

INSPECTION REPORT

BRACKENFIELD SCHOOL

Long Eaton, Nottingham

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 113031

Headteacher: Dr. Jean Chadha

Reporting inspector: Adrian Simm
21138

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 5th December 2002

Inspection number: 249350

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	5 - 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bracken Road Long Eaton Nottingham
Postcode:	NG10 4DA
Telephone number:	0115 9733710
Fax number:	0115 9721272
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Bob Jones
Date of previous inspection:	8 th - 12 th February 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21138	Adrian Simm	Registered inspector	Geography History Religious education Citizenship	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9348	Mary Le Mage	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10781	Bob Thompson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Modern foreign language Special educational needs Educational inclusion	How well are pupils taught?
30559	Jenny Taylor	Team inspector	English Design and technology Music	
7994	Pam Weston	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Chase Russell Ltd

85 Shores Green Drive
Wincham
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 6EJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brackenfield School is a community special school for pupils aged between five and 16 years. It educates 58 boys and 19 girls from a wide area, which includes pockets of severe disadvantage. Pupils' learning needs include moderate or severe learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech, communication or visual impairment, physical disability or autism. A small number of pupils have challenging behaviour. The majority of pupils are aged between 11 and 16 years. Forty three per cent of pupils on roll claim free school meals, which is similar to the last inspection. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry is low in comparison to their chronological age. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds but no pupils have English as an additional language. All pupils have statements of special educational needs. For 12 months from November 2000, building improvements meant that the school operated under considerable difficulties in maintaining its usual approaches to teaching and learning. Since September 2002, the school has introduced a system where some Educational Care Officers (classroom assistants) teach some lessons throughout the school in English, mathematics, science, humanities and speech and language. The current governing body is the third that has been in place since the last inspection. All governors are new to the school in the last 12 months.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

It is an effective school that has made substantial improvements in the main areas for development since its last inspection. Overall, standards are good and pupils achieve well. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they behave well in lessons. This is because good leadership and management by the head teacher, senior managers and staff with responsibilities have ensured good teaching and learning throughout the school. These, together with an effective curriculum, are some of the 'building blocks' that ensure the school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- It is very successful in ensuring that all pupils benefit from the good provision on offer;
- It provides good quality teaching and learning overall that ensures pupils achieve well. This is within an approach that places pupils' welfare as a very high priority;
- It offers a broad range of accreditation opportunities for pupils in Year 11 including GCSE in art and design and music. This leads on from good careers development and a curriculum that is generally planned well;
- Staff provide good support for pupils' moral development. This ensures pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are good.

What could be improved

- The support and training of the new governing body in what is expected of it;
- Involvement of parents more in partnership with the school;
- The use of the high amount of non-contact time that has come about for teachers as a result of the initiative where class assistants teach around 20 per cent of the lessons.

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 has made good improvement since it was last inspected in February 1999 when it had serious weaknesses. Also, it has continued to improve well since a two-day follow-up inspection in April 2000, which checked on its interim development since February 1999. The quality of teaching and learning has improved overall. Good standards in English have been maintained. The school has succeeded very well in improving provision for pupils' welfare, which is now very good. Governors have been involved in training but changes in membership of the governing body means that this is needed again. The role of staff co-ordinating subjects in the school has improved well and as a result, pupils' achievement has improved in mathematics, science, design and technology and personal, social and health education (PSHE). However, current use of the increase in teachers' non-contact time since

September 2002 is not effective. The poor school accommodation has been improved well although this was mostly structural and did not extend into classroom provision. Accommodation for physical education and for social areas for older pupils is still unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	By Year 6	By Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	B	Very good	A
Reading	B	B	Good	B
Writing	B	B	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	(*)	(*)		

(*) Targets set are too broad to show progress.

Pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, French and PSHE. It is satisfactory in all other subjects. This includes religious education, where, although evidence is minimal, new approaches introduced to teaching and learning since September 2002 are beginning to 'pay off'. Citizenship has been introduced well and is taught in a range of ways through history, religious education and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Achievement is satisfactory and is gathering pace. Pupils have improving opportunities at Year 11 for their achievement to be recognised in examinations in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art and design, music and information and communication technology (ICT). For those pupils entered for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations in art and design and music, achievement is very good. Those pupils with more complex behavioural difficulties, more severe learning difficulties, speech and language needs or autistic tendencies also achieve well because the school sets out to make sure all pupils benefit from what is provided. Girls are achieving equally as well as boys. The school has started to set targets for improvement in aspects of literacy and numeracy against which the school's success is measured. These targets have been met overall but do not yet show improvement in pupils' understanding of what they read as distinct from their recognition of words.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy coming to school and get themselves involved in a range of activities including those outside of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in the classrooms. Pupils generally move around the school in a sensible and polite manner although this is frequently overseen by staff. The school uses fixed period exclusions as one way of dealing with poor behaviour. Nine instances were recorded in the last school year, which is not excessive given the challenging behaviour of some pupils on roll.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' relationships with staff are good and sound with each other. Pupils' initiative and personal responsibility are developing adequately.

Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are on time for the start of lessons.
------------	--

Restrictions on access to the library and computer accommodation means that pupils do not show as much initiative and personal responsibility as they might in independent work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	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 and learning are good in English, mathematics, science and PSHE. Also, they are good in art and design, design and technology, French with Years 7 to 9 and in religious education. In all other subjects, teaching and learning are satisfactory. When lessons are taught by qualified teachers, the quality of teaching and learning is nearly always good, frequently very good and occasionally excellent. Where lessons are taught by qualified teachers both teaching and learning are strong. Staff set out to ensure that all pupils regardless of their differing learning difficulties benefit from the school's provision. They are very successful in this. When classroom assistants, supported by a qualified teacher take lessons, teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory and at times are good or very good. However, lessons taught by classroom assistants without teacher support are at times unsatisfactory. This occurs when lessons need amending because of changed circumstances. Overall, lessons with qualified teachers present are much stronger than those taught solely by teaching assistants. In general, skills in communication, literacy and numeracy are taught well. Pupils behave well. They concentrate and work hard to complete their tasks.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provided is good. Lesson planning ensures pupils' new learning builds on what they know already. The school offers pupils a broad range of practical opportunities for learning such as fieldwork in geography, sports activities off-site and activities outside of lessons such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Citizenship provision is building well in a broad range of subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Within provision that is satisfactory overall, support for moral development is good. Staff supervise closely pupils' time outside of lessons. Whilst this ensures good discipline, pupils' opportunities to interact socially and improve their own self-discipline are restricted. Pupils' wider understanding of the cultural diversity of British society today is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is very good overall. The school is a secure and safe environment in which to work. The teachers know the pupils very well and they are given good encouragement in their activities. The school has suitable systems to safeguard pupils' access to the Internet.

Checking of pupils' standards is good in mathematics and science because relevant staff have discussed how it can best work for all pupils from the youngest class to the oldest. This has not happened as fully in other subjects where procedures are satisfactory. Assessment in religious education is unsatisfactory because it is not yet in place and as a result, pupils' progress cannot be tracked. The school has set up a 'parent liaison initiative' to help improve the school's links with parents.

Many families live a long distance from the school and find regular contact difficult. Initially, a member of school staff has visited all families in an attempt to strengthen home-school links. Success with this is correctly being evaluated before developing the project further. Despite this, links remain unsatisfactory because parents do not get all of the information to which they are entitled. They were not consulted about the recent teaching initiative in which classroom assistants teach classes for part of the week. Also, targets in pupils' individual education plans are too general for progress to be clearly measured and reported to parents. Language used in school reports is sometimes difficult to understand. Full financial information has not been included in the governors' annual report to parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall this is good. The headteacher and her senior staff have improved the school well since the last inspection. All staff ensure that the school sets out to improve continually and is effective in what it offers all pupils. However, the introduction of the recent teaching initiative to permit classroom assistants to teach lessons has been introduced unsatisfactorily. Parents were not consulted and not all governors were clear about what was happening.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	This is satisfactory overall. The new governing body is already aware of many of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are becoming more active in the day-to-day life of the school. Some statutory requirements are not yet fully carried out.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is satisfactory for the school's normal day-to-day needs. The school sets out to check on pupils' standards and how well staff's lesson planning turns out in practice. Whilst this works in many ways, it has not been fully effective for all staff. There is no written rationale against which to evaluate the new teaching initiative. This is unsatisfactory.
The strategic use of resources	This is satisfactory overall. The school's day-to-day financial strategies are good. Recommendations of a recent budget audit have been introduced well. Longer term financial planning is just coming to terms with budget underspends during the last three years, which at times reached £106,896. This was due partly to difficulties with buying resources during the building alterations. As a result of the teaching initiative, teachers have more time away from the classrooms. This is not yet used effectively.

