? Residential.

The inspection contractor was:

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

Pitmore School is a residential and day special school for boys aged 11 to 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It caters for 63 pupils, 30 of whom are residential and come from the urban areas of Portsmouth, Southampton, Andover and Basingstoke.

The majority of the pupils at the school have complex behavioural and learning difficulties including specific learning difficulties. Many have been excluded from other schools because of aggressive or violent behaviour and have been involved in delinquent or criminal activities.

The school was scheduled for an inspection last term but following the sudden resignation of the headteacher the LEA requested a deferment of the inspection. Since November 2000 there have been considerable changes in the management of the school. The school is now led by the LEA's Senior Inspector for Special Educational Needs, who is the Acting Headteacher. Considerable recent work has been undertaken in the production of the school's Strategic Plan in order to give the school a new start. A new headteacher has been appointed and starts in September 2001..

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

Pitmore School provides a satisfactory education overall. It is improving from a low starting point and still has significant weaknesses in curriculum provision, staffing and timetable arrangements, which the newly formed governing body are systematically addressing. Since his appointment, the Acting Headteacher has led the school well. The quality of teaching has recently improved significantly and is now good but standards are still unsatisfactory, particularly in English, and insufficient accreditations are gained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 4. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The residential provision is very good;
- Teaching is good;
- Relationships in the school are good;
- The management of the school has improved and ensures very good leadership and direction for the school;
- Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good as is the support and guidance given.

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

- The standards achieved in English and the levels of writing skills across the curriculum;
- The extent and quality of pupils' assessed work which is stored to measure progress to ensure pupils' knowledge of their achievements;
- The expectations for the behaviour of pupils;
- The timetable and staffing to deliver parts of the curriculum and to improve balance;
- The opportunities for all pupils to leave school with accreditation;
- The provision for spiritual, cultural and creative education.

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

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

Since the last inspection in March 1998 the school initially made some progress towards meeting the issues for action listed in the last inspection report and the quality of teaching improved. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but good progress has been made recently. It now has a good capacity to improve further.



## STANDARDS

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

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

Pupils in Year 9 are generally at Levels 2 or 3 in English and mathematics, standards which are in line with other similar schools. By the end of Year 11 standards remain well below national averages and few pupils achieved grades in last year's GCSE examinations. In the last academic year, nearly half of pupils in Year 11 gained a pass in the Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA) in English and in a range of other accreditations.

During Key Stage 3, achievement in speaking and listening is poor but by the end of the key stage most pupils respond readily to questions. In Key Stage 4, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils at all levels of attainment extend their reading skills. Writing skills are underdeveloped and pupils' reluctance to write for a variety of purposes has a significant impact on their achievements in other areas of the curriculum. In mathematics, at Key Stage 3, most pupils have learned many new skills and by the beginning of Year 11, pupils are more confident in their use of number. Pupils of all ages make good progress in mathematics. In science, pupils' achievements are improving at both key stages. In design and technology the good progress made is almost exclusively related to food technology. Pupils' performances in physical education are at or near national expectations in athletics, swimming and team games. Achievements in art and design are satisfactory. In ICT, achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The overall standard of pupils' attitudes to learning in over a third of lessons is unsatisfactory or poor. In these lessons they show little or no interest in learning, respond negatively to challenges and fail to concentrate on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is varied but often less than satisfactory in and around the school with some pupils conducting themselves in a way that demonstrates poor standards of behaviour. However, recently there has been an improvement in the behaviour and those pupils who find it difficult to remain in class and on task are enabled to discuss their difficulty outside the classroom and then return to class. Exclusions are reducing.
Personal development and relationships	In classes, relationships are less well established than they are in the boarding houses, at mealtimes and in social situations. Staff set good role models and overall relationships with staff are generally good.
Attendance	Satisfactory

Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour around the school are unsatisfactory. Behaviour varies and is dependent upon the situation. Pupils behave better when on an out-of-school activity, during the evenings and at meal times but at other times they can seriously disrupt lessons. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good where lessons are well planned and managed. Pupils' personal development improves

slowly and in some circumstances they value the contribution of others and respect their feelings. All pupils are conscious of their personal targets and are willing to discuss them. Many are closely monitored throughout the day. Relationships between staff and pupils are good in the school. The school is successful in improving the attendance of the majority of pupils. Attendance is satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged 11-16</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good or better in two-thirds of lessons and, in all but a minority, is satisfactory in the remainder. Strategies are in place to meet the full range of behavioural needs encountered. Team work between teachers and support staff is improving, as is lesson planning and evaluation. Teachers provide too little homework and too few opportunities for pupils to undertake writing. Too little emphasis is placed on marking and the building up of a file of completed work so that pupils gain a feeling of success. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is good overall as is Information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are still very difficult to manage as many have long established and ingrained poor attitudes to learning. These behaviour patterns affect all subject areas but are especially noticeable when pupils are required to write or record their work. When teaching effectively motivates pupils and they become interested and involved they learn effectively. Slowly but surely teachers are successful in getting pupils to work and concentrate. In some lessons more challenges are required to ensure that pupils' rate of progress improves.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory with shortcomings in balance, some statutory requirements not met; for example design and technology, music and history. Timetable allocations to subjects are inconsistent.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils in the school who require this provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is a lack of attention to spiritual, creative and cultural matters throughout the curriculum. The school promotes social development well and moral development satisfactorily.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. Staff have a strong commitment to their pupils and work hard to help them to succeed.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory and parents are generally happier now with the school and supportive of its work. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The 24-hour curriculum provision is very good. The time allocated to "Tutor time", to the "work related" programmes of study and to the weekly activity sessions affect the delivery of cultural and creative activities. The quality of learning opportunities in English is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3 because of a lack of co-ordination. The curriculum provision for design and technology, history and music does not meet statutory requirements. Religious education is not taught. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils are well cared for and supported by all the staff and these procedures have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place and Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are well structured. There are well considered systems of reports and punishments which are well understood by pupils and effective. Procedures for the monitoring of attendance are satisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Since the change of leadership in November 2000 the school has been well managed and the senior management has effected considerable improvements in teaching. The school strategic plan has been written and its implementation is underway.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors are well led by the chair of governors and are actively involved in improving the provision in the school. They have published a new set of aims and direction for the school. They still have to fully comply with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is now beginning to monitor and evaluate its performance and is now analysing behaviour, exclusions and standards. Teaching and learning are carefully monitored.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good. In all its spending decisions the school is aware of the need to get the best value possible and tries to achieve this.

Staffing and resource levels are adequate but there are weakness in the staffing provision to teach history, music, religious education and parts of the design and technology curriculum. Accommodation is adequate but, for the number of pupils at the time of the inspection, here is unsatisfactory usage of parts of the available buildings. Specialist accommodation for ICT, a library, and music is not available and for the pupils in residence there is a lack of privacy when they wash in the hand-basins. It is a weakness that the school is inaccessible to wheelchair users.

The leadership and management are now good. The senior management team is committed to developing in the school a positive ethos and an effective learning environment.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The improvements in their children's behaviour at home.</li> <li>The quality of the residential provision and their strong links with the residential care staff.</li> <li>Most parents felt that the teaching was good and that the school was now well managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The frequency and length of exclusions.</li> <li>The lack of homework .</li> <li>The amount of bullying and use of unacceptable language.</li> <li>The lack of knowledge about how their children are getting on academically.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with parents that the behaviour of pupils in school is improving and that the residential provision continues to be very good. They found that communications between the school and parents are good. They agree that teaching has improved.

The inspectors agree with the parents that the amount of homework is too little. The inspectors found that bullying was very much less but that staff were still to reduce the use of unacceptable language by the pupils. The inspectors also agree that too few efforts are made to set review meetings when parents can attend.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. All pupils are admitted into the school because they have exhibited extreme behaviour difficulties in their previous educational settings. Many have a history of exclusion from school and some have made court appearances. A significant number of pupils have been diagnosed as having additional specific learning difficulties. Thus, when pupils enter the school the standards attained in English and mathematics are well below the average for their age. Pupils in Year 9 are generally at Levels 2 or 3 in English and mathematics, standards which are in line with other similar schools. However, some more able pupils reached Level 5 in last year's National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics. Preliminary indications from this year's SATs for Key Stage 3 suggest that standards in English and mathematics have risen. By the end of Year 11 standards remain well below national averages and few pupils achieved grades in last year's GCSE examinations. However, in the last academic year, nearly half of pupils in Year 11 gained a pass in the Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA) in English and in a range of other accreditations.
2. The initial improvements in pupils' achievements since the previous report were not sustained but, since the latter half of the Autumn Term 2000, the acting headteacher and the senior staff have effectively focused the attention of the staff on the need for good teaching and improved behaviour control. The recent improvements in the quality of teaching impact positively on the work undertaken in classrooms and, because of this, pupils' achievements are satisfactory at both key stages. However, these improvements have not, as yet, been translated into higher standards. The school is now paying good attention to the analysis of data provided by teacher assessments and national tests to inform teachers about standards and how they can be improved.
3. During Key Stage 3, achievement in English in speaking and listening is poor but by the end of the key stage most pupils, with adult encouragement, respond readily to questions. During Key Stage 4, pupils make satisfactory progress in listening to one another and by the end of the key stage are confident in framing questions, answering in sentences and are aware of the need to adapt their language to different circumstances.
4. Pupils at all levels of attainment extend their reading skills, albeit some to a limited extent. In withdrawal lessons, pupils concentrate well and try hard to achieve the targets set. In Key Stage 3, the majority of pupils who attend these sessions find independent reading difficult because of specific learning difficulties. Of the rest, a small minority read aloud with confidence and show a good understanding of what they have read. Pupils' attitude to reading improves during Key Stage 4 and most make progress.
5. Writing skills are underdeveloped and pupils' reluctance to write for a variety of purposes has a significant impact on pupils' achievements in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in their preparation for examination work. Pupils find it extremely difficult to make sustained efforts to ensure that each piece of written work attempted is completed. Individuals, at both key stages, are able to write well-formed sentences with correct spelling and punctuation but for most progress is very slow. These poor skills

also affect the development of pupils' self-esteem as they rarely produce written work which they are proud to keep.

