

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **HOLYPORT MANOR SCHOOL**

Holyport, Maidenhead

LEA area: Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 110183

Headteacher: Paul Donkersloot

Reporting inspector: Hilary Gannaway  
21527

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 249339

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:         | 2 - 16                               |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                |
| School address:              | Ascot Road<br>Holyport<br>Maidenhead |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body                   |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Robert Williams                      |
| Date of previous inspection: | June 1997                            |

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| Team members |                    |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|--|
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| 8937         | Howard Allen       | Lay inspector        |   | Pupils' attitudes values and personal development.<br>Pupils' welfare health and safety.<br>Partnership with parents and carers.   |
| 11239        | Sue Flockton       | Team inspector       | Foundation stage.<br>English as an additional language.<br>History.<br>Religious education. |  |
| 30243        | Anne Heakin        | Team inspector       | Mathematics.<br>Music.  |  |
| 22178        | Kate Robertson     | Team member          | Special educational needs.<br>Information and communication technology.<br>Art and design   |  |
| 22821        | Linda Wolstencroft | Team inspector       | English.<br>Geography.  |  |
| 8810         | Sue Aldridge       | Team inspector       | Educational inclusion.<br>Science.  | Quality and range of learning opportunities.   |

|       |            |                |   |  |
|-------|------------|----------------|---|--|
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|-------|------------|----------------|---|--|

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The Office for Standards in Education  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holyport Manor is a special school for pupils aged from 2 to 16. The present role is 158 of whom 116 are boys and 42 girls. One pupil is dual registered. Of 11 at the Foundation Stage, eight are part time in the nursery. There are presently 26 pupils in the residential provision and, for the first time, 10 of these are girls. Most pupils are of white British heritage with 18 being from ethnic minorities, the majority of these are Asian or Asian British of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage. There are 12 pupils with English as an additional language, none of whom are still at an early stage of development. The school caters for a wide range of special needs, including severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, speech and communication, physical difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. A significant proportion of pupils are not resident in the borough. The school is large and the only special school in a small authority. It aims to have a totally inclusive approach based on equality of opportunity and educational entitlement. There has been a shift in the needs catered for to those with high levels of dependency and more complex needs along with more emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupil attainment on entry is well below that expected for their age

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

Holyport is an effective school. Pupils progress well due to the good teaching and very good relations pupils have with staff. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they work hard. The headteacher provides good leadership that ensures pupils benefit from the education provided. The school is suitably managed on a daily basis and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good because of the emphasis on monitoring and the development of teachers' skills; it is particularly effective in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very good; it is enriched by community links and prepares pupils well for life after school
- The very good relationships staff have with pupils very effectively support personal development and independence; this is particularly true of staff in the residential unit.
- The school provides well for pupils who need additional equipment such as electric wheelchairs for mobility and aids to enable them to communicate, and this successfully supports the school's progress towards inclusion.

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

- Parts of the accommodation have a detrimental effect on learning and on access for pupils with physical disabilities.
- The use of assessment to plan the curriculum and monitor pupils' progress is limited.
- There is inadequate co-ordination of the curriculum, particularly for pupils from Years 3 to 6 where it lacks sufficient breadth and balance.

*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 June 1997. Since then, there has been satisfactory improvement overall. However, focused, regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching has led to a good improvement in all aspects of teaching. This has been well supported by professional development targeted to improve the skills of staff so they meet the learning needs of all pupils. Improvements have also taken place in literacy and numeracy, and the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is now good. Although there have been some developments in assessment and information and communication technology (ICT), these are still areas for further development.

## STANDARDS

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

| Progress in:   | by Year 6 | by Year 11 | Key            |   |
|--|-----------|------------|----------------|---|
| speaking and listening                                   | B         | B          | very good      | A |
| reading  | B         | B          | good           | B |
| writing  | C         | C          | satisfactory   | C |
| mathematics  | B         | B          | unsatisfactory | D |
| personal, social and health education                    | A         | A          | poor           | E |
| other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs* | C         | C          |                |   |

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

Overall pupils achieve well against prior attainment. Children of nursery age have a satisfactory start with those of reception age, who are in classes with Years 1 and 2, achieving well. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress towards their individual education plan targets. This is due to improved teaching supported by effective staff development. However, because of a high staff turn over, some staff are more skilled than others and there are occasions where pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and older pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties do not always make as much progress as they could. Progress also slows for some pupils when they move from the primary to secondary phase. Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is good because the school has implemented the literacy and numeracy strategies well and lessons are planned to meet pupils' diverse needs. Achievement for those with more complex needs, who use communication aids and switches, is particularly good. This is because teachers spend time ensuring aids are correctly programmed so pupils can join in the lesson. Pupils' achievement in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good and it is good in design and technology and physical education. Although pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6, there are presently limited chances to achieve a broad range of skills in science, music and religious education. The achievement pupils make in ICT is inconsistent throughout the school because not all teachers are confident users of technology. By the time they leave in Year 11, most pupils have made considerable progress and leave with a variety of accreditation. The school has begun to set school targets but these are not yet fully evaluated.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are enthusiastic and try hard to succeed in lessons. They maintain concentration for long periods and stay on task for most of the time.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Good. Pupils behave well in class and around school. They adhere to the Golden Rules. They behave very well on visits to the community. The few incidents of poor behaviour are usually restricted to individual incidents.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils value the staff that are responsible for them. This is particularly so for the pupils in the residential unit where they have many opportunities to practise their social and independence skills. Personal development and responsibility are promoted very well through personal, social and health education. |
| Attendance                             | This is satisfactory in comparison to similar schools. Pupils are mainly punctual to lessons.  |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:  | By Year 6 | By Year 11 |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Good      | Good       |

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

Teaching is good and this has a positive effect on learning. It is at least satisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. It generally meets the needs of pupils well because teachers have very good relationships with pupils and plan effectively for their individual needs. However, occasionally teachers have difficulties teaching the wide range of pupils in their class, particularly those of secondary age. Literacy and numeracy are taught well by teachers and this assists pupils in acquiring basic skills, particularly those of speaking and listening and number work. Teaching of communication skills for those pupils with complex needs who need communication aids, is good and well supports their ability to participate in lessons. Teaching in English and mathematics is good, it is satisfactory in science and very good in PSHE. However, inconsistent use is made by teachers of ICT to aid learning. Teachers plan effectively to assist pupils' independence skills and pupils respond by working hard. Clear instructions and good use of appropriate questioning means pupils understand what is required of them and they settle to work well. When teaching assistants are clearly briefed about what they need to do, they successfully support pupils' individual needs. However, they do not always have the opportunity to plan beforehand with teachers so they can ensure all pupils are working appropriately.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Satisfactory. The school provides a very good range of learning experiences for pupils in Years 10 and 11 including work experience and careers. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is good. However, for pupils in Years 3 to 6, where the curriculum is relatively new, it is not yet sufficiently broad and balanced, and is presently limited. Extra curricular activities for those in the residential unit are good. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. Good opportunities are provided for social, moral and cultural development. Arrangements for spiritual awareness are satisfactory but limited by too few planned opportunities across the curriculum. Personal development is promoted well and supplemented by life and independence skills for older pupils.   |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Good. This is a very inclusive school where every pupil is valued and a high priority is given to their care and well-being. Although assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, there are no effective systems to ensure pupils' progress in subjects is monitored and recorded consistently from year to year.  |

The school has effective links with parents and values the contribution that parents make to their children's education.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good. There is a clear educational direction for the school and the senior management team and key stage co-ordinators have worked hard to realise it. However there are too few systems for ensuring an overview of individual subjects. |
| How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities  | The governing body suitably and very actively supports the school. They are fully involved in policy making and financial planning.  |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Satisfactory. The school monitors teaching very well and there is an appropriate improvement plan. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and assessment is inconsistent.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. Although the school is overspent, it uses resources well to support pupils' needs with spending decisions carefully based on school priorities. The school obtains resources at a competitive price and consults staff and governors about certain issues.                                     |

There has been a high turn over of staff. However, staff are generally suitably matched to pupils' needs, although on occasions classes and break times could do with more support staff. Learning resources are adequate for pupils' needs with those for younger pupils using symbols and pictures often being good. Accommodation is generally unsatisfactory although staff work hard to overcome this.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

| <b>What pleases parents most</b>  | <b>What parents would like to see improved</b>  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with problems.</li> <li>• They consider teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents consider that there is not enough homework and home/school diaries are not always consistently used.</li> <li>• They are not well enough informed about progress</li> <li>• There are not enough activities outside lessons</li> </ul> |

The inspection team generally agree with the positive views of parents. Homework is set appropriately for pupils. Given pupils' needs, staff organise a suitable amount of activities outside lessons. However, home school diaries are not always reliably used and clear information on progress, work and targets is not always consistently given to parents. The school is aware that they need to develop these aspects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall pupils achieve well. This is an improvement from the last inspection. It is due to the generally good teaching of a more complex group of pupils and professional development which is aimed at making sure staff have the skills to meet a diverse range of individual needs. On the whole, staff manage groups of pupils with very wide abilities within one class well, resulting in considerable progress. However, some teachers are more skilled and experienced than others at teaching the wide range of special educational needs. As a result, there are occasions when pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and older pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties do not make as much progress as they could.

2. Pupils' achievement in English, where writing was poor at the last inspection, and mathematics, which was unsatisfactory, have particularly benefited from a commitment to providing professional development with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The very good emphasis that the school puts on PSHE means pupils achieve very well in this subject. This is because, in the primary department, staff make a conscious effort throughout the day to use every opportunity to reinforce these skills. In the secondary department, PSHE is also supported by high quality independence and life skills lessons. These all help to support pupil achievement in other areas by providing them with appropriate social and independence skills which they practise and use in a range of subjects.

