

# INSPECTION REPORT

## LINDSWORTH SCHOOL

Kings Norton, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103632

Headteacher: Mr M Clarke

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris  
23696

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 245932

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Monyhull Hall Road Kings Norton Birmingham
Postcode:	B30 3QA
Telephone number:	0121 693 5363
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Gascoigne
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23696	Mr J Morris	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages Personal, social and health education	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
09619	Mr R Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	English Music	
14596	Mr A Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	
04989	Mr L Lewis	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	
19996	Mr G Watson	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20024	Mr P Wright	Team inspector	Geography History	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
32171	Mr D Victor	Team inspector	Physical education	
18537	Mrs S Derrick	Team inspector		

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# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>	<b>43</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lindsworth is a community special school, which provides 187 day, extended day and residential places. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and their predominant difficulties are social, emotional and behavioural (SEBD). At the time of this inspection there were 177 pupils on roll, between 11 and 16 years of age, including 11 girls. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The percentage eligible for free school meals (95 per cent) is extremely high and the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (three per cent) is above the national average. Attainment on entry is well below average, particularly in the key skills of literacy, whatever age individuals start at the school. The school is on two sites. The south site, in Kings Norton, has been long established, provides places for pupils in Years 7 to 11 and includes the Girls' Unit and the residential homes. The north site, in Erdington, has only been fully operational since September 2001. It provides day places for pupils in Years 10 and 11, although some Year 9 pupils have lessons at both sites. The school is a major element of 'The Village Partnership', which comprises several other units across the city of Birmingham, including a secure and remand facility. This highly complex provision is managed by the headteacher. The 'partnership' is working towards integrated provision for a wide range of disaffected young people. The school is the West Midlands regional headquarters for the National Association of Workers for Children with EBD and provides training courses nationwide.

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

This is a very effective school, with some outstanding features. The excellent relationships between all staff and pupils are fundamental to the school's considerable successes. Pupils make very good progress both academically and personally. The quality of teaching is very good overall, and it is at least good in all subjects. The headteacher and senior management team provide excellent leadership. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- All pupils achieve very well overall in relation to their SEBD and abilities, including boys and girls and those from different ethnic backgrounds. They make very good progress in mathematics, information and communication technology, music, religious education and personal, social and health education. They make consistently good, and at times very good, progress in all other subjects.
- The teaching is very good overall and it is at least good in all subjects. The classroom support staff and residential staff make a very significant contribution to the pupils' academic learning and personal development.
- The leadership is excellent. The headteacher has great vision and is supported by a very highly skilled senior management team. There is a tremendous sense of teamwork among all the staff and the school governors.
- The relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and the relationships between pupils are good. This is because the school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development and provides very high quality care during the school day and the extended day, and in the residential homes.

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

- The attendance of some pupils is very poor and this severely affects the progress they make at school.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997. Improvement has been very good overall. This judgement is in relation to effective action taken to address the weaknesses identified in 1997, the maintenance of very good features identified in 1997 and the considerable expansion in the school's provision in the intervening period. Attendance has not improved but this is due to changes in the school population. However, there have been significant improvements in standards, teaching, the curriculum and assessment. Very effective management of the school's work and very high standards of care have been maintained. In addition, the school has a clear commitment to continuous improvement and the ability to do so.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	very good	A
Reading	B	good	B
Writing	B	satisfactory	C
Mathematics	A	unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	A	poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs or IBPs*	A		

\* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, and IBPs are individual behaviour plans for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Pupils who attend school regularly achieve very well in mathematics, design and technology (DT), information and communication technology (ICT), personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE). They achieve well in all other subjects, including English, except for German, where achievement is good in speaking and listening and satisfactory in writing. All pupils make good or better progress in relation to their individual academic and personal targets, particularly in behaviour.

Pupils are entered for nationally recognised examinations and assessments, including GCSE, whenever possible. Results have improved year on year since the previous inspection in terms of both the number of entries and the level of passes. Different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls and those from different ethnic backgrounds, achieve equally well.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils start school with negative attitudes to education. This improves dramatically at Lindsworth and all pupils show positive attitudes to school and learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall behaviour was good during the inspection week, with most pupils being co-operative, hard working and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and they are good among the pupils. Race relations are very good. Pupils make significant gains in self-confidence at the school.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are well below average. Many pupils attend regularly. Those whose attendance is poor, or who do not attend at all, do not learn.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Very good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Over a hundred lessons were seen and the teaching was very good or excellent in about half of them and it was satisfactory or better in all of them. The quality of teaching is very good in mathematics, ICT and PSHE. It is good in English and science. The teaching of the key skills of literacy is good and of numeracy is very good. The school meets the needs of different groups of pupils including boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, equally well.

Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and the pupils in their care. Relationships are excellent. Support staff make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. Learning is very good because the teaching is very good and there are few incidents of highly disruptive behaviour in the classroom. Pupils work hard and often overcome their initial reluctance to have a go at things.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides good learning opportunities and meets statutory requirements. There are some minor weaknesses. Not all the pupils in Years 10 and 11 have the opportunity to follow courses that match both their academic abilities and their more practically based, vocational interests and needs. There are not enough opportunities for girls and boys to mix socially and academically.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school meets the needs of the small number of pupils with English as an additional language well and they make progress at a very similar rate to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development. The provision for their moral and social development is very good indeed and enables them to make significant gains in their understanding of right and wrong, their self-confidence and their ability to get on with others. Spiritual development and cultural development are both good. The ethnic diversity of the staff, and very good relationships between all adults in the school, set a very good example for the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school. Statutory requirements are met. There are very good systems to promote and monitor the pupils' personal well-being and assess their academic progress. This is equally true of the day, extended day and residential provision.

The school has a good partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has great vision and is supported by a very highly skilled senior management team. There is a tremendous sense of teamwork among all the staff and the school governors. The school successfully achieves its aims as stated in the school prospectus.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors have a good understanding of the work of the school and offer effective support. Statutory requirements are met. They are fully involved in the school's budget.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school carefully measures its performance and identifies appropriate priorities in the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of available finances to develop its provision. Very good use is made of staff expertise.

Staffing is very good and reflects the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. The school has very good numbers of highly qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. The accommodation and learning resources are good. The school applies the principles of best value very well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best.</li><li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.</li><li>• Their child is making good progress at school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their child does not get the right amount of homework.</li><li>• Behaviour in the school.</li></ul>

The parents' views of the school are positive overall and the inspectors share these views. Behaviour in school is good. The school does not have a clear enough policy on homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils achieve very well. This judgement and all subsequent judgements on standards, except for the final paragraph in this section, relate to those pupils who attend school regularly. In addition to all pupils having a statement of special educational needs (SEN) with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), the school has evidence that about half the pupils have been involved with the police and nearly half of them have been involved in taking illegal substances. In relation to their abilities and these contextual factors, all pupils achieve very well in mathematics, design and technology (DT), information and communication technology (ICT), personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE). They achieve well in all other subjects, except for German where achievement is good in speaking and listening and satisfactory in writing.
2. These achievements are due primarily to the very high quality teaching. The very high quality leadership and high standards of care, through the extended day and residential provision, also have a significant impact on pupils' achievements. There is a uniform approach to behaviour management, particularly the use of daily individual contracts, and there are excellent adult-pupil relationships throughout all the elements of the school's complex provision. This provides a firm foundation to everything the school strives for and is the cornerstone of the good provision for the pupils' PSHE. All pupils start at Lindsworth with literacy and numeracy skills that are at least below average for their age and with negative attitudes to learning. Pupils make significant gains in self-esteem and self-confidence and develop a willingness to have a go in basic activities, such as contributing to a classroom discussion or reading in a group.
3. The school makes effective use of the extensive information on pupils to set clear individual targets for both behaviour and work. Pupils are entered for GCSE, CofA or other recognised examinations and assessments whenever possible. Results have improved year on year since the previous inspection in terms of both the number of entries and the level of passes. This is due much more to better academic standards achieved by the pupils and an increased range of courses offered rather than an increase in pupil numbers. There are some specific examples of individual achievement, which illustrate the school's considerable success with individual pupils, in the subject sections of this report. The pupil who achieved a GCSE pass in mathematics after only two years in the school from a starting point well below average is a particularly striking example of what is possible.
4. The inspection did not find any significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) progress at a similar rate to their peers in academic subjects and, at times, do very well in subjects such as music or physical education (PE). However, the school is not yet rigorous enough in analysing the performance of different groups of pupils.
5. Poor attendance by some pupils and irregular attendance by others is a major factor in this school and these pupils clearly achieve little. The school has carried out a rigorous analysis of attendance information on the basis of class groups and has a range of strategies for improving attendance. The most significant problems with attendance are in Years 10 and 11 at the north site. These pupils are among the most educationally and socially disaffected young people in the city of Birmingham. They have a long history of poor attendance at school. The north site has only been established this academic year and this inspection finds substantial evidence of the progress, both academic and personal, made by pupils who do attend.