6. The following of the National Numeracy Strategy ensures that by the end of Key Stage 3 most pupils have learned many new skills; for example, they gain in confidence and offer accurate answers about place value, two and three-dimensional shapes and co-ordinates. By the beginning of Year 11, pupils are more confident in their use of number and can cope with following a GCSE examination course.
7. In science, pupils' achievements are improving at both key stages as they are challenged to think scientifically, explain their findings and the requirements of a fair test. Some more able pupils are beginning to apply the knowledge, for example how much sugar can be dissolved into a cup of hot water. However, some inappropriate behaviour and a reluctance to record the findings of experiments affects the progress they make.
8. In their work in design and technology pupils research and generate ideas, taking account of function and the properties of materials. However, the progress made is almost exclusively related to food technology.
9. Pupils' achievements in ICT are satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Most pupils are able to combine text and graphics, enter and edit text, use a spreadsheet and a database. All confidently use the Internet to obtain information. They save their work into folders and print it off when required.
10. Pupils' performances in physical education are at or near national expectations in athletics, swimming and team games. Most pupils develop self-esteem and self-confidence and increasingly learn to work together as a team when playing football.
11. Achievements in art and design are satisfactory and pupils develop a sound understanding of textures, colour, and learn to use a range of materials. Achievement in geography, taught only to Key Stage 3, is satisfactory with pupils developing a sound understanding of world areas, environments and populations. Pupils make good progress in learning French and most achieve a secure understanding of simple French conversation. For those pupils who study the keyboard good progress is made and the majority of these pupils are able to read a simplified form of musical notation.

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

12. The overall standard of pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour around the school are unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good where lessons are well planned and where there is a well-managed relationship between staff and pupils. In mathematics, science and some ICT lessons, the pupils show a commitment to learning, interest and enjoyment, and this leads to better concentration and improved learning. In over a third of lessons, however, pupils' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory or poor. In these lessons they show little or no interest in learning, respond negatively to challenges and fail to concentrate on their work. In these lessons there is very limited evidence of pupils developing their ability and willingness to work on their own and to take responsibility for their own learning.
13. Personal, social and health education, (PSHE), is at the core of the work of the school and the progress of most pupils is evident by their behaviour in social situations, particularly in the evenings. A recent revision of the school's behaviour management strategies ensures that the messages about good social and learning attitudes are

constantly reinforced. Pupils are beginning to internalise the key messages that the programme of personal and social education has taught them. For example, they know that they must recognise and control their feelings and practice the learned strategies for doing this. In specific sessions pupils learn about the effects of smoking or the use of drugs and use this information when these matters are discussed.

14. Behaviour is varied but often unsatisfactory in and around the school with some pupils conducting themselves in a way that demonstrates poor standards of behaviour; examples of aggressive behaviour and outbursts of abusive language were noted during the inspection. However, recently, there has been an improvement in the behaviour and those pupils who find it difficult to remain in class and on task are enabled to discuss their difficulty outside the classroom and then return to class. Parents reported that in the past there has been a high incidence of bullying in the form of name-calling and intimidatory behaviour, mostly during the school day. Whilst it still occurs to a limited extent, pupils are now confident in accessing the help and support they need from the social worker and records show a marked decline in bullying. A significant number of lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour and certain pupils prevent teachers from teaching or other pupils from learning. There have been forty-three pupils given fixed period exclusions and two permanent exclusions during the previous year. However, records for the current year indicate significantly lower levels.
15. Pupils are polite, friendly and trustworthy with some teachers and support staff. They behave well towards residential care staff and generally well with visitors. There are however, too many cases of disrespectful behaviour in classrooms. Pupils rarely work harmoniously in groups and frequently fail to support each other. There is a general lack of respect for the beliefs and values of others and a failure to listen to different points of view and a high level of intolerance. In marked contrast, pupils enjoy better relationships and are much better behaved during the day-to-day routines, at meal times, in the boarding houses and during out of school activities. In these situations there are fewer outbursts of temper and a much greater tolerance of the wishes and feelings of others.
16. The 24-hour curriculum places high emphasis on personal development. Relationships with staff are generally good, with staff presenting as good role models. Team building and raising personal esteem are integral parts of pupils' development. Progress in this was observed, for example, through pupils' spontaneous applause for their competitor's success during a bowling trip. All pupils are conscious of their personal targets, and many are closely monitoring these throughout the day. Pupils are willing to discuss their development, and appear secure and relaxed. Equality of access to extra-curricular activities and involvement in decorating the school ensures that all pupils share in the life of the school, increasing their self-esteem and sense of ownership.
17. The school is generally successful in improving attendance of the majority of its pupils and most regularly attend. Authorised absence figures are significantly affected by the non-attendance of one or two pupils and the previously high levels of exclusions; also in one instance, by attendance at a secure unit. Most absence is authorised and the staff are working towards providing a first day response if the pupils expected do not arrive. The unpredictability of travelling time means that pupils being transported to the school do not always arrive on time. Both day and residential pupils often arrive late at lessons causing disruption. Staff work hard to encourage pupils to be included in all learning opportunities. However, a minority of pupils frequently absent themselves during lessons.

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

18. Since the last inspection when a significant proportion was unsatisfactory, the quality of teaching has improved considerably. Following this report teaching initially improved but by the end of October 2000 the Local Education Authority expressed grave concerns about the quality of teaching and the learning of pupils in the school. Parents also shared these concerns but were clear that matters had improved in the school since November 2000.
19. The improvements seen in the quality of teaching have been the result of the work of the acting headteacher and the senior staff who have provided significant support and advice for teachers.
20. Pupils are still very difficult to manage as many have long established and ingrained poor attitudes to classroom work. In the past, poor behaviour was rewarded by time spent out of the classroom without consequence. As a result, most lessons continue to be disrupted to an extent and teachers work hard to maintain order and discipline. Slowly but surely teachers are successfully getting pupils to work and to concentrate.
21. Teaching is now good in two-thirds of all lessons and, in all but a minority of lessons, is satisfactory. Teaching fully embodies the positive values that the school strives to develop in its pupils. In dealing with pupils, all of whom have challenging behaviour, the staff are calm, assured and firm. Strategies are in place to meet the full range of behavioural needs encountered amongst the pupils and good use is made of the school's reward systems. Teamwork is improving and throughout the day all teachers and support staff make a good contribution to the success of lessons. However there are some occasions when teachers could make better use of the support they have in the lessons, for example in art and design.
22. Teachers and support assistants interact with the pupils to great effect at every opportunity, encouraging them to talk of what they are doing and offer explanations about this. For example, at breakfast provided for day pupils a teacher talked to a group about the experiment undertaken the day before in a science lesson and encouraged the pupils to comment. By these means, learning and pleasure in learning are greatly encouraged and attitudes to learning improved.
23. Where they lead a subject, teachers generally have a sound knowledge of their subjects but sometimes teachers work in areas where they are less familiar. For example, a teacher of physical education was teaching English and was undertaking the planning in isolation. All teachers plan their lessons carefully and the methods they use are sufficiently varied. Expectations, particularly of behaviour and perseverance, are sound. Staff know the learning characteristics of their pupils very well and are generally able to help them to meet the challenges in lessons successfully. However, in some instances this can mean that teachers lower expectations and set too few challenges in a lesson. This means that for some pupils expectations are not consistently raised and too little attention is given to building on new skills learnt to ensure that progress is as fast as possible. Generally, in successful lessons, there is a good match between the work set and the abilities of the pupils and teachers meet the needs of pupils successfully.
24. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is good overall. However, too little attention is paid to the planned development of writing skills, not only within English lessons but also within all other subjects; because of this pupils find it difficult to settle to the isolated attempts by teachers to get pupils to record their learning. Teachers make very little use of worksheets to start this process.

25. Teachers assess pupils' social, learning and behavioural skills and set targets for these. They assess pupils' attainments in their subjects and use their findings to match work to the pupils' levels. They also effectively record pupils' response to tasks. However, there is a lack of planned assessment tasks and constructive marking of pupils' notebooks. There are no individual portfolios of assessed work. This is unsatisfactory, particularly in subjects where work is already available, for example art and design. Teachers miss opportunities to improve standards by developing pupils' understanding of their achievements through establishing a culture of recording work which is then marked and stored, so that by the end of Key Stage 3 pupils readily accept the discipline of completing course work for accredited examinations.
26. As a result of the good teaching in the school pupils are beginning to gain insights into their own feelings and develop strategies to amend their behaviour. They are becoming more successful learners and are slowly developing a greater belief in their own abilities. There is evidence that pupils consolidate and extend their knowledge, skills and understanding in literacy and numeracy by the end of Key Stage 4.

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

27. Overall, the quality, breadth and relevance of the curriculum is satisfactory in both key stages but there are significant weaknesses in balance and in meeting statutory requirements.
28. The time allocation to parts of the National Curriculum is affected by time given to the twice daily unstructured "Tutor time" sessions, the work related programmes of study and the weekly afternoon "activity" sessions. While the length of the teaching day is adequate the time provided for creative activities, such as art, music and drama, is limited. Opportunities are therefore lost for pupils to develop spiritually and creatively and for the school to ensure that, over the school day, activities are varied and do not constantly require an academic focus. The allocation of time to subject areas was judged to be inconsistent in the previous report and has not improved.
29. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in mathematics and physical education at both key stages and good in geography at Key Stage 3. They are satisfactory in English and science at Key Stage 4, and satisfactory in modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3. The quality of the curriculum for ICT is good across the school but the use of ICT has not yet permeated the breadth of the curriculum. It is possible for a pupil at Key Stage 4 not to follow a science curriculum because it is part of the option scheme. At the time of the inspection most Key Stage 4 pupils attended science lessons in Years 10 and 11.
30. Curriculum provision is unsatisfactory in English at Key Stage 3 where there is no scheme of work to ensure breadth, balance and continuity. In design and technology learning experiences are limited to food technology and there is a lack of a relevant curriculum for Key Stage 4 pupils. The spiritual curriculum is negatively effected by the absence of religious education on the timetable The school is failing to meet statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study in history and music to Key Stage 3 pupils.
31. Support for pupils with identified literacy problems is good. At present, the additional teaching is provided in a withdrawal situation. It is planned to balance this with in-class support to ensure access to all curriculum areas. The school has implemented the



numeracy strategy well.