3. Pupils' achievement in design and technology has improved because of an emphasis on practical work and a curriculum that effectively meets their special educational needs. Achievement in geography and history, where there was some underachievement, is at least satisfactory and better than before. This is due to more comprehensive planning. There is a difference in the achievement between primary and secondary pupils in history and art. Achievement is good in both subjects for secondary age pupils because teachers have specialist subject knowledge but it is less so for primary pupils owing to fewer chances to gain appropriate skills. Achievement in ICT is inconsistent across the school as not all teachers are confident users of programmes to support subject knowledge. However, they use ICT and communication aids, such as switches, well to ensure pupils have access to relevant ways of communication so they can join in lessons. As a result pupils, particularly those in the primary area who need these, make good progress.

4. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because of a curriculum geared to their needs and good progress achieved when of reception age. They particularly benefit from the use of aids when communicating. However, pupil achievement in Years 3 to 6, although good and sometimes very good, is presently within a narrower skills range. These pupils have fewer chances to achieve well in science, music and religious education. This reflects the stage of development of the newly implemented curriculum for these pupils. Initially, pupil achievement slows when pupils move from the primary to the secondary part of the school in Year 7. This is because pupils have a narrow range of skills and experiences in subjects such as science and there are not enough links to ensure all relevant information is passed on. However, the structure of work for pupils from Years 7 to 9 is good and by Year 9 they achieve well.

5. In Years 10 and 11 pupils achieve well because of a very appropriate curriculum which prepares them very well for the next stage of education, training and independence. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 11, they have made good progress and leave with a variety of accreditation relevant to their needs.

6. Pupils make satisfactory progress against targets set in their individual education plans. Although some are too broad, staff know pupils well and plan lessons effectively to meet their needs. This means that pupils with additional special educational needs achieve well. This is because the school works hard to see they get the extra support they need, such as speech and language therapy, mobility support, communication aids or support with signing.

7. In English, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because the school has implemented the literacy strategy well. There are good examples of pupils being enabled to steadily develop the skills of speaking and listening and literacy skills in subjects such as history, PSHE and life skills. Achievement is particularly good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 due to the high levels of skilled teaching and for pupils in Years 10 and Year 11 where work is relevant to pupils' needs as young adults, for example, follow up work after work experience.

8. Pupils' achieve well in mathematics for a number of reasons. Improved pupil achievement is linked to the vast improvement in teaching and the comprehensive planning and implementation of the numeracy strategy. As a result, by Year 11 pupils use their accumulated skills to achieve awards in Entry Level.

9. The good achievement pupils make in physical education is a result of pupils enjoying a wide range of physical activities. These have been well thought out to meet pupils' diverse needs and games such as Boccia and New Age Kurling, for example, are planned to include those who are less mobile.

10. Good achievement by pupils in design and technology means that, by Year 11, they develop ideas about strength in structures such as bridges and design alarm and lighting systems. Throughout the school, aspects of this subject support personal development and independence well. In secondary art, pupils develop a range of skills which they use to gain a variety of appropriate accreditation including GCSE.

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

11. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and is in line with similar types of schools. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is generally good. Relationships at the school are very good and pupils make very good progress towards becoming more independent and confident in coping with everyday life. Given the increased complexity of the difficulties the children attending the school have, this represents good progress since the last inspection.

12. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and try hard in lessons. They are usually able to maintain concentration for long periods and stay on task for most of the time. However, certain pupils with more challenging behaviours find it difficult to take part in some activities. Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to keep such pupils focused. They try to ensure all pupils take as full a part in lessons as possible. Many pupils are happy to show their work to visitors and speak enthusiastically about school, the subjects they enjoy and the teachers, teaching assistants and staff at the residential unit who they all valued.

13. Most pupils behave well, and often very well, both in class and around the school. They adhere to the school's *Golden Rules* and respond appropriately in most situations. Incidents of poor behaviour are usually restricted to individual incidents not directed at fellow pupils. Staff work hard to try to ensure such incidents do not disrupt lessons. Despite the school's success in improving pupils' behaviour, there were 17 fixed term exclusions last term. This reflects the changing profile of many pupils who now attend the school. Pupils'

behaviour around school is not always as good as when in lessons but is still of a good standard. Most pupils are generally polite to visitors and each other. For example, pupils readily hold doors for visitors and happily give directions. Pupils' behaviour outside school mirrors that seen in school. For example, a Year 9 group, whilst visiting Maidenhead, behaved impeccably in the main post office, where they bought stamps at the counter and posted letters. People in the post office enjoyed the company of the children and the counter staff were very supportive in helping them improve their life skills.

14. Pupils' personal and social development is very good. Pupils have very good relationships with the staff who are responsible for them. This is particularly so for the pupils in the residential unit. As well as fun social activities, such as trips to the leisure centre, pupils in the residential unit also enjoy a range of practical activities such as cooking, making beds and vacuuming that help them become more self sufficient and confident. From the time they arrive at school, pupils are encouraged to become independent and take on responsibilities, which they are keen to do. Even nursery age children are continually challenged to do things for themselves and work collaboratively. For younger pupils, snack times are used effectively to help them become more independent by encouraging them to make choices and drink and eat for themselves. Older pupils, from Year 5 upwards, get lunch for themselves and clear away in the cafeteria style senior dining hall. Pupils throughout the school undertake monitor duties and get out and clear away work and equipment for themselves. The many trips pupils make into the local and wider community help them become more independent and responsible from the time they start school. By the time they are ready to leave school, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education or work, all pupils having had an opportunity of work experience and also to attend college before they leave school.

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

15. Overall the quality of teaching across the school is good. This is a good improvement on the last inspection when the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching was high. Six out of every ten lessons were good or better and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This improvement has been achieved despite a significant turn over of staff. It has been aided by the school providing a good range of staff development opportunities, access to support from advisors such as those for literacy and numeracy and the regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching. As a result, teaching has improved in a number of subjects. For example, English teaching is now good overall. Teaching is good in mathematics where, at the last inspection, there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. It is good in design and technology, at least satisfactory in art and satisfactory in geography, all of which had an element of unsatisfactory teaching.

16. Teaching is also very good in PSHE and good in physical education. It is good in history for pupils in Years 7 to 9. This improvement in teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning and, for older pupils, on their ability to become independent, gain accreditation and prepare effectively for life after school. There is an even spread of good teaching across the school so all pupils benefit from this, with a higher proportion of very good teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

17. Literacy and numeracy are taught well by teachers and this assists pupils in acquiring basic skills, particularly those of speaking and listening and number work. However, the use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent. It is used well in mathematics, where it is integral to lessons for pupils from Years 7 to 9, and to access learning along with communication aids for primary pupils. Apart from these examples, the knowledge and skills of teachers varies. As a result, some staff miss opportunities to use ICT to support and reinforce learning.

18. Planning is generally well matched to the wide range of pupils' needs because teachers know their pupils well. Occasionally in lessons for pupils of secondary age, such as geography and science, this is not so. As a result, some pupils, such as those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, miss out on relevant experiences. Planning is very effective for pupils in Years 1 and 2 where work is very well matched to individual needs and pupils gain in confidence from doing appropriate activities. Planning for the relevant use of communication aids for those pupils who need them in Years 1 and 2 is very good. For example, in one literacy lesson, the programming of appropriate songs and vocabulary meant that all pupils had access to an enhanced range of learning experiences and remained on task. Teaching assistants support pupils' individual needs well but sometimes there is not enough support and some opportunities are lost to support learning.

19. The use of signing and symbols is mainly good for younger pupils. For example, in one good literacy lesson, signs and symbols were used well to change activities so pupils knew that the activity had ended and another was about to begin. However, it is not always consistently used with older pupils who need it. This is because staff do not always have the skills, and pupils begin to lose concentration. Where staff do have the skills, pupils gain greatly in terms both of the subject and of self-esteem because they can join in the whole lesson. For example, in a geography lesson for pupils in Year 8, a teaching assistant with very effective signing skills kept a pupil with complex needs fully engaged in the lesson.

20. Lessons are organised well so no time is lost. Confident subject knowledge on the part of teachers enables pupils to improve their skills. Clear instructions and good use of appropriate questioning means pupils understand what is required of them. While the starts of lessons are generally good, final whole class sessions are not always used well. Sometimes they are hurried and pupils do not get a proper chance to finish or recall work completed. However, given the wide variety of needs of pupils within a class, time is mainly used well and pupils produce good quantities of work. A variety of activities sustain interest, with those for pupils in Years 3 to 6 being particularly motivating for pupils. Resources are carefully chosen to meet pupils' needs. For example, in one class for young pupils, a puppet was used well to re-enact a story and, in another, a range of scarves, gloves and hats were used to reinforce understanding of everyday articles and to help pupils sequence a song.

21. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Teachers are enthusiastic, expect pupils to work hard and praise them when they do. Pupils appreciate this and try hard to succeed. Overall management, particularly of behaviour, is good. Teachers are calm and patient because of an understanding of the very good procedures in place to manage behaviour. This helps pupils to feel secure when working. Occasionally pupils, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorder and challenging behaviours, are not managed as consistently as they could be and this affects the learning and progress of other pupils.

22. Teachers' day-to-day assessment is generally satisfactory. It is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and for those in Years 10 and 11 where they are working towards external awards. As a result, teachers of these pupils know what pupils need to do next and can plan accordingly.

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

23. Learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory overall; however, within this the curriculum varies. The school provides a very good range of learning experiences for pupils in Years 10 and 11. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is good. In Years 1 and 2,

there is a satisfactory range of learning experiences. However, for pupils in Years 3 to 6, the curriculum presently lacks breadth and balance, and is limited. This is because the school has very recently introduced a new curriculum for younger pupils to take account of their more complex needs. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, the school has chosen to teach National Curriculum subjects through topics. This works reasonably well in Years 1 and 2, and builds well on the curriculum at the Foundation Stage, although at present, too little religious education and ICT are taught.