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

6. Pupils who attend regularly have good attitudes to school and work hard. In the majority of lessons they are interested in their work and respond positively. They are keen to be involved and are pleased by their successes. Pupils concentrate well when they are actively involved in their learning, for example when designing a web page in ICT, competing in team games in athletics and completing an assignment in DT. Pupils offer tastes of the food they have cooked, asking for comments about the quality. They celebrate the success of other pupils, for example applauding in assembly when certificates are presented and during the finals of a whole-school table tennis competition. Pupils settle down quickly at the start of lessons, respond well to teachers' questions and directions and are well motivated by the range of good teaching strategies used in the school. Older pupils have developed the ability to work independently and produce project work of high quality in subjects such as history and English. They enjoy and find interest in the work, gaining a sense of achievement in what they do.
7. Pupils' personal development is good. The extensive behaviour monitoring system gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on the impact of their actions on others and enables them to be realistic about reaching their own behaviour targets. Relationships among pupils are good and excellent between pupils and staff. Race relations are very good. There were no recorded examples of racial harassment during the inspection. Pupils often support each other in class and are usually tolerant of the wide range of abilities that exist in some classes. They learn to co-operate with each other and to contribute effectively to discussions. During PE activities their sense of teamwork improves considerably. They have a keen sense of fairness and have learnt to curb negative reactions when they disagree with the referee's decisions. Whilst a minority of pupils continue to have difficulty throughout their school life, most successfully complete both college courses and work-experience placements. Pupils show concern and empathy for others. This is seen in the way they respond to advice from the specialist teacher on how to be aware of the best way of helping a pupil with a hearing impairment. Pupils also showed themselves to be quiet and orderly during a school assembly when certificates were distributed. Similarly, at lunchtime and after school in the homes, pupils joke with each other and with staff in a relaxed atmosphere. Most of the pupils are very welcoming to visitors and very happy to discuss their schoolwork.
8. Pupils' behaviour is good. However, as would be expected in a school of this type, a minority of pupils occasionally displays very challenging behaviour. It is to the pupils' credit that there were few incidents during the inspection. The well-structured system of behaviour rewards and sanctions are clear to pupils and they are confident that staff will apply these in a fair and consistent way. Discussion with pupils indicates that they do have very good awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Many of the pupils failed to establish themselves successfully during their time at other mainstream and special schools and they respond very well to the consistent care and support offered in this school and the residential homes. Conflicts among pupils did occur during the inspection but the staff dealt with all these incidents in an appropriate manner. The rate of fixed-term exclusions for the year prior to the inspection was high. However, these were necessary to maintain good order in the school and were in accordance with the school's policy of not tolerating serious violence.
9. The attendance rate remains well below the national average for this type of school, at around 66 per cent. Since the previous inspection the number of pupils on roll has nearly doubled. Many of the pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have good attendance records. However, all the pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a history of very poor attendance at school. In spite of the school's extensive efforts, over 40 per cent of these pupils continue to have poor attendance records and this adversely affects the school's overall figure. Overall, punctuality is good and lessons start and finish on time.

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

10. Teaching is very good overall. Just over a hundred lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was very good or excellent in very nearly half of them. The teaching was good or better in nearly nine tenths of the lessons and it was satisfactory in all other lessons. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when there was a smaller proportion of very good lessons and a small percentage of unsatisfactory lessons.
11. Teachers are knowledgeable in their own areas of expertise. The school makes very effective use of this expertise through the organisation of the pupils into classes based on ability, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and a mainstream subject departmental structure. Much of the very good teaching is characterised by this skilled knowledge and delivery of the subject. The key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught very well, as are specific skills and techniques in other subjects such as food studies and games in PE. The most significant strength of the teaching is the excellent adult-pupil relationships. These relationships include high expectations of both work and behaviour, consistent use of the contracts system and positive personal interactions, which feature genuine warmth and humour. Pupils with SEBD often have difficulty accepting their own mistakes or understanding some of the more subtle ways in which people interact. There were many examples of pupils controlling their anger or negative feelings about their own ability to learn, for example when making contact with another player in a game of football, or persevering when in difficulty, for example when preparing ingredients for a curry sauce in the kitchen.
12. Support staff make a very significant contribution to the high quality teaching and pupils' learning. In the classroom, the role of additional adults is clear and often included both in the lesson plan and written on a separate form. These staff know the pupils well and are particularly effective in encouraging reluctant learners to have a go or helping others to control themselves. In this way, the possible disruption to others arising from frustration or aggressive behaviour is minimised. There are many other adults in the school beside the classroom staff. All of these people also contribute to the pupils' academic progress and personal development.
13. Marking is becoming increasingly supportive for pupils. Thus, many teachers not only comment on pupils' work, but also indicate how they can improve it. In general this is good, but there is still room for development in this area. The best examples show a good rapport with individual pupils and link teachers' comments to that pupil's targets. Thus, one teacher comments that a piece of English work is weak on the structure of paragraphs, which is a target for this pupil. The next piece of work is specifically about paragraphs and provides immediate development of an area of weakness identified through the previous marking.
14. The school has been unsuccessful in making its policy on homework clear to parents. This became apparent before the inspection week through inconsistencies in the views expressed by the headteacher and the parents to the registered inspector. The headteacher stated that the school policy is to provide homework if pupils or parents request it. Several parents stated that they did not want homework and several others that it was never set and it would cause problems at home if it was. However, a small number of parents stated they had asked for homework but had been told the school did not provide it. Furthermore, they were happy with the reasons given. A letter was sent to all parents shortly after the inspection clarifying the school's position on homework. This is, that it will be set if parents or pupils request it, but it must be completed. The registered inspector saw a copy of this letter.

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

15. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities, within which there are several significant strengths, and there was a positive response to the findings of the last inspection. All subjects of the NC, together with RE, are now taught and statutory requirements are met. The ways in which the school actively promotes the pupils' personal, moral and social development are very effective. The extended day and 24-

hour curriculum provided in the residential homes are very good. The girls' unit effectively meets the needs of this specific group of pupils.

16. Subject policies and schemes of work are generally good and sometimes very good, for example in mathematics and ICT. There is the necessary detail to ensure that pupils build upon what they already know, understand and can do as they progress through the school. A good and expanding range of relevant, accredited academic and vocational courses reinforces the provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Some of the planning, for example in art and design, is relatively new and untried, but the school has effective systems in place for monitoring the success of its provision, even though opportunities for co-ordinators to observe teaching in their subjects are limited. The school has made a good start to raising the profile of literacy, and the ways in which it addresses numeracy and ICT within the whole curriculum are very effective. However, opportunities to recognise, develop and accredit vocational core skills within lessons and other activities are sometimes overlooked.
17. There is a strong commitment to providing the same range of opportunities that might be expected in mainstream education. However, those pupils who are persistent non-attendees are at a disadvantage in that they increasingly lack the skills, knowledge and understanding to access existing activities at the appropriate level, with the result that the school has difficulty ensuring that the provision is relevant to these pupils' needs. In addition, some courses and activities, for example the Youth Award Scheme, are not available on both the north and south sites. This limits some pupils' access to relevant educational or vocational opportunities.
18. The school's provision for promoting the pupils' personal, moral and social development is very effective and endorses the aims of the school exceptionally well. It is founded upon the very positive relationships that exist throughout the school, and the residential provision plays a crucial role very successfully. All staff know the individual pupils and their particular circumstances very well and act as very positive role models, giving clear, consistent guidance on what is, and is not, acceptable. There is no formal School Council but pupils are encouraged to give their opinions on day-to-day school issues. Daily routines, for example registration, assemblies and mealtimes, are highly civilised affairs. There is a good scheme of work for PSHE, which is reinforced by good quality programmes for sex and drugs education. These are adapted very effectively to individual pupil's circumstances, and considerable work is undertaken to help pupils explore their personal qualities and raise their self-esteem. This in turn provides the foundation for a very effective programme of careers education, reinforced by a very good range of relevant work experience opportunities and links with further education colleges. The result is that the majority of pupils successfully address their emotional and behavioural difficulties, and leave school as responsible young adults with a good humoured, positive outlook on life. The only weakness in the provision is that opportunities to promote social inclusion between boys and girls are underdeveloped, although these are greater than they were when the girls' unit was first established. Suitable plans to incorporate the new national requirements on citizenship, from September 2002, are included in the school development plan.
19. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. It is underpinned by the way in which the school continually encourages pupils to reflect on the consequences of their actions. Staff encourage and welcome pupils' contributions in lessons, and are successful in creating an atmosphere in which individuals' ideas and contributions are treated with respect, with the result that pupils often become absorbed in activities. Many subjects make positive contributions. For example, the exploration of feelings is woven into the pupils' work in English and the scheme of work for RE is particularly strong in this respect. The pupils' spiritual development is further enhanced by the well planned,

whole-school assemblies which celebrate the achievements of individual pupils, as well as giving good opportunities for self-reflection.

20. The provision for pupils' cultural development is also good and the school successfully promotes the pupils' awareness and understanding of the diverse nature of modern society. Many subjects provide an effective context for such issues, notably geography, German and religious education. The first phase of the Comenius project established links with schools in Austria and Finland. Recent projects, such as the one focusing on the canals in Birmingham, have helped to promote a good understanding of local culture and tradition, and visitors to the school, such as speakers at assembly, also make a positive contribution. Planning for such activities, however, tends to rest on individual subject co-ordinators, and opportunities to promote the pupils' cultural understanding in a coherent way across a range of subjects are underdeveloped. This point also applies to the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development.
21. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, many of which are organised very successfully through the extended day provision. The school makes very good use of local community sports facilities such as swimming pools and golf courses, and leisure facilities such as ten-pin bowling centres. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning, particularly in PSHE and PE. Visits further afield have included museums, art galleries and residential outdoor pursuit trips to Bala in North Wales. The school also actively seeks to bring the community into the school, for example by involving members of the local table-tennis club in the tournament, which reached its climax during the inspection week.
22. There are very constructive relationships with other institutions. The school makes very good use of other members of the Village Partnership by using facilities and sharing expertise. Links with work placements, employers and further education establishments are highly effective. The school actively seeks to make the most of their very positive connections with other institutions, such as the local school of nursing by, for example, canvassing the views of students on placement in order to assess whether the school's practice reflects its policies.