32. Provision for PSHE is satisfactory. The existing programme of study is relevant to the needs of pupils with complex emotional and behavioural difficulties and the time allocation for this subject is appropriate in both key stages. PSHE is very well supported by the residential care staff who provide many opportunities for boys to develop personal and social skills as well as self-help skills. Sex education is delivered satisfactorily through the science curriculum and the school has a clear commitment to creating a smoke and drug free environment through well planned procedures and the involvement of experienced counsellors.
33. There is a good range of extra-curriculum activities arranged each week for pupils who board which are available to day pupils on request. These activities include a wide range of sporting activities, outward-bound activities, sailing and canoeing and trips to shops. The school timetable provides for an afternoon of activities where boys can choose from a range of opportunities on offer which include bowling, golf, horse riding and swimming. The school also arranges a number of visits to places of interest such as the theatre, art galleries, museums and sites of historical interest and provides a residential experience in Wales. The therapeutic effect of these activities is evident in the quality of staff- pupil relationships and the good behaviour and positive attitudes of the pupils in some social situations.
34. Throughout the school week there are some opportunities for pupils to enjoy experiences that can only be described as "awe-inspiring". For example, a teacher performs an experiment in a science lesson in which he appears to set fire to a twenty-pound note and shows that it does not burn; the pupils are dumbfounded. There are the times when pupils ride horses and the excitement, enjoyment and exhilaration can be described as a spiritual experience. Occasionally, in some English lessons, pupils are so engrossed in the work that they are doing, and the discussions in which they are involved, that they are completely spontaneous in their comments which reflect a passion within their thoughts.
35. Unfortunately opportunities for such experiences are far too few. The school's provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is poor. Many opportunities to engage pupils in thought and reflection are missed. The school does not have a spiritual ethos. Opportunities are not promoted nor are they engineered to allow and encourage pupils to think, reflect upon and enjoy the many spiritual experiences that are available through learning.
36. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. All the adults in the school set very good role models for pupils. There is a clear understanding among pupils of the difference between right and wrong. However, there is some inconsistency amongst staff in the management of the pupils' behaviour. Some staff are rigorous and consistent without being confrontational whilst others are less consistent and less rigorous. The situation creates many problems and for this reason, whilst the behaviour and co-operation of the pupils has improved tremendously over the last few months, there is still some way to go.
37. The school promotes the social development of its pupils well. The relationships between staff and pupils are very good indeed, and form a secure foundation on which social development can build. The school provides many opportunities for its pupils to take part in activities within the community. Many of these activities are of a sporting nature but there are also visits to music concerts museums and art galleries. There is a School Council that comprises representatives from each class. This enables pupils to

take responsibility by representing each other for the well-being of all. Pupils also are successful in taking responsibility in their work in the garden. Here there are two poly-tunnels and two greenhouses along with many beds, which contain small shrubs, cuttings, flowers and bedding plants. This part of the school's curriculum is self-financing, and is an area where pupils have to take responsibility, and they enjoy doing so. There is a weakness in the school's contribution to the community. However, the school does make some contribution, for example, pupils and staff alike took part in the national 'red nose' day appeal and raised sixty-seven pounds for the charity.

38. There is some evidence that pupils attend the local art galleries and music concerts, which gives them an understanding of the modern music culture and some historic art. However, the school's contribution to pupils' cultural development is poor. There is not enough evidence around the school about the work of famous artists or musicians. There is little evidence of learning or discussion of the work of the great writers, politicians, religious leaders and poets. There is insufficient acknowledgement around the school of the multicultural society in which we live.
39. Some good links have been established with colleges of further education throughout the catchment area. Some pupils in Key Stage 4 have opportunities to attend link courses in preparation for Post-16 placements on vocational courses in computing, construction or motor vehicle maintenance. There are however insufficient introductory opportunities for most pupils in Years 10 and 11 and this reduces their chances to take advantage of the second chance at education that the colleges can provide. Future opportunities for pupils to attend regular supported sessions at a local college to develop key skills for entry to vocational courses when they leave school are soon to be available. This would provide a suitable flexible introduction which would meet the needs of more pupils.
40. The school and local special schools work closely together to successfully place pupils in work experience. Teachers attend the local cluster group of schools curriculum meetings and there are effective links with other organisations that provide support for children and young adults; for example, The Careers Service and Social Services. The school also works closely with departments of the Local Education Authority such as the education psychology service. The links with the secondary school on the same campus as Pitmore are very few and considerable opportunities are therefore lost for part-time placements, the sharing of curriculum ideas and events, particularly in art, drama, music and physical education.
41. Through these links and those developed with the local community the school offers a very well established and wide variety of work experience for the senior pupils. For those pupils who struggle with relationships outside of school, there is the opportunity for some work experience within the school itself. Some pupils work in the kitchen, or act as additional support staff for the younger pupils, especially during physical education sessions or games lessons. Other more adventurous pupils work as assistants at a local chain store, web designing at a computer company, maintenance workers in a game shop or working as a maintenance person at the local golf course. Other pupils work at a neighbouring school as welfare assistants or learning support assistants. Reports show that these placements have been successful and some have proved to be very valuable.

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

42. The provision for the welfare, health and safety and child protection of pupils is good.

Staff have a strong commitment to their pupils and work hard to help them succeed personally. They provide pupils with coping strategies and successfully raise pupils' self-esteem through the points system, which acknowledges their individual achievements. Wherever possible pupils are helped to return to mainstream schools. Staff form very good relationships with pupils and know them well. They provide effective support for individuals, helping them to manage routines and achieve personal targets. The good support is established right from the start and regular reviews are held which include the range of professionals involved with the child and the parents or carers. This support extends to very good residential provision where necessary help is available twenty-four hours a day for all pupils, including older pupils preparing for work or further education.

43. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good. The designated teacher and support staff are trained and ensure that all staff are regularly provided with inset training and written guidance to assist them in their responsibilities. The policy provides clear guidelines and there are strong links with other agencies and in-house advice from the social worker based in the school. There is an appropriate health and safety policy and regular checks are carried out. Fire safety procedures are in place and equipment properly maintained. First aid and medication arrangements are very good and designated staff have appropriate training.
44. The good quality support and guidance has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and, to a certain extent, success in the classroom both at Pitmore and for life beyond school.
45. Overall there are satisfactory procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress. There are effective systems for monitoring academic and personal development. A good system for maintaining an on-going record of pupils' achievements in all curriculum subjects has been established. Half-termly, "end of topic" or "programme of study" assessments are made and pupils' level of attainment in the National Curriculum is recorded. This is beginning to provide clear data on pupils' progress over time and is enabling senior staff to monitor learning outcomes across the curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. However, teachers do not keep portfolios of pupils' work as a record of their achievements and marking is not sufficiently annotated to provide pupils with guidance on how they could improve. This is a significant shortcoming and is a consequence of pupils' poor attitude to learning, particularly to recording the outcomes of their study. Many have poor writing skills and often use disruptive strategies to avoid it. Insufficient attention is given to changing these poor attitudes and creating an ethos in which pupils' good work is expected and valued throughout the school.
46. IEPs contain both short and long-term targets which are regularly reviewed. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and parents are kept informed through weekly reports and are encouraged to support personal targets at home. The IEPs are 'driven' within tutor groups and are effective in regularly keeping pupils aware of expectations and their targets for improvement. They include good quality and appropriate baseline information, learning targets for literacy and numeracy, which are set by the teachers for English and mathematics, and updated targets for behaviour. For pupils identified as having learning difficulties, particularly with reading, the Special Needs Support Teacher sets clear and progressive targets for the development of reading skills. These are shared with class teachers and effectively communicated to subject teachers. All IEPs are monitored termly by the deputy headteacher who provides good feedback on the suitability and quality of targets. Overall the quality of IEPs is good and the individual learning targets, in formative profiles, are satisfactory,

but no better.

47. Approximately half of the pupils have statements of special educational needs and these are suitably reviewed annually with the involvement of parents and relevant professionals. An educational psychologist has an appropriate allocation of time to work with the pupils and staff. This provides good support for staff regarding the effective management of pupils' behaviour and for pupils through assessing, monitoring and counselling their personal development both in school and, in some cases, at home.
48. A well considered system of rewards for achievement of behaviour, which focus on one or two agreed targets for each week, is consistently applied by staff within the school and in the residential setting. Rewards are progressive and, by the accumulation of points, pupils can earn valued rewards such as a CD, cinema tickets or sports equipment by the achievement of the required stages of 5, 15 or 30 targets. The whole-school application of the reward system is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Good use is also made of the allocation of 'points' to motivate class groups to earn a valued activity such as go-carting.
49. A strong emphasis is given to promoting appropriate behaviour and to helping pupils to effectively overcome their difficulties so that they can access the curriculum and succeed personally and academically. There are clear and agreed rules, which are consistently reinforced. Staff work effectively with pupils establishing mutual respect and regard and helping to change their attitude and outlook on life. What is achieved in promoting good behaviour with these pupils contributes well to progress they are making in developing their self-esteem and confidence. Where bullying, harassment, sexist or racist incidents occur, the school has appropriate procedures to deal with them. Pupils benefit greatly from having access to the social worker who works closely with both perpetrators and victims and whose work has resulted in a lower rate of incidents. However, not all staff are vigilant in addressing comments that some pupils make and there are inconsistencies in the way staff apply the procedures to ensure good behaviour.
50. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Where there are concerns the school works closely with the educational welfare service. Individual pupils records are examined regularly and staff are prompt in contacting parents or carers. These systems have been successful in reducing the unauthorised absence and increasing staff awareness of the categories of authorised absence. There is some analysis of attendance but the current system of marking and maintaining registers of attendance is unclear in terms of the differences between boarders and day pupils. The annually reporting of the figures to the DfEE is flawed and may be the reason for the low attendance figures.
51. The school's procedures for supporting pupils in order to raise their achievement levels are satisfactory. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement but, as yet, these procedures have not been established long enough to enable clear trends to be seen.
52. The school has a good range of methods to encourage and reward pupils' achievements. There is a celebration assembly each week in which the personal and social aspects of pupils' achievements are recognised and certificates awarded. During this assembly every member of staff highlights the achievement of a particular pupil or pupils. The school has a set of rewards which are awarded to pupils who have made the most progress in meeting the targets on their individual behaviour management plans or on their IEPs.