The school accommodation is now satisfactory. Teachers' use of the very good resources in mathematics and good resources in art and design, design and technology, science and ICT is supporting pupils' improving achievement. Staffing levels and expertise are good overall although the school does not have a clear picture of the balance it wants between teachers and class assistants. Currently, for the number and needs of the pupils on roll, the school has fewer teachers and more classroom assistants than would be expected. The school has not set out yet to compare itself formally with other similar schools and it failed to consult with parents over the current teaching initiative. Whilst it sets out to ensure that it gets good value when buying expensive equipment, overall, the school's approaches for meeting the principles of best value are unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good quality of teaching; • The good leadership and management of the school; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work pupils do at home; • Knowing how well their children are getting on.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. | |
|--|--|

Inspectors agree with what please parents about the school and what some would like to see improved. A number of pupils at the school would benefit from homework and details of pupils' progress in school reports and individual educational plans are not always sufficiently clear.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. All pupils in the school have learning difficulties; some are moderate and some more severe but the majority make good progress and achieve well. This is in relation to the learning outcomes planned for them in lessons and in the accredited courses for pupils in Years 10 and 11. In some subjects this represents good improvement since the last inspection such as in mathematics, science, and PSHE. There is very good improvement in design and technology and the maintenance of good standards in English and art and design. Only in ICT with Years 7 to 11 have standards fallen, but here, they are still satisfactory. This is a good achievement given that the schools' computers were put into storage for the full extent of the building project at the school, which lasted 12 months.
2. Achievement is good overall in English, mathematics and science. Also it is good in art and design, design and technology and French with pupils in Years 7 to 9 where it is taught. For those pupils taking GCSE in art and design and music, achievement is very good. These subjects have been priorities for development for the school. In all other subjects, pupils achieve appropriately and make satisfactory progress. In geography, history, religious education, music and physical education, staff have done well to maintain pupils' standards in these subjects, particularly during the building work and especially in the case of physical education with the lack of accommodation particularly for Years 7 to 11.
3. Those pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, more complex behavioural difficulties, severe learning difficulties or speech and language needs achieve equally as well as other pupils. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls despite there being very few girls in some classes. Teachers are conscious that they have to ensure the girls are fully included in lessons. This works well. Teaching staff make every effort to follow programmes set out by visiting specialist staff for pupils with speech and communication needs, hearing or visual impairment. This is much improved since the last inspection.
4. Pupils in all year groups achieve well in their personal, social and health education. The subject has been extended to incorporate citizenship education introduced nationally since the last inspection. Citizenship has been introduced well and features in other subjects also, such as history, English and religious education. Pupils' achievement reflects the extent of its current inclusion in these subjects and is currently sound. The introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme both in PSHE time on the timetable and as a club activity outside of lessons is strengthening pupils' involvement in citizenship activities. The school places particular priority on provision for work-related learning and careers guidance and these are good in preparing pupils for life after school. Pupils achieve well in this particular work.
5. Opportunities for pupils to take accredited courses in subjects have expanded since the last inspection. The school has evaluated different courses and has settled on the Certificate of Achievement accreditation. This has not been in place long enough to be showing trends in achievement. Overall trends will also be affected by the extent of the learning difficulties of pupils in the Year 11 cohorts from year-to-year. However, good opportunities are in place which are expanding for 2003 with pupils showing at least good progress towards attaining accreditation in English, mathematics, science,

design and technology, art and design and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in the school are good and have a positive impact on standards attained. Personal development is sound. Overall, this aspect of the life of the school is strong as it was at the last inspection.
7. Throughout the school pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. They are pleased to see their teachers each morning, are interested in what is happening in the classroom. They are usually co-operative. Parents are almost unanimous in reporting that their children are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. In lessons, pupils respond well to questions and all concentrate well. There is no difference in the commitment to work between boys and girls, higher or lower attaining pupils or those from different backgrounds. Across all areas of the curriculum, higher attaining pupils help and support others within their group, although at times, the opposite happens with a small number of pupils who deliberately attempt to upset others. Teachers and support assistants skilfully and sensitively handle the majority of these situations with minimal disruption to pupils' learning. On other occasions pupils with more complex learning difficulties opt out of learning although without disruption to others. Here also, skilful and unobtrusive support usually results in the pupil joining in again after a short while. On occasions when classroom assistants are teaching lessons without the support of a teacher, they are less successful in coping with the more difficult situations.
8. Behaviour in the school is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. At times, behaviour is very good, often associated with practical, creative activities or when a teacher's enthusiasm for the subject being taught, captures the total interest of the pupils. Pupils relate well to adults, including visitors, and are generally co-operative. At other times, some pupils display challenging and inappropriate behaviour. There have been eight pupils excluded for fixed periods of time in the last school year and one permanently for very difficult behaviour. Exclusions are used only when pupils have not responded positively to staff who almost always deal with difficult behaviour in an effective and consistent manner. Outside of lessons pupils behave well at all times: in the playground, in the dining hall, at lunchtime clubs and when moving around the school. There were no incidents of bullying seen during the inspection. Nevertheless, pupils are very aware of the way in which they should deal with such situations.
9. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. From their earliest days in school pupils are encouraged to reflect on the consequences of their actions and how they may affect other people. This approach is extended in citizenship and in personal, social and health education where pupils are encouraged to talk or think about their feelings and how others may feel in certain circumstances. Relationships between pupils are satisfactory throughout the school. All pupils demonstrate respect for, and some understanding of, the feelings, values and beliefs of other people who are the focus of their lesson. For example when considering life in a Victorian workhouse in a literacy lesson, they described how they thought people would feel. They find it harder to transfer this compassion into their own everyday relationships, for example, in controlling themselves not to make an unkind comment. Nevertheless, as they get older, pupils become more aware of the effects of their actions. Relationships between pupils and adults in the school are good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility for minor jobs around school and the recently formed School Council is significantly increasing these opportunities. Older

pupils respond well to the responsibilities offered by the Duke of Edinburgh and Peak Award schemes. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their initiative or make choices in less-structured social situations. The lack of social areas for older pupils noted at the last inspection has not yet been addressed.

10. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. It is what would be expected of similar schools nationally. The questionnaires completed by parents for the inspection show clearly that children enjoy school and want to attend.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. Overall, teaching and learning are good. There are no significant differences across the school between classes, age groups, pupils of different attainment or background and boys and girls. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. Nearly all lessons are satisfactory or better. Around seven out of every ten lessons are good or better with a small number very good or excellent. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching and learning has reduced to around one out of every twenty lessons.
12. When lessons are taught by qualified teachers, teaching and learning are invariably good, often very good and occasionally excellent. When classroom assistants, supported by a qualified teacher teach lessons, lessons are generally satisfactory or good. However, lessons taught by classroom assistants or unqualified staff supported by a classroom assistant, at times result in unsatisfactory or poor teaching and learning. This is where lessons need amending because of changed circumstances and staff are inexperienced in dealing with these types of situation or where the classroom assistant taking the lesson does not fully check that the lesson plans written in co-operation with a teacher are fully followed. This happened several times during the inspection. For example, only half of a class of pupils arrived for a history lesson because unexpectedly the rest had gone to play in a football match. The lesson planned did not suit the attainment level of those remaining and as a result, pupils found the work too hard and did not learn satisfactorily. Also, the work planned and the support identified for some individuals within an English lesson were not fully effective. Consequently, one pupil scheduled to receive extra support missed out on this and another pupil initially had the wrong work.
13. The range of pupils' learning difficulties in any lesson is wide. Consequently teachers are challenged to select tasks that meet the needs of the pupils. Good planning helps to achieve this aim. Time is set aside on the timetable for teachers and class assistants to plan together. This generally works well. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies are well established in English and mathematics lessons as well as being fully incorporated into other subjects across the curriculum. Staff have high expectations of pupils, both in their behaviour and in their work. Consequently, pupils behave well in lessons, sustain concentration, persevere and work hard to complete their tasks. Pupils take pride in their completed work and are keen to show off their work to visitors. In the best planning, for example in science, lessons have an extra 'extension' element for those pupils who complete their work and need to be further challenged. For example, in one such science lesson, pupils used the Internet to find web sites where they could find out more about Weil's disease, also called autumn fever, in their water topic.
14. The consistently high quality of teaching motivates pupils to do well as learners. This

is reflected in the high percentage of lessons, which are good or better and almost one quarter of lessons, which are very good. Teaching and learning with pupils who have additional special needs are consistently good or better in all classes. For example, a particular lesson, which was very good in the lower primary department, was aimed successfully at meeting the speech and language needs of the pupils. This was very well planned, in conjunction with the speech therapist and fully involved three classroom assistants as well as the teacher and the speech therapist. Pupils were challenged to meet 'practical language tasks' including expressive and receptive language. The work included 'positional', 'directional', 'social' and 'mathematical language' as well as carrying out verbal instructions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils made very good progress. Detailed assessments were recorded throughout the lesson and the pupils were pleased with their success.

15. The way in which pupils are taught to use ICT skills to enhance their learning in other subjects is impressive. There were good examples of ICT being used to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in science where they used data logging and the Internet to research their topics. In design and technology pupils used ICT to download and compare designs of similar products to those they were making. In mathematics, pupils used ICT to produce and transfer information and data. In music, as part of the Certificate of Achievement award, with an emphasis on visual arts, pupils used a digital camera effectively to 'image' masks, which they then 'sharpened' before cutting and cropping together. This is good practice as a direct result of good teaching.
16. The school does not have a written 'homework' policy. Arrangements are made on an ad hoc basis for parents or pupils who ask for homework. The inspection team agrees with some parents that this arrangement is not fully clear to parents. The school should express a written policy on homework and be more active in ensuring that pupils who will benefit from homework receive it on a regular basis as a means of extending and improving their standards in school.
17. Since the last inspection, the significantly improved quality of teaching and learning has enhanced pupils' achievements in many subjects, including that of pupils with additional special needs, especially those with speech and language difficulties.

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

18. The school's curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and is extended in a way that is relevant to the pupils at the school. Pupils with additional special educational needs have access to a similar curriculum, the delivery of which is appropriately adapted to meet different needs. There are good opportunities for pupils to integrate into mainstream schools when appropriate. An example of this is when younger pupils, once firmly settled into school routines, join mainstream pupils for a weekly assembly. The curriculum in mixed-age classes is well matched to pupils' attainment levels. Throughout the school all pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum, which ensures very good equality of opportunity. The recently formed 'transition class', designed to bridge the gap between primary and secondary aged provision helps a smooth transition between these two parts of the school.
19. The curriculum for Year 10 and 11 pupils is good. Its strength is in its relevance and preparation for adult life. This was found to be generally unsatisfactory in the previous inspection. However it is now distinctive and highly relevant to the pupils' individual

needs. Pupils have good opportunities to discover about the life in the community and the world after school. For Year 11 pupils, opportunities include work experience and college links. The emphasis is well directed at developing independence skills. Pupils are encouraged to make their own way to and from their college and work experience venues. However, for those not as independent, appropriate support is provided for pupils in their work experience placements, for example transport to and from school. This strong feature in the school's curriculum develops the pupils' independence and encourages them to plan for the future. The growing emphasis on the development of the school's Youth Award Schemes makes a significant contribution to the overall development of the curriculum and is encouraging greater independence at an earlier age.