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

23. There are very good procedures in place for supporting pupils' educational and personal support and guidance. This has continued to be a strong feature of the school since the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents agree that the school supports children well and helps them to become mature and responsible.
24. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils are sound. A number of aspects regarding the accommodation have been drawn to the attention of the school. The designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection has a clear understanding of the role. The school has, however, identified the need to involve governors more in these aspects of school provision. First-aid provision is satisfactory with a number of staff trained and records kept of any accidents that occur.
25. Despite the school's attendance rate being well below the national average, the school's procedures for monitoring attendance and promoting good attendance are extensive and they are rigorously applied. Registers are accurately kept and in accordance with statutory requirements. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. There is good liaison with the educational social worker and unexplained absences are quickly followed up. The school strives to convince parents of the need for their children to attend school regularly but is not as successful as it would wish to be.
26. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive conduct, including racism, are very effective. There is a clear behaviour policy that is regularly reviewed and evaluated. The behaviour management procedures are extensive and well understood and consistently applied by all staff. All pupils carry a 'Behaviour Contract' with them at all times during the school day. Staff diligently record the performance of all pupils on these contracts. This leads to credits and rewards being earned or sanctions being applied. Rewards are given frequently for good behaviour. The frequently very good management by teachers and support staff has a positive effect on pupils' attainment.
27. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Staff know the pupils well and any areas for development are identified by staff and addressed. Personal targets are set and shared with pupils and parents. The school works closely with a wide range of special education and health support staff. This includes professionals employed by the school itself and based on the south site, and other agencies, including the school nurse. The school's work with pupils who have SEBD is highly regarded by other professionals.
28. Standards of care and relationships are very good in the residential homes. There are very close working relations between residential and classroom staff and very good arrangements at the start and end of the school day.
29. The school has made good progress in its assessment procedures. The last report identified concerns relating to, 'the effective assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects', and the use of this information, 'in the planning of the work of pupils'. There is now a good policy for the assessment of pupils' work and the monitoring of their progress. This has already had a very positive impact on the progress pupils make, as each subject has implemented good, regular assessment procedures which are beginning to be discussed with the pupils themselves.
30. Every subject has good assessment procedures in place at both key stages. It is particularly good in mathematics, ICT, DT and RE. In PE and DT pupils make regular and effective contributions to their own assessments and this participation is also developing well within other subjects, such as English and music. The assessment information is detailed and closely linked to the curriculum units being covered. The records are concise in content and yet comprehensive in the educational perspectives they cover. By this means, subject co-ordinators are getting a good detailed picture

of what pupils know, understand and can do. In Years 10 and 11, the development of accredited work has been impressive and external assessors have commented on the detailed assessment carried out in most subjects. Good use is made of photographs, video recordings and digital imaging to emphasise the nature of pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment is shared well between teachers and teaching assistants. This provides a basis for the very good knowledge that the assistants have, and use, on a day-to-day basis.

31. There are many instances of assessment data being used to develop and refine the curriculum. It is particularly good in mathematics and RE. In ICT and science, good day-to-day assessment is reviewed regularly and informs what a teacher does next with a group or individual pupil. The use of assessment information is particularly impressive in the senior part of the school. Here, for example, English teachers carefully monitor results from standard assessment tasks, the daily performance of individual pupils and the level of work being produced. This is brought together regularly and often indicates adaptations that will assist pupils in completing an accredited course. It is also taken into account in deciding which modules of a course are best for the pupils from year to year. This has been particularly impressive on the north site, where the English team has used data to implement and monitor a one-year GCSE qualification that has benefited pupils who have never previously gained qualifications.
32. The school uses a range of assessment formats. Behaviour is very well monitored through the contract system, which is a model of its kind in terms of both thoroughness and pupils' participation. Records of achievement bring together a range of evidence relating to individual pupils, including certificates, photographs and self-assessments. At present the work undertaken with regard to behaviour is stronger than that for learning. However, the fact that all subject areas now have well-thought-through procedures indicates that the focus on curriculum adaptation arising from pupil assessment will continue to improve in all subject areas.
33. The school complies with national legislation and recommendations with regard to pupils with SEN, including the new national code of practice. IBPs and IEPs are used throughout the school in accordance with national requirements and guidance. Sensibly, the school has made behavioural targets the basis of the contract system, which has, in turn, had a very good impact on individual and overall behaviour standards. It has also decided that learning targets are often the same for a group. Thus, subject teachers use their planning to identify learning targets for groups and classes, while detailed IEPs are only produced for those pupils with complex and additional learning difficulties. The work in Year 7 is providing a very good model of how this can be done. All classroom and care staff are advised of all pupils' reading ages when they are tested on entry to the school and each time they are re-tested. However, at present subject teachers do not have a totally clear idea of individual pupil's reading requirements, and the school could usefully monitor this process.
34. There is a considerable amount of good work, but this has not yet been co-ordinated and fully linked to the monitoring and adaptation of the curriculum. An assessment co-ordinator's post has been established from September 2002 and this person will need to ensure that the information gained within subjects provides a clear overall picture of individual progress. She will also need to link assessment data to regular reviews of the curriculum. This will ensure that significant factors, for example low literacy levels, are not common features that continually reduce performance.

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

35. Parents' views of the school are positive. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, those who returned the questionnaires and those spoken to during inspection week are satisfied with the quality of education provided. They view Lindsworth as a good school. Their children like coming to school and the parents believe that the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. A very large proportion of parents feels comfortable with approaching the

school with any problem they might have. The only significant issues of concern disclosed in the returned questionnaires were the amount of homework offered by the school and the pupils' behaviour. The inspection findings are that homework arrangements are not clear enough and there is currently no written homework policy. The behaviour of pupils during the inspection was found to be good overall in lessons and in and around the school. During the meeting with the registered inspector, a small number of parents raised objections to pupils smoking at school. A letter was sent to all parents immediately after the inspection clarifying the school's position on both homework and smoking. The registered inspector saw a copy of this letter.

36. The quality of information to parents is good overall. There is regular dialogue between staff and parents over the telephone each week. Discussions with staff are organised appropriately and parents find the staff to be approachable and happy to discuss areas of concern. Most parents feel well informed about their child's progress but a small number do not. The school does all it can to involve parents in their child's annual reviews, including offering transport if there are severe difficulties, and pupils are always present. There are good opportunities, in accordance with the national code of practice for pupils with SEN, for parents and pupils to be involved in the setting of learning and behaviour targets. End of year reports are good overall. However, they do not always contain levels of achievement in all subjects and they are sometimes unclear in describing what pupils know, understand and can do. The school brochure now meets statutory requirements and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. The governors' annual report to parents is a very well presented and informative document.
37. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is unsatisfactory. Parents are not actively encouraged to help in school and there is no parent association. There is little evidence to show parents are making a valuable contribution to their child's learning at home and more could be done to help parents to become more effective in this area.

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

38. The headteacher and senior management team provide excellent leadership and very good management to the work of the school. This is a highly complex school, which provides very well for its pupils and manages many other facilities in the city of Birmingham. It is very successful in achieving its own specific aims and in contributing to the city's wider provision for disaffected young people. The headteacher has great vision and is an outstanding leader and organiser. The senior management team comprises a group of highly qualified and experienced professionals who demonstrate a wide range of sophisticated leadership and management skills. The residential provision and the girls' unit are both managed very well. There is a tremendous sense of teamwork and common sense of purpose among all the staff. Improvement since the previous inspection has been excellent and there is a clear, shared commitment to doing even better. The governing body is effective in supporting the school in its work and at times asking searching questions about aspects of the school development plan or the school budget.
39. Leadership in the subjects of the curriculum is very good overall, always good and sometimes outstanding. It is understandable that links between the north and south sites are variable given the distance between the sites and the fact that the north site is a very new provision. In some subjects, such as mathematics, DT and PE, these links are very good and are helped by some teachers and some pupils spending time at both sites. In others they are less well developed but this is, nevertheless, at least satisfactory in all subjects. There are good arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum through the departments and the implementation of national requirements and guidelines on performance management. Members of the management team observe teaching formally and colleagues work closely within departments including visiting each other's classrooms. However, not all subject co-ordinators have enough opportunities to formally observe their colleagues teaching.

40. The school development plan is a highly detailed and comprehensive document. It includes separate action plans for most of the subjects at both sites. It identifies appropriate priorities for development and is closely tied in with the school budget. It is an effective tool for the management of change. All departments have high quality handbooks and there are policies for all aspects of the school's work, many of which are high quality.
41. The school bursar, her staff and the administrative staff together form an effective and efficient team. They are responsible for a wide range of duties including finance, staffing and attendance. They successfully enable the smooth running of the school. The senior management team, governors and bursar's office plan and monitor the school's budget very well. In the last financial year they overcame a deficit from the previous year and achieved a very small carry-forward figure into this year's budget. There were no major issues arising from the most recent external audit of financial procedures and effective action has been taken to address the shortcomings identified. Good use is made of specific grants and funding. Furthermore, the school is very successful in bidding for funding for exciting, innovative and imaginative projects.
42. The school is very well staffed. There are good numbers of teachers, support staff and care workers. Many of the staff are highly qualified and very experienced in working with pupils with SEBD. A strength of the staffing is that it reflects the mix of ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. The school has successfully recruited new staff during a period of significant growth. In the past year there have been some staff who have been absent for long periods. There is no evidence that this has had an adverse effect on pupils' progress. The school is a major provider of training for professionals in the field of SEBD and takes many students on placements.
43. The school accommodation is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. An extensive refurbishment programme has been carried out on both the north and south sites. For example, one of the residential homes has been changed from six dormitories into 14 en-suite rooms, the girls' unit building also now houses a computer suite and conference room and the toilet facilities have been refurbished. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The accommodation for pupils who board and attend the extended day activities is spacious and of good quality. Pupils are involved in all aspects of residency, such as choosing the colours, furniture and fabrics in all the rooms including their own bedrooms. Their privacy, dignity and rights are recognised but there is no dedicated 'child-line' telephone provision. Health and safety procedures and fire evacuation procedures are satisfactory. The fabric of the outside of some buildings remains in poor condition. The physical education changing room has been completely refurbished and this is a further improvement. On the south site there is no library provision and disabled access does not currently meet requirements. There are very well-equipped specialist areas for subjects such as science, DT, food studies, ICT and music. Learning resources are good overall and at least adequate for all subjects. They are very good for science, DT and ICT.