53. The school is steadily becoming more settled and the overall behaviour of the pupils is improving slowly. Pupils have now begun to appreciate the value of the school's code of behaviour. There is a developing whole-school ethos, but this is not yet firmly established.
54. The school has very strong links with the Youth Support Services and buys this provision on a termly basis. Together they spend a great deal of time and effort in ensuring that a great deal of support and guidance is given to each pupil. Staff from the Youth Support Service work in the school with the pupils on their 'work related' curriculum. The relationships between pupils and the youth service staff are slightly different and enable them to gain a very good understanding of the wishes or aspirations of the pupils as they work in semi-formal activities.
55. This service is of great value to all pupils and staff and the highly skilled work of the staff enables relationships to be built with pupils who are finding the situation difficult. This operation has been in existence for only six months, but already there has been some improvement in the attitudes of the pupils. They are beginning to show more responsibility for themselves and taking responsibility for each other. Moral issues and self-responsibility are at the forefront of the work. This is to enable the pupils to become better citizens, to respect boundaries and face the consequences of their actions.
56. Many activities take place outside of the school day. These are designed to help develop pupils' self esteem as well as offer activities that they will enjoy. These include: rock climbing, ski-bobbing, canoeing and mountain bike riding. Pupils have also taken part in a week's residential visit to an activity centre in South Wales. In these situations good relationships are built quickly.
57. The care arrangements for the resident pupils help them to mature as individuals and develop emotionally, socially and physically. Pupils are known well by the care staff and enjoy good and proper relationships with them. There is close liaison between care staff and teaching staff, procedures ensure that there is a secure exchange of information for the well being of the pupils. Care staff and teaching staff are fully involved in the pupils' annual reviews

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

58. Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents' involvement in the educational development of their children is seen as a crucial link in the chain of support that is offered to pupils. This partnership is being built upon the good relationships between parents and staff. Parents are generally happier with the school and are supportive of its work.
59. The governing body includes one parent representative and encourages parents to be involved and support fund-raising initiatives. The school regularly provides letters for parents and is planning to introduce a newsletter. Parents receive a copy of the annual reports, which provides a detailed account of their child's attainment and progress but omit to report on their attendance. However, the school provides little easily readable written information about the school and the residential facilities for parents when pupils first start. Staff regularly telephone parents and communicate both positive messages and negative issues they need to be informed of. There is particularly close verbal contact between residential care staff, and parents who visit school are made very welcome.

60. At the initial admission interview pupils and parents agree to adhere to the school's expectations and to maintain good communication. Close liaison with parents is continued, especially over attendance and behaviour. Parents receive copies of annual reviews and are encouraged to attend review meetings. While some do, others find the times of meetings inconvenient and the school is looking at providing a more suitable range of times to improve parental participation. Parents and carers are encouraged to support pupils with any homework tasks or with the personal targets that are set. Currently too little homework is set to be an effective tool in the raising of standards and the school has no alternative strategies such as a homework club.

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

61. Since the last inspection the school initially made some progress towards meeting the issues for action listed in the last inspection report and the quality of teaching improved. However this improvement was not sustained. The headteacher resigned in November 2000 just before the start of a full inspection. As a result of this resignation the inspection was delayed for a few months. At that time Pitmore School was listed by the LEA as a school "at risk" as a result of concerns regarding the effectiveness of the senior management team in implementing the school's improvement plans within a reasonable time scale. Following the resignation of the headteacher, the LEA placed the Senior Special Educational Needs Inspector to lead the school as an interim measure before the appointment of a new headteacher, an appointment which was confirmed during the week of the inspection. A senior member of staff from a local special school and new governors were appointed. Governors then set about the task of reviewing the provision in the school. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but good progress has been made recently. In this new situation the school is overall effective and provides satisfactory value for money having a good capacity for further improvement.
62. The acting headteacher, together with the assistant headteacher, leads the school extremely well and works well with the senior management team. As a result of the efforts of the governors, the acting headteacher and the senior management team and all the staff, Pitmore School is now an improving school which still has some significant weakness to be addressed. These weakness are well understood by the governors and senior management team and are mainly in curriculum provision, staffing and timetable arrangements and the updating of a number of policy documents. However, while the monitoring of the quality of teaching shows it has improved significantly in the last three months, and other indicators such as a reduction in exclusions show that pupils' behaviour has improved, classes are still not free from disruption and pupils' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. Standards are still to show improvement and too few pupils make best use of opportunities to obtain suitable accreditations.
63. The acting headteacher and the assistant headteacher have good communication skills and his enthusiasm has been passed on to the staff team. The senior management team is committed to developing in the school a positive ethos and an effective learning environment. They have introduced a number of systems to ensure that the school's strategic plans are put into practice and that staff morale is raised. The school's strategic plan introduced in January 2001 is well constructed. Whole school priorities are broken down into manageable targets, and the steps needed to achieve them are clearly described and costed and frequently monitored. At the heart of this plan is the improvement of teaching and learning and the re-establishment of a new direction for the school and a set of long term aims, values and purposes. The governors have

published these aims and staff are increasingly involved in moving the school forward and the scope of developments extends to all areas of the school's work.

64. Very well led by its Chair, the governing body shares the sense of purpose and excitement in the school's achievement so far. All the governors are actively involved in keeping themselves informed about school life and developments and providing practical support. Their awareness of the issues involved in improving a school adds significantly to the effectiveness of their decision making. This was demonstrated in the care taken with the appointment of the new headteacher. Again, when it became clear, during the inspection, that the co-ordination of English was unsatisfactory governors took the opportunity to review applications for the post of deputy headteacher in the light of this knowledge. The governors have also been successful in attracting a number of mainstream specialist teachers to the school and have increased the numbers of non-teaching assistants. However, they are still to secure staff expertise to meet all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for spiritual, cultural and creative development and to provide a timetable which delivers these aspects.
65. Financial planning is good and the governors have successfully used specific grants. The school has a very clear view of the need to judge the effectiveness of spending decisions by judging their effect on maintaining and raising standards in teaching and learning but procedures are not yet fully in place. Planning for expenditure on school improvement is significantly better than at the previous inspection, since priorities for development are closely linked to spending. The school makes every effort to spend money wisely and there are extremely good financial controls to ensure the reliability and accuracy of financial transactions. The budget is now in surplus and subject to regular and effective monitoring by the acting headteacher and the governing body. They monitor the school accounts to ensure that the money available is sufficient to maintain funding for the priorities within their strategic plan that promote high standards of teaching and learning. The staff in the school office manage the financial and administrative life of the school efficiently and unobtrusively. The school makes good and improving use of new technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of administration and record keeping.
66. There are ten full-time equivalent teachers including the acting head teacher and temporary deputy head teacher. One member of staff is on extended sick leave and is currently being replaced by a part-time supply teacher with sound experience in working with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is anticipated that the current situation will be stabilised with the appointment of a permanent head and deputy head teacher. The teaching and support staff are well-qualified, and the school generally uses them effectively. There are fourteen support staff for the current organisation of six classes. This is sufficient to provide the necessary level of support for the number on roll in the majority of situations but the deployment of staff is not always as efficient as possible. The vast majority of support staff provide good and, in some cases, very good assistance to the teachers and to the running of the school. There is a strong ethos of team work in providing for the pupils.
67. There is a satisfactory match of staff expertise to the subjects they teach but there are gaps, for example there are no specialist teachers for English, design technology, music, history or religious education. There are good mixtures of very experienced and more recently qualified teachers and new and experienced learning support assistants. Teaching staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and these are known and understood by all. There is a very good commitment to professional development for all members of staff, and all teachers are required to produce personal development plans,

helping to identify their training needs. The induction of new staff into the routines of the school is good.

68. The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped. Most subject specialists are curriculum leaders and are responsible for teaching their own subjects so that they tend to work in isolation. There is a lack of effective communication between subject co-ordinators in terms of cross-curricular links and the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Overall, this has a negative effect on standards. The absence of an English specialist on staff has resulted in unsatisfactory standards in Key Stage 3.
69. The adequacy of resources varies from subject to subject and reflects a previous lack of subject co-ordination and a planned strategy to purchase resources to ensure the delivery of the curriculum. There are clear indications that resources are now improving in some subject areas, particularly those which are part of the school's recent strategic plan; for example, ICT. However, resources in English, history, music and religious education are inadequate. Resources are adequate in most other subjects but are very good in physical education. In design and technology, while it would appear that the workshop is well equipped, it was not possible to undertake a full review of all the resources available because of the other material stored.
70. The school's accommodation is adequate but there are a number of shortcomings arising because the school was designed for pupils with moderate learning difficulties before the National Curriculum was introduced and has not been updated since. The school has very poor access for anyone in a wheelchair and the stairs in main teaching block can become congested during lesson change over. The school hall is too small for team games or for two activities to take place at once. The accommodation for teaching food technology is poor. The residential block has sink units which are paced in the corridors and so provide no privacy for pupils. There are a number of other buildings on the site originally designed as staff houses which are poorly used and overall, the use of the accommodation on the site is unsatisfactory.
71. The school has extensive and attractive grounds which are well kept with hard and grassed play areas. As well as a range of fixed outdoor play equipment there are quiet areas for pupils to use.
72. The building is kept in a satisfactory state of repair and is clean and clear from graffiti. Parts of the school and the residential block have been considerably improved by the decoration undertaken by pupils and care staff. A number of health and safety issues arising from inadequate building maintenance were brought to the attention of the acting headteacher and the governors.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue to improve the provision in the school the governors, the senior managers and the staff should -

Improve the standards achieved in English and the levels of writing skills across the curriculum by developing strategies which include:

- the improving the co-ordination of English;
- the improving the provision for literacy;
- the extension of pupils' writing in English lessons and in other subjects.

Improve the extent and quality of pupils' assessed work which is stored to measure progress to ensure pupils' knowledge of their achievements through a range of strategies which include:

- the marking of pupils work;
- the storing of pupils' work in a portfolio of work;
- the discussing work completed with pupils.

Address the structure and organisation of the curriculum by:

- a review of the current curriculum provision;
- meeting all statutory requirements;
- considering the time allocation to "Tutor" time, "work related" provision and the "activity afternoon";
- developing a new timetable;
- improving the provision for spiritual, cultural and creative education.
- increasing the opportunities for all pupils to leave school with accreditation.

Raise the expectations for the behaviour of pupils by:

- itemising the behaviours which require improving;
- reducing the levels of tolerance for these groups behaviours progressively.

## RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

73. Approximately half the pupils who attend Pitmore School are resident from Monday to Friday each week of the term. The school's residential provision is a strength. The care staff work closely with the teaching staff and make a point of celebrating the academic achievements of the pupils along with other successes in sports or outdoor activities. The care staff deliver an extended curriculum to the pupils and constantly help them to realise the difference between right and wrong whilst giving them responsibility for themselves and their actions.
74. The staff meet regularly to plan trips for the pupils and to discuss the routines that have been developed for the smooth running of the accommodation. If it is necessary to revise or modify arrangements then this is done effectively. The staff enjoy very good relationships with the pupils and the pupils are encouraged to show that they care for and value each other. Pupils are encouraged to give and receive affection in appropriate ways.
75. The morning routines are well established and each pupil takes his fair share of responsibility within the individual houses. Chores have to be done each day and there is a well-managed roster for these. Pupils discuss the roster and sometimes they moan about it, but they do take the responsibilities seriously. Pupils move from the residential part of the building to the main school hall where they eat breakfast and this is done in a very orderly manner and the breakfast meal is a very pleasant social occasion.
76. The attendance of pupils in the residential provision is carefully monitored. There is a very clear overlap between the behaviour management procedures in the school and those in residence. However, it is rather more difficult to gain rewards in the residential setting and, for this reason perhaps, the behaviour is better. Pupils take responsibility and are sensible, for example when throwing javelins in a sporting activity after school. The hand-over between school and residence runs well and information is readily exchanged. There are very few incidents of absconding, but when they do happen they are dealt with appropriately and efficiently. The residential provision certainly enhances the quality of education that the pupils receive.
77. In the evening time the care staff help to develop boys' interest in the community. Pupils attend the local Cadet Force meetings, there is a theatre group, and some pupils are interested in going to the local swimming pool or to the local sports centre to play football. There are many activities that take place on the school campus. These include gardening, football and general sports activities. There is also the opportunity for some pupils to exercise their artistic talents in painting, under the supervision of one of the care staff. Before evening activities take place there is careful discussion between the day staff and the evening staff as they hand over the pupils. Each pupil has an independent behaviour management programme and all scores are carefully logged and monitored, then sent home for the pupil's parents to see. These programmes are carefully monitored and are reviewed regularly to ensure that the targets are appropriate and achievable. They are also discussed at the time of each pupil's annual review of statement, and here they link directly into the pupil's individual education plan.
78. If there are any serious incidents within school or the residential setting then the member of staff who is on duty has to make a verbal report at the morning or evening briefing and in all cases the incidents are written in the house log. All care staff are trained in permissible forms of control of pupils but it is now rarely needed in the school.

79. The residential provision aims to improve the attitudes of the pupils towards learning and improve their ability to concentrate. In these aims the residential experience is very effective. There is a key worker system, which operates for the benefit of the pupils, and each pupil is reviewed every six weeks. The comments are sought from the parents, the school and the personal tutors to try to ensure that the residential element of the education is as efficient and effective as possible.
80. The residential provision is highly valued by the pupils. This is reflected in the very low incidence of damage or graffiti that occurs in the buildings. The staff are developing closer links with the school and its academic curriculum to help raise pupils' levels of literacy and numeracy. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility in many different ways, ranging from responsibility for oneself to responsibility for other people.
81. Care staff ensure that all pupils have access to the telephone for personal and private calls. There is space and time for pupils to enjoy moments of quiet reflection should they so wish. The school's key worker system ensures that each pupil has access to a member of staff if they need it, to discuss problems that may arise.
82. The health and wellbeing of pupils is carefully monitored and the administrations of medication along with details of any medical conditions of the pupils are carefully recorded. There is an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced members of staff to ensure that the residential setting provides a very high standard of care for all the pupils. Staff are on duty both night and day to meet any demands that may be made of them and to ensure the well being of the pupils.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	121

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	51	30	6	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	47
Number of full-time day pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	20.9	School data	9.6

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	0	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	2	2	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	2	2	0
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	13	13	0
	National	3	8	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	0	1	1

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	2	3	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	2	3	0
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	13	20	0
	National	4	11	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	1	2	1

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	0	12

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	0	0	6
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	6
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	0	0	50
	National	0.5	8.8	47.9

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score	School	1.3

per pupil	National	2.94
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**Results of other examinations undertaken in 2000**

Other Examinations	Level	Number of Successes
Certificate of Educational Achievement (CEOA) : English	Pass	7
OCR: Graduated Assessment Awards in Mathematics	Foundation Stage 1	3
	Foundation Stage 2	2
	Pre-foundation	3
Certificate of Educational Achievement (CEOA):Design and technology	Pass	3
AEB Graphicacy	Merit	1
RSA: Information Technology (CLAIT)	Pass	1
CIEH: Health and Safety	Achieved	6
RSH Health and Hygiene	Achieved	2
Youth Award Scheme	Bronze	3
	Silver	2
St Johns Ambulance : First Aid	Achieved	2

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	2
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other	3	1
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		

White	45
Any other minority ethnic group	

White	93	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y 7 – Y 11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.5
Average class size	8.5

#### **Education support staff: Y 7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	363

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	1,067,970
Total expenditure	1,032,638
Expenditure per pupil	22,722
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 6332
Balance carried forward to next year	29000

### **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

#### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

- Most parents felt that the teaching was good and that they could approach the school readily and that the school was well managed.
- The quality of the residential provision was recognised as were they links with the residential care staff.
- They are less assured that they know how their children are getting on academically and if their behaviour in school is improving.
- Most felt that homework was insufficient.
- Some parents felt that their children did not like going to school.

#### **Other issues raised by parents**

- Parents express concern about the frequency and length of exclusions.
- Parents are anxious about the amount of bullying and poor language.
- Parents noted that the behaviour of their children has improved at home in recent months.
- Parents agreed that the Acting Headteacher was far more accessible than the previous headteacher.





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

### **ENGLISH**

83. Standards are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 where there is a lack of continuity and progression in the pupils' learning due to the absence of an appropriate scheme of work and low expectations. Standards in Key Stage 4 are satisfactory overall. The previous report judged standards to be satisfactory in both key stages when compared with similar schools. This indicates unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 since the last inspection and the maintenance of similar standards in Key Stage 4.
84. Teaching is generally satisfactory but there are shortcomings in planning over the key stages because of the lack of overall co-ordination. Lesson planning sometimes takes insufficient account of the specific learning difficulties of pupils and the targets set by the literacy support teacher. There are too few opportunities for planned written work and no strategy to develop skills where pupils are reluctant to try. There is a significant amount of good teaching when pupils are well challenged, particularly in Key Stage 4.
85. In Key Stage 3, listening skills are poor. Pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration and are easily distracted. They use inappropriate and often aggressive language when speaking to each other and to adults. Pupils are reluctant to participate in class discussion. They lack confidence in expressing their ideas in front of a group and need high levels of adult encouragement to respond to teachers' questions. They are more secure in a one-to-one situation and most pupils work satisfactorily with the learning support assistants when they settle to a task.
86. In Key Stage 4, pupils' listening skills are satisfactory and sometimes good. They often respond to the teacher's questions sensibly, demonstrating understanding and empathy. For example, in a Year 10 literature lesson on the set text 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck, pupils watched and listened attentively to a sensitive video extract and expressed their own feelings clearly. Skilful teaching guided pupils into a constructive discussion about the characters in the scene. The majority of pupils listen to the contributions of others. They are making satisfactory progress in learning to control their first impulse to shout out and interrupt when someone else is speaking. However, for a significant minority, this remains a problem and their progress in learning to communicate effectively is slower. By the end of the key stage, pupils listen well and confidently engage in conversations with adults, for example, several senior boys were keen to explain their plans to go to college when they leave school. They are aware of the need to adapt the register of their speech in different circumstances and some do this well. The use of standard English and range of vocabulary is, at least, satisfactory.
87. Reading standards are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4. Just under a half of the pupils in school receive additional teaching for identified literacy problems and they are making slow but steady progress in their reading. Basic literacy skills are well taught in these withdrawal sessions and the pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They concentrate well and try hard to achieve the clear targets set. In Key Stage 3 class lessons, the same work is set for all pupils and too little account is taken of individual difficulties. As a consequence, the majority of pupils experience considerable difficulties in reading their work independently. Pupils are over-dependent on the learning support assistants because the work is set at an inappropriate level of difficulty. A small minority of pupils read at a level close to or commensurate with their

age. They demonstrate satisfactory understanding of the text and use of punctuation when reading aloud. Where teaching and pupil management is good, pupils are successfully enabled to develop their reading skills as, for example, in a Year 7 lesson where a small group of pupils of differing reading abilities co-operated well with each other and with the staff to read a play.

88. In Key Stage 4, the reading standards of most pupils is still well below their speaking and understanding but attitudes are becoming more positive and progress is evident. After a noisy start to a Year 10 lesson, pupils settled to follow the text when a classmate was reading and some made perceptive contributions to the discussion. More able readers work independently but do not reach their full potential. They understand what they are reading and make satisfactory attempts to read expressively. However, they have insufficient opportunities to carry out small research topics or to develop the higher order skills of skimming or scanning a text for meaning and information.
89. Writing skills are underdeveloped in Key Stage 3 and by the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are still unwilling to transfer writing skills to other subject areas. In Key Stage 3, a small minority of more able pupils have good handwriting and spelling. They use correct sentence constructions and express themselves well with a satisfactory range of vocabulary. The majority of pupils lack confidence and are unwilling to record their learning independently without extensive support and guidance. They often rely on the teacher or learning support assistants to scribe work which they then copy or word process. Pupils are more confident in undertaking sentence completion exercises which they manage successfully with support. Independent writing for different purposes poses a challenge which the majority are loathe to try. For example, in a well planned Year 9 lesson on writing a newspaper account of 'Ronnie Biggs - The Great Train Robber', attitudes to work were good but only one pupil attempted to compose a column of writing from the information provided. Three boys showed good awareness of alliteration in their headlines but were reluctant to move beyond this stage. The other pupils relied on the adults in the class to write for them. The low standards in writing in Key Stage 3 have a significant impact on other areas of the curriculum where the recording of work is unsatisfactory.
90. In Key Stage 4, pupils respond satisfactorily to the teacher's expectations that they work towards the Certificate of Educational Attainment (CoEA) or the General Certificate of Education (GCSE) and most attain satisfactory standards in comparison with pupils in other similar schools. Pupils write for a limited range of purposes, demonstrating awareness of correct grammar and punctuation but inconsistent usage. More able pupils write confident and lively stories with a clear structure but complex sentence construction, correct use of tenses and paragraphing are weaknesses in their writing.
91. Leadership of this subject is unsatisfactory across the school. There is no scheme of work in Key Stage 3 and no subject specialist on the staff to provide direction and ensure continuity and progression across the key stages. The school is aware of this major weakness in provision and the governors are seeking to appoint an English specialist before the next school year. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy into Year 7, which is planned for next September, will depend on this appointment for its success. The co-ordination and delivery of the Key Stage 4 curriculum is satisfactory and this is reflected in the learning outcomes.
92. Resources in English are inadequate to raise standards. In lessons, pupils work from photocopied worksheets which are often undated and unmarked so that progress is hard to track. There are insufficient good quality books to provide all pupils with a copy of their own and there is no school library to help develop positive attitudes to reading for