24. In the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6, there is too little religious education, music and ICT taught. At this stage, there is also too little science taught, as the subject is given the same time allocation as geography and history. One aspect, materials and their properties, is taught only once in the four-year period. This does not prepare pupils well enough for the demands of the secondary curriculum and is presently unsatisfactory. However, the school has concentrated on improving the curriculum for literacy and numeracy and this it has done well. The school understands that they have not yet achieved an appropriate breadth and balance across these subjects as yet.

25. Since the last inspection, the school has partly addressed the weaknesses identified. However, there has been a change in the way pupils are grouped into classes, and in the needs of pupils admitted, and much work has gone into modifying the curriculum to take account of these changes. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills have been improved, and these are now good. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

26. For pupils of all ages, there is a very good quality programme of personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education and drugs education. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development by systematically developing their independence skills and preparing them for adult life. For example, secondary pupils evaluate toys for young children, thus developing their understanding of the importance of play, children's changing preferences and safety aspects of toy design. For pupils who are residential, there are good opportunities to develop personal skills during weekly evening sessions. Pupils work towards individual targets, with a view to improving their ability to interact with others, or their self-help skills.

27. In Years 10 and 11, all the required subjects are taught, and there is a good range of additional experiences, including vocational taster courses at the local college, a good quality careers education programme and a mini-enterprise project. Although pupils in Year 10 complete a module of religious education, those in Year 11 do not effectively build on this, as religious education forms only a small part of the citizenship programme. Productive links with the community help to enrich the curriculum at this stage. For example, there is a wide range of work experience providers, including a well known catalogue retailer and Windsor Castle. Links with the local education business partnership help the school to provide this range of placements. A local business provides support for the mini-enterprise project run by pupils at this stage. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next step, and most go on to continue their education when they leave at the end of Year 11.

28. The range of extra-curricular activities provided for pupils in the residential houses is good; a few day pupils are able to join in these activities too. Activities range from 'chilling out' with a video to outings in the community, such as ten-pin bowling. Good organisation allows an element of choice.

29. The school provides well for pupils who need additional equipment to enable them to communicate, and for those who have the potential to use electric wheelchairs. Needs are carefully assessed, and direct teaching in the use of switches is provided. Therapy



programmes are provided for those pupils who need them, and there is a move towards providing therapy in the classroom, but there is no formal means of ensuring that pupils catch up the work missed when they are out of class

30. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While the provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, the social, moral and cultural development is good. This marks an improvement since the last inspection when moral development was judged as satisfactory.

31. Provision is very well supported by PSHE, but staff have not had the opportunity to consider ways in which support could be given through other areas of the curriculum. This is particularly so for spiritual development. As a result, opportunities are sometimes missed to improve this area of pupils' development.

32. Spiritual development is enhanced by a thematic approach to *Thought For The Day*. Each week a particular theme such as 'friendship', 'good and bad decisions' or 'trying something new' is used by class teachers for thought and reflection. During the week of the inspection, the 'thought' was appropriately 'visitors'. As a result, pupils were encouraged to think about feelings and became more confident in talking to and welcoming the visiting inspection team.

33. Moral and social development is well supported by the establishment of a list of *Golden Rules*. These reinforce the school as a safe learning environment where all individuals are respected. Pupils earn merits towards the House system and older pupils, if they earn sufficient merits to be a prefect, gain privileges. Noticeably, pupils of all ages are willing to help each other to complete tasks or move around the building. Staff make time for pupils and support their personal development well by talking through problems and helping pupils to improve their behaviour in school. Regular assemblies emphasise respect and responsibility and reinforce a sense of community amongst the pupils and staff. For example, a lively assembly for secondary age pupils reinforced very well the need for rules and fairness in a community. Adults are very good role models in being fair and tolerant and reinforcing the idea of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to think of other people. Specific charities are chosen each term, the most recent being for children in Afghanistan. The vocational aspect of the curriculum for older pupils encourages the development of independence and life skills and links well with the world of work. As a result, pupils are able to talk with confidence and maturity about their work experience placements.

34. Cultural development is supported through activities in art such as the appreciation of the work of different artists such as Monet and Seurat. Pupils have been introduced to the art of other cultures, such as Aboriginal and African art. They are made aware of the multi-cultural nature of society in religious education, when they hear about the customs and festivals of other faiths. Pupils in Year 10 compile sensible questionnaires in preparation for their interviews with members of the Sikh and Muslim faiths. The school encourages pupils to consider the local environment with an emphasis on recycling. The governors support the school well with this initiative, awarding a challenge cup each year to the team making most impact on the environment. Experiences are not limited to the school environment; a range of visits are made to religious buildings, theatres, garden centres and supermarkets all planned to extend pupils' cultural awareness.

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

35. This is a school where the needs of all pupils are considered. Every pupil is valued, and a high priority is given to their care and well-being. All staff strive hard to ensure that all pupils feel secure and able to learn to the best of their ability. The school has made good

progress since the last inspection and the care and welfare of its pupils and procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good overall.

36. The school has good links with support agencies including nursing services, social services, speech and language therapy and educational psychologists. These services work well, with teachers discussing the needs of specific pupils with professional colleagues. Other professionals speak very positively about staff at the school who they feel know the children in their care very well and are confident in seeking guidance when they have concerns.

37. The school is generally a safe place and there is much good practice with regard to health and safety. Child protection procedures are secure with the headteacher being supported by his two deputy headteachers to ensure any matters of concern are dealt with promptly. There is a comprehensive staff handbook that covers many aspects of pupils' welfare. This has helped promote an awareness of health and safety issues during the recent period of high staff turnover. There are impressive plans for a complete redesign of the school site in order to develop better specialist resources and adequate space to meet the diverse needs of all the pupils. However, the school needs to ensure that during the interim period important aspects of health and safety are constantly reviewed to ensure good practice at all times. For example, the start and end of day are currently very difficult times because of the lack of sufficient parking spaces for staff and school transports. The school is not sufficiently imaginative in how current space is used so children are not put at risk by vehicles being parked on footpaths, double yellow lines or near the zebra crossing.

38. The procedures for promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. The whole school *Golden Rules* are supplemented well by age appropriate class rules. Most pupils are aware of these and take them seriously. The school recognises that many more children have significant behaviour problems when they come to the school and has been very proactive in ensuring that these are addressed. There is a continual review of pupils' behaviour and behaviour strategies and individual behaviour plans are developed and kept under constant review where appropriate. The school monitors incidents of poor behaviour well and analyses them to identify pupils or situations that cause particular concern. However, there have been many changes in a short space of time and at present procedures are over complex and sometimes inconsistently practised. On occasions, such as break, there is not always sufficient staffing and as a result vulnerable pupils are at times put at risk by the inappropriate behaviour of individual pupils.

39. The procedures for promoting pupils' personal development and independence are very good. As much information as possible is collated about pupils when they start at school. This helps staff to understand the problems any pupil has to cope with. Appropriate personal development targets are set from the time pupils arrive at school. Such targets are reviewed on a termly basis as part of the individual education plan process. Progress is regularly reviewed during the time children are at school. This enables teachers to ensure all pupils make very good progress in their personal development. The residential unit is very effective in supporting the school in helping pupils become independent and develop social skills. The residential unit sets suitable targets for pupils whilst they are in the unit and for pupils who are moving towards returning home full-time. They will also set targets for them to achieve whilst at home. The courtesy and self-sufficiency of pupils at breakfast time in the residential unit was very impressive. Pupils were continually challenged by staff to do as much for themselves as possible and most pupils were extremely supportive of each other and displayed great courtesy to visitors. Life skills lessons are used very effectively to help pupils cope with everyday situations whether in the context of personal care or coping in public places.

40. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school works well with the education welfare officer in analysing attendance to identify pupils for whom they have concerns. The school and the education welfare officer work together well in order to improve the attendance of such pupils.

41. Assessment procedures overall are satisfactory, although in practice they are not always used effectively. There have been some improvements in assessing and monitoring progress but the lack of consistently effective subject assessment limits staff knowledge of pupils' achievements. Overall, baseline assessments are appropriately in place for pupils entering the school. Assessment is best in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development, where assessments are used very effectively to record and monitor pupils' progress using the 'P' levels. However, a weakness is that there are few effective systems to plan for, and monitor, pupils' progress in other subjects from year to year.

42. All pupils do have records of achievement that are completed on a termly basis and the best examples clearly identify progress. This, however, is the exception and currently the records do not identify how pupils are developing specific subject skills, knowledge and understanding. Therefore, teachers cannot use assessment information satisfactorily to plan long term to meet individual pupils' needs. Teachers make good use of opportunities that present themselves during lessons to assess what pupils know, understand and can do, and as a result, teachers are in a position to use this assessment information to plan work on a day-to-day basis.

43. Arrangements for National Curriculum tests and tasks in English, mathematics and science are in place, where appropriate, and the results are reported to parents. Assessment for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is appropriately based on examinations and records of pupils achievements are maintained in their national record of achievement portfolios.

44. A significant weakness in the school's arrangements for supporting pupils' academic performance lies in the fact that the school does not yet have in place systematic procedures to ensure staff apply assessment criteria in the same rigorous way when standardising pupils' work. The absence of internal moderation and levelling practice has an adverse effect on ensuring consistency in subjects. This also has an effect on individual targets for pupils. This is because teachers' knowledge of National Curriculum levels is, in some cases, insecure and this inevitably means that targets set are often too broad and inappropriate. This makes it hard to assess progress towards them.

45. The provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is good overall. Staff work hard to implement the advice from visiting specialists, such as the occupational therapist. The arrangements for the annual review of a pupil's statement of special educational needs are well organised.