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

44. The headteacher and governors should now:
- (1) find ways of improving the rates of attendance and thereby improve the achievements of those pupils whose attendance is poor and those who do not attend at all.
- (Paragraphs 5 and 9)
45. The headteacher and governors should consider the following minor points:
- (1) make sure all pupils benefit, where relevant, from the best provision on both sites giving particular consideration to improving the links between the north and south site and offering more vocational courses for pupils in Years 10 and 11 on the south site;

(Paragraphs 16, 17 and 86)

- (2) develop and exploit opportunities to promote social inclusion between boys and girls both in and out of class; and

(Paragraph 18)

- (3) provide a library on the south site to support independent reading and promote the development of research skills across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 43 and 53)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	109
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	13	40	40	15	0	0	0
Percentage	12	37	37	14	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	177
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	168

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	45
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	13.1

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	18.7

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

## ***Pupils' and students' achievements***

It is not appropriate to provide comparisons between the performance of pupils at this school and national data. However, the school has substantial evidence that the performance of pupils in the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 and achievements in GCSE examinations are above average in comparison with available data for similar schools.

### **In 2001:**

#### **KEY STAGE THREE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARD ASSESSMENT TESTS**

36 pupils entered

English: 5 Level 1; 16 Level 2; 4 Level 3; 6 Level 4

Mathematics: 1 Level 2; 7 Level 3; 5 Level 4; 4 Level 5

Science: 10 Level 3; 7 Level 4

#### **GCSE**

Overall, four pupils achieved 5 passes and 17 pupils, including 4 girls, achieved one pass.

There were a total of 26 passes.

#### **GCSE (short course)**

There were a total of 15 passes.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT**

English:	6 passes 5 merits	8 distinctions	
Mathematics	3 passes 7 merits	17 distinctions	
Science	1 pass 2 merits	7 distinctions	
Design and technology	2 passes 2 merits	1 distinction	
Geography	1 pass 1 merit	3 distinctions	
Information technology	1 passes 10 merits	5 distinctions	
Music	1 pass 3 merits		
Religious education	3 passes 3 merits	6 distinctions	

#### **CLAIT**

2 passes

#### **ASDAN**

9 Bronze Level

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	25
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	26
Indian	0
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	111
Any other minority ethnic group	5

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	26	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	8	0
Indian	1	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	54	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## ***Teachers and classes***

### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	31
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.7
Average class size	9.3

### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	29
Total aggregate hours worked per week	901

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	2,910,616
Total expenditure	2,829,810
Expenditure per pupil	18,140
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 53,782
Balance carried forward to next year	27,024

## ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	38	8	8	2
My child is making good progress in school.	42	47	4	2	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	11	47	19	6	13
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	8	9	28	32	17
The teaching is good.	47	36	0	2	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	23	11	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	21	6	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	30	4	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	57	26	9	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	51	30	6	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	30	11	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	26	8	2	8

### Note

The answers to some questions may not total 100 per cent because some parents did not answer all the questions.

### Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents expressed concerns that their children were allowed to smoke at school.

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

### **ENGLISH**

46. There have been significant improvements in the provision for English since the previous inspection. Progress for all pupils was satisfactory then. It is now good and often very good. Writing progressed at a satisfactory level, but is now seen to be good. Pupils' attitudes have improved from good to very good. Teaching overall is good, frequently very good and occasionally excellent. This year's national assessment tasks for Year 9 produced a standard that was very much higher than in 2001, both in terms of the numbers participating and the levels of attainment reached. There has been particularly good improvement in Years 10 and 11, where pupils produce work of a high standard on both sites. Accreditation has been taken forward very well and in 2001 eight pupils gained an English GCSE, while another ten gained the CofA. With the imaginative work being undertaken on the north site, these figures will be even higher this year. For a school whose intake includes 50 per cent of the pupils with reading below an eight-year-old level, this is an impressive achievement.
47. Progress by all pupils in speaking and listening is good. Younger pupils have benefited from the implementation of the NLS, in which teachers enable them to listen carefully to stories, join in with reading, commenting on parts of the text, and answering questions. Daily discussion ensures that pupils take part fully in oral aspects of the lesson. Because teachers focus well on the understanding of vocabulary, and offer clear explanations, pupils develop an increasing ability to express themselves, debate and come to conclusions. The very good choice of texts assists in the development of speaking and listening skills. Books, such as 'The Hobbit', graphic novels and Martin Burgess's 'Junk', together with a range of poetry, provide pupils with the opportunity to think and talk about fantasy and day-to-day issues in a small group environment. They are also given opportunities to participate in role-play and tape-record, which further enhance their confidence in talking and turn-taking. Thus, in a very good Year 7 lesson, pupils discussed how to develop a magazine. The teacher and teaching assistant worked as a very effective team using humour, challenge and encouragement to draw ideas from the pupils. They acted as good role models for speaking and listening, reinforcing turn-taking skills by accepting answers when spoken and not shouted out. The pace of the lesson was good and even a reluctant member of the group participated well after encouragement from the teaching assistant. The quality of the learning that took place was very good indeed. Pupils happily volunteered the meaning of words such as 'editor' and 'advertisement', and willingly voted for one of the group to edit the final version. The interaction of pupils, their enthusiasm for the task and the standards of speaking and listening were of a high quality and underpin the good progress being made in all aspects of English.
48. The success of early work on speaking and listening provides a good basis for work in the later years. Once again, very good teamwork between teachers and assistants, coupled with a very good choice of texts, combine to develop a creative atmosphere where pupils feel secure and can volunteer ideas in the knowledge that they will be valued. One very imaginative aspect of English teaching is the way that texts and plays are used so effectively to explore emotions. Thus, a very good Year 10 GCSE lesson saw pupils exploring 'Of Mice and Men', having seen the film previously. They were encouraged to identify with individual characters and discuss the way Steinbeck uses animal adjectives to describe them. Homework was set on the theme of, 'Imagine you are one of the characters in 'Of Mice and Men''. The following day, during a group activity called 'hot seating', each pupil expressed the opinions and ideas of one of the characters. Once again, the teaching assistant provided an excellent role model and the final taped version is a good example of the growing confidence and proficiency in putting thoughts and feelings into words. For pupils with the difficulties that many experience, this is a very valuable element of their curriculum. Members of the inspection team watched the video 'On a

Hiding to Nothing' produced by the school. The level of confidence, the proficiency in empathising with characters and the overall exploration of social issues and emotions show how far pupils progress as the result of the English and drama teaching they receive.

49. Progress in reading throughout the school is good. This is the result of some very effective initiatives and the good emphasis placed on reading throughout most subjects. School records indicate that pupils enter throughout the year and with a wide range of learning difficulties. However, it is consistently the case that pupils have not had the opportunity to develop their reading to an appropriate level or use these skills once acquired. One fifth of pupils entering the school record a reading level below seven years, while half have a level that is appropriate for only the simplest of texts. Inevitably this means that pupils lack confidence and reject the printed word. It is a tribute to the school that by the end of their first year all pupils are happy to participate in class reading and most express a wish to improve the skills necessary to reach greater fluency. In all lessons observed, pupils were either able to cope with the reading of the texts used or showed a willingness to receive adult assistance. The Year 7 class reading 'Junk' read round the group, despite the fact that their reading levels varied considerably and some of the issues addressed by the book were sensitive ones for individual pupils. All had developed a good sense of intonation and were willing to correct themselves, using phonic skills and good use of context. Similarly, in an excellent lesson, the video of 'Anne of Green Gables' was discussed well by the girls' group as the result of each pupil having read the text. Once again, the concentration on feelings was high and teacher and assistant worked well to build on the reading of the text in previous lessons. In this way, the pupils used their own reading as the basis for discussion. A good Year 10 lesson on the north site, with a group of disturbed pupils, saw them using Yellow Pages, to find the contact numbers for a range of services. The dual emphasis on survival skills and developing understanding and humanity is a great strength throughout the English teaching and provides the basis for the personal, academic and emotional development of pupils.
50. On entry, each pupil is assessed with regard to reading skills. This is complemented by further assessments during the first fortnight. On the basis of the results, pupils receive additional reading support. Teaching assistants have been central to this development. They have developed very good paired and individual reading programmes, a thoughtful and effective reading policy, together with highly structured support programmes using computer and taped materials. This is a very strong development indeed since the last inspection and, together with daily reading lessons, is contributing significantly to the progress being made by most pupils in reading. However, the success of these initiatives has not been fully recognised and co-ordinated well enough to maximise individual progress. The teaching assistants involved have a very good body of expertise and many class teachers are providing effective support for their classes in reading. However, the inspection team finds that the focused work, particularly for those pupils with the lowest reading levels, should be more visible and have a higher status within the school.
51. In the last report, progress in writing was assessed as 'satisfactory throughout the school'. It is now good for the vast majority of pupils, who develop the ability to write tidily, more accurately and, where appropriate, with the assistance of a word processor. By the age of 14, most pupils write stories that are well structured, use vivid vocabulary and are presented in clear joined or printed style. Dictionary work and additional support programmes have increased confidence in spelling. Pupils write effective letters, reports and take notes from books and websites. The most noticeable developments, for all ages and on both sites, are the ability to produce longer pieces of independent writing, draft and re-draft their work and use evocative vocabulary in stories and reports. In a very good Year 9 lesson, pupils read a rather boring short story. They were then asked to create a more dramatic one, using appropriate language. From the beginning of the lesson where the pupils complained of boredom there was very good progress resulting in three independent pieces of writing by pupils using evocative phrases such as, 'I was petrified out of my wits' and 'the smell of death hung around the house'.

Similarly, the work of older pupils reaches a good level with regard to both the vocabulary and sentence structures employed. One Year 11 pupil writes of his grandmother, 'I remember very clearly the beautiful smell that surrounded her and her flat'. Later, when grandma died, he wrote, 'Suddenly she wasn't there. No more visits. No more playing cards.' Another pupil wrote about a snake, following the reading of the poem by D H Lawrence, 'I heard his beautiful hiss'. It is clear that the teaching and encouragement of writing assists pupils in preparing effectively for adult life and, in the process, allows them to come to terms with a wide range of experiences.