20. The school's careers education is good and is supported well by the Connexions Personal Advisor. Overall provision for the older pupils is good. Particular strengths are in the provision for music and art and design in Years 10 and 11. Opportunities for accreditation are good with courses leading to GCSE in art and design and music. Pupils have opportunities to obtain nationally accredited certification in all core subjects and many other subjects through the Certificate of Achievement. Information and communication technology is developing in line with the school action plan with increased use across all curricular areas. However not all curriculum provision is fully planned and effective. There is still a need to complete the revised schemes of work for history, geography and religious education across the school. In physical education with pupils in Years 7 to 11, learning opportunities are diminished by weaknesses in the accommodation. Attempts have been made to overcome this by use of the local sports centre. Plans are underway to enhance this provision further through links with other schools in the community. There are good links established with a local high school and college to provide a wider curriculum for older pupils. Specific citizenship lessons have been introduced for Year 10 pupils with elements of citizenship identified in all subjects. They are particularly noticeable in English, history and religious education. Lessons for personal, social and health education are timetabled with all classes. This is good with plans for further development.
21. Good provision for pupils in Years 1 to 6 in speech and communication ensures that specialised teaching and management programmes are available. The school has modified its approaches well to the 'literacy hour' and 'numeracy hour'. Both are a success and pupils' progress is planned for well using a nationally recognised approach, which breaks-down the national assessments and learning into much smaller steps. Governors have agreed spending to extend this even more and to ensure that curriculum planning builds totally across the school in all subjects from Year 1 all the way through to Year 11. There are good learning opportunities planned for all pupils, including those with additional learning difficulties, especially those pupils with speech and language difficulties.
22. The curriculum that takes place outside of the classroom is also good. It includes after school clubs such as the horticulture club and sessions for those pupils taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Every pupil now signs up for one of the many lunchtime clubs, which includes activities such as board games and knitting. The school makes good provision for residential visits to widen the pupils' horizons, including an annual visit to France for some pupils. Sporting activities, such as football, takes place against other schools. The school is developing good links with the community. Pupils are taking part in an 'ecological' initiative and as part of this initiative have set up a recycling centre for old mobile phones and printer ink cartridges. They receive for example all the used ink cartridges from a well-known football club and also canvas local companies. Pupils are taken shopping in the local

community and take part in fieldwork-visits for example, to Flamborough Head where pupils studied coastline erosion.

23. The school has good links with the health service. For example, the school nurse is an important member of the team teaching the personal and social education programme. She contributes well to sex education lessons. Personal and social education lessons are well planned. In a mixed Years 4, 5, and 6 class, pupils were encouraged to consider the needs of the younger pupils in the school in planning how to develop the school playground. This was good personal development based on a real project, which the pupils will take to the School Council. The recently introduced 'Brackenfield Challenge' Awards that consist of First Aid, Personal/Group Safety, Peak and Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes aid personal development with older pupils. The aim is to challenge all pupils from Year 7 upwards, at a level appropriate to their ability. It is planned that these activities will develop the pupils' self esteem and confidence in the wider community. It also allows for greater involvement and participation of parents and carers. Add the good PSHE lessons to what happens normally in school on a day-to-day basis in support of pupils' independent learning and in extending their initiative, overall, provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection it was good. At the moment, the good behaviour of pupils around the school is more as a result of good control and management by staff than by pupils' personal choice. The school does not yet plan effectively for pupils to work more independently for example, in using the school library and accessing the computers.
24. Arrangements for pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. The school provides pupils with opportunities to explore their own values and beliefs and those of their classmates in PSHE lessons and when discussing stories in their literacy lessons. Lessons in religious education give opportunities to learn about the beliefs of the world's major faiths and visits to a variety of places of worship give pupils further opportunities to appreciate the beliefs and traditions of other peoples. Daily assemblies, as a whole school, or in classrooms, include an act of collective worship, but there is insufficient time for pupils' to reflect on this experience or make a personal response. There are also limited opportunities for quiet, reflective free-time indoors or outside. The adults in school value pupils and their contributions, and they are encouraged and supported to listen to their peers and respect their views.
25. Pupils' moral development is well promoted beginning with the good role models presented by the adults in the school. There are five, clearly expressed rules operating in the school and pupils are aware of them. In addition, assembly is frequently built around a moral story or message. This is picked up, as appropriate, in classes during the day. The personal, social and health education lessons which pupils have several times each week create opportunities for pupils to explore moral concepts such as right and wrong and fairness. Care for the environment is well promoted across the school through a number of initiatives such as the 'after school club' and the school's intention to become an 'Eco-school'. Pupils are given opportunities to help others by collecting for a range of charities and supporting a young person in Africa.
26. The school's provision for social development is satisfactory. All staff encourage pupils to collaborate and support each other. The School Council is beginning to provide a good means of involving pupils in the development of the school but it has only been formed very recently. The school is truly inclusive, where pupils from a range of backgrounds and abilities are supported to work together. However, there is very little unstructured time in the school, even for the older pupils, and the

opportunities for all pupils to experience normal social choices about their free time are limited. The social development of some pupils is specifically targeted and supported through 'social groups' in which social interactions are planned and managed well.

27. Arrangements for pupils' cultural development are satisfactory, including both local and world culture. Through lessons in art and design pupils are made aware of the artistic heritage of various parts of the world. There are some examples of high quality artwork, produced by the pupils and on display around the school, especially in the entrance hall. Music, as part of the daily life of the school is less evident. During the inspection, music was heard only in music lessons and the whole school assemblies. Every year a number of pupils have the opportunity to visit and 'live' in France, staying in a gite. Religious education lessons give the pupils an awareness and some understanding of the major faiths of the world. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to more fully appreciate the cultural diversity of Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The school places very high priority on the welfare of its pupils and has created an environment where pupils are happy and feel safe, secure and valued. All statutory checks are undertaken and very comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the building, visits and people at particular risk and use of equipment. Staff know the pupils well and are responsive to their needs. Child protection procedures are in place and have proved to be effective. All staff receive an annual update on child protection and additional updates as legislation develops.
29. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school investigates absences that are not explained by parents. The systems in the school to monitor and promote good behaviour have not been formalised and each class makes its own arrangements to reward desired behaviour. Nevertheless, behaviour management is consistent across the school and resulted in good standards of behaviour being evident during the inspection. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are satisfactory although largely informal. Several members of staff know every pupil and this supports them well very well. However, there is no formal personal development pathway specified, against which pupil's progress can be checked. Even pupils with behavioural aims on their IEPs do not have these aims broken down into short-term, measurable targets, which can be easily monitored. Overall, the school's educational and personal support and guidance is satisfactory.
30. Overall, procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. There is a file for each pupil, which contains comprehensive information about both their academic achievements and their personal development. However, this information only builds well across the school in mathematics and science where the subject co-ordinators for Years 7 to 11 have been in close discussion with the staff teaching pupils in Years 1 to 6. This has not happened effectively in other subjects. No assessment is in place in religious education and only partially in place for design and technology and music. Whilst reports to parents, annual reviews of statements and reviews of individual education plans are included in pupils' assessment files, much of this information is not precise enough to offer good opportunities to track pupils' progress and therefore, evaluate whether pupils are doing as well as they might. Staff annotate samples of pupils' work effectively to explain and support their

judgment of pupils' attainment. Their notes include a description of the task and the amount of support given. It is also recorded whether the task was experienced or was achieved. This is a good approach. The results of formal tests in English, mathematics and science are recorded using a basic computer management system so that results can be converted to block graphs. These are easily read to ascertain pupils' achievements over time and the school has plans to develop this further.

31. The provision specified in the pupils' statements of special educational needs is implemented. The additional provision, for example, speech therapy is also fully in place. These targets are transferred to the pupils' individual education plans, which are reviewed termly. The targets are too broad for example, 'to develop basic academic skills'. This makes it difficult for staff to transfer targets realistically to their lesson plans. Targets frequently do not refer to a time scale within which the target will be achieved. Consequently most targets are not specific and measurable and do not provide a clear picture of the pupils' progress.
32. Statutory assessments at the end of Year 11 are undertaken in accordance with national guidelines. Higher attaining pupils follow courses leading to Certificates of Achievement and G.C.S.E. in music and art and design. The procedures for conducting annual reviews are satisfactory. Parents are invited to attend annual reviews of statements of special educational needs and if they are unable to do so then they are sent copies of the review report.
33. Assessment information is used well to inform planning particularly in numeracy and literacy lessons. Groups of pupils are arranged according to prior attainment in the subjects. This advances learning in these subjects. Teachers plan activities well, building sequentially on prior attainment; they involve support staff closely in checking pupils' progress and planning for future teaching and learning.
34. The school has already identified areas for development. The present system for checking and recording pupils' achievement and progress is currently unwieldy and will be superseded by a commercial computer system, which in time will encompass all subjects. This will enable all teachers to access and track easily and efficiently the progress of individual pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents consider this is a good school. Parents' questionnaires completed for the inspection reveal that parents are most pleased with
 - The quality of teaching in the school;
 - The high expectations the school has of its pupils;
 - The way in which any questions or concerns they may have are received and dealt with;
 - The quality of the leadership and management of the school.

The inspection endorses parents' positive viewpoints.

36. A small minority of parents does not
 - Feel that the school provides enough homework for their child;
 - Feel well informed about how their child is getting on.

The inspection agreed with these parents and found these aspects of the life of the school to be unsatisfactory. The partnership between the school and the parents is ineffective and has deteriorated since the time of the last inspection.

