

# INSPECTION REPORT

## ALFRISTON SCHOOL

Beaconsfield

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110573

Headteacher: Mrs Val Gordon

Reporting inspector: Steven Parker  
13033

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> October 2002

Inspection number: 249342  
Short 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
Age range of pupils:	11-18
Gender of pupils:	Female
School address:	Penn Road Knotty Green Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP9 2TS
Telephone number:	01494 673740
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dennis Morse
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Alfriston is a special school for girls aged between 11 and 18. There are 125 pupils and students on roll, of whom 9 are in the Post 16 department – Alfriston Continuing Education (ACE). Whilst the majority of pupils meet the admissions criterion of moderate learning difficulties, most have additional emotional, social, physical or sensory impairments. There are also an increasing number of pupils with more complex needs. Currently there are 17 identified as having severe learning difficulties and 4 with more challenging emotional and behavioural difficulties. Current referrals indicate a trend of continuing change. As a result of this wide range of special educational need, attainment on entry to the school is below national expectations. There is weekday residential provision for 32 girls. There are 31 pupils from ethnic minority groups (the largest of which is from the Pakistani community) and 17 have English as an additional language. Just over a quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

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

Alfriston is a very good school with many excellent features. Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in their studies, because they are taught very well. Many of them are positively transformed by the experience of attending the school, as the result of very effective support and guidance from the whole staff team. The school owes much of its success to the determined leadership of a very good headteacher who inspires and motivates everyone to give of their best. It provides very good value for money.

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

- Very good teaching and a highly relevant curriculum enable pupils to learn very successfully, make very good progress and achieve impressive results.
- Excellent personal, social and health education helps pupils to be very well prepared for their future life when they leave school.
- Very good pastoral support, characterised by excellent relationships throughout the school, including the residential facility, encourages pupils to have extremely positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour.
- All staff work very hard to build and sustain a very effective partnership with parents, which enables parents to support their children's learning very well.
- The headteacher, together with her very supportive senior managers and very knowledgeable governors, are firmly committed to continuously improving what the school already does very effectively.

No significant areas for improvement were identified. Two small issues relating to planning for the school's future are, however, considered worthy of attention. These points are referred to in the commentary and should form the basis of additions to the wholly appropriate objectives contained in the current school improvement plan.

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

The school had a small number of issues identified in its previous inspection in June 1998 and has been very successful in rectifying them, especially in relation to arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress across the school. There have been many important improvements in curriculum arrangements, most particularly in relation to mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The school's wish to keep on improving has also resulted in, amongst many things, advances in the quality of teaching and learning, improved community links and a significant extension of the social and learning opportunities offered to pupils outside the normal school day.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	very good	A
reading	A	A	good	B
writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	A	A	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education (PSHE)	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A		

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

Pupils achieve very well in all the subjects that they study and make outstanding progress in the priority area of social development. The school is ambitious for its pupils to succeed and, at 16, many of their achievements, across a wide range of certificated academic courses, are notable. In the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), for example, two thirds of this year's entrants gained grades A\*- G in up to three subjects. Results in the Welsh Board Certificate of Educational Achievement were even more impressive across nine subjects. Appropriate targets, taking account of the school's changing population, have been set for next year. Those students who stay on at the school after 16, achieve great success in the ASDAN (Youth Award) and OCR National Skills Profiles accredited Life Skills courses. Challenging targets are set for all pupils in their IEPs, across a wide range of activities. As a result of these high, but realistic expectations, and very good quality individual teaching and support, all pupils achieve equally well. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well and there is no variation in achievement between any other particular minority groups of pupils. This overall picture is an improvement since the last inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils have extremely positive attitudes to all the learning opportunities on offer. They enjoy their work and consistently try hard. As a result, they develop as very enthusiastic and successful learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils are very well behaved, both in school and the wider community. They are unfailingly courteous to all adults, both in lessons and during social activities. Their respect for and acceptance of each other is very impressive.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent, both between pupils and between staff and pupils. The school's structured approach to friendship support is particularly noteworthy for its positive impact on relationships between girls of different age groups. Pupils become confident and independent as a result of the encouragement and many responsibilities they are given.