52. The subject is managed well on both sites. The two co-ordinators provide good leadership for colleagues, all of whom are experienced English teachers. They have been instrumental in raising the profile of English in all subjects. Thus, in DT the specialist teacher makes very good use of writing frames to assist in writing and evaluating plans. In ICT pupils write their own web page. In history, extended pieces of writing are well presented in all topic units and, in geography, pupils re-draft their field-work notes for examination presentations. Particular strengths in the management of the subject include the use of the library on the north site and the development of a wide range of accredited courses across the school.
53. Although pupils on the south site experience a rich curriculum, the lack of a library means that the development and usage of independent reading skills for pleasure and research are limited. This has a negative effect on pupils' progress. Pupils on the south site are not being provided with library skills and book experiences that will contribute to their social confidence and lifelong learning when they leave the school. This is due to a lack of access to good quality fiction, in book form rather than electronic, and a reduced stock of non-fiction material for general access.

## **MATHEMATICS**

54. Overall, pupils make very good progress in mathematics, and they achieve very well. This is borne out in many individual cases, but is best exemplified by a pupil who arrived in the school with a mathematical age of 6.5 years. He left at the end of Year 11 having gained a GCSE pass, having only been in the school for two years. The co-ordinator has successfully developed the curriculum to assist pupils to learn at appropriate levels. By the time they leave, pupils gain at least one of the various nationally accredited certificates that the school offers, including GCSE. The NNS has been very successfully introduced in Years 7 to 9, and the latest results show that the number of pupils gaining NC Level 4 has doubled since last year, while the proportion achieving Level 5 has been maintained. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.
55. By the end of Year 9, pupils collect and record data, solve mathematical problems of basic number and work successfully on problems involving time, days, weeks and years. They carry out all four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division accurately. They understand the properties of triangles and they know and use terms about them such as equilateral and isosceles. Pupils conduct surveys well using tallies of, for example, favourite television programmes and the eye colours of the pupils in the class. Then they record this data on charts. They work on frequency and probabilities in problems such as whether drawing pins will land point up or down. Pupils use brackets correctly in more complex problems and know about the equivalents of fractions, decimals and percentages. In spite of the very good progress that many pupils make in Years 7 to 9, attainment in mathematics remains below average overall by the end of this key stage.
56. By the end of Year 11, pupils have continued to make very good progress in building on their mathematical skills and knowledge. There is a wide range of ability, but all pupils gain an accredited certificate by the time they leave the school, some taking the CofA and a few taking GCSE examinations. The numbers of distinctions and merits gained in the CofA are very good.

Pupils know how to order large numbers, and some use negative numbers accurately. They learn how to 'round up' or 'round down' to ten or a hundred. Other pupils work on co-ordinates and fractions and more able pupils find the area and circumference of a circle, both by diagrams and by formula. They construct pie charts and interpret graphs.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, within a range from satisfactory to excellent. In the best lessons, teachers plan very well and provide work that challenges pupils. In lessons that are less successful, though still satisfactory, teachers do not always apply a consistent management style that is in keeping with the school's system. This results in some pupils learning less, and the pace of the lesson is also affected. Generally, teachers provide appropriate levels of work for their pupils. For example, in a very good Year 9 lesson, pupils were learning to estimate using units of measurement in weight, height, distance and volume. The teacher provided clear reference points such as the height of the support assistant, the measurements of the room, or the contents of a cola can. In this way, when pupils came to work on written problems they had some starting point in mind and made very good gains with some close and very well-directed support from the adults.
58. Teachers provide a good grounding in the basic skills required for mathematics. For example, in a good Year 7 lesson, pupils were seen learning how to use a protractor. They were given a range of angles to construct and followed these by some calculations to find missing angles since they already knew that a straight line is 180 degrees. Pupils in Year 8 were seen in an excellent lesson preparing for a traffic survey. The very brisk pace kept pupils on their toes and actively engaged throughout the lesson. They constructed simple tallies and recorded this data onto a bar chart using graph paper. They understand that the horizontal and vertical lines of a graph are labelled 'x' and 'y', and know how to plot co-ordinates.
59. Teachers provide good courses so that those who are able to take the examinations are well prepared for GCSE. For example, pupils in Year 10 were seen in a good GCSE course lesson about mathematical enlargement and symmetry. The teacher and support assistant provided very good individual help so that pupils could grasp this difficult concept. Pupils used mirrors and discussed a range of two-dimensional shapes and their properties, including symmetry. They used computers, each pupil having access to a machine, and worked on the vertices of triangles as an extension to the lesson.
60. In another Year 10 lesson, pupils tested the probable outcomes of several different events. One of these activities involved using a bag of counters, but pupils could not see what was in the bag. They picked out counters, either red or blue, for a hundred turns, and then had to calculate how many counters of each colour they thought were in the bag. They were exactly right in their calculation and learnt very well from this lively activity with plenty of fun keeping their interest and motivation at a high level.
61. The subject is very well led and the planning of the curriculum is very good. The year is planned week by week and assessment is very good. It enables teachers to know how each pupil is doing and where they are in relation to the planned levels of work. Adjustments are made through the outcomes of this assessment. For example, when the teacher sees from assessing the work that pupils need another one or two lessons on a topic to fully understand it, they alter the programme accordingly. An area for development, already planned by the co-ordinator, is the further training of the mathematics team to ensure that they all agree about the levels of the work when grading the work pupils do. Much hard work has been done by the co-ordinator to set up this curriculum and to support teachers who are not necessarily mathematics specialists. There are no areas of concern for non-specialists teaching the subject because of this very good planning and help. As a result, pupils are receiving very good provision for mathematics and it is a strength of the school.

## **SCIENCE**

62. Pupils achieve well and standards in science are improving. In the Key Stage 3 NC assessments, results this year are better than they were in 2001. A pupil achieved Level 6 for the first time and two achieved Level 5. This caused great excitement among the science teachers who received the results during the inspection. There has been significant improvement made in achievement since the last inspection when progress was satisfactory.
63. By the end of Year 9, pupils' achievements and progress are good. They build up a range of knowledge and increase their understanding of science well. They display confidence during the plenary of a lesson by answering questions on what they have learned during their investigations, for example, to illustrate that creating marbling needed oil added to the colouring to produce the necessary effect. During Year 7, pupils learn about how we see and how light reflects from an object. The most able understand that light travels in straight lines. In Year 8, pupils gain an understanding of the origins of sound and how objects need to vibrate to be heard. This was very well illustrated through the use of musical instruments and a large spring to show how sound moves in waves and how sound diminishes as the speed and size of them decreases. By the end of Year 11, for those pupils who attend regularly, examination results are good. In GCSE science, single award, there were 13 passes out of the 14 pupils entered. The highest grades were at D level and in the coming years teachers are determined to raise pupil performance to achieve A to C passes. All pupils were entered for CofA where there were seven gold awards (distinctions). No lessons were observed at Year 11 as they had all left school. However, the scrutiny of their work folders supports the encouraging results pupils achieved in external examinations. During Year 10, pupils increase their knowledge of rock formations and they experience and handle sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks and appreciate that they have different properties. Pupils' scientific vocabulary is extended, with some very good understanding of words, such as 'crystallise', when handling samples of igneous rock.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. At times, teaching and learning are very good and at others, satisfactory. This shows a distinct improvement since the last report when teaching was deemed to be satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers' planning is consistently very good across the school. Lesson plans give a detailed appraisal of what is to be achieved and this is often shared with the pupils, reinforcing their learning. All lessons end with a plenary session when pupils' targets are evaluated and scores given. Teachers, through their planning, show their very clear knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is apparent in the way lessons are broken down into small elements before moving on to the next stage. Teachers use worksheets well to prepare pupils for the learning in some cases and to evaluate their learning in others. The quality of meeting the learning needs of individual pupils is generally good as with one pupil with hearing impairment, who benefited from the teacher using a radio microphone and also the support of a skilled signer. Teachers, in their general planning, take account of pupils' varying reading levels and, in most lessons, new vocabulary is written clearly on the classroom whiteboard. In the best lessons the pupils are keen to learn but there are other times when a well-planned lesson fails to reach its intended outcome because of the disruptive behaviour of a significant minority of pupils, who are experiencing difficulties and clearly do not want to participate. The pace of lessons is generally brisk with teachers mindful that there needs to be a swift introduction, plenty of time for experimentation and clearing away before the plenary. This is successfully achieved in most lessons and helps keep pupils' focus on their work and minimise inappropriate behaviour. The role of the support assistants in all of the lessons observed in science was a major strength. They are given clear directions by the teacher and are central to maintaining high levels of learning for those pupils who experience difficulties in their understanding or in managing their behaviour.
65. The leadership and management of science are good. There are clear procedures for staff in the department handbook and schemes of work reflect the programmes of study of the NC. The subject co-ordinator is anxious to improve the current schemes of work and to relate them more

to the needs of the pupils allowing them greater access to external evaluation. He is currently doing the training to prepare himself to move the department's thinking toward the national guidelines to assist teachers' planning in the subject. He has already spoken to his colleague at the north site, who is keen to be trained. Liaison between the science teachers at both sites does need to be improved. There is a willingness at both sites for this to happen to increase the level of sharing and supporting. Both sites have major strengths in providing science teaching of a good standard.