37. The school has experienced great difficulty in engaging parents in their children's learning and has embarked on a Home/School liaison project to improve the situation. This project has been set up well. However, it is relatively recent and as yet there has been no significant improvement in parents' involvement with the school. Parents are supportive of informal events involving their children such as concerts and sports day but very few attend events related to education.
38. However, the school could do more to keep parents informed. Although parents receive an annual report on their child's progress, the content of these could be greatly improved. With pupils in Years 1 to 6, reports are confusing as the text is organised under the six areas of learning for nursery and reception age children but the reported grades refer to the subjects of the national curriculum. Religious education is not reported. The language used in reports is sometimes too technical and doesn't always carry a clear meaning for parents. Overall, reports for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are unsatisfactory. Elsewhere in school, reports are slightly better, covering all national curriculum subjects and giving some indication of the national curriculum level achieved by the pupil in English, mathematics and science. However, poor proof reading makes some reports meaningless as vital words are missing. It is inappropriate that the teacher records pupils' comments on their year's achievements, even when the English report states that the pupil can write clearly and with meaning. Overall, reports with Years 7 to 11 are satisfactory. Parents are invited to annual reviews for pupils but very few attend. Each year, a copy of the review and the new IEP are sent to parents. However, when the IEP is reviewed termly, or even half-termly, the updated plan is not sent to the parents. Parents are not kept up-to-date in this, which is unsatisfactory.
39. Some parents enter into a dialogue with the school but many do not. In addition some of the written information recorded by the school is too general to be of real value to a parent, for example '(name of pupil) was silly at lunchtime today' but without being more specific. Newsletters and class letters about visits out of school keep parents informed about the daily life of the school. However, the school did not consult with, or even inform, parents about the major project in the school to involve some classroom assistants in teaching some lessons without the direct support of qualified teaching staff. Overall the quality of information provided for parents, especially about pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. Since the previous full inspection in February 1999 and the subsequent two-day inspection in April 2000, the school has made good improvement. All staff have done their best to put in place a range of strategies that have set the school firmly on the road to improvement. Since February 1999, the assistant headteacher has worked very hard to ensure issues of serious weakness in the school's approaches to health and safety and ensuring pupils' welfare have been totally overcome. The school's strategies for this are now very good.
41. Since May 2000, when the current headteacher was appointed, the school has been successful in, amongst other things:
 - Improving the opportunities for pupils to be examined in a range of accredited

- courses at the end of Year 11;
 - Concentrating on improving literacy and numeracy throughout the school but particularly for pupils in Years 7 to 9;
 - Introducing ways of ensuring all staff are more fully involved in contributing to the school development plan;
 - Ensuring that staff's professional development is of benefit both to staff themselves and to the school's needs to improve expertise in areas of the curriculum;
 - Supporting governors in understanding their role more;
 - Improving the accommodation
 - Improving curriculum planning in design and technology and careers education.
42. The headteacher and her senior staff are leading this process well and are clear what the school needs to do to improve further. This is clearly known in school and is prioritised and costed in the school improvement plan, which has appropriate measures of success. As such, the management of the process is good. Particular areas for development include:
- Ensuring planning and assessment build smoothly between Years 6 and 7 as the pupils move from the primary to the senior department in the school;
 - Providing further opportunities for all staff to take part in training for dealing with the more complex behavioural needs of some pupils;
 - Improving governors' understanding of their role and of the pupils' special educational needs;
 - Continuing to improve pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy;
 - Tracking pupils' progress and the teaching offered to them to see if it is the best it can be.
43. Major improvements were made to the structure of the buildings in the 12 months from November 2000. Classes had to be moved regularly from room-to-room as building work continued. The school's computers were put into storage to avoid damage. Staff did well to continue with developments during this period but some, understandably were slowed by the building work, including the checking of some teacher's lessons to see just how well they were doing.
44. All other staff with management responsibilities have played their part in this improvement. Since the building work was completed, all staff have had time away from the classroom to work on developing their areas of responsibility. This has given them some opportunity to check that agreed ways of working are actually happening. This has been successful overall although the updating of some schemes of work and approaches to checking pupils' progress have still to be completed. Subject development has been good overall, curriculum development and assessment is more advanced than it was at the time of the last inspection and teaching and learning have improved well because of the support offered to most staff as a result of monitoring by the head teacher and senior staff.
45. The school has introduced well many initiatives in the last two years, which are usually built into planning with ways of evaluating just how well they work in practice. However, in September 2002, the school introduced a 'teaching and teaching assistant partnership' project, without setting out the expectations of the project and how its success is going to be judged. The initiative involves staff employed as classroom assistants planning lessons with qualified teachers but then teaching whole classes of pupils without qualified teacher support in many cases. The management of the introduction of this initiative was unsatisfactory because,

- Parents of pupils at the school were not consulted;
 - Inadequate minutes of governors' meetings led to some governors being unclear about exactly what was happening;
 - Lack of a written rationale has resulted in uncertainty about evaluation of the project and what will be recognised as 'success' at various stages in its development. This is particularly in relation to the quality of teaching and learning;
 - The amount of time that qualified teachers have on average, away from the classroom, amounts to around 20 per cent. The head teacher has not set out how all or some of this time will be used. This is at a time when staff recognise that their co-ordination of subjects across the school has room for improvement in ensuring smooth transition for pupils between Years 6 and 7.
46. At the moment, the school is understaffed in qualified teachers and over staffed with teaching assistants in comparison with what would be expected for the number of pupils in the school and their range of special educational needs.
47. The school has not benefited from the support of an experienced governing body since the last inspection with constant changes in its membership. The longest-serving governor has less than 12 month's experience of the school. As a governing body, this is the third since the last inspection. Training has been part of the school's approach for governors but with the changes, this regularly has to start again. This is the case with the current governing body. Their contribution is satisfactory given the time they have been together. The chair of the governing body has particular expertise in finances and has set out to understand the school's approaches to this quickly and effectively. The school has benefited from a full audit of its budget in 2002 and points for improvement have been carried out. Governors are becoming increasingly involved in the day-to-day running of the school and their school development plan sets out clearly recognised areas for improvement. Their contribution is showing clear signs of getting stronger. However, they have yet to ensure that
- Their annual report to parents contains full financial data;
 - They are fully involved in ratifying all new policies in the school;
 - Minutes of governors' meetings show clearly their full involvement in evaluating and updating the school's improvement plan;
 - They are clearer on what questions to ask and procedures to follow when setting up new initiatives;
 - They set out to follow the principles of best value effectively.
48. Governors' involvement in longer-term financial planning is just coming to terms with a series of budget underspends during the last three years, which at times reached £106,896. This was due partly to difficulties with buying resources during the building alterations. It was this information that was missing from the governing body's annual report to parents. Plans are now in place to support possible staffing improvements which will ensure that by March 2003, the budget underspend is more realistic and the spending of monies more effective.
49. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory. Much has been done to improve the fabric of the building both internally and out. Far better car parking arrangements are now in place, which has helped improve the safe arrival and departure of pupils. School transport now accesses the school's grounds easily and a safe system is in place for pupils to enter and leave the school building. The school hosts an area support team for primary schools. They work from a separate building on the school site, which has freed-up room in the main building. This space has been converted

into a library although it is remote from general areas of the school and cannot be accessed independently by pupils. This restricts the personal development of even those pupils who could be allowed independent access to library resources. As yet, improvements in accommodation for physical education and social areas for older pupils noted at the last inspection have not been dealt with. The school tries hard to overcome the drawbacks in physical education by carrying out some lessons at the local leisure centre and taking pupils to other places such as the local golf range. Overall learning resources are satisfactory. They are good in mathematics, science, ICT, art and design and design and technology. The good resources, when linked to good or better teaching ensure that interesting lessons are the outcome and pupils' learning benefits as the result.

50. The school is beginning to know how well pupils are progressing individually and is in the early stages of using computerised management information systems to support the processing of information and the target setting process. The head teacher, senior managers and staff recognise in the main what is working and what else needs to be done. The new governing body is coming to terms with their roles and responsibilities. They are not yet fully clear about the extent of their statutory responsibilities. Staff and governors have the drive and commitment to develop further and the planning is in place to support this. Overall, the school has developed well since the last inspection on an income that is around average to that of similar schools. As such, the school provides good value for money and has the team of staff and governors to ensure it improves further and fully satisfies the principles of best value.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. To ensure the school improves further, it should

- (1) Prioritise and carry out training for the new governing body so that it is clear about all of its statutory responsibilities and other requirements expected of it including,
- Its role in ratifying new school policies; (*)
 - Minuting accurately and in sufficient detail all significant decisions taken;
 - Evaluating school development planning in general and specific initiatives in particular, against understood success criteria; (*)
 - Meeting the principles of best value.
(Paragraphs 42, 45, 47 and 50)
- (2) Involve parents more in partnership with the school by ensuring, amongst other things, that
- Parents are consulted about major developments planned for the school;
 - IEP targets are more specific to pupils' individual needs and as a result, parents are as clear as possible about the progress their children are making;
 - Pupils' annual reports to parents are written more clearly and highlight progress;
 - The governors' annual report to parents contains all expected information.
(Paragraphs 31, 38, 45, 47, and 57)
- (3) Make sure the headteacher schedules effectively the significant amount of time that teachers now have away from the classroom as a result of the teaching and teaching assistants' initiative. Use of this time should include
- Improving the co-ordination of subjects to ensure staff are clearer about subject planning, assessment and pupils' progress across the whole school; (*)
 - Ensuring the school's approaches to checking on the quality of teaching and learning both by qualified teachers and teaching assistants are fully effective;
 - Ensuring the school meets the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus in the teaching of religious education and that pupils' attainments are assessed and progress tracked. (*)
(Paragraphs 20, 30, 42, 44, 45, 59, 76, 81, 90 and 113)

In addition to the development points above, the following less important issue should be considered for inclusion in the school action plan:

- Complete the improvement in accommodation noted at the last inspection for physical education and social areas for older pupils. (*)
(Paragraphs 9, 52, 108 and 110)

(*) Indicates areas already noted by the school in their development planning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	28	17	3	1	
Percentage	1	22	44	27	5	1	

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

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	77
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	33

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	6.9	School data	3.6

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

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	74	12	1
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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: Y1 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	9.2
Average class size	11

Education support staff: Y1 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	383

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	659808
Total expenditure	644285
Expenditure per pupil	9074
Balance brought forward from previous year	91373
Balance carried forward to next year	106896

KEY STAGE 1, KEY STAGE 2 and KEY STAGE 3.