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

46. The school has suitable links with parents. Staff values the contribution that parents make to their children's education and has identified the need to create a post of Home School Liaison Officer to improve links between home and school. However, this post has still to be filled and the school has made only satisfactory progress in its partnership with parents since the last inspection.

47. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy and feel comfortable when approaching the school with any problems. Parents agree communication on a day-to-day basis is good with

the school phoning home if necessary. They are confident that any issues they raise with the school are treated seriously and will be dealt with promptly.

48. Parents appreciate the home visit they receive before their child enters school. Parents of younger pupils feel the home/school diaries are used very well and effectively. However, there is some inconsistency in the use of home/school diaries elsewhere across the school. This results in some parents being less confident that they understand how well their children are progressing. The residential unit maintains more consistent links with parents and generally these parents feel better informed about how well their children are doing, particularly in relation to the targets their children are working towards, within the residential unit.

49. The school provides a useful prospectus that gives parents a good idea of what goes on in school. School newsletters provide parents with an idea of what activities pupils across the school are involved in during the term. The school has recently reviewed the format of the annual report parents receive about their children at the end of the school year. These are now well written and focus on the progress pupils have made during the year, particularly in relation to mathematics, English and personal and social development. In contrast, the educational reports parents receive at the time of their children's annual review are very brief and often only comprise a list of levels their children have reached for each subject. Similarly, pupils' individual education plans that are produced each term are not of a format that could usefully be shared with parents. Parents also receive little regular advanced curriculum information to enable them to be aware of topics which their children may be covering at school and which it might be beneficial for their children to explore further at home.

50. Most parents live some distance from the school and this means there are few who are able to help in school. However, parents do have the opportunity to attend events at school such as open evenings as well as annual reviews. There is a Friends of Holyport group where parents can meet socially as well as raise funds that can be used to provide resources for the school.

51. The school has yet to consult fully with parents on issues that affect them and how they view the school. This could help to ensure parents are better informed and more able to contribute towards their children's learning.

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

52. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The senior management team have continued to build on the work begun at that time to ensure all pupils are taught in age appropriate classes, regardless of their wide range of needs. The headteacher continues to provide good leadership that is outward looking. This includes working with mainstream schools to support and advise, particularly on access issues, and the establishment of a learning resource base in the school for mainstream staff. The headteacher has a clear educational direction for the school and despite the difficulties in terms of the complexities of this school, the senior management team and key stage co-ordinators have worked hard to realise this. However, the pace of some developments has been slowed by substantial staff changes. These have come at the same time as pupils are being admitted with more complex needs and the resultant need to review the curriculum. 53.

This has meant that, for example, professional development and induction have taken on a particular importance as the school has sought to make sure new staff have the ability and resources to teach all pupils. Commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils is at the heart of the school's work and is promoted constantly by the senior management team. There is a good atmosphere for learning. School values are well reflected in the work of the school and staff share a sense of purpose and commitment.

54. While aspects of the management of the school are good, overall management is satisfactory. The school runs effectively on a daily basis. Very appropriate key stage team meetings are held weekly and include communication from the teams to the senior management team and vice versa. This ensures that all staff know what is going on and have their chance to have a say. The key stage co-ordinators manage their teams and areas well. For example, the new Key Stage 3 co-ordinator has created a brighter environment and a quiet reading area appreciated by all. However, management and monitoring of subjects and their assessment is inconsistent. While senior managers do monitor assessment, this checking is not comprehensive enough to ensure consistency. The school has recently appointed a teacher to develop numeracy and literacy across the school, but most subjects do not have a member of staff with this overview. As a result, individual staff only have an understanding of their subjects in the key stages in which they teach. This results in the lack of a clear picture of what pupils have learnt in some subjects and a resultant lack of balance. Skills are not always built on consistently. This is because information is not passed as effectively as it could be between key stages, especially when pupils move to the secondary phase.

55. The monitoring of teaching has improved very well since the last inspection and as a result teaching now effectively meets pupils' needs and their achievement has improved. Lessons are observed by senior managers and by key stage co-ordinators, who also monitor planning. All observations are focused to reflect school priorities; for example, one focus was on communication for those pupils who need extra support. Written and verbal feedback with clear judgements is given and outcomes discussed at senior management and governors' meetings. Further priorities are then set from these evaluations to benefit pupils' learning. Particular attention has been paid to numeracy and literacy and this has resulted in teaching and pupil achievement significantly improving in these areas. Performance management is in place and helps staff reflect on their work.

56. There are good relevant priorities for raising standards based on identified needs. However, not all areas of the improvement plan are presently costed because of overspending. The school is very carefully spending standards fund and other grant money, where available, and using school expertise to make sure developments continue to take place. A feature of the school is the quality improvement teams which are set up with a cross section of all staff to make recommendations on issues. Recent ones have included home school liaison and assessment, both of which are present school improvement priorities.

57. The governing body appropriately supports the school and has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development. The governors are very pro-active in ensuring that whatever their needs, pupils are given every opportunity to gain the best from the school. They have been instrumental in working with the local education authority to find a solution to the financial and accommodation difficulties. There are a range of very appropriate meetings, well documented, which keep them up to date with school issues. For example, staff are often invited to the curriculum committee to discuss and share expertise on issues such as access to ICT. Governors are frequent visitors to the school and keep themselves well informed by attending school conferences and being involved in improvement planning.

58. The school is presently overspent but the finance committee is very aware of this and expenditure is comprehensively monitored and the budget revised appropriately. The situation should ease as the school has now reached agreement with the local education authority on adjustments to the pupil bandings, which provide a substantial part of the budget, to meet the needs of a more complex population. From 2003/4 there will be four bands instead of three, with one new one for emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is presently an increase in

the funding for the top band and there will be significantly more pupils allocated to the top two bands. This will ensure that the school has more money to reflect changing needs.

59. Staffing is adequate to meet the needs of pupils; however, there are times when more would be helpful, particularly at break and lunch time.

60. Accommodation overall is unsatisfactory and some parts militate against easy access for pupils with physical difficulties. Nevertheless, the school has worked hard to ensure these problems do not detract from pupils' learning. There are aspects of the school that clearly enrich the curriculum as well as pupils' personal development. These are well used by the school to provide a broad education. For example, the grounds are used to provide opportunities in studying the environment in science and in personal education. The fitness trail and sensory gardens also add much to pupils' daily activities. These features are appreciated and well utilised. The residential unit is also well used. The staff and pupils make very good use of what is clearly insufficient space for the proper delivery of social and personal activities.

61. The halls are used for physical education and are unsatisfactory, being used as corridors to enable staff and pupils to make their way around the school, as is the nursery classroom. These interruptions detract from teaching and learning. The school has been adapted and modified to meet the needs of pupils over the years. There have been successes, but the primary department is becoming increasingly unsuitable for the changing pupil population. The whole school has made great efforts in the past to ensure the projected pupil population will have better facilities for learning and this has been partially successful. There are some sensory rooms and pools and these are effective when operational. The remaining accommodation needs the same development as the primary department in order to meet the needs of all pupils, as well as providing access to the curriculum in the broadest sense. The buildings' officer has visited the school as part of the local education authority response to the disability act and recognises it is an issue which needs addressing. Proposals are currently out to consultation on rebuilding the school.

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

62. The headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) seek ways to improve the accommodation so that, as pupils' needs become more complex, learning is not hindered by the physical limitations of the building.  
(Paragraphs: 60,61,75,136)
- (2) Improve assessment by:
  - regularly monitoring, assessing and recording what pupils know, understand and can do and use this information to further plan their learning;
  - moderating pupils' work so staff have a good idea of National Curriculum levels and are able to use them accurately;

- passing on all detailed relevant assessment information on skills gained when pupils move to the secondary phase;
- ensuring individual education plans are specific to the needs of individuals and are regularly evaluated to measure progress and used to set learning targets.

(Paragraphs: 4,41,42,44,54,79,82,94,104,123,136)

(3) Improve curriculum co-ordination by:

- establishing a comprehensive overview of each subject by completing subject audits so there is a record of what is taught and when, so gaps can be identified;
- continuing to develop the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that it is broad and balanced, builds on previous experiences and fully incorporates music, religious education and science;
- ensuring consistent use of ICT throughout the school by incorporating it in all planning across the subjects;
- monitoring to ensure there is appropriate coverage of the whole curriculum across the school.

(Paragraphs: 3,4,23,24, 82,90,91,104,112,115,119,123,126,137,140)

The following measures should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan for improvement:

- review support staff levels to ensure there are always an appropriate number to support pupils in the classroom and around school;  
(Paragraphs:18,38,59,72)
- improve information given to parents on progress so they are more clearly informed about what their children can do and what they need to do next;  
(Paragraphs: 48,49,104)
- ensure all staff who join the school, particularly those in the secondary phase, continue to receive a good level of training in the teaching of autistic spectrum disorders and profound and multiple learning difficulties.  
(Paragraphs: 1, 18, 21,97)

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

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

Number of lessons observed

|    |
|----|
| 76 |
|----|

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

|    |
|----|
| 54 |
|----|

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

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 2         | 13        | 33   | 28           | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 3         | 17        | 43   | 37           | 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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

### 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                     | 158          |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 32           |

| <b>English as an additional language</b>                | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 12           |

| <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 | 20           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 17           |

### Attendance

| <b>Authorised absence</b> | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 7.0 |

| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> | %   |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| School data                 | 3.0 |

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British                             |
| White – Irish                               |
| White – any other White background          |

### Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 126                  | 14                                | 1                              |
| 3                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| 3                    | 0                                 | 0                              |



|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian                     | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani                  | 8 | 2 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese   | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 8 | 0 | 0 |

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

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: Y N – Y 11

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 23   |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 6.16 |
| Average class size                       | 9    |

#### Education support staff: Y N – Y 11

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 36  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 997 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2001/2  |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 1859414 |
| Total expenditure                          | 2001106 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 10368   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 68521   |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | -73171  |

**Recruitment of teachers**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years   | 12   |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years   | 22.8 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 2    |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 0    |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 2    |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 158 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 60  |

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 62             | 23            | 8                | 5                 | 2          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 45             | 43            | 12               | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 26             | 50            | 14               | 7                 | 3          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 11             | 39            | 30               | 14                | 7          |
| The teaching is good.  | 54             | 37            | 7                | 0                 | 2          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 38             | 35            | 18               | 7                 | 2          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 57             | 33            | 7                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 47             | 38            | 10               | 2                 | 3          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 45             | 28            | 17               | 7                 | 3          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 47             | 44            | 3                | 3                 | 2          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 41             | 45            | 7                | 5                 | 2          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 32             | 25            | 17               | 10                | 17         |

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

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

63. Since the last inspection, when there were a small number of children of nursery age who attended the school on a part time basis, there have been significant changes in the numbers and ages of those joining the school during the Foundation Stage. During the last school year, most of the children were of reception age. In September there was no separate provision for foundation children as there were insufficient children to make up a class. Since then, more children have joined the school and, after Christmas, the nursery was reopened. Most of the recently admitted children have complex needs including profound and multiple learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder. The few children of nursery and reception age who have been in the school for a longer time are placed in mixed age classes with pupils in Years 1 and 2.