66. Accommodation for science is very good on both sites. All classrooms have space for teaching and a laboratory area where experiments can be carried out. Teachers take great care in making their rooms attractive with the use of good display. This includes, at the north site, a display of scientists from different ethnic groups, many of them black, with photographs and text stating what they had achieved in their careers. Learning resources at both sites are very good. The storage of chemicals in a locked room at both sites meets with health and safety requirements. At the north site there is a market garden which produces vegetables for use in the kitchen and for distribution to the elderly of the area. The teacher responsible for science at the north site sees the potential for extending the gardening project into a mini-company to give the youngsters an increased awareness of commercial business.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

67. The school has responded well to the findings of the last inspection when provision was satisfactory. It is good now. Pupils' achievements are good throughout the school, particularly in practical activities. They enjoy the subject, concentrate well, and often become increasingly absorbed in their work. They look after their work well, and produce work that is often individual. In these respects, the subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
68. Younger pupils use a good range of simple media to create rich, colourful portraits in the style of Modigliani, drawing firm, bold outlines and mixing colours carefully to create highlights and shadows. They practise their observational skills to good effect when enlarging pictures of foliage in the style of Rousseau, and show some understanding of such elements as balance and proportion when developing their work on Mondrian. They make good use of rough sketches when exploring their ideas and, although they have a tendency to stick with familiar ideas and images, they will use a wide range of source materials and ideas to good effect. Many older pupils are more adventurous and willing to experiment. The more able pupils have a sound grasp of concepts such as tone and line, and can discuss such ideas when considering work that has been inspired by, for example, Matisse's tissue paper collages, Lichtenstein's comic-book imagery, or Lara Croft computer games. Pupils on the north site use a limited choice of pastels effectively to create pictures of flowers that suggest both form and depth, and use ICT to illustrate Van Gogh as part of their accredited vocational course-work. Pupils take a passing interest in the work of their classmates, and there is some productive, critical self-evaluation. They also take pride in their work, and the respect they show for the often fragile displays that brighten the classrooms and corridors demonstrates that the subject is helping them address their individual emotional and behavioural difficulties well. In all these various ways, art and design makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development.
69. The quality of teaching is now very good in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. It was previously satisfactory. Lessons are well organised, and no time is wasted. Staff know the pupils very well, and lessons are underpinned by relaxed, very good-humoured relationships between all concerned, with the result that pupils know what is expected of them and settle to work quickly. Staff successfully adopt a consistent, patient approach and, in the most successful lessons, use quiet touches of praise together with supportive questioning very effectively. This not only helps pupils decide

what they need to do next to achieve the effect that they want, but also encourages them to reflect on the consequences of their own behaviour. Source materials are used effectively in ways that allow pupils to develop their knowledge of different artists and cultural influences. However, they are not always used or contrasted in ways that ensure pupils fully understand why some techniques or images are more effective than others for a given purpose.

70. Art and design is overseen by two well-informed co-ordinators, one for each site. Teamwork within the department is effective, and the subject is managed well as a result. There is a good scheme of work that pays due regard to the NC programmes of study, particularly in respect of developing pupils' practical skills. However, the long-term absence of staff has delayed its implementation, and units of work are not always organised in ways that ensure pupils develop their understanding of art and design systematically as they progress through the school. The limited opportunities for accreditation are recognised, and GCSE is due to be introduced next term.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)**

71. The school makes very good provision for DT, and has maintained the high standards noted at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 9, pupils' levels of achievement are good, particularly in the development of their practical skills of making and assembling. In resistant materials, they undertake simple projects, such as making wooden storage boxes or desk-tidies, and construct items such as clocks, mini-torches and car alarms using a variety of materials, together with standard components such as bulb-holders. They use ICT to help with their designs, and use tools competently and confidently. In food studies, pupils research menus from different countries participating in the World Cup. The more able pupils apply their number skills well when weighing out ingredients and calculating the necessary cooking time. Pupils make dishes such as curry and rice, or cheese and mushroom pasta bake, and have a good understanding of healthy eating. Pupils also have a responsible attitude towards safety issues and use a range of equipment appropriately. In all areas of the subject, pupils take pride in their work and care with their projects, finishing them off well. Their planning skills are sometimes restricted to simple criteria such as the choice of materials, and pupils are not always clear why some designs might work better than others.
72. By the end of Year 11, pupils have built upon this foundation very effectively, and make very good gains in learning that are reflected in their GCSE coursework and recognised in their examination results. They show a highly responsible, common sense attitude towards health and hygiene matters. On occasion, they work well together as a team and, in these respects they show very good personal and social development. In resistant materials, pupils use tools and equipment carefully when making more sophisticated articles such as stools or hinged kitchen roll dispensers, and respond very well to prompts and suggestions from teachers and instructors, anticipating problems and correcting mistakes with good humour. They apply their understanding of food studies extremely effectively when learning the discipline and standards necessary to bake Belgian buns on a commercial scale.
73. Teaching is good at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4. It is always at least good, and it is often very good or excellent, notably at Key Stage 4. All lessons have a clear purpose and are very well organised with a very effective, routine emphasis on health and safety issues. Support staff are very well deployed, thoroughly trained and familiar with the activities under consideration. Professionals from the wider community, such as catering instructors from the Birmingham College of Food, make a particularly positive contribution. These features help to reinforce the relevance of the activities, especially for the older pupils who are treated in ways that reflect their



development as young adults and future employees. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and sometimes display exemplary attitudes whilst remaining on task for significant periods of time. Minor weaknesses in the teaching are that aspects of designing and evaluating are occasionally sacrificed to ensure that pupils remain actively engaged in the practical activities, and opportunities to recognise and accredit pupils' achievements in vocational core skills are sometimes overlooked.

74. The subject is managed very effectively, and endorses the aims of the school particularly well. There are good schemes of work for all areas that reflect the NC programme of study, and the school is proactive in exploring ways to extend the range of activities and opportunities for accreditation. For example, the proposals for the breakfast club, and the new projects for GCSE coursework are both positive developments that should do much to enhance the relevance of provision still further. The various teaching areas are very well equipped and there are appropriate plans to improve them further. Minor health and safety matters are in hand.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

75. Overall, the quality of provision in geography is good. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve well. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. During Years 7 to 9, pupils acquire a satisfactory range of geography skills and knowledge. They become increasingly able to use maps and pursue environmental investigations in order to find out information. For example, Year 7 pupils enjoy finding out about the different effects that weather has on vegetation and farming. They respond with interest and enthusiasm to the very good teaching. Because of the relaxed and friendly atmosphere created by the teacher, pupils feel comfortable answering questions and are able to fully participate in lessons. By the time they are in Year 8, pupils have built on this early work and are able to recognise how climate changes influence what crops can be grown. During a question and answer session, more able pupils recalled some of the causes of global warming. They showed a good understanding of the terms 'environment' and 'greenhouse effect', and could use these when referring to climate change. At the end of the lesson, the teacher reviewed what pupils had learned, checking their understanding, and setting the scene for the next stage in their learning.
76. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 have been given the opportunity to study geography as an entry level GCSE course. The course provides a clear structure for pupils' learning, and this helps them to make good progress. Pupils in Year 10 show an understanding of what is meant by 'conservation' and what factors led to the location of factories in the past. They study the development of settlements and show an understanding of natural hazards such as droughts and storms. Pupils learn about major earth movements, such as earthquakes and volcanoes and know why these happen. The more able pupils describe in their own words what it is like when a volcano erupts, 'destroying everything in its way'. In one lesson, the teacher led a good discussion about people and the environment. Work in Year 11 builds effectively upon pupils' previous experiences and concentrates on following their coursework. Teachers use their very good relations with pupils to promote confidence and self-esteem and this has a positive impact on the pupils' progress. However, some pupils in Year 10 are not given the opportunity to follow an externally accredited course.
77. Teaching and learning are good overall. The quality of teaching throughout the school is always at least satisfactory and often very good. Lessons are well planned taking into account the interests and abilities of pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well to meet the needs of all pupils. There are very clear expectations, which are met, that much will be achieved in individual lessons and over time. Resources are prepared with care and books are of good quality, giving status to the subject in the eyes of the pupils. The co-ordinator has worked with the literacy co-ordinator to produce worksheets that are accessible to all pupils. Pupils' moral and social development is good as they are given opportunities to discuss issues facing the world such as the cutting down of rainforests and, more locally, the problem of pollution in

a local river. High quality displays celebrate achievement and support learning. The skilled support staff are invaluable in helping to maintain pupils' interest in their learning and also in diffusing any potentially disruptive behaviour and reducing the effect this might have on the rest of the class.

78. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator who has suitable plans for development over the next few years. Resources have been improved since the previous report and they are now good. The co-ordinator has developed detailed plans of work. However, no time has been allocated to monitor the curriculum and teaching in the subject area. At the present time there are not consistent strategies in place to ensure that pupils' progress is accurately monitored and that assessment is used to guide curriculum planning. However, the co-ordinator has begun to address this issue by linking assessment and planning more closely to NC requirements.

## **HISTORY**

79. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in history. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are good. There is a comprehensive curriculum policy, which is helpful in clarifying what should be taught and what the learning outcomes should be. This represents good progress since the previous inspection. The co-ordinators manage the subject well, but have insufficient time to monitor it adequately. Pupils have a good attitude towards studying history because teachers make the subject interesting and relevant. Pupils study history throughout the school.
80. In Years 7 to 9, pupils make good progress. Pupils in Year 7 study the reign of Elizabeth I and the circumstances surrounding her accession to the throne. They understand the background to her reign and why she succeeded to the throne. By the end of Year 8 pupils understand the importance of particular historical figures, such as Sir Francis Drake in Elizabethan England. By the end of Year 9 pupils have a basic knowledge and some understanding of the major historical events and personalities of the periods they have studied and they can place these in a chronological framework. Pupils make very good progress with literacy during history lessons because teachers provide very good opportunities. For example, pupils read aloud, select information from a wide range of sources and write for a variety of different purposes. Language development is good through the extension of subject vocabulary and the frequent chances given to pupils to take part in discussions about a range of issues.
81. Pupils in Year 10 are working towards the entry level GCSE accreditation. This represents a considerable development since the last inspection, when history was not taught at all to pupils in Year 10. However, one group of pupils is not entered for any form of externally accredited examinations. The co-ordinators have a very good relationship with these older pupils and relate to them in an age-appropriate manner. Because of this they work hard and take a mature attitude to learning. Pupils ask sensible questions and volunteer information willingly. By Year 11 pupils talk about what they have done in history with clarity and a good sense of chronology. They imaginatively place themselves in the position of a World War I soldier in the trenches, writing very descriptive letters home, graphically describing the terrible conditions in which they have to live and fight.
82. Teaching is good overall at both key stages. It is always at least satisfactory and occasionally very good. The good and very good teaching is characterised by teachers setting clear and achievable objectives and having appropriately high expectations of pupils. This holds pupils' interests and makes them want to do well. As at the time of the previous report, classroom support is used well, and is effective in supporting pupils' learning and in promoting good behaviour. Teachers throughout the school have a good subject knowledge and they use this to develop and maintain the interest of the pupils. This was used to particularly good effect when, during a Year 9 lesson, the teacher linked the study of the 'Easter Uprising' in Ireland to how

different interest groups interpret the same historical event. Being shown copies of contemporary posters portraying political activists from the time increased the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The main weakness in teaching is the limited use of historical artefacts to bring the lessons to life, which makes it harder for pupils to learn as quickly as they might.