Pupils are not entered for National Assessments.

KEY STAGE 4.

Course results in 2001/2002 showing the number of pupils at each level accredited in the Certificate of Educational Achievement.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
ENGLISH	2	2	0
MATHEMATICS	0	5	0
SCIENCE	1	5	0
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY	0	4	2

Recruitment of teachers

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

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	77
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	30	9	4	
My child is making good progress in school.	46	36	18		
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	44	13	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	17	26	22	9
The teaching is good.	61	35			4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	26	22		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	4		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39			4
The school works closely with parents.	61	26	13		
The school is well led and managed.	56	35			9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	26	13		
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	31	13	4	

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

ENGLISH

52. Pupils' achievement in English is good. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls or those of different attainment or background. All pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils sign or say single words in response to adult questions, match symbols and are beginning to become involved in stories by turning the pages of the book and commenting on the pictures. Higher attaining pupils use phrases or simple sentences to communicate ideas, identify initial letter sounds, follow left to right lines using a pencil and write over the letters of their name or sentences written for them.
53. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils discuss work set out for them and reply to questions about topics of interest to their class. They show an enjoyment of books and read simple sentences using their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt unfamiliar words. Most learn to recognise words that appear frequently in text and identify all letter sounds. These pupils construct simple sentences using full stops and capital letters in clear legible print. Many write their own name and spell words such as bed and bat correctly. By the end of Year 9, many pupils take the opportunity to read aloud to their class. Higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression whilst lower attaining pupils make good progress in reading words more slowly. They are not yet fluent. When asked, most pupils identify the main elements of a story and identify which character is speaking at any one time. Whilst higher attaining pupils spell words easily such as 'exist' and know basic punctuation, others struggle at times with spellings such as the word 'left' and in knowing where to put full stops in their writing.
54. By Year 11, most pupils listen and contribute to discussion. Older pupils engaged in a discussion about the place of a Victorian workhouse in modern society. They expressed their views and sympathetically made sensitive statements about the value of providing warmth and shelter for the poor. This indicates that literacy makes a good contribution to their spiritual and moral education. Most pupils talk with varying degrees of confidence about their work. Some pupils recognise whether they have produced a full sentence in response to a question. Higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression. Most pupils show enjoyment and growing confidence in their reading. They understand much of what they read from texts adapted from books, for example, a passage from an adaptation of 'Christmas Carol'. They sound out words that are unfamiliar. They learn appropriate terms such as author and predict successfully the next event in a story read with the group. Higher attaining pupils produce paragraphs of independent writing and develop stories that have a beginning, middle and end. Most fill in a form including basic personal details and write a formal letter such as a job application. Lower attaining pupils throughout the age range learn to listen to stories, respond to familiar adults, point to or exchange pictures and symbols to make choices and copy sentences written for them.
55. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy to structure the teaching of reading and writing for all pupils from Years 1 to 6. The strategy provides a structure for planning the teaching of literacy skills and a context for checking and

recording progress. All pupils have targets for reading, writing, speaking and listening as part of their individual education plans although they are frequently vague in relation to pupils' specific learning difficulties. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, the school has introduced a course leading to the Certificate of Achievement award for higher attaining pupils. This has been a good initiative.

56. Most teaching and learning in English are good with some very good examples. Only one example of unsatisfactory teaching and learning was seen. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this very well to the benefit of their pupils. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has provided a good structure for planning in the subject. Class teachers with pupils in Years 1 to 6 teach most subjects and ensure that literacy is built well into other lessons. With all pupils, a good range of approaches is used in the teaching of English with most lessons using the structure of an introduction to the lesson with the whole class, followed by individual or small group tasks and finishing with a short plenary session. The plenary is used well to check on pupils' understanding and point the way ahead for the next lesson. Teachers make good use of questioning to challenge their pupils and have high expectations of achievement and behaviour. Information and communications technology is not yet used as effectively as it might be with pupils in Years 7 to 11. All pupils benefit from the skilful support of classroom assistants. Overall, good relationships between adults and pupils are evident in all classes. Pupils develop confidence in their abilities and are enthusiastic about learning, which results in them working hard and listening to their teachers. Staff use the school's system of 'positive behaviour management' effectively in all classes. It works for the majority of pupils. However for the most challenging pupils, even these strategies lead at times to their withdrawal from the classroom although the amount of time lost from lessons is kept to a minimum.
57. Whilst the provision specified in the pupils' statements of special educational needs is implemented, such as additional support for speech therapy, the targets transferred to the pupils' individual education plans are too broad for example, 'to develop basic academic skills'. This makes it difficult for staff to transfer targets realistically to their lesson plans. Targets frequently do not set out when they will be achieved by. Consequently most targets do not provide a clear picture of the pupils' progress.
58. Pupils' work is monitored and checked soundly. Results are recorded in the pupils' individual profile. There have been some changes in the form of assessment during the last year. A decision has now been made to introduce a software program based on pre-National Curriculum and National Curriculum levels next term, which is intended to improve the efficiency and accessibility of information.
59. The leadership provided by the co-ordinator is satisfactory. She supports teaching and learning in the subject well in Years 7 to 11 by identifying clear priorities for development based on evidence about the standards achieved in the subject. The subject is led in Years 1 to 6 by the lower school co-ordinator who has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. This has resulted in clear planning, staff development and the purchase of resources for younger pupils. The school recognises that its links in planning between Years 1 to 6 and Years 7 to 11 are not as well set out as they might be and that a consistent system for checking teaching and learning across the whole school is not fully in place.
60. The library has very recently been re-sited and refurbished. However, it is not central to the school and access is restricted so that it is unlikely to be available to pupils to use without supervision particularly for younger pupils. This means that pupils do not

have independent access to reading material in a central library, which adversely affects their personal development. During the course of the inspection the library was used on several occasions as an additional teaching space, which reduces its access for library-skills work. Also, there is a restricted range of books available. They include some traditional and contemporary children's fiction for example by Roald Dahl and a small selection of non-fiction texts. The books are not classified and do not include books about other countries and cultures. However, books loaned from the county library service supplement the stock of books and this is an efficient way of using resources.

MATHEMATICS

61. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. They progress well as they move through the school. Pupils with additional special educational needs make similar progress to that of others in the class. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys or girls. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be only satisfactory between Years 3 and 9. The main strengths of the subject are its leadership, the good implementation of a well-modified National Numeracy Strategy, the quality of teaching and learning, the knowledge that the teachers have of the pupils and the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
62. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils put in order by size, four or five teddy bears and extend this activity to ordering shoes by size. Lower attaining pupils are able to order three teddies by size but are less secure when extending the activity to ordering three snakes by length. With support, those with additional special educational needs recognise items that are big and little. They reinforce their understanding of this when working with an adult using a computer program. Higher attaining pupils recite numbers in order to 20 and count in twos to ten. Pupils make good progress because the teacher plans the lessons well so pupils achieve what is expected of them. Resources are exciting such as the eye-catching assortment of teddies contained in 'Santa's Sack'.
63. By Year 6, pupils continue to achieve well and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils know number names beyond 20 and count backwards in twos. Lower attaining pupils count in twos up to eight. They are helped to achieve this because the teacher uses good strategies to get everything possible out of the lessons. For example, consistent eye contact with pupils so their attention is held and they concentrate and achieve as well as they are able. Pupils are encouraged to work together without adult assistance. They work co-operatively maintaining a good pace when given assorted number cards 'one to ten' and are challenged to form as many variations as possible when adding any three cards from the pack. They work well together and take turns. Pupils with additional special educational needs still lack true understanding when matching objects to number cards one to ten.
64. By the end of Year 9, pupils show very good understanding of number. They solve a given problem by collecting, grouping and interpreting data in a range of ways such as tally charts, frequency tables and pictograms. This was an area previously identified for further development and staff and pupils have worked hard to achieve good results. Pupils add 15 and eight and subtract four from 12 correctly when given quick-fire number problems during the introduction to the lesson. Pupils use their whiteboards well and this aids the general pace maintained in lessons both by teachers and by class assistants when they take lessons. Lower achieving pupils in

Year 8, in the first of a series of lessons working with fractions, recognised whole numbers and halves because the teacher made the lesson very practical by referring to for example to half a pizza. Higher attaining pupils find fractions of shapes and numbers. In some lessons, lower attaining pupils and those with additional special educational needs benefit from support from the class teacher whilst the main teaching activity is taken by a class assistant. This provides a useful way of targeting teacher expertise for different pupils.