64. Records show that standards of achievement for children of reception age are good overall and they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Those of nursery age have made satisfactory progress in the short time they have been in school.

#### **Personal social and emotional development**

65. Children, throughout the Foundation Stage, make good progress in this area. They begin to develop an understanding of the structure of the school day, and some of the newer children already recognise routines at the beginning and end of the day. Children with significant learning difficulties begin to take an interest in what is happening around them. They notice what is happening in the classroom and are aware, for example, of when their peers are absent. Children of reception age settle well to tasks and enjoy individual and group activities due to good teaching. As they spend time in the school, children develop concentration and some stay on task to complete the activities that they are set. They are encouraged to help others, by getting out and putting away equipment. Some are already becoming aware of the needs of others so that, for example, when one pupil in the nursery was crying, another went off to fetch a box of tissues for him. Where children have difficulty in managing their behaviour, as in the case of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, strategies have yet to be developed for helping pupils to settle. All adults are good role models and staff praise and encourage children. Positive attitudes are consistently reinforced.

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

66. Children of reception age make good progress in developing language and communication skills. This is because they are taught well and given good opportunities to develop these through many of the activities which take place throughout the day. Those in the nursery make satisfactory progress due to appropriate teaching. Listening skills are being well developed, and children are learning to follow instructions of increasing length. For example, older children are beginning to listen well to adults and to respond by word or gesture. Those with more complex needs are beginning to respond by making eye contact or smiling when their names are spoken. They learn to indicate choices by using picture symbols. Some children are beginning to learn letters, for example, by matching the letters of their names. Others are beginning to make marks on paper as a pre-writing skill. While in the nursery, satisfactory teaching ensures children make marks on a chalkboard and, with help, some trace the initial letters of their names in sand or foam. Higher attaining children begin to copy over an adult's writing. Older children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books with

an adult. Some of those in the nursery already recognise the need to turn pages. Those with more complex needs show interest in stories and take part in role play by using a switch.

### **Mathematical development**

67. Children of reception age make good progress in acquiring pre-mathematics skills, while those of nursery age are making satisfactory progress. Children of nursery age, and those with more complex needs, begin to learn about colours and sort and match objects according to colour. Older and higher attaining children match objects to pictures and sort by size and shape. They count to five. Learning in mathematics is well supported by the use of counting rhymes and songs, which help children to remember the numbers and make the learning an enjoyable experience. Overall teaching is satisfactory and better for those of reception age.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

68. Satisfactory teaching encourages children to observe their environment, for example, by looking at the weather. Those with more complex needs explore the environment, while those new to the school are given suitable opportunities to explore their classrooms as they settle into school routines and become familiar with the resources available. Several show an interest in the computer and are aware of how to switch it on and how to operate the mouse, for example, to change the screen.

### **Creative development**

69. Children make good use of a wide range of opportunities to work creatively in different media. They use paint, pencil, crayon and different types of modelling material which allows them to experiment with texture, shape and space. Those with more significant needs become more tolerant of tactile experiences and are able to touch clay, sand and dough. They enjoy activities such as bubble painting and marbling, which they undertake with varying levels of support. Teaching that is satisfactory enables children in the nursery to begin to respond to singing and when music is played, some vocalise or hum in response. Music is used on several occasions throughout the day, as, for example, at the start and finish of the sessions when pupils are greeted and bidden goodbye. Some children are beginning to show an interest in percussion instruments, and make some attempt to play these.

### **Physical development**

70. Children are developing gross and fine motor skills at levels appropriate to their abilities.

71. Some children press switches to work a bubble tube, while others begin to throw balls into a hoop. They move around the hall or playground using a variety of equipment. Fine motor skills are developed through activities such as cutting and sticking and playing with construction toys. Physical development is well supported by a range of activities such as swimming, hydrotherapy, physiotherapy and tac-pac.

72. Overall teaching in the Foundation Stage is only satisfactory because the school has staffing difficulties, and there was no qualified teacher available for the nursery class. However, teaching is better for reception age children who are taught with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory. On occasion, too few staff are available to ensure that children in the nursery are fully occupied.

73 Staff are not always aware of the full variety of learning experiences which they can offer to children. However, they do provide a suitable range of opportunities that enable the children to make satisfactory progress. At times there is insufficient use of signing and symbols to promote the learning of some children.

74. The curriculum for children of reception age has been well planned. It is based mainly on the Foundation Curriculum, with some elements linking to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, in preparation for pupils moving into Year 1. Because the intake of children of nursery age has been fairly recent, plans for a suitable curriculum for these children are not yet in place, and this is an area for development. Very effective assessment procedures are in place; this is an improvement from the last inspection. Assessment begins with information gathering from parents and other professionals before the children start school. It links into the development of very good communication passports. In the first few weeks in school, an entry assessment is completed and individual targets set for pupils. Children's development is closely monitored and observations are recorded which are used to review the targets and to complete a record of achievement.

75. Staff work hard to develop good relationships with parents and carers. The nursery teacher provides a very good range of opportunities for parents to share information, as well as concerns, starting with initial visits before pupils start school. This partnership with parents further enhances learning opportunities for children. There is a satisfactory range of equipment, although the influx of younger children and those with more complex needs means that more resources are required. There is a pleasant outdoor play area in which children have opportunities to develop their physical skills. In the summer, they also have access to a grassed area which has an activity play area and a garden area, both providing additional learning opportunities. The accommodation for the nursery class is inadequate. The room is the only access to the classrooms for pupils in Years 1 to 2 and there are many interruptions to lessons as people move about the area. In addition, the part of the room which forms a corridor is the only suitable area for materials such as sand and water to be available. As a result these cannot always be on hand for children to use.

## **ENGLISH**

76. Pupils make good progress in English. Progress in reading and in speaking and listening is better than in writing. This reflects the limited range of opportunities for pupils to develop independent writing skills in some lessons. English, particularly communication skills and speaking and listening, is promoted well across the curriculum. Overall teaching across the school is good. In some lessons, it is very good. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement in the achievement that pupils make.

77. In speaking and listening, pupils of all ages make good progress. This is because teachers place strong emphasis on communication skills. For example, teachers make good use of a range of special communication aids such as switches so that pupils with complex needs are given every chance to join in lessons. Pupils in Year 2 chant familiar number rhymes with the adults and learn to take turns while participating in drama activities. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they contribute to the lesson and wait in turn to describe to their classmates what they have done. Higher attaining pupils answer questions confidently, while completing work on myths and legends. Older secondary pupils recount the events in the play they are studying and discuss how they would report the death of Macbeth in a newspaper article. By the end of Year 9, pupils take part in discussions about what you might find on a treasure island. By Year 11, pupils interview one another about their work experience. They discuss in groups who will contribute to a pamphlet they are writing for others in the school. As pupils move through the school, they become more effective and

confident communicators. This is in response to the wide range of opportunities provided for them in lessons and in other school activities.

78. Pupils across the school make good progress overall in reading. Signing and the use of symbols are well used with the younger pupils to support the development of their reading. In Year 2, some pupils read from books where the text has been supplemented by symbols. They work confidently with books, following the story in the pictures and identifying familiar words. By the time pupils reach Year 6, higher attaining pupils are becoming more fluent readers. They choose books that interest them from within a colour-coded range. They retell the story, drawing the listener's attention to important elements such as a magic key. Higher attaining pupils in Year 9 read fluently from books such as those from the Harry Potter series. They show an interest in the stories and can predict a possible ending. Older pupils choose and read from a range of books written for young adults. They are interested in the content but also enjoy reading adventure stories. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 develop their reading skills through opportunities for focused reading activities in class.

79. Although pupils across the school make generally good progress in reading, some pupils' achievement is limited. This is because, although pupils are given opportunities to read and respond to a range of texts, teachers do not always accurately determine the level each pupil has reached. Consequently, the next appropriate steps have not always been identified and the development of higher order reading skills is sometimes restricted. The use of assessment to inform future planning for individuals has been identified as an area for development by the school.

80. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing. Younger pupils prepare for writing by overwriting and copying letters and sentences. They develop pencil control through the use of work sheets and by writing in sand. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils record their work on *Calligrams* by writing a poem they have created in the shape of the subject. Most write using a correct letter formation and their work is well presented. Pupils, at an early stage of writing development, track a series of colourful moving pictures with their eyes. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils have progressed in completing a diary and are developing cursive writing. Pupils in Year 11 use the skills they have developed to complete appropriate accreditation for external awards.