Attendance	Good, particularly when compared with similar schools.
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Many of the pupils and their parents talk eloquently about the positive impact that coming to the school has had on their lives. They are sure that they would never have achieved so well if they hadn't had the opportunity to attend. The school's culture is seen as enabling pupils to become flexible and adaptable learners.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is consistently very good throughout the school. This is a significant improvement on the standards at the last inspection – and particularly noteworthy for mathematics, where much development work has been done. The teaching of English, science, ICT and PSHE has continued to be of high quality. The Key Stage 3 Strategy has been very well adapted to ensure that the development of literacy and numeracy skills is now embedded in the school's practice across all subjects. Teaching is so good because of teachers' very detailed and thorough planning (based on very good subject knowledge) to meet the full range of pupils' needs, the quality and use of assessment information and, above all, a very high expectation to succeed. The very successful partnerships that teachers have with school support assistants (SSAs) and residential staff also have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Learning opportunities during the school day are greatly enhanced by excellent, wide-ranging lunchtime and after school activities. Educational visits and links with the community and other agencies also support pupils' learning very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Appropriate support is provided for individual pupils and their families, according to need. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that they are fully involved in all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Arrangements for promoting pupils' personal, moral and social development are excellent, because the school considers these aspects to be a priority. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are also very well supported.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures and practice are well established to ensure that pupils' wide-ranging needs are very well met and that they remain safe and secure. An atmosphere of care and concern for the individual is apparent in all aspects of school life, resulting in pupils being treated with considerable respect.

The high quality of the careers education and guidance programme has recently been recognised through the Careers Excellence Award. Out of school activities, including sporting, music and drama links with other schools, provide very valuable additional experiences for both boarders and day pupils. Very effective use of the wider community features prominently in most of these opportunities. Parents are highly appreciative of the productive partnership that they enjoy with the school.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and senior management team provide very strong leadership for a well-established staff team, who work very hard to maintain and develop the very high standard of education enjoyed by the pupils. This enables them, over time, to achieve an excellent realisation of the school's aims, values and ambitions.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is thoroughly dedicated to the school and carries out its work with an excellent regard to its statutory duties. Governors ensure that they have a very good understanding of the school by each taking personal interest in an aspect of its work. This provides them with very good information upon which to base their decisions about the school's development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Everyone in the school is actively involved in checking that very high standards of education continue to be achieved. The very high quality of teaching is maintained by an excellent staff appraisal scheme, which includes frequent observation of lessons by senior managers.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Despite the challenge of recruiting suitable staff, the school continues to provide for the pupils' learning needs by having manageable class sizes and by providing very good numbers of teachers (many with subject specialist qualifications) and support staff. Pupils' learning is further supported by very good classroom resources.

Very efficient organisation and administration help the school to run smoothly. Very good induction procedures and training and professional development opportunities ensure that all staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge successfully to meet the needs of the school's changing population. The school makes very good use of its current buildings, one of which houses a new extension providing high quality facilities for teaching science and design and technology. Two of the classrooms in the main building, currently used for teaching English, are very small for the numbers they accommodate, but the school has appropriate plans to overcome this difficulty. The school's governing body and senior managers make every effort to apply the principles of best value successfully, with the result that the service they provide for their pupils represents very good value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Their children enjoy coming to school</li> <li>▪ As a result of the school's high expectations, very good teaching and pastoral support, their children have excellent attitudes and behaviour – and, consequently, they make very good progress.</li> <li>▪ The school is very well led and managed.</li> <li>▪ All staff are approachable and supportive, making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There were no significant concerns expressed about any aspect of the school's work.</li> <li>▪ Many parents were unhappy about the arrangements for transporting their daughters to school, but recognised that this was outside the remit of this</li> </ul>

discussion about any difficulties a comfortable experience.	inspection.
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The inspection team fully endorses parents' very positive views. The headteacher and a representative of the Local Education Authority were informed of significant parental concerns about transport arrangements.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Very good teaching and a highly relevant curriculum enable pupils to learn very successfully, make very good progress and achieve impressive results.**

1. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and the range of learning opportunities available to pupils have both improved. Evidence gathered from this inspection showed teaching to be consistently very good. Over three-quarters of all lessons seen were very good or excellent and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, being particularly apparent in mathematics, where all the issues identified previously have been dealt with very thoroughly and successfully. The reorganisation of the way mathematics is provided for pupils was typical of the development work that has been done for all subjects across the curriculum, within a thoughtful and well-prioritised overall plan. This thorough approach has also resulted in a considerable investment in ICT, both for computers and software and in the development of staff competence and confidence. The new computer suite is highly motivating to staff and pupils alike and standards have risen accordingly.
2. The Key Stage 3 Strategy has been very well adapted during its first two years in relation to English and mathematics. As a result, teaching in both subjects, within sets arranged according to pupils' ability, has improved further. Equally important has been the way in which the development of pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills is now firmly embedded in the school's practice across all subjects - and has had an important impact on pupils' learning. There are structured plans in place for the Strategy to be applied to the teaching of science and ICT and other foundation subjects over the next two years.
3. The school's thoughtful and comprehensive teaching and learning policy informs the way all staff approach their work - and ongoing professional development and training to meet identified needs is provided for everyone. Teachers, SSAs and residential care staff are regarded as having equally important roles in pupils' education, with the result that they all work in extremely effective partnership. Teachers constantly evaluate the way they teach and its impact on pupils' learning. Senior managers regularly monitor lessons and provide supportive feedback, often providing teachers with help and guidance about how things could be done even more effectively. This integrated approach to supporting and developing staff was recognised through the award of Investors in People (IIP) status in 1999 and again very recently, confirming a continuing commitment to sustaining and improving standards. The very high quality of teaching is a direct result of teachers' thorough and detailed planning to ensure that lessons have pace and structure, and that learning materials are clear, appropriate and accessible to all pupils, no matter what their particular needs are. The powerful combination of very good subject knowledge and well used information about individual pupils, derived from impressive assessment systems and records, informs this planning very effectively. This ensures, for example, that pupils with English as an additional language can participate fully in lessons and achieve very well
4. All of these strengths in teaching were evident throughout the inspection and across all subjects. They were particularly well illustrated in some excellent English and mathematics lessons, which successfully challenged pupils to explore and understand difficult concepts and then clearly demonstrate what they had learned. In these circumstances, it was often teachers' very high quality use of questioning and

modelling skills that enabled pupils to succeed. However, perhaps the most important elements in pupils' successful learning were the very high, but realistic expectations and enthusiasm that were successfully communicated by both teachers and SSAs during lessons, serving to reassure, encourage and motivate pupils and, as witnessed in many lessons, to make learning fun. This was very evident in an extremely effective swimming lesson, when pupils were able to succeed, many having overcome their anxieties, and were encouraged to celebrate their own and each other's successes.

5. The curriculum that has developed in the school over a number of years is balanced and very relevant to pupils' needs. They are able to study a broad range of academic subjects in well-equipped specialist facilities and achieve creditable results throughout their time in school, but especially in exams before they leave. At the same time they follow a valuable life skills programme to provide them with the ability and confidence to deal successfully with their day to day needs. All pupils are very well prepared for their life after school through an outstanding careers education and guidance programme, which has been recently awarded Careers Excellence status. Lessons during the normal school day are greatly enhanced by excellent lunchtime activities, run by SSAs, which provide a very wide range of opportunities for pupils to pursue particular interests. Sports opportunities and team practices are also available at lunchtime, organised by the physical education co-ordinator and senior pupils as sports leaders. Pupils then go on to participate very successfully in a wide range of local and national sporting activities. The school's grounds (which include an impressive wildlife area) and educational visits into the community, are well used to consolidate learning. About a quarter of the pupils benefit from staying in the weekday residential facility, which provides them with a very wide range of additional experiences as part of a valuable 24 hour curriculum. Notable among these is the opportunity for older boarders to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award. There are plans in place to enable a small number of day pupils to stay on and benefit from the many evening activities that boarders are offered.
6. One recent development that has recognised the changing nature of pupils' needs has been the creation of the Alfriston Continuing Education (ACE) department. This initiative resulted from the school working collaboratively with some parents to meet their real concerns about how best to cater for their daughters' continuing education. The department was, therefore, created to meet the needs of those post 16 students who are not yet properly equipped to benefit from college courses, or who need the continuing support of the school's ethos to fulfil their potential.
7. The combined benefits of the very good curriculum and high quality teaching, are impressive results. Pupils make very good, often outstanding progress and achieve very well across all the subjects that they study. At 16, many of their achievements, across a wide range of certificated academic courses, are notable. In the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), for example, two thirds of this year's entrants gained grades A\* - G in up to three subjects, English, science and art. It is expected that, as a result of the improvements in mathematics teaching, there will be similarly good results in this subject. Results in the Welsh Board Certificate of Educational Achievement were even more impressive across nine subjects. Those students who stay on at the school after 16, achieve great success in the ASDAN (Youth Award) and OCR National Skills Profiles accredited Life Skills courses. All pupils achieve equally well and there is no variation in achievement between any particular minority groups of pupils. This overall picture is an impressive improvement since the last inspection.