65. By Year 11, pupils work towards the Certificate of Educational Achievement. Higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of number, shape and measurement. They use ICT unaided, for example, to present data following research into identifying the most popular television programme. In oral activities pupils of all ability levels estimate lengths in metres. They rise to the challenge extended by the teacher so pupils have to listen carefully and solve a simple problem. For example they are asked to 'find something less than a metre which is used to write with, then estimate the length.' Higher attaining pupils approximate measurements and say that the fridge is around 20 centimetres less than two metres, that is, about 180 centimetres. Most pupils show good understanding when converting centimetres to metres. Lower attaining pupils and those with additional special educational needs benefit from additional support from the class assistant when they are unsure how to measure objects in centimetres and millimetres. They also need support with using a ruler to measure correctly. Lower attaining pupils come to understand that ten millimetres equals one centimetre, whilst higher attaining pupils know that three kilometres equals 3000 centimetres. They enjoy working in very large numbers. This really boosts their confidence. Pupils showed very good achievement working on their topic on time. For example, they converted 'am' and 'pm' times to the 24-hour clock and vice versa. Because of the small number in the group and the very good support given, the pupils had the opportunity to relate the lesson specifically to their own interests and to appreciate the need to plan and to record past and future events.
66. Good use is made of ICT to support their work, for example, pupils present their a time line about themselves showing sound understanding of the skills needed to produce and transfer information using a computer. This lesson in particular made a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Through good speaking and listening activities, the pupils develop an awareness of planning for their future, to relate to past events and to consider the needs and interests of others. Pupils respond well to success in these activities and it encourages them to work hard. There are good examples of the use of mathematics in other lessons and in display around the school. These include measurement of weight and volume in science and counting aloud in French.
67. Overall teaching and learning are good across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The main strengths of the mathematics teaching are very good team teaching, lessons that are successful in what they set out to achieve and very good planning which enables work to be matched to meet the needs of individual pupils. In the best of lessons, which includes lessons taken by class assistants, teachers are enthusiastic and lessons have a sparkle. They start promptly with a well-planned mental exercise, which focuses the pupils on the subject. The group work, which occupies the majority of the lesson, is explained carefully and at a level that interests all pupils and helps them to learn. When teaching is only satisfactory this is because the work is too demanding for some of the pupils. An example of this was when some pupils were given 30 pence to buy sweets but were unsure of number facts to 10. Pupils' learning over time is good, including in data handling. Learning is reinforced at the

end of the lesson by a plenary session, where pupils are praised and sometimes rewarded for their efforts. Pupils generally relate well to each other and staff. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are well motivated by studying for nationally accredited examinations. Homework is not set routinely. This was a point raised by parents with inspectors who agree that homework should be available for pupils who would benefit from it. Mathematics contributes well to the moral and social development of pupils through the good role models of staff, activities, which demand taking turns, working together, co-operating, collaborating and thinking about the needs of others.

68. The subject is well managed overall with very good procedures in place for checking pupils' attainment and progress. Information on how pupils are doing is used well to guide curriculum planning. The National Numeracy Strategy has very successfully been extended into Years 7 to 9 and is helping to raise standards. The co-ordinator has made very good arrangements for the smooth transition to this new framework for teaching and has established good curricula and assessment links throughout the school, which is providing good continuity in the pupils' learning opportunities.

SCIENCE

69. Pupils across the school, including those with additional special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Resources and standards have improved since the last inspection.
70. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 carried out an experiment on 'tasting' fruit, vegetables, chocolate and sweets. Before carrying out the experiment pupils identified and named all of the items to be used. They predicted which food they thought they would like the taste of, carried out a tasting, and recorded whether or not they had predicted correctly. Record sheets were used well to record both their predictions and the outcomes of their experiment. A good plenary session was held at the end of the lessons, bringing together the whole classes predictions and results.
71. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 show a good understanding of the need for humans to eat and drink and maintain a healthy diet. Good use of literacy and numeracy skills was evident as pupils explained their knowledge to a visitor from the planet 'Zog'. They had to be very clear about what we eat and how many times a day we eat. Pupils discuss the difference between what we need to eat and what we like to eat. They co-operated well and offered good ideas on preparing a book to record their evidence.
72. By the end of Year 9, pupils have a secure knowledge of the structure of 'cells'. They know that cells join together to make tissue, which makes organs such as the heart, liver, lungs and skin. They show a good understanding of the structure of cells, and by an innovative experiment with plastic bags, wall paper paste and black olives, show clearly the way in which cells are made up of cytoplasm (paste), a membrane (plastic bag), and a nucleus (black olive). The oldest pupils in Year 9 show good understanding of the way in which microbes cause disease, such as Weil's disease in water. They name local water venues near the school where water sports take place and understand the risk of taking part in these sports, and what to do to minimise the risk of catching such a disease.
73. By the end of Year 11, pupils work towards achieving a Certificate of Achievement in science. As part of this course they study 'waves' such as sound waves. By using a metal 'slinky' they demonstrate the way in which waves travel. They understand the term 'cell phone' and describe the range from a mast. Using the Internet, pupils research sites of masts across the country and from this information, plot locations,

and work out the operator, height, power and frequency of the masts. This is very relevant and interesting work.

74. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers, including the class assistant who leads lessons, have good knowledge of their subject and this together with a good understanding of the needs of the pupils enhances the progress pupils make. Staff use correct scientific language and pupils respond well. For instance in their work on cells, pupils discuss freely the structure of cells and how they form organs in the body. In a Year 7 class, one pupil temporarily got his 'man's brain' confused with his 'membrane'. Good use of humour, praise and encouragement, with support from his peers soon rectified the situation without the pupil feeling embarrassed or foolish. In a Year 9 science lesson, pupils used their past knowledge of the water cycle to help with their understanding of the diseases which are carried in water. From previous knowledge they built new knowledge and understanding. In a strong science-citizenship link, pupils in Year 10 had 'high-powered' discussions on the positives and negatives of mobile phones available; which ones they would like and why.
75. Numeracy skills are developed well in measurement. When pupils mixed paste for their work on cells, they estimated and measured accurately the paste and water before mixing. Information communication technology is used particularly well with Years 7 to 11. Pupils use the Internet for research purposes, many independently and some with a little support.
76. The subject is well led. There is good liaison, meetings and sharing of information between staff across the school. However, at present the co-ordinator has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning in lessons with Years 1 to 7 despite the high amount of time that has been made available for this by the class assistant teaching initiative. The co-ordinator is aware of this area for development. The capacity of the subject for further development is good.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Achievement in art and design is good overall with very good achievement in Years 10 and 11. They learn a wide range of techniques and skills. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to work independently and in small groups.
78. By the end of Year 2, pupils produce paintings and other drawings using a wide range of tools. They learn a range of methods for application of different media, for example, finger painting and the use of sponges. Pupils experience colour, shape and texture, which enable them to use their senses well. They experience tearing and scrunching of various textures of paper when for example they produce pictures of 'My Monster'. With the aid of a mirror, pupils make good attempts at painting a self-portrait. By Year 6, pupils have developed their skills further. They concentrate well and work more independently. Higher attaining pupils use tools with increasing control and to better effect. As they gain in confidence they show a good capacity for experimentation. They complete paper weaving and make good attempts recreating Celtic and Aboriginal art. They work collaboratively to produce a stunning winter scene, using silver, white and black paper and paint to very good effect.
79. By Year 9, pupils build on previous knowledge, discuss effectively and learn new skills. Because staff use appropriate language such as 'landscape', media and contrast, pupils begin to talk as artists. They consider the use of materials such as glue, semolina or sawdust to make texture in paint. When designing a Christmas

card they draft their first design and look at ways of improving it. They look at the work of other artists to get ideas, looking closely at detail. This helps lower attaining pupils in particular. Teachers give much praise and encouragement and as a result pupils are proud of their work. By Year 11, all pupils make further gains; some make great strides in their work. Some of the work seen is of high quality. Some pupils this year have been entered for the GCSE. Creativity is much in evidence. Higher and lower attaining pupils are equally successful in consolidating their work and developing their skills. Portfolios built up over time show a good ability to review, revise and refine work.

80. Teaching and learning are good overall with some excellent teaching in Years 10 and 11. Most lessons are planned to meet individual needs and inspire pupils. However on one occasion with Years 1 to 3, teaching and learning were only satisfactory because when pupils were asked to draw their favourite foods, the lesson lacked the imaginative use of models or pictures to illustrate the materials and so aid the pupils' imagination. Behaviour is never less than good because of the usually stimulating resources, constant praise for effort that is made and the good relationships that exist between the teachers and the pupils. Pupils co-operate well, quickly become engaged in lessons and thoroughly enjoy the work. All pupils are fully involved in discussion and teachers and pupils listen carefully to for example, those pupils who have considerable difficulties in speaking and communication. Pupils gain in confidence as they discuss and reflect on their own work and that of the other pupils. Discussion is used well to help the teacher check pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Very good teamwork between teachers and class assistants is beneficial to the pupils and there is no waste of time. Art and design makes a strong contribution to the personal development of pupils. The spiritual dimension detected in art and design lessons, in particular in Years 10 and 11 is almost tangible.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall although planning links between Years 1 to 6 and Years 7 to 11 are not fully in place. Since the last inspection accreditation has been introduced and there are a good variety of art and design packages available for pupils to use on the computer.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they make in all aspects of design and technology are good throughout the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning, together with pupils' attitude have all improved. Pupils across the school make good progress. By Year 2, pupils learn about the link between design and making. They design and plan their favourite meal and make a representational model using a paper plate as a base. They discuss the colours of their food and choose appropriate materials to represent their food in a collage. They cut a variety of papers, card and textiles using scissors and join the materials using glue sticks. Pupils who have physical or visual difficulties are well supported by classroom assistants to ensure they achieve success. By Year 6, pupils build on their knowledge and with a strong link with citizenship education, plan and build equipment for a model playground linked to their topic 'Around our school'.
83. By Year 9, pupils have designed and made useful day-to-day items such as a fabric pencil case. The link between design and making is now well established and the use of models is clearly understood as an important element in producing a worthwhile finished product. They use a sewing machine with adult support and sew buttons or Velcro to make secure fastenings. By Year 11, pupils produce a tropical Christmas cake. With support they follow a recipe and select, weigh and mix the ingredients

using appropriate methods and utensils, for example whisking eggs and beating the cake mixture. Pupils know about the relevant health, safety and hygiene issues. They are taught how to chop cherries safely using a sharp knife and to take care when using the oven or washing up sharp instruments. Pupils learn well about resistant materials. Their making skills are enhanced by the use of a wider range of power tools such as saws, drills and lathes. They learn to connect materials by gluing, screwing, making traditional joints in wood and through the use of different sewing styles in textiles. They develop well their use of hand and power tools, and construct increasingly complex designs to better levels of accuracy. This allows pupils to successfully complete a practical assessment leading to a Certificate in Educational Achievement.