pleasure or to develop information retrieval skills. The recent arrangement with the county library service to borrow books for each class has yet to make an impact on attitudes or standards. The use of information communication technology (ICT) is beginning to have a positive effect in reinforcing basic literacy skills and in promoting the confidence of pupils but is not yet systematically used in lessons for drafting, editing and improving work. The dedicated literacy support room is a pleasant, well- equipped learning environment which is having a positive effect on the attitudes and learning of pupils who use it.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. There has been satisfactory progress in the teaching of mathematics since the last inspection. The lessons are well planned and now follow the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines. This has given all lessons a similar structure, which is very effective in supporting the pupils through consistency of approach. The introductory activities are delivered in such a way as to be interesting, exciting and challenging for most pupils. The school also uses a commercially produced computer program that helps pupils to progress at their own pace, whilst still presenting a challenge to them. A big advantage of this program is that it will give some diagnostic test results, which enables teachers to plan the work more effectively. Pupils of all ages make good progress in mathematics.
94. By the age of 14 years pupils have learned many new skills. Pupils are using a multiplication strategy to achieve the correct answers to problems and gain a clear understanding of the decomposition of numbers, of the place value of numbers, and the way in which they should be set out on paper. Pupils also study basic geometry, they learn about triangles, squares, rectangles, circles and other two-dimensional shapes. Pupils gain confidence as they study number patterns and count on and back. They recognise odd and even numbers and have an understanding of co-ordinate in geometry. With this understanding and knowledge they progress to making enlargements of shapes, identifying lines of symmetry and eventually produce nets of different solids including cubes and pyramids.
95. By the time that pupils reach the age of 16 they are much more confident in using number, and can read and estimate values from different scales including circular and linear. Pupils also have a clear understanding that the order in which numbers are multiplied makes no difference to the product at the end. Pupils follow an accredited course, which leads to the GCSE examination in the final term of Year 11. During the final two years of study pupils follow individual courses which are tailored to meet their requirements. In this way, work can be challenging for each individual, as each person is working at a different level.
96. The quality of teaching for pupils up to the age of 14 years is good. The teacher has established definite routines within the classroom; these include routines for work and behaviour. He sets very clear boundaries for behaviour and also makes sure that the work is challenging and interesting for pupils. The structure of the National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted in the school and is proving to be very effective. The teacher begins each lesson with a session of mental mathematics, often involving calculations using tables. The teacher is positive about the work of the pupils and is quick to praise when answers are correct. He ensures that the lesson proceeds at a brisk pace and that all pupils are challenged by the questions that he asks of them. The questions are carefully graded to meet the different levels of understanding and competence of the pupils. In this way there is challenge and achievement in each lesson and the pupils can

enjoy the work in the knowledge that they are improving.

97. The quality of teaching for pupils up to the age of 16 is also good. The teacher works effectively to ensure that the work is carefully matched to the individual needs of the pupils. The teacher's strategies for managing inappropriate behaviour are good, he challenges inappropriate language in a very clear and firm, but non-threatening manner. Thanks to the good quality of teaching in mathematics, pupils are well motivated; so much so that pupils occasionally ask the teacher to go away because they are busy.
98. During the inspection the behaviour of pupils in Key Stage 4 was very good, they showed respect for the teacher and worked extremely hard because they did not want to let the teacher down. Quite often pupils were unsettled at the very beginning of the lessons and presented behaviour that was unacceptable. There was swearing and movement around the classroom. However, with careful management and quite clear and definite strategies the teacher quickly established the work ethic and pupils were busy once more. Pupils in Key Stage 3 were often quite excited by the work that they were doing and were keen and eager to learn. The relationships between the teacher and the pupils are good; this helps to create a positive atmosphere within the classroom, and an atmosphere in which pupils are willing to work.
99. From discussions with teachers and pupils it is clear that the behaviour in lessons is improving and has done so quite dramatically over the last few months. However, there are still many areas in which there is room for a great deal of improvement. There is room for the staff within the school to raise their levels of expectation even higher in order to minimise the use of inappropriate language and make sure that the time that pupils spend at the school is as positive as possible. This will then fit them for their role in society as totally acceptable people, when they leave school.
100. Despite the improvements that there have been in the quality of mathematics teaching and learning recently, the levels of attainment of all pupils are still well below the national average. The curriculum that is planned and taught within the school is good; it covers a wide area of knowledge and is appropriate to the needs of the pupils.
101. During the last full academic year, Year 11 pupils gained GCSE certificates ranging in grade from D to G. There were also 3 pupils who gained their 'Amber' award, 3 gained Foundation Stage 1, and 2 gained Foundation Stage 2 in the OCR Graduated Assessment Awards. The pupils who are in the present Year 11 are already working at Foundation 3 level.
102. The teaching of mathematics in the school does not exclude any pupil for any reason. It is totally inclusive, regardless of age, ability, culture or learning difficulty. Within the school there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified teachers to deliver mathematics. The classrooms are sufficiently large to accommodate the small group sizes and are in a good state of repair. The materials and equipment for teaching mathematics, whilst adequate, show some significant weaknesses. There is very limited material and equipment available for carrying out mathematical experiments and general investigative work. The school is aware of these shortcomings and plans to address them. This is clearly shown in the school development planning.

## **SCIENCE**

103. The teacher responsible for science is a recent temporary appointment and at the time of the inspection had been in post for nearly a month. Since the last inspection there

has been little change from the low allocation of time to the subject. In Key Stage 4 science is taught as an option in the work related programme. As a consequence there is no opportunity at present for accreditation of science achievement for all Year 11 pupils. In Key Stage 3 insufficient time is allocated to science lessons, particularly in Year 8 and Year 9. The good school scheme of work provides for appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and a CoEA scheme is available for Key Stage 4. Long and medium term plans are suitable and include an appropriate breadth of outline planning supported by well-planned and detailed modules of work. An appropriate programme of topics has been planned for the remainder of the summer term. Resources for science are adequate.

104. Despite good teaching which includes well planned lessons with good resources being made available for pupils to select and use to conduct their own experiments, pupils often do not maintain attention or work collaboratively. Consequently, in many lessons the overall effectiveness of the teaching is satisfactory. For example, in an interesting group experiment to extend and apply their learning of chromatology, Year 7 pupils were unwilling to work together during the second half of a double lesson. Previously, they were well focussed on discovering the component colours in different inks or coloured markers when experimenting individually. Good subject knowledge enables the teacher to effectively challenge pupils to think scientifically to explain why things happen and the requirements of a fair test. The high expectations of the teacher are effective in enabling Year 8 pupils to begin to understand and use the scientific terms such as 'solute, solvent and solution' during their full participation in an experiment to investigate the rate of dissolving of sugar in water and the concept of saturation. Occasionally planned learning tasks are incomplete when too much time is spent following up an idea such as the effect of heat on saturation, and losing the opportunity for pupils to adequately analyse and discuss the outcomes of the planned activity. This adversely affects the establishment of scientific process and the security of pupils' understanding.
105. Good opportunities are taken for pupils to apply their numeracy skills such as in working out time differences when recording results on a chart. However, when pupils are presented with written tasks, for example recording experiments, they use disruptive behaviour strategies to avoid this work. The teacher is devising some effective ways of changing pupils' negative attitude to recording their work by use of prepared worksheets with simple charts and statements for completion by correctly selecting and writing the key science vocabulary. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for science is effectively promoted by being enabled to carry out dramatic experiments such as an empty drinks can being crushed by air-pressure.
106. Standards achieved in science are satisfactory and in line with those of pupils in similar schools. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are working at Level 4 of the National Curriculum in experimental and investigative science. They select their own equipment and consider the variables which influence a 'fair test' when carrying out experiments. Pupils' learning is promoted effectively by the teacher who takes every opportunity to use his very good knowledge and experience of science to relate their emerging science ideas to meaningful situations. Some, more able Year 9 pupils, are extending their understanding of materials and their properties towards Level 6 when applying their knowledge of the movement of particles in liquids and gasses to an explanation of diffusion rates.
107. The teacher's positive care, concern and acceptance of pupils, appropriate expectation for behaviour and good use of praise and encouragement is effective in helping them to develop a more positive attitude to science and gain satisfaction from their achievements. Their interest and attention are gained in the majority of lessons. However, the disruptive behaviour of pupils is not always effectively overcome to enable

the suitably planned learning objectives to be achieved. Intermittent distractive and provocative behaviour frequently disrupts lessons and, for those pupils with low tolerance levels, their learning is often incomplete and this seriously undermines their understanding and application of scientific facts and concepts. Clear science laboratory rules for acceptable behaviour have yet to be established. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory.

108. Pupils' spiritual and moral development are suitably promoted in science. The teacher pays due attention to giving pupils suitable guidance on personal values and issues of right and wrong and through the opportunities to conduct experiments they become excited by their discoveries. Pupils are given good opportunities to work together but many are not yet socially able effectively to do this. Good relationships are being established with pupils and the teacher's involvement in some after-school activities with pupils in residence is having a positive impact.
109. The management of the teacher's recent temporary appointment to the school has provided an effective interim arrangement for science through appropriate guidance on the management of pupils and the support of good staff teamwork, within class by the skilled support assistants and throughout the school. However, the time allocation to science is unsatisfactory and needs to be improved to enable pupils to sustain progress over time and achieve appropriate qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

110. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in art lessons but their attainment is below average. This is because, while the quality of teaching in lessons is satisfactory and lessons are planned well, there is no overall scheme of work which considers how to develop skills knowledge and understanding and build upon these to lead to suitable accreditation at the end of Key Stage 4. As a result few Year 11 pupils are successful in the GCSE examination, reaching standards in line with those of mainstream pupils, despite the obvious talents of some pupils as shown in some of the displays around the school. Overall, expectations are too low and opportunities are missed to improve pupils' self-esteem through success in this practical subject. Progress since the last inspection has been limited and the previous report raised many similar issues.
111. During Key Stage 3, pupils develop a range of skills, such as drawing, painting and printing, and they learn to use a variety of tools and materials, for example clay and textiles. A particular strength is the way in which pupils' skills of observation are developed. For example, in one lesson, Year 9 pupils were observing a human skull and drawing it. The teacher took care to build up an atmosphere of light and shade through the use of blackouts and candles. She encouraged them to look carefully at the different tones of light and the different shapes created by the lights. This enabled pupils to achieve well. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils are able to mix colours accurately and apply paint very effectively. They have learned how to produce a wide variety of effects, such as marbling, using coloured sand on paper, making patterns made with printing blocks. Pupils also design collages of a jungle scene, make reflective patterns, use stencils, make papier-mâché bowls and masks and models from straw. Pupils skills in the appreciation of art and the work of other artists is less well developed and, although pictures by Monet, Lowry and Kate Bunce are on display, there is little evidence that pupils have considered these artist in any detail.
112. In Key Stage 4, pupils can follow an option course leading to a CoAE in Art. However, in last year's examination no pupils were entered. There are now four pupils following this

programme during the time allocated to work related activities. Pupils' art folders show that they have undertaken work on self-portraits, undertaken considerable work on drawings and some three-dimensional work. Folders do not clearly show a development of an idea through to a finished piece of work and are not moderated.