81. The teaching of English is good overall but ranges from satisfactory in some lessons to very good in others. In the very good lessons, work is clearly planned to include all pupils. Teachers are enthusiastic and communicate this to their pupils who in turn show interest and involvement in the lesson. For example, in one good lesson, pupils were expected to work collaboratively and to share ideas. As pupils in the group had significant difficulties, this was a very challenging task that not only developed their speaking and listening skills but also contributed to their personal development. In a very good lesson, the work was planned with reference to the National Literacy Strategy and began with work on a Big Book for all pupils. Activities following this were designed to ensure that all pupils worked as hard as they could on their tasks. Teaching assistants were well informed and able to support the pupils in their group, ensuring they completed their work. Where teaching is less effective, the work planned does not always provide challenging activities for all pupils and they lose concentration. Some teachers make effective use of signing and symbols but this is inconsistently used across the school.

82. The curriculum for English is good overall. Teachers are working hard to continue to develop the subject in response to the changing needs of the pupils admitted to the school. Staff work with other professionals such as the speech and language therapist who also contribute to this development. Particular attention is paid to the development of communication. The planning of work is undertaken within different areas of the school and

plans are discussed between the members of staff responsible. There is no overall subject co-ordinator and consequently no overview of English across the school. Appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy have been implemented in the classes for younger pupils but this good practice is inconsistent. The use of ICT to support pupils learning is also inconsistent and does not regularly appear in short or long term planning. The introduction of a new system of assessment has resulted in a start being made to the recording of levels of attainment for all pupils. Older pupils are able to work towards an externally assessed qualification in English and use their literacy skills in work for the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network Course (ASDAN).

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. The provision for mathematics, the quality of teaching and pupils' learning have all improved since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. However, there is still room for development in promoting numeracy skills across the other subjects and in planning the consistent use of information and communication technology to help pupils learn.

84. Pupils' achievements in mathematics, in relation to their prior attainment and to their individual targets, are good overall and often significantly better for pupils in Years 1 and 2. By Year 2, pupils learn to sequence beads to combine size, colour and shape in pattern making. With support, lower attaining pupils identify circles and squares while higher attaining pupils discuss a wider range of shapes. They learn the early skills of measurement when they sort objects into 'big' or 'small' groups. The higher attaining pupils count up to ten and understand the principle of 'one more than' and 'one less than'. By Year 6, pupils have a deeper understanding of number, sequencing numbers to twenty and subtracting numbers under ten. Higher attaining pupils add hundreds, tens and units and learn to round numbers to the nearest ten or hundred. Pupils who have the most severe learning difficulties continue to achieve well, increasing concentration levels as they use eye-pointing skills to sort items into two-colour groups, and explore the texture of items provided for them.

85. Pupils continue to build on their earlier skills and by Year 9 record their survey findings about favourite foods in horizontal bar graphs. Pupils in this age group make good progress in learning to input data onto a spreadsheet and accessing graphs. Lower attaining pupils have problems with their co-ordination and manipulative skills so their recorded work is less accurate. However, they use cubes and calculators to add and subtract numbers under twenty, recording their answers on whiteboards. Pupils in Year 8 enjoy the good opportunities to investigate the principles of area, to experiment and estimate using postcards and playing cards as non-standard forms of measure when they measure classroom items.

86. By Year 11, pupils put their mathematical skills to good use when they run their business project, 'Holyport Handicrafts'. This practical application of mathematical skills supports pupils' understanding of income and expenditure. They produce a financial report and analyse their results, noting that, while the sale of goods was good, the sale of shares was disappointing. While they are in Years 10 and 11, pupils work towards achievement in Entry Level certification and the bronze and silver awards for the ASDAN award scheme.

87. Teaching is good. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when there was a high level of unsatisfactory teaching. The best lessons are very well planned to provide for the wide range of needs of pupils in the class. Lively introductory activities include all pupils. These are most successful when teachers take the time to plan questions that relate directly to the attainment of each pupil. This results in all pupils participating, achieving success and feeling positive about their work. At the end of the better



lessons, teachers review the lesson targets and make sure that pupils share their new learning with each other. This is effective in consolidating learning and in making pupils aware of their new knowledge and skills, resulting in a confident approach to their next activity. Lessons are a good combination of mental and practical mathematics that encourage pupils to join in all aspects of the subject.

88. The very best lessons allow no time wasting but have a strong work ethic focusing on achievement and enjoyment of the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced to pupils in Years 7 to 9. Lessons are of a consistently high quality. They are typified by good subject knowledge, high expectation of achievement and good ongoing assessment of pupils' skills and progress. Clear instructions mean pupils understand what is required of them and they concentrate and persevere till their work is complete. Meaningful praise motivates pupils and reassures them in knowing they are achieving well. The very good teaching seen for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is based on providing a wide range of appropriate activities that appeal to pupils and encourage them to consolidate and learn. Less progress is made when teachers do not manage the different behavioural needs of pupils appropriately or are insecure in teaching aspects of the numeracy strategy such as the final plenary session. All lessons benefit from the good quality teamwork between teachers and support staff and pupils enjoy their lessons.

89. Teachers of pupils in Years 1 to 6 display key mathematical words. In one Year 3 and 4 class, the large monthly calendar is completed daily to show significant events in the lives of the pupils, supporting their understanding of time. Good ICT provision has been made for pupils in Years 7 to 9 who all have a lesson each week designated for data handling and mathematics. In other classes, computer technology is underused in reinforcing pupils' mathematical understanding.

90. The curriculum in mathematics is good throughout the school, being balanced and relevant and covering all aspects of the National Curriculum. The quality of assessment in mathematics is good. Pupils' progress is tracked against the National Curriculum and the 'P' levels. Records show that teachers have encountered some difficulty in making accurate judgements but this has improved. The ongoing assessment made by teachers while they work with pupils is good and properly informs their teaching for the next stage in pupils' learning. There is no overview of the whole subject including a strategic development plan. In appointing a specialist subject teacher for Years 7 to 9, the school has made a good start in establishing the foundation for developing the subject further.

## **SCIENCE**

91. Achievement in science is satisfactory overall. Higher attaining pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well. They are given a broad range of learning experiences that are taught and assessed well. Secondary pupils with more complex needs are not engaged as much as they could be during lessons, though their achievements are satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a reasonably broad curriculum, and teaching is satisfactory; as a result, achievement is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, the curriculum is too narrow and there is an imbalance between the different aspects of the subject. As a result, pupils do not continue to build on the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have acquired up to Year 2. As a result, achievement is limited at this stage.

92. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make sound progress across the science curriculum. By Year 2, lower attaining pupils track colours when they see sunlight through pieces of coloured plastic, and higher attaining pupils use simple equipment to explore light and dark. By Year 6, lower attaining pupils make their preferences clear, when they smell different foods, for example. Higher attaining pupils make simple observations, such as a lightning ball being

brighter in the dark. These pupils know how shadows are cast, and that shadows are shorter in the middle of the day. They record their findings by writing short sentences and drawing diagrams. By Year 9, most pupils know basic safety rules in the science room, and correctly and safely use common pieces of equipment found in the room, such as thermometers, bunsen burners and measuring cylinders. They know that we breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Higher attaining pupils know that photosynthesis and respiration are chemical reactions. They write short accounts of investigations and record using tables or charts. In Years 10 and 11, pupils make sound progress towards externally accredited awards. Lower attaining pupils make responses using switches, such as activating a bubble gun, then tracking the progress of bubbles until they pop. Higher attaining pupils know some of the properties of metals, and they know how fossils are formed. They record findings using charts and graphs, and make suitable use of ICT to present certain pieces of their work.

93. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are skilled in selecting methods that help pupils to learn. They plan activities that appeal to pupils, are appropriate for their ages and help them to understand scientific ideas. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils became absorbed in making working models that incorporated simple circuits. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 were busy constructing a board game, based on snakes and ladders, where there were bonuses for using renewable sources of energy, such as wind, and penalties for using non-renewable sources, like coal.

94. Planning and assessment are best in Years 7 to 11, where good marking and testing, combined with the revisiting of topics, ensures that pupils continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding. In Years 3 to 6, topics are planned over a period of 12 terms, and in four of these terms no science is taught at all. For these years, teachers do not have a good enough grasp of assessing National Curriculum levels, and this leads to a false picture of attainment and progress. However, teachers do know the pupils well, and have a good idea of what each knows and understands. In Years 1 and 2, this is reflected in records of achievement, which give clear information about attainment. In Years 7 to 11, similar information is recorded on recently developed ongoing records. These help teachers to plan the next steps in learning.

95. Teachers plan to include good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills in science. For example, pupils are asked to write words associated with topics, and are increasingly expected to write accounts of their findings as they get older. Lower attaining pupils build up sentences by using symbols and text. There are opportunities to measure length, weight and volume in science. However, ICT is not used as well as it should be. There is no software for data logging, and limited use of interactive software.

96. The extent to which all pupils are included in lessons varies. In the most inclusive lessons, all pupils are acknowledged and greeted, as some arrive late because their personal care needs have been being attended to. Teachers ensure that pupils' work during the lesson is carefully monitored and that all receive their attention and feedback. Towards the end of the lesson, all pupils' achievements are acknowledged and reviewed. In the most successful lessons, good teamwork between the teacher and support staff enables the teacher to spend time with all ability groups. An example of this was seen in a Year 3 and 4 lesson.

97. Teachers and teaching assistants are not all equally skilled in managing pupils with more complex needs, such as autistic spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties. As a result, these pupils do not always make as much progress as others in Years 7 to 11.

98. At the time of the last inspection, pupils made good progress in science. However, since then the needs of pupils have changed, particularly in the primary classes. The

decision to group pupils by age rather than ability has meant that a great deal of work has had to be done to modify planning to take account of the wide spread of ability in each teaching group. The present co-ordinator, who is a subject specialist, has concentrated on developing the curriculum for secondary pupils; this is now good. Overall, improvement is satisfactory.