83. The co-ordinators manage the subject well. Documentation has been reviewed and extended since the last inspection, successfully increasing pupils' opportunities for learning. This has led to good improvements in the subject. There are end-of-topic assessments, which are increasingly being compared with NC levels. The department is well placed to implement developments planned for the new academic year. However, the co-ordinators have insufficient time allocated for monitoring and supporting colleagues throughout the school. Current planning does not identify the use of ICT in lessons sufficiently, which limits the information pupils can access through the Internet and CD-ROMs.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

84. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. There has been significant improvement made in achievement since the last inspection when progress was good. At Year 7, standards are improving rapidly. Pupils are able to create a website and know the procedures for opening a page. Their keyboard skills ensure that they are able to make very good entries into their sites, which have been wordprocessed. They know how to click on and when to click twice. They demonstrate these skills on the large classroom electronic screen. In Year 8, pupils extend their understanding of web-sites and what they can offer. They display confidence in entering text into a web page, they format the text, use the preview browser and increase their knowledge and use of specialised ICT terminology. These skills are further developed and tested in Year 9, where their capability to use photographs on screen is developed. They change the size of the image and locate it in a given part of the screen. The teacher challenged them to reproduce an image as four identical ones of equal size. They were able to achieve this in a minimum of time. During Year 10, pupils have followed a range of projects, a favourite being the one on graffiti. They had visited the Graffiti Park at nearby Selly Oak and that had inspired an incredible use of 'Clipart' to create their own graffiti art and to print it out in colour. They also used photographs and programs to change the colour of hair and to add various bits and pieces to the image. This was work of the highest quality and forms an attractive display. The use of 'Clipart' and high quality wordprocessing was seen in the corridor display of 'The Warrior Queen'. Although no lessons were observed in Year 11, pupils' folders illustrated the extension of their skills from previous years. They created some impressive work in their folders, including the use of broad-sheets, to record wind direction, rainfall and temperatures when studying the weather. Pupils at the north site, who have the most negative attitudes to school, achieved one pass and three distinctions in the CofA.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is very good at both key stages. This shows a significant improvement since the last report when it was good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Teachers' planning is of the highest quality and ensures that the learning is of a high standard. The richness and variety of the schemes of work are central to this exciting department. Some of the teaching and learning is of exceptional standard and, as well as the planning, the style of delivery is very significant. Teachers have a full understanding of the problems presented by the pupils. These are dealt with by the use of subtle humour and high expectations, which results in very few behavioural issues. The support assistants make an excellent contribution to the teaching. They work very closely with those pupils who have the greatest emotional and learning difficulties using a range of skills to keep them on-task. Where there may be a behavioural problem they are there to offer support and to prevent such behaviour from interfering with the learning of others. The use of the electronic white-board is a strength of the teaching input. This gives pupils the opportunity of trying a new technique in a whole-class situation before using it as part of their individual tasks.
86. The management of the subject is excellent and the teachers are supported by a very well-presented departmental handbook. The quality of the accommodation is very good and the range of technical equipment is impressive. The planned updating and linking of the equipment in the two classrooms at the south site will provide better Internet capability and access to the full range of facilities on offer. However, there is insufficient liaison between ICT staff at the two sites and this is not conducive to a single-school approach. Teachers put a great deal of effort into making the environment pleasing by using attractive displays in the classrooms and corridors. 'The Warrior Queen' display sets a standard, with an individual pupil's display for the inspectors being much appreciated.
87. The extensive use of ICT across the curriculum contributes significantly to the pupils' achievements. Music is an outstanding example of this. Pupils use computers and electronic keyboards to create imaginative compositions, to learn the disc-jockey technique of fading from one piece of music to another and to record their work on CD. In mathematics, ICT is often

used well and the department has an electronic whiteboard. Very good examples of the use of ICT were seen in English, DT and art and design. This widespread use of ICT is only possible because of the high quality of the main subject delivery.

88. There are exciting plans to develop the provision of ICT, in the broadest sense, both in the school and the wider community. The mobile classroom equipped with 'state of the art' technology ('Cyber-bus'), to be used by disaffected young people throughout the area, is nearing completion. This is being undertaken to attract these young people into a learning environment. There are plans to involve local schools, community groups, business partnerships and to use the facility both as an assessment centre and out-of-hours classroom. The 'Learn Direct Project', located in the same building as the girls' unit, will be completed shortly and features an excellent ICT facility offering considerable benefits to pupils, staff, parents and the local community.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (MFL)**

### **GERMAN**

89. At the time of the last inspection pupils in all year groups made good progress in French. Due to staff changes the school no longer teaches French and a new German department has been set up this school year. Comparison with previous provision is problematic but it is reasonable to say that the provision of a modern foreign language has been maintained at a level that is at least satisfactory. German is currently taught to all pupils in Years 7 to 9, with plans to offer the subject to older pupils in the future. The provision is satisfactory overall, with a significant strength in the teaching of speaking and listening. The department has been built up over the year from a zero starting point in terms of curriculum planning and resources and is improving rapidly.
90. The co-ordinator, who is also the only teacher in the department, has chosen to give priority to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and providing them with a useful vocabulary. Given the nature of the pupils' difficulties and the lack of resources when she took up the post, this is a very sound strategy. It has been effective in that all pupils in Years 7 to 9 have made good progress in terms of their willingness to speak in German, the quality of their speech and the rate of acquisition of vocabulary. All pupils have made significant gains in learning useful vocabulary for situations, such as greetings, routines and significant times at school and at home, and leisure activities, such as eating out and sport.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Eight lessons were seen and the teaching of speaking and learning was always good and sometimes very good. All pupils spoke some German during lessons, ranging from single words to full, quite complex sentences. Very few opportunities were provided for pupils to write in lessons. However, examples of written work in pupils' books and in display in the classroom show satisfactory progress overall. The teacher has a very good knowledge and understanding of German and is very successfully promoting the pupils' interest in learning a foreign language. The role of support staff is clear and effective.

## MUSIC

92. This subject, taught at both key stages on the south site, is now a strength of the school. This is a remarkable achievement in the context of the last inspection when there was no music taught at all. A key recommendation in the 1997 report was to, 'provide a taught music curriculum at Key Stage 3, in line with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum'. Not only has this been carried out very effectively but, in 2001, the school gained seven short course GCSE passes in music and four CofA passes, three with merit. Parents commented very favourably on the school's music provision at the meeting with the registered inspector.
93. A combination of very good teaching and the use of high quality technology have contributed to all pupils on the south site becoming good performers, with very positive attitudes to both music appreciation and composition. They acquire the ability to plan, compose and assess their own or collaborative pieces of music. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills by improvising and extending pieces using electronic keyboards linked to a computer. They add pre-recorded rhythms or backing tracks to their tunes. They record their work, listen to it and decide how to improve it. Most pupils use the recording studio and supportive software very successfully, with appropriate help from a highly skilled technician. A very good Year 9 lesson exemplified the success of nearly all music lessons at Lindsworth. Three pupils worked at their own individual compositions, using ICT that was up-to-date and of near professional quality. One composed a multi-track piece using composition software. He identified the need to layer the music and was keen to get the right balance and inter-connection between the different parts before adding his voice. A second used new studio software of the highest quality and, with the guidance of the ICT technician, also built up a complex piece from a simple initial idea. A third pupil used the recording studio to sing while the music technician created a balanced background in full consultation with him. The programmes of study at Key Stage 3 have been well thought through in the teacher's planning. The necessary skills of composition, performance and appraisal have been incorporated in the work, but at a level that takes into account the literacy, speaking and listening and ICT skills of each pupil. The level of performance skills, the knowledge of the principles of a balanced recording and the understanding of the dynamics of loud and soft indicated good to very good progress for each pupil.
94. In very good Year 10 and 11 lessons pupils worked individually or in pairs, gradually building up pieces of their own composition. Discussions between pupils or with staff led to adaptations that created a better balance or introduced a new theme. These discussions indicated the very positive attitudes that have developed towards music in the school. One pupil, working hard at blending different layers of music commented, 'It's good, but you want perfection, don't you?' Another showed great satisfaction in playing his composition to an inspector and receiving comments back. A similarly high level of performance was seen on video material. This indicated composition skills that were close to the national expectations for 15 year-olds and performance skills that were at, or above, this level. Apart from progress in these areas, there is a clear and universal development of pupil confidence, together with the willingness to accept and act on advice from staff and friends. The curriculum is well balanced for the pupils it serves, but more work can now be carried out on the formal group evaluations of individual compositions.
95. A major strength of the teaching in music is the way in which other aspects are incorporated or developed spontaneously. Thus, in the previously discussed Year 10 lesson, one pupil left the studio saying, 'I'm off to compose my lyrics'. All pupils develop good skills in using the available technology and every pupil interviewed showed good development in their ability to talk about their work in a mature and technically relevant way. There are good opportunities to listen to music and perform in school assemblies. All pupils have the opportunity to produce CDs and these are to a high standard. One girl was recently selected for a role in a regional musical and two other pupils have been involved in a production of African dance with local mainstream schools.