**Excellent personal, social and health education helps pupils to be very well prepared for their future life when they leave school.**

8. At the heart of Alfriston's philosophy is the aim 'to equip pupils to deal with an ever changing society' and 'to develop their self-confidence and personal worth'. Many of the girls arrive in their first year lacking confidence and self-esteem, often having had negative experiences, leading to failure in their previous schools. They are able to recognise how important the move to Alfriston was for them. Girls talk straightforwardly about how they have changed for the better and value the knowledge that they have gained about themselves and the social skills they have been taught. Their parents are often eloquent in their description of the transformation of their daughters and the confident assertion that they would never have achieved so well if they hadn't attended the school.
9. An important contributor to pupils' progress is the effect of carefully constructed and integrated personal and social educational experiences offered throughout the school day. All staff are committed to using every opportunity to help pupils to think about how best to develop the necessary skills to function successfully in the world around them. Social occasions, such as meal times, tutor groups and breaks are often well used to model appropriate behaviour and every contact between an adult and a pupil provides similar opportunities. This solid foundation is then built on through a thoughtful programme of studies that covers a wide range of topics, including many of the elements that will ultimately be incorporated in a citizenship course, health topics, sex education, drugs awareness and child development. There are continuing benefits in this respect from the school's involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative.
10. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible for themselves, to take care of their own belongings and to respect and value their environment. The student council enables them to influence their day to day experiences, for example through evaluating and choosing lunchtime activities, and older pupils are given particular responsibilities as prefects or sports leaders. The result of these wide-ranging opportunities and influences is that pupils become more self-aware, respectful of other people's rights and able to behave responsibly. They are consequently more confident of their ability to cope in a wide range of situations and mature in their handling of relationships with others. The school is justifiably proud of the way it prepares its pupils for the next stage of their life after school and the evidence is that, when they leave at 16, or later if they stay on in ACE, the girls have become confident and mature young women.

**Very good pastoral support, characterised by excellent relationships throughout the school, including the residential facility, encourages pupils to have extremely positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour.**

11. When they start at school, pupils are allocated to pastoral groups, which ensures that they have regular and consistent support from familiar adults. They are also introduced to older pupils who take a personal interest in their welfare. Many of these relationships become special, lasting throughout their time at school - and it is particularly impressive to see girls of different ages happy in each other's company. The quality of relationships between pupils is excellent. They are mutually respectful and caring and many examples were observed of them being solicitous or helping each other. The quality of these relationships reflects those that pupils enjoy with all adults, who know them well enough to provide appropriate, empathetic care, encouragement and, where necessary, firm but fair discipline. One clear outcome of this approach is that pupils feel respected, secure and happy to be at school. As a

result, and also because there are very effective systems for monitoring and following up absences, attendance is good in comparison with similar schools.