99. Development work on the curriculum in Years 7 to 11 has been carried out well. The co-ordinator's role has not extended to monitoring the subject in primary classes, but she is aware of the need to do this, and has a suitable action plan to support further development.

## **ART**

100. Pupils' achievement in art is satisfactory for the primary pupils and good for secondary pupils. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when some was unsatisfactory and poor. Taking into account the increasingly complex nature of the pupils' needs, there has been some improvement in the subject since the last inspection although teachers' knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study is variable.

101. Primary age pupils work on cross-curricular themes such as colour. They explore what happens when colours are mixed and investigate the difference between cold and hot colours. By Year 6, they experience a range of techniques such as print making, watercolours, working with clay and three dimensional structures. By Year 9, they are using these skills to produce a collage choosing appropriate materials. The oldest pupils have the opportunity to use all these skills whilst working towards GCSE, Entry level, and, for lower attaining pupils, the ASDAN award scheme. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, a wider range of accreditation has enhanced the provision and assessment is appropriately linked to external awards.

102. Teaching of art is good for secondary age pupils and satisfactory for those of the primary age. Teachers organise lessons well, and this enables pupils to improve their skills at their own levels. Teachers usually give clear instructions, expect pupils to respond promptly and are vigilant in matters of safety. Appropriate opportunities are provided at each age for pupils to learn about different artists, such as Seurat. This encourages pupils to appreciate the artists' work and style. For instance, in a Year 10 lesson, the teacher's good demonstration and explanation enabled pupils to appreciate pointillist style and the good assistance of support staff enabled a pupil with more complex needs to achieve. For younger pupils, plans indicate the study of the work of local artists, in addition to investigating art in Tudor and Greek times. Good links are made to cultures when pupils study African and Egyptian art. Older pupils develop an understanding and appreciation of other cultures through the study of Aboriginal art.

103. The teachers' enthusiasm and relationships with the pupils ensure they co-operate and this has a positive effect on learning. Older pupils say that they enjoy their art, and observation of lessons supports this. Their attitude towards the subject is positive and they try very hard to carry out the instructions given to them by the teacher. All pupils are included fully in art activities, regardless of their level of special educational needs.

104. There is a subject coordinator for secondary age pupils, but there is no specific coordinator for primary pupils. Teachers' reports to parents are often very brief and do not contain details of experiences or progress made so that parents are not in the best position to help their children's learning. Teachers do, however, have a good understanding of their pupils and this helps when planning experiences, but for pupils in Years 1 to 6, this does not ensure that the planning of art skills and techniques are systematically and progressively taught. Teachers have a procedure for regularly assessing pupils' progress in art but this is carried out inconsistently and identifying progress remains an issue. Assessment does not

sufficiently identify what pupils know, understand and can do and the use of ICT is underdeveloped.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

105. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on citizenship, the school has made a good start on planning and provision for pupils of secondary age. Whilst being a recent addition to the curriculum, the subject has been adapted so that it can be delivered in a range of subjects, such as life skills and PSHE, as well as in individual subject lessons. This is already beginning to support the very good progress pupils make in personal and social education and the areas that prepare pupils for leaving school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. There has been a good improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection. The school has adopted a suitable curriculum to meet pupils' special educational needs. The range of experiences includes food technology and design technology, where pupils work with resistant materials such as wood or plastics. The subject has links with other areas of the curriculum. For example, there is a good link with science when working with metals to make chimes, and with ICT when working with switches and controls for houses. The subject supports pupils' personal development and independence by providing a range of activities that ensure that pupils experience food technology throughout their time in school.

107. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties activate a switch to start food mixers in cooking sessions. All pupils help to make rainbow cakes, stirring correctly. By the end of Year 6, pupils continue to extend their social skills and they understand routines and the need for cleanliness when cooking. These pupils design an item and follow the design to make bookmarks. They listen to instructions carefully when making puppets for a shadow theatre. Pupils work cooperatively with teaching assistants to make choices when cooking or designing.

108. By the end of Year 9, pupils continue to achieve well. Most pupils understand that electricity is used in the home and school and are able to switch on many appliances. They also know the names of the tools used in the workshop and the kitchen. They cook, following recipes, measuring ingredients and keeping their eyes and ears open. Pupils know how to use the correct equipment for working with wood, metal and plastic. Most know how to cut and bend materials to make chimes, picture frames and models. Pupils design and take care to evaluate their work. Their confidence in the workshop is made more effective as they understand the dangers while following the health and safety routines. 109. By the end of Year 11, pupils are able to develop their ideas about strength in structures such as bridges. Pupils also develop their knowledge of health and hygiene. These pupils are at their best when designing alarm and lighting systems for houses using and evaluating programmes.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and ranges from good to very good. In very good lessons, teachers produce a range of targets well matched to pupils' ability. Teachers and support staff explain clearly what is to be done. This results in pupils being interested and motivated. Staff expect pupils to achieve well. Relationships are good, especially when jokes are shared in the workshop. Pupils are challenged to succeed with a range of activities and resources imaginatively used to match their needs. For example, the teachers provide sensory activities for all so that every pupil has the opportunity to be part of practical lessons. Teachers plan well to ensure that all pupils are included. Teachers develop pupils' responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to evaluate their own learning.

111. Close teamwork with support staff means that every pupil is engaged and learning. Teachers successfully use skills from other subjects to enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about measuring and weighing in food. They learn about science when developing shadow puppets, and they learn about ICT when trying to use switches on a model Ferrari in a problem solving exercise. Good management of behaviour in practical lessons means that every lesson is used to the full, with no time lost through disruption.

112. The subject is well managed, in primary and secondary phases . However, the curriculum for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 does not prepare them for the next phase as well as it might do as the co-ordinators do not liaise efficiently enough to overcome any gaps in learning and ICT is not used consistently to support learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. The school's provision for geography is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was unsatisfactory in just over half of the lessons observed. Standards in teaching and learning have now improved and pupils make satisfactory progress.

114. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a knowledge of geography by making journeys around the school. Pupils find out about hot and cold weather and use pictures to record what they have learned. Pupils in Year 6 study the globe and as part of a topic on Egypt learn the position of both England and Egypt. In Year 8, pupils learn about geographical changes. They compare life in France with life in Kenya. Older pupils in Year 10 are studying volcanoes and have made their own models. By Year 11, pupils know about the rainforest and are helped to concentrate in lessons by listening to music which creates an atmosphere of forest noises. Higher attaining pupils know that we need oxygen to breathe, but find the concept of the greenhouse effect difficult. The pupils discuss the plants which grow in the rainforest and understand that trees help to provide oxygen.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is less effective, planning does not address the needs of all pupils. Some teaching has good features such as the teachers' subject knowledge and the relating of the familiar environment of the school to geographical skills being discussed. Management of the subject is split between staff working in different parts of the school and consequently no teacher has a complete over view of the subject. Recent changes to the planning of the subject for younger pupils have yet to be evaluated in terms of curriculum coverage. Pupils' attainment is recorded using a record of achievement. Whilst a level is given for each pupil, no evidence to support the judgement is recorded.

## **HISTORY**

116. Pupils study History up until the end of Year 9. Pupils' achievements up to the end of Year 6 are satisfactory overall. For pupils from Years 7 to 9, achievement is good.

117. By the end of Year 2, pupils have begun to learn about the passage of time by looking at their own personal histories. Higher attaining pupils describe events in their own lives, using today, tomorrow and yesterday. Lower attaining pupils begin to show awareness of the week's activities. By Year 6, pupils know something about life in Ancient Egypt. They complete a pyramid showing the different social groups, and mark key features on a map. They are aware of features such as the foods which were eaten, and of the burial customs. Pupils with more complex needs show interest in different artefacts. They take part in activities linked to the topic, such as tasting of the types of food which were eaten. By Year 9, pupils know about Roman Britain. Higher attaining pupils mark the main features on a map,

and place key buildings on a plan of a town. They write briefly about topics such as food and leisure activities of the time. They learn about the industrial changes which took place in Britain between 1750 and 1900. Higher attaining pupils recall key facts about the lives of engineers such as Brunel and Stephenson. In looking at Britain in the 1950s, they interview members of their families about life at the time.

118. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils of primary age. It is good for pupils in Years 7 to 9 where subject knowledge is good. At this stage, work is well adapted to the needs of the different pupils and a variety of activities sustained their interest. Pupils have a number of opportunities to role play events such as a Roman Banquets, and these opportunities enhance their learning. The curriculum is well supported by a variety of visits, for example to the British Museum, the London Transport Museum, and to St. Albans. .

119. Since the last inspection, the planning of the curriculum has changed, so that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have history as part of "Knowledge and understanding of the World". The themes within this are taught on a four year rolling programme. Overall, the subject coverage is satisfactory but, because pupils do not have regular experiences of history, it is difficult for them to build on their previous experiences. The curriculum for pupils in Year 7 to 9 is well planned and, as pupils have half a term of history in each term, they are able to develop their knowledge and understanding more securely. Assessment is very good for pupils in Years 7 to 9, with the records of achievement referring clearly to the evidence on which decisions are based, and clearly annotated work samples supporting the information. This enables the teacher to plan very carefully for the next steps in pupils' learning. There is no overall co-ordinator for the subject which means that monitoring of the curriculum is underdeveloped.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on achievement in the primary phase. There is currently no scheme of work nor is the use of ICT identified in subject planning for this age group. Recent improvements in the quality of the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 11, means that achievement is satisfactory. Nevertheless, the narrow range of the curriculum taught until recently, means that the full range of skills in the programmes of study are not yet developed enough. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of monitoring and, to a lesser extent, control are weak. Although individual teachers use computers to extend pupils' learning, these opportunities are not yet identified in curriculum plans and pupils' opportunities are inconsistent across the school. However, provision for pupils with complex needs is good. For instance, good use is made of switches in the nursery and Years 1 and 2 to work bubble tubes, and to activate recorded messages or complete gaps in texts during literacy lessons.