113. The art room is rather small and, while it is a stimulating working environment, too little use is made of activities where pupils have to co-operate together. As a result, pupils tend to work alone and considerable opportunities are lost to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed co-operatively. Given opportunities, pupils show that they can be creative and develop ideas. For example, in designing an anti-smoking poster pupils showed some skills in drawing and sketching in fine details and making good use of cigarette packages and other artefacts. Support staff play an important role in helping pupils to complete work but too often they do the work for the pupil. Few pupils are encouraged to regularly record their ideas and experiments in sketchbooks.
114. Few opportunities are provided in which the teacher talks to pupils about the work undertaken, marks the work, making positive suggestions for improvements or changes in direction. Little art work is properly structured in art folders and pupils' art folders are simply used as storage containers. Thus there is too little encouragement for pupils to take a pride in their work, and develop an understanding of building up a portfolio of work which will be used for accreditation purposes.
115. The subject is taught by a part-time teacher and during the last term there have been a number of different timetables in operation within the school which have affected the time allocation to art for different classes and the classes taught. As a result continuity and progression has been lost. Art makes too little a contribution to pupils' cultural development through raising their awareness and encouraging their appreciation of art and artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

116. There have been some changes in the development of design technology within the school since the last inspection. Progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The previous technology teacher, who worked mainly with resistant materials, has now left the school and there is only one teacher on the staff who specialises in food technology. Consequently, the curriculum at present is very narrow, comprising mainly food technology. There is some opportunity for Key Stage 4 pupils to work with timber as a part of their work related studies, but this is minimal and enjoys no national accreditation.
117. Technology is taught to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and is an option subject for pupils in Key Stage 4. The food technology specialist carefully plans the course and this is based on a three-year cycle to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to study all modules. Within each module there are clearly written assessment criteria. All pupils are expected to research and generate ideas and communicate those ideas clearly, plan and their work, and use the tools, materials and equipment carefully and safely. The course that pupils are following has been planned through consultation with the local education authority's advisor and is accredited through the St. Ivel Awards leading to a Food Hygiene Certificate at Bronze, Silver or Gold level. The targets for learning are carefully linked to the National Curriculum attainment targets and are reviewed regularly, each half term.

118. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher has very good relationships with the pupils and in turn they respect the teacher. There is a very positive atmosphere within the food technology room where pupils are willing and eager to work. The teacher has a very good knowledge of each individual pupil and talks with them, in turn, about the progress that they have made during lessons. She speaks very carefully with them and makes sure that the questions she asks are challenging but still within their capabilities. The teacher is highly skilled and gives excellent demonstrations. She speaks carefully as she works and makes sure that the attention of the pupils is clearly focused on what she is doing.
119. In one lesson the pupils are taught to make sausage rolls as a snack meal. In this case they use frozen puff pastry. The teacher gives an excellent demonstration of rolling out the pastry, and with highly skilled direction she ensures that pupils are successful in their work. The lesson then proceeded at a brisk pace. Consequently, the pupils are busy, quite excited, pleased with their own progress and are successful. When they finish making pastry they take care to clean the work surfaces, pack their produce into foil containers and wash up the equipment that they have used.
120. Throughout the lessons the pupils relate well to the teacher; the occasional inappropriate remarks made by the pupils are dealt with very carefully and properly by the teacher, without making a big issue. The very high quality of the teaching ensures that all pupils are successful in these lessons. They work hard, they enjoy it and at the end of the lesson they leave with a dish or dishes that are very well prepared.
121. The clear curriculum development plan has clear targets, has a time structure and careful costing of all elements. At the moment the whole curriculum revolves around food technology. The school acknowledges that this state of affairs is unsatisfactory.
122. The accommodation for teaching food technology is poor, it is badly in need of refurbishing. The work surfaces, cookers and cupboards are quite dilapidated. The resources available within the room are just satisfactory but are aged and quite worn. Nevertheless, the teacher makes very good use of these facilities and the pupils benefit greatly from them. There is a workshop within the school where resistant materials may be used. However this workshop is not fit for use, it has been used as a dumping ground. There is no member staff with the proper qualifications to use the machinery, nor is there space to get to the machinery. The school is aware of this difficulty and has sought the advice of the local Education Authority's advisory service. As a result of this advice, a plan of action has been produced which involves the removal of some of the machinery, the re-siting of some machinery and the refurbishment of the room.
123. The school is already planning the curriculum, which will offer skills including fabric printing, designing and making clothing, designing and making electronic equipment and building small machines. There are also elements of computer control technology and computer aided design. In the next term the school will be introducing a course of canoe construction as an option for the Key Stage 4 pupils, just as soon as the workshop is fit to use.
124. It is clear that a great deal of time and effort has gone into the planning of this new venture. At the moment the situation is still unsatisfactory, but with the implementation of these plans the school will offer a much broader and more appropriate technology curriculum for its pupils.

## **GEOGRAPHY**



125. Geography is taught only to pupils in Key Stage 3 and standards are in keeping with those of pupils in similar schools. Since the last inspection, curriculum provision for geography has been maintained with good improvements in the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and a clear statement of policy established. However, at the time of the inspection geography was not time-tabled for Year 7. This is unsatisfactory. The resources for geography are adequate and appropriate. The subject development plan aims to update textbooks and make better use of ICT.
126. The quality of teaching is good. Teacher's planning is good for long-term topics, termly modules and lessons which provide for a suitable breadth of curriculum. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject plus a personal experience in Africa is used enthusiastically to capture pupils' interest leading to good interactive and positive discussion. Texts and photographs are used well to illustrate different world areas, environments and populations. The brisk pace of lessons maintains pupils' positive approach to sharing ideas. The 'reward' of using the computer at the end of a lesson is effective in encouraging pupils to complete the recording of their work.
127. Within lessons the pupils achieve a sound knowledge and understanding of the learning objectives, such as the negative and positive factors which affect population in a variety of world-wide environments. In a lesson on erosion and weathering the most able Year 9 pupils understood the principles at Level 5 of the National Curriculum and others reach standards in the low average range.
128. The good relationships between the teacher, support assistants and pupils are evident from the respect pupils show and the mainly good level of acceptance of clear expectations for acceptable behaviour. Pupils respond well to the teacher's good supportive strategies which enable them to record their learning, for example, by cutting and pasting labels on to diagrams, drawing pictures and indicating density of population by drawing 'stick figures' on a chart. However, much of pupils' recorded work shows an overall poor attitude, particularly to writing. There are sporadic examples of some pupils recording their learning effectively but overall this is a significant weakness with very little evidence of pupils writing their ideas in their own words.
129. Good personal support and guidance is provided for pupils by the teacher and support assistants. Good feedback is provided on achievement with positive use of praise and rewards. The appreciation of the power of nature shown by volcanoes and severe weather provides incidental insights for awe and wonder but opportunities are missed to develop spirituality to best effect. Time constraints further reduce these opportunities to explore significance, values, feelings or emotions when studying different global environments. Social development is limited since few opportunities are provided for pupils to work together co-operatively. Pupils do acquire some contextual insights into other countries and cultures, especially when the teacher shares personal experiences of Africa.

## **HISTORY**

130. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on standards in this subject. History was not being offered to Key Stage 3 pupils in the term of the inspection. At present, there is no subject specialist on staff, no scheme of work and no subject co-ordinator. This has been identified in the School Strategic Plan as a major weakness in curriculum provision and appropriate steps are being taken to address the problem. The geography co-ordinator will assume responsibility for history from September and is

currently working with the LEA advisor to plan a scheme of work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. As a result of good teaching and a well-planned programme of study, pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4. Attainment varies from pupil to pupil but in Key Stage 4 a significant number of pupils are working at or near national expectations. Increasingly a number of pupils are completing the Computer Literacy and Information Technology accreditation (CLAIT) and are moving on to the QCA Hampshire Key Skills course. There has been an improvement in the teaching of ICT since the last inspection and in the provision of machines.
131. The subject is mainly taught by the co-ordinator and in these lessons good teaching takes place. Teaching is less secure when other teachers work with a newly introduced creative arts package or when subject teachers use the computer suite, for example in art and design. In these circumstances pupils are frustrated by the teachers' inability to get machines to work properly or their lack of detailed knowledge about the software and become disruptive and off task. In English, the school has just introduced "Successmaker" and lessons in the library also suffer from a lack of teacher expertise and knowledge about how the system actually works. The use of this software is made less effective because pupils are not aware that they have to undergo a test to obtain an entry position. Some pupils found these timed tests difficult to complete mainly because the task was not properly explained. Occasionally, computers are used inappropriately as a reward or to occupy pupils who are unable to remain focused on the lesson. Where this is planned into teaching, it can be very effective but on some occasions too little challenge is built into the lesson and too few activities are expected of pupils. In these circumstances pupils get rewards for very little effort.
132. In Key Stage 3, although lessons often start with disruption, pupils soon settle down. Pupils demonstrate considerable skills in computer literacy. Most, by the end of Key Stage 3, confidently use the machines to load, complete work in a package and save their work with unique file names. In Years 7 and 8 pupils begin to show confidence in using a word processor, a spreadsheet and an adventure game. They require no help to switch on the machines, use drop-down menus and to respond to instructions on the screen. They are beginning to investigate a topic on the Internet with help. In Years 10 and 11 some pupils complete the CLAIT examinations. All pupils extend their skills and the most able pupils design their own web-sites and copy pictures, sounds and sequences from the Internet to enhance them. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of how a spreadsheet works and can manipulate cell calculations. They type into a word processor, slowly but with confidence and are able to edit, highlight and add clip-art graphics to their work. Pupils are learning how to save information to a CD ROM and to use software to design a CD cover. Pupils learn how to search the Internet and which commands to use to narrow down the research to find what they want. Some pupils are able to use computers to create compositions and to explore a variety of musical sounds. Throughout the school, where ICT is used, pupils take great interest in their work and leisure activities and enjoy developing their skills.
133. The school is suitably equipped with computers following a recent substantial investment in hardware and software. There are also many other resources, such as electronic keyboards, scanners and some very useful software throughout the school covering a range of topics. However, the computers in the classroom in the main block are not properly wired into the mains, most being on additional electric sockets extension leads. This creates a potential health and safety risk for the pupils. The school

buys into a well-organised and effective technical support. This enables emergency support for technical problems to be available to the co-ordinator on a continuing and an emergency basis.