12. There are comprehensive policies and systems in place to ensure pupils' health, safety and wellbeing and their progress is closely and very carefully monitored. Pupils are appropriately involved in their annual reviews and are very aware of the targets in their IEPs, which are regularly referred to and reviewed. Pastoral tutors are often the first point of contact between home and the many outside agencies with which the school works effectively. Their comprehensive knowledge of the whole child often helps them to make the best use of these contacts.
13. The school employs a counsellor from its own funds for half a day a week. Pupils can self refer and parents can also be offered support. The counsellor works very successfully with individual pupils who have a need for the particular personal guidance she can provide. She also offers much appreciated help to staff who need advice on how best to work with particular pupils and this helps them to develop their own expertise.
14. Those pupils who are boarders benefit from a further dimension of care, which helps them with any difficulties they might have about being away from home and encourages their independence. Their individual care plans have targets, which link appropriately with their IEPs and enable very good collaboration between education and care staff. The atmosphere in residence is warm and encouraging, helped considerably by its homely feel and the quality of the staff. Those parents whose daughters are boarders were very appreciative for the support, informal counselling and guidance that care staff offer them.
15. The school's approach to discipline means that there is a very positive ethos and extensive use of praise and reward in all aspects of its life. Staff are confident and calm in handling any challenging behaviour, because they have all received appropriate training to implement the well established and effective behaviour policy. There are a few, simple rules that are consistently applied. Behaviour is, consequently, excellent, both in school and out in the wider community.
16. The values system of the school is clear to everyone. Daily assemblies provide an opportunity to remind pupils about particular principles and to celebrate individual and collective success. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and the student council has established a strong ethos of fund raising for the benefit of those less fortunate than themselves.

**All staff work very hard to build and sustain a very effective partnership with parents, which enables parents to support their children's learning very well.**

17. Both at the meeting before the inspection and through their questionnaire returns, parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the school and the work that it does with their daughters. They were very praising of the headteacher, whom they find approachable, supportive and encouraging and were clear that her example is followed by all staff in the school. They are very appreciative of the considerable investment that has been made to seek their views and the way the school has always responded positively to their suggestions.
18. Many examples were offered to illustrate a whole staff commitment to establishing and maintaining an effective working partnership between home and school. The exchange of comprehensive information about both whole school issues and their

own child's activities and successes were seen as being of paramount importance. Regular newsletters, homework diaries, home-school books, telephone contact and supportive face-to-face meetings were all cited as very effective tools in this process. Parents' high level of satisfaction with the way the sometimes difficult experience of statement reviews is managed (often involving considerable flexibility on the part of the school) explains why there has been 100% parental involvement over the past three years.

19. Whilst a very small number of parents expressed some concerns about homework provision, the great majority feel very satisfied with the arrangements. Parents offered many examples to illustrate a flexible approach to meet individual needs and, most importantly, that involve them well in consolidating and extending the work the school does with their children, particularly in relation to core skills. Inspectors agree that the school's policy is appropriate and well managed.
20. There is a successful Friends of Alfriston group who raise funds and work to improve the school environment (most notably in the woods wildlife project). There are regular parents' evenings, careers conferences and other events that bring parents into the school, helping them to feel involved and to view the school as positive, fair and enabling.

**The headteacher, together with her very supportive senior managers and very knowledgeable governors, are firmly committed to continuously improving what the school already does very effectively.**

21. Everyone involved with the school has a shared ambition to provide the best possible educational experience for its pupils. Whilst the headteacher has been in post for a long time, she has continued to pursue her vision with energy and enthusiasm. By constantly adapted to new challenges and leading by example she has ensured that a clear set of aims and values has been established, effectively communicated and maintained. She has been well supported in this process by her very able deputy and senior teacher colleague on the management team - and they have combined their different talents to very good effect. The school's ethos of high standards and supportive care is consequently robust and well understood, ensuring that any new staff members quickly integrate into the well established staff team and work collaboratively towards the agreed aims.
22. The very good governing body is an important part of the school's success. Governors are equally dedicated to partnership and take their responsibilities very seriously. They are fully aware of their statutory duties, which they carry out very effectively, ensuring that all legislative requirements are fully met. By involving themselves actively in the life of the school, each taking a personal interest in an aspect of its work, they ensure that they have a thorough understanding of its work and any issues that arise for debate. This in turn enables them to base any decisions that they have to make about the school's development on sound knowledge and information. On occasion they act as very effective advocates for the school in the wider community and provide valuable links with individuals and institutions who can further the school's interests.
23. There is a strong commitment to monitoring all aspects of the school's work to ensure that the current high standards are maintained. Everyone in the school is involved in this process and is encouraged to critically evaluate their own contribution. Where there are any shortcomings which require improvement, appropriate support is offered and any necessary development work is effected. By the same token there