84. The good quality of teaching in most lessons promotes good quality learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. For example, pupils do well because they receive good quality advice from the teachers. Pupils are clear what they have to achieve and to what standard. They enjoy this structure and work hard intellectually in designing and physically when they are making. They want to succeed. Interesting activities are presented and there are good relationships between pupils and all adults involved in teaching. Teachers develop pupils' skills well by the effective use of questions, setting suitable challenges and providing skilled support. In many lessons the different levels of pupils needs and abilities are well catered for in lesson planning and through the good use of class assistants. The importance of this was illustrated when some pupils were making Christmas cakes and others were using the Internet to research designs for their projects. Class assistants made sure that the pupils understood the tasks required of them. This increased pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Strengths of teaching include good subject knowledge and the management of pupils. Pupils enter the teaching areas quickly and are eager to begin the practical activities. Lessons are well planned and the effective use of questioning encourages pupils to recall what they know and what they need to do to improve their design or product. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and this results in a good standard of work.
85. Since the last inspection the range of materials available to the pupils has been extended. Consideration has been given to the types of resistant materials used so pupils with physical difficulties can complete a product successfully using for example, foam-board instead of wood. Following the computers coming out of storage at the end of the school's building work, pupils now use ICT, particularly access to the Internet, for their research and design projects. The subject is well led and managed although there is currently insufficient focus on strengthening links in planning between Years 1 to 6 and Years 7 to 11. The curriculum, learning opportunities and the ways the school has of checking pupil progress have improved. The resources are good and well maintained and accommodation for design and technology is good for those pupils who access the workshop.

HUMANITIES (GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY)

86. Achievement in geography and history is satisfactory by pupils in Years 1 to 9. The subject is not taught to pupils in Years 10 and 11. Pupils make sound progress over time. Pupils in geography in Years 1 and 2 learn about homes. They discuss their own home in particular; what it looks like and who lives in it. This is extended in history where pupils learn about the different generations within their families. Whilst pupils cut out and stick pictures into their books, which represent different ages of people from babies to grandparents, they are not yet successful in getting them all in the right sequence.

87. This work is built on so that, by Year 6, pupils investigate their immediate surroundings and compare it with the past. In geography, pupils are beginning to find their way around the school and to study it in detail. They come to understand how it was different before the building alterations were made to the school. Whilst little work was available for scrutiny in geography, history skills are building soundly. Pupils use the 'before and after' photographs of the changes in the school buildings. They begin to understand how their environment has changed for the better. Good signs of early citizenship skills are obvious as the pupils 'vote' for their preferences. Do they like the school better as it is now or before the building work? They count the votes which shows appropriate skills in numeracy. Also, they try hard to give reasons for their decisions both orally and in writing. Higher attaining pupils use their imagination well and try hard to work independently. Some pupils describe their thoughts to the teacher and subsequently copy-write or over-write their teachers' writing. Pupils with more pronounced learning difficulties join in fully with discussions and try hard to record their work with adult support. They achieve soundly.
88. By Year 9 in geography, pupils investigate rivers and coastlines and build their understanding about how they change over time. Some pupils know technical vocabulary such as 'erosion' and 'deposition' and what it means. Higher attaining pupils use their literacy skills appropriately as they correctly extend the words 'wide' and 'slow' to 'wider' and 'slower' in their descriptions of what happens to some rivers over time. Pupils come to understand by the use of a CD ROM with adult help, that 'deposit' is another term for 'drop' and that river pollution can be lessened in many ways that individuals can influence. This is another example of pupils' citizenship skills extending appropriately. In history, pupils have a clearer understanding about different eras in history and have knowledge of what it was like to be growing up, for example, in the Second World War. During a sound lesson which included a discussion on rationing, pupils became clearer on why the country was expected to 'dig for victory' during the Second World War. Sound management and clear knowledge by staff ensures that all pupils are involved and learn appropriately. Although part of the curriculum, no work was available for scrutiny that showed pupils' ability to use their geographical and historical knowledge in drawing comparisons between their own and other countries.
89. During the inspection teaching and learning were satisfactory overall although they ranged from good to unsatisfactory. In good lessons taken by qualified teachers with pupils in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7, lessons were well planned to include a range of interesting activities, which helped pupils to concentrate. Pupils responded well to interesting lessons such as the one where pupils studied photographs of the school during its building improvements and compared them with how it looks now. For older pupils, fieldwork both close to school or further away is used well. This is always accompanied by the taking of photographs to aid discussion on return. The quality of discussion, such as that carried out by Year 7 pupils during the inspection, was good. Good questioning by the teacher led pupils gently through their recollections of their previous work on investigating rivers and helped them to draw simple conclusions about how rivers change over time. In these lessons, pupils receive good support from class assistants who in the best lessons maintain a constant but quiet dialogue with those who need extra support. This maintains pupils' interest and concentration and ensures they learn equally as well as others. Where class assistants have the teaching responsibility in lessons such as in history with Years 8 and 9, teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. On occasions, however, lessons became unsatisfactory when last-minute changes made to pre-prepared lesson plans, are not successful. This can be, for example, because additional support staff are absent or

a number of higher attaining pupils are playing in the school football team, which alters the dynamics of the group. Because of lack of experience, on-the-spot adjustments to lessons prove harder to achieve.

90. Co-ordination of humanities (geography and history) is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject in Years 8 and 9 but not yet as fully as he would like in Years 1 to 7. Despite a significant amount of non-teaching time, checking on how well the subject is developing across the school has not happened. However, other responsibilities of the co-ordinator in developing ICT and French have correctly taken precedence. Long term plans for the subject are nearing the end of being reviewed and re-written to suit the changing needs of the pupils. Assessment procedures have started but have not been in place long enough yet to be of significant use in tracking pupils' progress. Specific literacy, numeracy, ICT and citizenship expectations are being built into the curriculum, which is good. Reports to parents are made annually but these tend to report coverage rather than progress in what pupils have studied or learned. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils' standards have been maintained and the inclusion of elements of citizenship within the curriculum now gives the subjects an extra dimension, which is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. Across the school, pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in ICT. Their achievements in lessons are often good. However over a longer period of time pupils' progress has only been satisfactory because their learning was affected significantly by the school building project when all computers were put into storage.
92. Pupils make a good start in Years 1 to 6, in key areas such as knowing how to use the computer keyboard and 'mouse'. They identify icons, click on specific objects and move these across the screen. As pupils move through to Year 6, they understand other equipment needs to be switched on before something will happen, such as the television, video and music centre. They develop ICT language and use correctly, for example, programs, text, data, and font.
93. By the end of Year 9, pupils develop a good understanding and knowledge of a wide variety of software packages, such as word processing, word art, desktop publishing and drawing programmes. They use their ICT skills well in other lessons such as mathematics to display data in graphic forms. In science, pupils use the Internet very effectively to research their topics. One example of this was to identify the difference between 'mitosis and meiosis', (cell division). In English, pupils use ICT to create brochures and design them with one, two or three columns, as well as decorating both front and back pages. In music, pupils use the digital camera effectively to link with visual arts. By the end of Year 11, pupils successfully complete the Certificate of Achievement. They consolidate their knowledge of ICT, such as word processing, the use of text, data and graphics to produce a book and a book cover of their choice. As a result of effective teaching, high expectations of work and behaviour and good relationships in class, pupils respond positively by showing good attitudes to the subject, working hard and behaving well. However, pupils do not yet access equipment for independent personal study, which means that pupils' personal development is hampered.
94. ICT is resourced well across the school. There is a well-equipped ICT room, including a multi-media projector linked to a laptop. However, this room is not yet used as

effectively as it might be because it is used also for subjects, which could easily be taught in ordinary classrooms. This would leave the specialist ICT room for use by pupils in Years 1 to 6 who do not currently use it. Each classroom has ICT equipment, which is effectively used across the curriculum. ICT is co-ordinated and taught by one teacher across Years 7 to 11. The co-ordinator meets regularly with Year 1 to 6 staff to discuss standards and developments. A future development, which has been identified by these meetings, is the monitoring of ICT teaching with Years 1 to 6. Now that the school has all its ICT equipment reinstalled, connected and operating fully there is good capacity for further improvement.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

95. The provision, including the quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' communication skills, their cultural development and their self-esteem. Standards in French have been maintained since the last inspection, although French is now only taught to pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. All pupils in Years 10 and 11 have been individually disapplied from the subject in order to develop a wider and more vocational curriculum at this stage.
96. Pupils start to learn French at Year 7. At this stage many have limited language skills. By Year 9, pupils learn to greet each other and visitors, which they do enthusiastically. They consolidate and build on their range of vocabulary and respond accurately to simple instructions and commands. They repeat words and phrases, which improves their accent and pronunciation as well as building their vocabulary. They enhance their number skills by counting in French and consolidate their literacy skills by their reading and recording their work.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Planning is detailed and ensures all pupils participate. The teachers check the pupils understanding and then build this into their planning for the next lesson. Management of pupils and timing of changes of activities are very good. This ensures pupils are motivated, concentrate well and persevere to complete their work, even when they find some aspects difficult. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes and behave well. Praise, encouragement and humour are used well, which is appreciated by pupils and builds on good relationships between staff and pupils. This works particularly well when occasionally, pupils with additional special needs, such as emotional behavioural difficulties, exhibit challenging behaviour.
98. Learning resources are satisfactory, mostly made in school by staff, and matched well to the needs and aptitudes of the pupils. Pupils' attitudes to French are good. They are prepared to attempt new words and phrases, to build upon existing knowledge, extend their vocabulary, and practice and improve their accents, thus raising self-esteem and confidence. French makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Good staff role models add to their moral development. Pupils take turns in role-play, support and encourage each other and are quick to celebrate each other's successes. This enhances their social development. They discuss and compare French and English customs and traditions. The school has successfully carried out residential trips to Normandy in France, for the last four years. Although numbers of pupils who participate in this venture are small, it adds to the French curriculum and motivates pupils to do well, giving them experiences of real French situations, such as shopping, which the pupils love.
99. It will be difficult for this subject to make much more improvement as the opportunity for pupils to study French in Years 10 and 11 is no longer available, thus denying them

an opportunity to achieve an external accreditation in French.