134. There is a good subject policy in place and the scheme of work is well structured. Assessment procedures are well developed and all pupils know what they have achieved and what they have to do next. Learning targets are well set out and pupils are encouraged to meet them. Completed work is marked against National Curriculum Levels and work retained. There is a clear commitment to develop the subject further, particularly in the extension of the use of ICT to support learning in all subject areas and to develop accreditation further. There is a generally positive attitude to the use of ICT throughout the school.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

135. French, introduced since the last inspection, is taught well to all pupils up to the age of 14 years. In this way the school meets statutory requirements. The majority of the French that is taught is of a conversational nature, the lessons are carefully planned and well structured in order to make sure that all pupils take a full and active part. The majority of the work that is done by the pupils is based on 'Le Français c'est facile'. Here they have a well-planned course that introduces them to the colours, the common foods that we eat and ways of conversing at a simple level, using only the French language in a way that is readily acceptable to them.
136. The teachers manage the difficult behaviour of the pupils well. Lessons are carefully prepared and content is such that pupils are interested and well motivated. In one lesson pupils were making up a school timetable and motivated to discover that many other words used in French are very similar to those used in English. For example, "l'art, les maths, l'histoire, la géographie and la musique". Pupils eagerly devised a school timetable comprising subjects which were their favourites. Several pupils showed high levels of competence and were able to copy not only the French pronunciation but also the appropriate facial expression.
137. Pupils also learn to name different items of food. One lesson began with a French breakfast of bread, cheese and strawberry jam. Pupils ate the food and discussed their likes and dislikes, then made sensible comparisons between the eating traditions of the French when compared with the English. There are excellent cross-curricular connections with mathematics as the pupils learn and rehearse the numbers in French up to and beyond a thousand. Pupils have great delight in translating "1950" into "mille neuf cent cinquante". Mental arithmetic questions are fired at the pupils who respond equally rapidly with answers that are, on the whole, correct. Pupils clearly enjoy their learning thanks to the innovative and exciting way in which it is presented. Pupils, who behave well most of the time, enjoy the lessons. They make good progress and have acquired a secure understanding of simple French conversation.
138. Pupils' behaviour is usually satisfactory but there are occasions when it is unsatisfactory. The problems usually arise as pupils move from one lesson to another and arrive in a lively and uncontrolled state. In these situations, a great deal of time is then spent in getting the class settled to work and into the correct frame of mind for learning. The rapid pace with which lessons are conducted helps to focus the attention of the pupils and engage them in the positive activities. This is a valuable skill in

teaching.

139. The skills and confidence of the teachers in their use of French is an asset to the school. They manage the behaviour of the pupils well, and when there is a difficulty, the teachers bring the pupils into line with very clear direction. There is an adequate number of suitable qualified staff to teach the subject and the accommodation is also suitable. Resources are satisfactory though there are insufficient overt displays of pictures or artefacts that relate to France. Here there are opportunities for the cultural development of pupils that are being missed.
140. All pupils up to the age of 14 have access to French, but there is some inequality as pupils also choose to learn to play the electronic keyboard in a session that coincides with the one French lesson of the week. This is a situation that needs to be addressed to ensure that no one misses either French or keyboard as they are both minority subjects that cannot be picked up elsewhere in the week.

## **MUSIC**

141. Music is not taught in the school.
142. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to be taught keyboard skills by an experienced visiting music teacher and this provision is good. Nearly half of the pupils, at one time or another, have taken part in these sessions but in order to receive this tuition they have to be withdrawn from other subject areas and this is unsatisfactory. The school is still to include the development of a musical curriculum within its strategic development plan so that the cultural life of the school can be enriched.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

143. Provision for physical education is good. A well considered curriculum development plan is being implemented and provides a broadly based curriculum experience for pupils with challenging opportunities to develop their personal and social skills along with self confidence and esteem through achievement of a range of skills within the National Curriculum. These include gymnastics, games, athletics, swimming, and outdoor and adventurous activity. Additionally, pupils benefit from opportunities to take part in weight training, trampolining and indoor games such as badminton and table-tennis. The teacher responsible is well qualified and effective in developing physical education opportunities within the school and liaising with residential staff to provide a very good range of experiences to meet the needs of the pupils. Since the last inspection a good system for assessment and recording of pupils' attainments and progress has been established. The development plan aims to provide training to extend staff competencies in related activities and further improve resources.
144. The quality of teaching overall is good and often very good. Lessons are well organised and structured with good attention to safety. The teacher is enthusiastic, has a good relationship with pupils and provides good quality instruction and coaching based on personal expertise. In the main, most pupils are well motivated, make good progress and show a sense of achievement. Some pupils are reluctant to take part and occasionally refuse to be involved or disrupt lessons. By good use of encouragement and praise whenever pupils achieve some success, the teacher and support assistant create interest and improve pupils' participation and motivation. The teacher carries out good assessments and keeps very good records of each pupils' attainment of targets

for achievement and attitude in each programme of activity.

145. Pupils' assessed performances overall are near national expectations in athletics, swimming, trampolining, outdoor and adventurous activities and games such as football and cricket. For example, pupils know, understand and apply the rules in games such as football and cricket and many have achieved at least satisfactory levels of skill. More able pupils show a clear understanding of strategy through good passing and positional play or by the placement of fielders. In swimming, pupils work independently to achieve swimming distance awards. They make good progress as they move up the year groups. During team games in particular they increasingly work together as part of a team. The good programme of activities and games for pupils in residence contributes significantly to this. Older pupils in Key Stage 4 improve their self-esteem and self-confidence when taking responsibility for supervising and supporting younger pupils and encouraging them to achieve good standards in activities such as swimming.
146. Good opportunities are provided for pupils' personal development, especially in outdoor and adventurous activity. They develop self-awareness and an awareness of the needs of others. Keen interest, enthusiasm and expertise of staff and specialist instructors in challenging activity such as canoeing has a positive effect on pupils' attitude and behaviour and self-esteem. Good opportunities are taken to develop pupils' positive attitudes to fair play, sportsmanship and compliance to rules, such as encouraging team-mates by praising good contributions and showing appreciation of others' achievements. They make positive evaluations of the performance of others. For example when team captains gave opposing team players a mark out of ten and explained the reasons for their judgements at the end of an evening football match.
147. Good use is made of the interests, expertise and qualifications of other teachers, support assistants and residential care staff. Several have recognised qualifications or LEA certificates to coach, instruct, or supervise games and activities. They provide a very good range of options, as part of an afternoon session of activities, which promotes competence in sports, recreational and social skills for all pupils. They also contribute to a work related learning programme of activities aimed to promote teamwork, problem solving skills and communication skills for pupils in Key Stage 4. Pupils in residence also benefit from this range of physical education expertise including the involvement of the specialist teacher during the very good programme of activities available during the evenings. Overall, physical education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.**

148. Religious education is not formally taught in either key stage. This has been identified in the School Strategic Plan as a weakness in curriculum provision and plans have been drawn up to address the problem. The governors are seeking to appoint a subject specialist to the staff before the beginning of the new school year. No judgements on standards were made.

## **PERSONAL, HEALTH AND SOCIAL EDUCATION.**

149. Standards are satisfactory in both key stages. The co-ordinator of this subject has been on long term sick leave and an experienced supply teacher has assumed responsibility for delivering the comprehensive programme of study. Informal support for personal, health and social education (PHSE) is provided in some tutor periods but this is

unstructured and lacks rigour. Care staff in the residential situation follow a careful plan to enable pupils to develop self- help skills and to improve their personal and social skills. Learning outcomes are successful over time in the majority of cases. Members of the domestic staff, such as the head of kitchen and laundry assistant, make significant impact on the quality of PHSE in informal settings, such as helping older pupils to prepare themselves for interviews.

150. In Key Stage 3, attitudes to learning are often negative but skilful teaching and pupil management establishes a reflective atmosphere in which pupils are prepared to share their thoughts on sensitive issues such as feelings. In a Year 7 lesson, the teacher enabled a disruptive pupil to settle and talk about his feelings as she drew around his hand and asked him to think of each finger as a different feeling. The pupil found it difficult to express sad feelings but was keen to share happy feelings. Year 8 boys showed interest in the topic of actions and consequences and contributed relevant suggestions such as ..'do the crime, pay the time'... With very sensitive guidance, pupils offered thoughts on relationships and were able to develop ideas about the effect of relationships on their own lives.
151. Key Stage 4 pupils contributed well to the theme ' What do I want', talking enthusiastically about possessions and jobs. They found the subjects of home, relationships and ambitions more difficult to express but most provided a limited response when asked. The high level of adult-pupil support in this lesson contributed to its quality and enabled pupils to evaluate their own learning. By the end of the key stage, pupils engage well with adults in discussing their future plans and they reflect on their school experience in positive terms. They are less prepared to participate in subjects which are sensitive or which they do not perceive to be relevant to them; for example, one articulate Year 11 pupil could not be persuaded to join a lesson about the Samaritans organisation. More practical activities such as visiting a bank to open an account are well received by the senior pupils.
152. The caring ethos of the school and the positive role models provided by the teaching, support, care and domestic staff all have a positive impact on the personal and social development of the pupils. A better-planned and more effectively delivered programme in tutorial time would support the formal curriculum and promote higher standards. Progress since the previous report has been maintained as satisfactory.