is regular evaluation of aspects that are considered to be already good and effective. This is, perhaps, the explanation for the view expressed by one parent at the pre-inspection meeting who said that “it just seems to keep on getting better”.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

24. No significant areas for improvement were identified. Two small issues relating to planning for the school’s future are, however, considered worthy of attention.
25. Whilst the school is currently providing a very effective education for its pupils, there are clear signs from the make-up of the present roll and the pattern of referrals that many future pupils are likely to have more significant learning difficulties. In these circumstances, change is required. There are indications that individual staff in parts of the school, most particularly the ACE, are being pro-active in developing their courses and teaching approaches to accommodate these changing needs. There is also evidence that managers and governors recognise the challenge of this situation. In order to sustain the current high standards, there is, though, a need to initiate a structured, wide-ranging debate, involving all professionals and interested parents, about how best to meet this challenge, share existing good practice and plan strategic development of an appropriate response.
26. Similarly, the school has done its best, in challenging circumstances, to provide as inclusive an educational and social experience as possible for its pupils. Involvement in sporting, music and drama links with other schools and very good use of community resources provides pupils with some opportunities to be part of wider life experiences outside the school environment. It has, however, proved difficult to establish and sustain regular, ongoing links with local mainstream schools and youth activities. There is a continuing need to explore ways of overcoming these difficulties in order to provide pupils with a more inclusive educational experience.

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

27. In order to improve further the already very good education the school provides, the headteacher, senior management team and governors should incorporate the following objectives in future school improvement planning:
  - consider how best to structure development of teaching and learning approaches better to meet the needs of a changing population and
  - continue with development of opportunities for social and educational inclusion in the wider community.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	17	3	2	-	-	-
Percentage	19	62	11	8	-	-	-

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 three percentage points

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	125
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2002	0	22	22

Some pupils were entered for statutory testing, but, because of their learning difficulties, most did not meet the nationally expected standards. Teacher assessment was, however, carried out with all the pupils in the year group and the results are shown below.

Teachers' Assessments	W	1	2	3	4
English	18%	13%	32%	32%	5%
Mathematics	-	32%	32%	36%	-
Science	-	14%	27%	27%	32%

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	2002	0	18	18

GCSE results	Grade	English	Science	Art
	D	0	0	1
	E	0	2	4
	F	6	0	1
	G	2	0	1
	U	0	1	0

Certificate of Achievement results	WJEC English	WJEC Maths	WJEC Science	WJEC Life Skills	WJEC Humanities	WJEC Physical Education	WJEC Religious education	WJEC Art	WJEC Design & Tech.
Pass	5	6	6	0	3	2	0	6	5
Merit	3	9	5	2	6	5	8	3	7
Distinction	10	3	7	9	8	8	7	8	4

### ***Attainment at the end of the sixth form (Year 13)***

Twelve students in ACE worked towards National Skills Profile Certificates and all gained an average of fourteen modules each across seven skills areas.

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	94	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	17	0	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	3	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	0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

### ***Financial information***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.42
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8.2:1
Average class size	10.4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

£

Financial year	2001-2002
Total income	1.056,565

**Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	271

Total expenditure	1,036,677
Expenditure per pupil	8,860
Balance brought forward from previous year	68,772
Balance carried forward to next year	88,660

**Note:**

The significant carry forward of over 8% into the current financial year was the result of unspent allocated funds relating to difficulties in recruiting staff and late allocation of funds by the LEA. There are appropriate plans in place to reduce the balance to well below 4% in the current year.

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.18
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.60

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	56

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	21	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	34	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	30	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	36	6	0	2
The teaching is good.	85	13	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	25	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	14	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	16	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	87	13	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	25	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	26	8	0	4