121. By Year 6, some pupils use the mouse and keyboard independently to access a variety of commercial programs linked to literacy and numeracy. By Year 9, pupils have extended their range of skills. They demonstrate that they can retrieve and store information, format text in different styles, colours and sizes. Higher attaining pupils insert clip art into documents and search for appropriate graphics. Pupils learn how to use spreadsheets in dedicated data sessions. They make good progress in understanding how to input fields and data onto a spreadsheet and create graphs based on favourite fruit and types of transport. Most pupils have had some experience of searching the Internet for information. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 learn about control through activities in design and technology; for instance, in one very good lesson pupils were able to identify which switches operate when they throw a switch. Higher attaining pupils are able to make good suggestions on controlling lights using a flow chart.

122. Teaching and learning are good for pupils in the secondary phase but there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching for the primary phase. In lessons with older pupils, teachers demonstrate good knowledge of the programs used, lessons are well planned and pupils show a high level of concentration and interest.

123. The coordinator for ICT for Years 7 to 11 has begun to develop appropriate schemes of work but there are no schemes of work for Years 1 to 6 and there is limited use of ICT within other subjects throughout the school. The range of equipment and software available has improved since the last inspection. For older pupils there are more opportunities to develop their ICT skills in mathematics lessons. However, overall improvement is only satisfactory as planning and monitoring of the curriculum is not fully in place. Additionally, assessment is inconsistent and in some cases does not accurately identify levels of attainment, nor is it easy to recognise what pupils know, understand and can do as a first step to recognising the progress they are making.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

124. French is taught to pupils from Years 7 to 9. The subject has been suitably maintained since the last inspection through enthusiastic teaching and an oral approach appropriate to pupils' needs. Overall achievement is satisfactory and was good in the one lesson observed. Pupils' benefit from the oral approach combined with signing to reinforce vocabulary. They have good recall of words and phrases. For example, in the lesson in Year 8, pupils remembered *Je m' appelle*. Some were able to say their age, most joined in counting to thirteen and one higher attaining pupil could count confidently on their own. Pupils follow instructions, choosing food, when offered, using French and remembering to say *merci*.

125. Teaching is appropriate for pupils' needs. The French language is used as much as possible, which helps pupils to remember a range of words. Activities are frequently changed so pupils remain interested and enjoy the lesson. A good range of visual resources is used, and these, combined with signing and getting pupils to repeat the words, leads to them remaining motivated. The subject has a good range of resources and assessment appropriately shows the levels pupils are working at.

## **MUSIC**

126. The previous inspection reported that pupils made good progress in music but had limited opportunities to appraise music. During this inspection there was a limited range of evidence on which to make judgements. Music provision is underdeveloped, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, where it is presently very limited because the new curriculum is not yet fully in place. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is satisfactory. Lack of a subject co-ordinator means that there is no development plan.

127. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory achievement because they have a weekly music lesson based on a topic approach. Pupils have opportunities to sing, explore the sound made by musical instruments, listen and follow instructions by a musical conductor. Pupils in this age group are given very good opportunities to sing and listen as they join in with familiar tunes such as *The wheels on the bus go round and round* and *Old Macdonald had a farm*. In this short session at the end of the school day, all pupils are included, those with more complex needs using switches or symbols to decide which songs the whole class will sing. The session provides good opportunities for participation, co-operation, turn taking and fun.

128. For pupils in Years 3 to 6, there are few formal lessons and achievement is limited. The school recognises this issue and promotes singing during assembly and in productions. When possible, visiting groups such as Berkshire Young Musicians Trust are welcomed to perform at the school and, as a result of a link with a charity, a group of pupils has performed to a large audience at Windsor Castle. An assembly encouraged listening and turn taking as pupils sang and signed *London's Burning* in two parts, quite a challenge but resulting in enthusiastic participation. In a lesson, pupils were fascinated by the range of musical instruments, listened and clapped in time to *Red, Red Wine*, and enjoyed using the Sound Beam to create sounds triggered by their movements. The fact that pupils are not used to regular sessions was clear because they were distracted by their surroundings and needed tighter management.

129. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 build on their knowledge of song, create their own music, appreciate music from other countries and listen to the work of composers, recognising they have different styles.

130. The subject is well resourced with a designated music room and a good supply of keyboards and untuned instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. There has been a good improvement in physical education since the last inspection. The subject is well organised, with a good scheme of work throughout the school, a knowledgeable co-ordinator and an interesting and challenging curriculum.

132. Pupils' achievement is good overall and very good for secondary pupils. By the end of Year 2, pupils indicate their preferences in sensory games. They respond to a range of noises in balls. They stretch toward stimulus with great efforts. Pupils are beginning to follow instructions; they recognise the equipment that they use in the lessons. They all try hard to develop skills, not least the pupils working to get a 'driving licence'. All become aware of space and take big or little steps when asked. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils develop sequences in floor work. They jump and roll and explain most of their movements in lessons. Pupils take part in games and try hard to improve their passing skills in hockey. These pupils talk about the differences between push and pull. They also develop skills needed to play in teams with small numbers of players. They swim, using the swimming and hydrotherapy pools and achieve fitness awards.

133. By the end of Year 9, pupils understand the rules of many games. They explain the rules and referee Boccia and New Age Kurling. Pupils name an aerobic exercise, using the correct terms. They play in teams for tag rugby and football. Pupils develop confidence in basic skills in a range of activities and understand the purpose of warm-up exercises. All meet their individual targets and challenges. By the end of Year 11, pupils build a dance sequence linking a range of movements skilfully. They continue to play games, now with large teams, and play in inter-school matches. Some also achieve national standards in physical education. In this year, pupils continue to consolidate skills, but they add a range of knowledge and understanding of personal fitness and life skills.

134. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. On occasions it is very good. When teaching is very good, teachers plan to meet the needs of everyone. The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and this enables them to challenge and encourage. Pupils learn well as they are interested and motivated. There are high expectations for pupils' achievements and behaviour, which enable them to work at a good pace and with a high degree of concentration. Pupils learn how to organise others, and keep



score. Teachers plan their work well within a scheme of long term planning. This enables the pupils to learn in a structured sequence of skills and activities, each stage building on the previous one. Teachers maintain good discipline in their lessons and manage pupils very well. For the youngest pupils, it is a major aim of teaching that they should listen to instructions, and comply with them, as an essential to safety in physical education.

135. Pupils behave well because teachers provide challenging activities. They enjoy their lessons and clearly have fun in games. Teachers give them opportunities to help each other which they do very well, insisting that everyone be part of the exercise or game. Pupils are expected to change for physical education and accept the outcomes if they forget. There are good relationships in lessons; the teamwork between teachers and support staff makes it possible for everyone to enjoy the lessons.

136. The leadership and management are good and the subject is being well developed. However, opportunities are missed to monitor the move from primary to secondary phases to consolidate skills. Further progress is hampered by the unsatisfactory accommodation which staff work hard to overcome through the careful way they plan lessons. The range of activities is very good and imaginatively delivered. The grounds are excellent and provide for a wide range of alternative activities, not least the fitness trail. There are many strengths in the subject with pupils developing independence, confidence and skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

137. The provision for religious education and, therefore, the quality of pupils' learning has altered since the last inspection because of changes made to the curriculum, which are not yet fully in place. As a result, pupils in Years 1 to 6 no longer have regular religious education lessons and consequently achievement is limited, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Instead there are themed days in which religious education is the focus. These are based around religious festivals such as Eid and Diwali. For example, younger pupils have designed *Eid Mubarak* cards and empathised with the feelings of Muslims before Eid, likening it to the feelings of anticipation before a birthday. These experiences provide an opportunity to learn about those festivals and to be involved in a variety of linked activities such as art work. These days provide a good learning experience for pupils. However, they take place only once every half term which is not frequent enough. As a result, pupils now have a very limited curriculum and are not able to build on their knowledge of different aspects of religions.

138. For pupils in Years 7 to 9 progress is satisfactory because there is a suitable curriculum in place. This is based on the locally agreed syllabus and provides pupils with an opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of different faiths. Higher attaining pupils compare rules of different religions, and begin to relate this to their own experience. They retell simple stories as, for example, about the life of Gautama, the Buddha. They consider how belonging to a religious group affects the lives of teenagers. It was not possible to make a judgement about teaching but the one lesson seen made good use of an older pupil in the school, who answered questions about his life as a Muslim. Pupils of all abilities learn about the symbols of the different religions, such as, for example, looking at rites of passage such as birth and marriage ceremonies. Lower attaining pupils need help to record their work, but records show that most pupils make progress with oral work.

139. Pupils in Years 10 to 11 also have a more limited curriculum. It is better in Year 10 than in Year 11 but is satisfactory overall. This is because pupils in the former undertake a module in their ASDAN award scheme which has a focus on different faiths. Recently they planned questions and interviewed a Muslim and a Sikh; this reinforced their research on these religions. Pupils in Year 11 learn the subject as part of their citizenship programme, but there are too few opportunities within this to develop their knowledge and understanding.

140. As at the time of the last inspection, curriculum planning across the school is not well developed, as there is no overall co-ordinator. Two teachers have an overview of the primary curriculum, and one of the secondary. Neither has a co-ordinator role, so there is no monitoring of either the curriculum or of teaching. There are artefacts for each of the main religions, which enable pupils to become more aware of aspects of these religions. However, little use is made of ICT. There are some opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship such as a church, a synagogue and a mosque. Pupils have also visited the local community to see how the buildings of different faiths impact on the area. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the subject makes a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.