96. The success of music arises from very good leadership. The co-ordinator is a skilled performer with an open-minded approach to composition. She works closely with the music technician and both provide teaching and guidance of the very highest quality. Considerable care has been taken to devise a scheme of work that is varied, but also plays to the strengths of individual pupils. There is also good day-to-day and long-term assessment of pupils. The co-ordinator has trained and qualified in music therapy. This is an imaginative development on the part of the school and, once again, much appreciated by parents.
97. High quality music provision is currently only available to south site pupils. The progress made and the impact it has had on attitudes and behaviour indicates that it should be offered to north site pupils if at all possible. This is certainly a strong wish on the part of both staff and pupils. A second area of development is one of time-tabling. At present there are not enough links between the performing arts subjects, and most lessons last thirty-five minutes. To build further on the strong foundations laid in the field of performance, consideration should be given to ways in which the timetable could assist in the development of collaborative work over longer periods of time.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

98. Pupils achieve well and progress is good throughout the school. Attainment is mostly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' response to the subject is good in all year groups. They follow the teachers' instructions well and seek advice and guidance in order to improve their performance. Pupils understand the purposes of warming up at the start of PE lessons and undertake a range of appropriate exercises before all activities. Pupils in Years 9 and 10 display a good range of skills in a variety of athletic activities, for example using the correct technique in standing, long and high jumps, sprinting and relay races.
99. Pupils co-operate well and often encourage each other. In one Year 8 class the teacher identified team leaders for a games activity, who actively sought to motivate their peers and assist in maintaining good behaviour. Pupils show an appreciation for the subject. They are keen to succeed and respond with enthusiasm to the challenges set and show enjoyment and a sense of pride in their achievements.
100. The quality of teaching observed ranged from excellent to satisfactory and is good overall. The very good subject knowledge and pupil management skills of each of the specialist teachers result in high expectations of work and behaviour. Teachers use a blend of humour and challenge which boys appreciate. In an excellent Year 7 lesson on high jumping the teacher praised a pupil asking if he had 'eaten a kangaroo'. In a good Year 8 swimming lesson pupils were developing stroke technique and style. Pupils are given opportunities to take part in a wide variety of games, health and fitness exercises. No gymnastics activities or lessons for girls were observed during the inspection. The subject policy and scheme of work states that there is no difference in the opportunities provided for pupils on the grounds of gender, race or ability.
101. The quality of specialist accommodation is satisfactory at both sites. However, there are no separate changing facilities for girls in the gymnasium. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 swim in the school pool at the south site. The health and fitness suite and swimming pool have been refurbished since the previous inspection. There are proposals for a major new facility, including a new pool, to be used by the school and many other establishments in the local community. The quality of equipment and resources is good. These have been enhanced through successful bids to a range of grant-making trusts. At the north site, Year 9 pupils enjoyed using new high quality cricket equipment. A range of mountain bikes has recently been provided.

102. Very good links have been established in the wider community, which extend the range and quality of learning opportunities for pupils in all year groups at both sites. Aston Villa Football Club provides soccer-coaching sessions for Years 8 and 9 pupils. Pupils are able to use specialist facilities at a mainstream sport academy. Year 10 pupils use a specialist golf centre and receive coaching from a fully-qualified coach. International table tennis coaches have contributed to lessons.
103. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for both day and residential pupils. Boys of all ages participate in residential activities at an outdoor centre in North Wales and Center Parcs. The majority of boys participate in the regular lunchtime activities, which are provided at both sites. Residential pupils use the school swimming pool. The school's own accommodation and learning resources, use of community facilities during the school day and extra-curricular activities, in combination, have a very positive impact on pupils' progress in PE and PSHE.
104. All lessons are well planned and are based on a concise scheme of work, which reflects the NC. Comprehensive assessments are maintained for all pupils who contribute to recording their performance. Cross-curricular links are fostered well, particularly with PSHE and science. For example, in one Year 9 class the teacher emphasised the value of trust in relay races. Opportunities are taken to name muscles and tendons and explain how these enable movement. Pupils displayed positive attitudes to the subject and each other during the final of a table tennis tournament in which every pupil had participated.
105. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. A clear and ambitious development plan has been devised. There is a commitment to high achievement, and all pupils have the opportunity to participate in an extensive programme of physical education. Good progress has been made in all areas since the previous inspection.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

106. Provision is outstanding and is a strength of the school. Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in all year groups. This shows very good improvement since the last inspection, when RE was judged to be satisfactory. The reasons for this very good progress are the outstanding quality of teaching in the subject and the very well-planned curriculum. Most pupils, while knowing the details of what they have studied, find it very difficult to write them down, because their literacy skills are not strong enough. The teacher therefore provides ample opportunities for discussion, but also adds work that is designed to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, whilst still fully based in the study of RE. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a nationally accredited course, and achieve a very good rate of success. In the last set of results, there were six distinctions, five merits and two passes. During this inspection, no lessons were observed at the school's north site. This report draws on planning and discussion with staff from both sites, examination of a representative sample of pupils' work in all year groups, including those in Year 11, and lesson observations at the south site.
107. By the end of Year 9, pupils have studied aspects of three world religions. These are Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Within these, pupils' knowledge and understanding is often above the expectations (of the locally agreed syllabus) when they are talking about a particular topic, and they know some detailed facts such as the names of all of the ten Gurus in Sikhism. They study broad outlines of each one, adding considerable details for most of them. They talk about these details very well. This was demonstrated in an excellent Year 7 lesson when they began with a lively recap of what they knew, with the teacher firing rapid questions and the pupils joining in very well with their answers. In Christianity, pupils work on Bible stories, such as that of Zacchaeus, and how he climbed a tree to see what was happening. They also hear how Christianity affects people's lives. For example, they know the story of Bernadette,



and compare the events at Lourdes with the idea of pilgrimage in other religions, especially Haj in Islam.

108. By the end of Year 11, pupils continue to make very good progress, not only in the depth of factual details they know, but adding the application of the teachings of each religion to modern life. For example, pupils compare the views of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus when they study topics such as euthanasia (sometimes called 'mercy killing'). They have considered racism and prejudice, and understand stereotypes, giving examples such as 'all teenagers are rude' or 'all Scots are mean'. They understand further that certain jobs are traditionally thought of as for men only or women only. For example, one pupil wrote about women not usually becoming heavy goods vehicle drivers. This work provides very good opportunities for pupils' personal development, especially their social knowledge and experience of everyday life. It is also enabling pupils to exercise tolerance and understanding of other people whatever their background or belief. This tolerance is very evident in lessons and around the school, and is a strong feature of their learning.
109. The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The teacher plans and prepares lessons to an excellent standard, and an exceptional feature is that she devises a very wide variety of first class activities that involve pupils very well. For example, in an excellent Year 7 lesson all the pupils had a copy of the text and they took turns to read aloud. They answered questions such as, 'What can money *not* buy?' Another very good example of imaginative activities was seen in an excellent Year 8 lesson where the teacher had devised a game of bingo based on the story and details of the formation of the Khalsa in Sikhism. This is when Sikhs were called upon to make a full commitment to their faith. Pupils really enjoyed this, and it enabled them to remember the details and terms used, as well as having the excitement of a game. They learnt excellently from this lively activity.
110. The teacher encourages pupils to recap on what they know in most lessons, and so in all years pupils know and talk about some of the fine details in a topic. For example, Year 8 pupils know all about Guru Arjan and the persecution of the Sikhs, in his time, by the people of other religions. They know that this eventually led to the formation of the Khalsa to strengthen the faith. Relationships and the challenge presented to all pupils are excellent. The teacher and support assistant, who work very closely together, have established an excellent and very positive atmosphere in lessons, often using humour. This results in very good response and behaviour from the pupils and, consequently, they learn very well. Included in the lesson activities, the teacher has addressed pupils' need to improve literacy and numeracy skills. For example, Year 10 pupils were seen in an excellent lesson using the underneath of a jigsaw puzzle that has writing instead of a picture. In order to complete this, they needed to work out the words and sentences in the correct order before they were able to read the whole tale. Others had to solve mathematical problems and use the resulting answers to refer to cards with the corresponding number. When put in order, these cards revealed the story of the Good Samaritan written in contemporary 'skinhead' terms. These excellent and imaginative activities enabled pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills whilst making tremendous gains in their knowledge and understanding of RE.
111. It was not possible to see lessons in the girls' unit, but their work was examined. From this analysis, the indications are that these pupils are also making very good progress. Their knowledge and understanding are good, and the coursework included in the sample shows that they have studied parables such as, 'The lost sheep' and 'The Good Samaritan'. Other biblical work includes writing about the temptations of Jesus. Pupils also study how faith affects the lives of followers. A good example of this is their writing about Jackie Pullinger and her work in Hong Kong among drug dealers. In this sample, teaching and learning are very good and there is very good provision in the curriculum to cover the certificated course.

112. Year 10 lessons and Year 11 work samples clearly show that certificate coursework is done well. Many pupils gain distinctions or merits in the nationally accredited course they enter. Pupils successfully use computers to write some of their work and the teacher uses a 'Smartboard' linked to a computer in lessons. Analysis of pupils' work over their time in Years 10 and 11 shows that pupils write extended pieces of work, carry out surveys and learn to give their own opinions well. They have a good grasp of the topics they study such as abortion, racial issues, arguments for the existence of God, and some extended writing about Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.
113. The teacher's lively and business-like style in lessons, coupled with imaginative methods and activities, leads to pupils being fully engaged and concentrating very well. During the inspection no behavioural difficulties were seen, and pupils applied themselves to work very well, often with lively exchange of comments and ideas with the teacher.
114. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent. Much inspired work has been done by the co-ordinator, which includes a very well-planned programme of study, and very good assessment procedures and use of resources. These all work together and result in the pupils achieving very well. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn to enquire into some of life's difficult questions such as the existence of God, or the social questions related to marriage and divorce. They study patterns of worship in several world religions, and they understand how people of faith apply this in their everyday lives.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ASDAN	Professional body which produces accredited courses for pupils and students with SEN
CofA	Certificate of Achievement
DT	Design and technology
EAL	English as and additional language
EMAG	Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector/s
IBP	Individual behaviour plan
ICT	Information and communication technology
IEP	Individual education plan
LEA	Local education authority
MFL	Modern foreign languages
NC	National Curriculum
NGFL	National grid for learning
NLS	National Literacy Strategy
NNS	National Numeracy Strategy
NOF	New opportunities fund – generally refers to teacher training for ICT
PE	Physical education
PSHE	Personal, social and health education
RE	Religious education
SEBD	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
SEN	Special educational needs