MUSIC

100. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on pupils' achievements and progress overall as no music was seen being taught to pupils in Years 1 to 6 during the inspection. The previous inspection reported that pupils made good progress in music. With Years 7 to 11, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The standards pupils achieve and the progress made is satisfactory. The subject has not been developed consistently since the last inspection because of staff changes. The current music teacher is not a qualified teacher and has been appointed recently on a temporary part-time basis. The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the last inspection.
101. By Year 9, pupils develop a sense of timing, follow instructions well and distinguish, for example, whether the beat is fast or slow or sounds are loud or soft. Pupils work hard to establish a rhythm and to co-ordinate their movements to music. Challenge is consistently high and pupils are expected to respond positively to the demands made of them. When pupils have more complex and challenging learning difficulties they are well supported by class assistants and achieve well. They respond to the directions of a conductor when they are singing. They know when to stop, start and get ready to begin by interpreting the conductors' movements. They know which music they like listening to but have little knowledge of composition. Many find it difficult to clap their hands to a rhythm. They do not use instruments. They respond to rhythmic music and enjoy using their voices and movements to represent the changing speed and distance of a steam train. They sing simple, lively songs tunefully and enthusiastically but experience some difficulties when practising two-part singing.
102. By Year 11, a very small number of pupils were engrossed in developing their individual coursework for their GCSE accreditation. The curriculum is extended to encompass other creative arts, such as dance and art and design. The pupils practise together and with adult support, they dance to music choreographed by one of the pupils as part of the course work. They prepare images taken with a digital camera using a computer program to illustrate and create moods associated with different forms of masks and music. All pupils have a good relationship with the adults who teach them. This enables them to feel confident enough to perform in front of others. Their musical vocabulary is developing but they have limited experience of composing or making music. Pupils taking GCSE clearly benefit well from the additional support and make good progress.
103. The enthusiasm, expertise and interest of the adults involved in teaching music are having a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils generally enjoy music lessons and make good efforts to join in vocal exercises and singing. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in Years 7 to 11 is satisfactory overall. On occasions it is less than satisfactory when the challenge for pupils with complex and multiple learning difficulties is too demanding resulting in a lack of interest by the pupils and consequently poor behaviour. In general, planning for lessons does not yet fully include how learning is going to build from lesson to lesson. Objectives are not clearly stated nor do they reflect sufficiently the levels required for the National Curriculum and associated sets of plans. Opportunities for the teacher and pupils to review the success of lessons are scarce, which reduces the opportunities for the teacher to check the pupils' knowledge and understanding and aid planning for future development. All adults involved in teaching music work hard to ensure all pupils are included in the activities. The teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are high.

Whilst resources are satisfactory the instruments are under used and those pupils involved in The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme have a reduced number of lessons. The subject's contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but pupils' experience of music and instruments from other counties and cultures is limited. They do not join with pupils from other schools to make music. There are no extra-curricular activities, for example choir or orchestra to enable them to enhance and develop their musical interests and abilities.

104. The co-ordinator of the subject has recently been appointed on a part-time basis. She is beginning to make an impact on the leadership of the subject. The teaching staff care about the quality of the experiences the pupils receive. The overall ethos for learning is very positive. The accommodation is adequate as teaching takes place in the hall and the recently refurbished library. This is a satisfactory arrangement, as the noise does not interrupt other classes. Whilst resources are satisfactory and match the requirements of the curriculum, the instruments are under-used.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. The school keeps little evidence to help monitor pupils' standards over time. On the limited evidence available standards of achievements overall in physical education are satisfactory. This is similar to that found at the last inspection. Only one lesson was observed in Years 1 to 6. In this lesson pupils' learning was very good. They used the space available to them, took turns to lead the others in a line and changed activities as instructed when dancing and listening to music. Higher attaining pupils put together a sequence of three body-shapes showing good control of movement. All contributed well when asked to describe the type of shapes made by the pupils using descriptions such as 'forward roll' and 'tall and narrow'. In gymnastics, pupils in Years 7 and 8 transferred their weight using different parts of their body. They moved and changed direction soundly within the confines of a small hall. The size of the hall restricts the opportunities the pupils have to develop their expertise and the standards they achieve. They worked appropriately together in small groups practising their movements of jumping, turning and rolling. In this lesson pupils made sound progress developing their skills moving from the floor to simple apparatus such as benches and hoops. In the one lesson observed in Years 9 and 10 pupils practised badminton. This group was made up of those pupils not playing in a football match against another school or those who had gone to the golf range. Some pupils hit the shuttlecock over the net successfully, showing sound co-ordination of skills. These pupils also had a basic understanding of scoring. However, the majority of pupils found the game difficult. Achievement in this lesson was poor because a class assistant with little teaching experience was assigned to teaching the lesson alone with a difficult group. Some were unwilling to join in properly and gained very little from the lesson.
106. On the limited evidence available the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. In a very good lesson with Years 4 and 5, the teacher managed the pupils very well, had high expectations and pupils responded to this. When watching others perform they concentrated hard and made fair comments. When teaching was satisfactory with Years 7 and 8, this is because the hall is too small to successfully accommodate older and bigger pupils, and the lesson had many interruptions as younger pupils crossed the hall to attend speech therapy. At the end of lessons pupils were eager to assist in putting away equipment but were not aware of the correct manner to handle it.

107. Good opportunities exist for pupils to extend their skills for example, Years 1 to 6 pupils visit the swimming baths weekly whilst older pupils have good opportunities at the local golf range. Here they are encouraged to distinguish between woods and irons and to know golf terminology. Good use is made of the local sports hall for pupils and there are opportunities for them to take part in out-door adventurous activities. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in football matches against other special schools. Here they play with enjoyment and a sense of fair play. There is an emphasis within the curriculum on the development for future life and the need to develop independent leisure skills.
108. Overall the subject is satisfactorily managed. The subject manager has worked hard to co-ordinate teaching and learning across the school. However at times the grouping of pupils in Years 9 and 10 leads to poor behaviour and serious management problems when an experienced teacher is not involved. There is a good policy and set of teaching plans in place, which provides good links across the whole school. The co-ordinator teaches all senior pupils and because of this has an overall view of standards in Years 7 to 11. The previous inspection judged that accommodation for successful teaching of physical education was poor. Whilst the school has made good attempts to make alternative arrangement by using the local sports centre, teaching and learning are still adversely affected for Years 7 to 11 because some lessons take place in school accommodation, which is too small for the number and age of the pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. Judgement of pupils' achievement in religious education by the end of Years 2 and 6 could not be made because the subject was not timetabled for Year 2 pupils during the inspection and insufficient other evidence was available for pupils up to Year 6. Elsewhere in school, based on minimal evidence from September 2002, pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily by Year 11. The school is in the early stages of a new approach to teaching religious education, which is showing good signs of development. Expectations for the content of the subject set out in the new Locally Agreed Syllabus are fully covered in planning although the time set aside for teaching the subject is less than recommended. Expectations of what pupils will learn are being developed to accompany each module of work. These will allow teachers to build on previous learning more effectively as pupils move through the school. Methods for checking the pupils understanding of their religious education learning is not in place and little discussion has taken place between staff as to how this will work across the school. As such, the development of the subject is not as far on as it should be and progress in provision since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.
110. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 identify the major world religions and know some facts about them such as features in a Gurdwara or the significance of the terms 'pilgrim', 'faith', 'tradition' and 'shrines'. In Years 7 and 8, pupils have 'tackled' the difficult concepts of 'The Creation' and the difference between 'knowing' something to be true and 'believing' something to be true. The teacher has dealt with this in simple terms and pupils show signs of a basic understanding. Also, pupils have investigated patterns in nature by studying leaves and berries. By Year 11, pupils have studied aspects of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. They know how some religions are similar and how they differ and what is important to different people. Pupils' weakest knowledge until recently was in Christianity. This is being redressed. Higher attaining pupils in Year 9 know much now about the historical evidence of life when Jesus was a boy. The two girls in this class joined in with discussion and showed equal understanding with the boys about how the people of Palestine must have felt in

a country controlled by 'the Romans'. Strong elements of citizenship are built into lessons and pupils are beginning to understand about 'censuses' and the need for 'taxation'. The lower attaining pupils listen to stories and with adult help, begin to discuss their ideas about whether the historical term 'betrothed' means the same as 'engaged'. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 broaden out their learning into current day issues such as discussions about racial prejudice.

111. Teaching and learning with Years 7 to 11 are good with some being very good. Lessons are well planned with a series of appropriate activities although pupils' progress is lessened by the reduced amount of time given to the subject within the curriculum. Also, pupils' interest is curtailed by the lack of interesting and real artefacts available. More difficult concepts are made relevant to the pupils by relating these to their own experiences. For example, in discussing whose head is on our own coins and how pupils would feel if it was the portrait of another country's leader. The supportive relationships and good use of questioning promote good discussion and an opportunity for pupils to reflect. For example, in a very good lesson with Year 8 where pupils considered how they would feel if an angel suddenly appeared to them. The best progress occurs in lessons where teachers make effective use of a plenary discussion to focus attention on the learning outcomes and assess the learning of each child over the lesson. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They are confident to answer questions and generally offer ideas with enthusiasm.
112. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well supported through the subject. Opportunities are provided to reflect and visits are made to places of worship. Throughout the school, pupils have the opportunity to revisit the concept of right and wrong and examine the idea of codes of conduct. Work in all the major world religions promotes an interest and understanding of their own and other people's culture that pupils can often relate to their own experiences outside of school.
113. The headteacher is the co-ordinator at the moment and has established appropriate development priorities. This focus is to put in place a comprehensive scheme for planning the study of religious education in order to ensure learning builds step by step, as pupils get older. The further development of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in religious education has been identified as another priority.