

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ROSE'S SPECIAL SCHOOL

Stratford Lawn, Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115813

Headteacher: Sister M Quentin OP

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris
23696

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd January 2003

Inspection number: 249361

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils:	2 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stratford Lawn Stroud Gloucestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr M T Billington
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23696	Mr J Morris	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's results and pupils achievements. How well are pupils or students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12536	Mrs S Bullerwell	Lay Inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
27409	Mrs S Hunt	Team inspector	English Personal, social and health education and citizenship	
22948	Mrs M Vallis	Team inspector	Art and design Geography History Education inclusion, including race equality	How high are standards/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil's attitudes values and personal development
19386	Dr T Watts	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	
4989	Mr L Lewis	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Rose's is a non-maintained, Roman Catholic special school situated in extensive grounds near to the centre of Stroud. The school is approved for 100 places. There are currently 56 pupils from two to 18 years of age, with the numbers of boys and girls being very similar. The school has traditionally provided primarily for pupils with physical disabilities but the range and complexity of the pupils' learning difficulties has increased significantly in recent years. Currently only just over half of the pupils have physical disability as their main difficulty and about a sixth of the pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). The school has a nursery with nine children attending part-time at the time of this inspection. The nursery provides an important assessment facility for Gloucestershire local education authority and the children do not necessarily stay at St Rose's. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The school's extended education unit has its own accommodation and provides for students over 16 years of age. It is known as St Joseph's and is referred to in this way throughout this report. The school has residential provision and just under half of the current pupils are boarders at St Rose's or St Joseph's. There are no pupils with English as an additional language and nearly all the pupils are from white British families. Currently 14 different local education authorities pay for pupils to attend St Rose's and St Joseph's.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school overall. There are many outstanding features. The school's Christian ethos is at the heart of its work and very clear in day-to-day practice. Teaching and learning are very good. Pupils' achievements are good overall. Leadership is good with very good features although management is satisfactory. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. The contribution of classroom support staff and therapists is extremely good.
- The provision for developing pupils' communication skills, including the use of electronic aids and signing are outstanding. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are excellent. Relationships are exemplary.
- Leadership successfully focuses on the needs of the pupils. Good consideration is currently being given to the school's finances and changing population.
- For these reasons, pupils make good progress overall and the oldest students at St Joseph's are prepared very well for adult life.

What could be improved

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. This is largely, but not entirely, due to staffing issues.
- The school's funding is low for a school of this type. Consequently, progress on accommodation and staff development, including monitoring teaching, has been inconsistent.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June 1997. Overall improvement has been satisfactory. Many features of the school's provision previously described as good or outstanding have been maintained. This inspection confirms the previous very positive findings about the provision for pupils' communication skills, personal independence and physical education. In some respects these are even better. Teaching and learning have improved. The governors are currently very active in reviewing the school's finances

and the changing pupil population. The new accommodation for St Joseph's is excellent and is paid for. However, action taken on the key issues relating to staff development, curriculum monitoring and accommodation for some subjects has been barely satisfactory. Provision for mathematics and ICT is less effective than previously.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key
speaking and listening	A	A	A	A	very good A
reading	A	B	B	B	good B
writing	A	C	C	C	satisfactory C
mathematics	A	D	D	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	A	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A	A	A	

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

Pupils achieve well overall throughout the school. Older pupils and St Joseph's students achieve well in a wide range of nationally recognised accredited courses and examinations. Pupils and students participate in and achieve considerable success in competitive sports locally and nationally. Students attending St Joseph's benefit from the very good provision, which is matched well to their needs. Consequently their progress is consistently good or better. Pupils in Years 1 to 11 make very good progress in the key area of communication, PSHE, physical education and design and technology, particularly home economics. Progress is good overall and sometimes very good in reading, science, art and design, French, geography and history. Pupils' achievements are variable in mathematics, ICT and music and overall standards are not as high as they should be in these subjects. The children in the nursery make good progress towards the national early learning goals but, because of their learning difficulties, do not fully achieve any of them. They make very good progress in communication, mathematical development and personal and social development and good progress in physical development, but there are not enough opportunities for outdoor play.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils have very positive attitudes to school and appear to be very happy.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is excellent at all times. Pupils are very enthusiastic about learning and care for one another.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is very good. The relationships between all adults and pupils and the pupils themselves are outstanding and reflect the Christian ethos and mission of the school.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly average for schools of this type. Although it is lower than previously this is because the school population has changed

	and more pupils are absent for medical reasons.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Many lessons were observed and the teaching and learning were very good or excellent in a very high percentage of them. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The management of pupils by all staff and contribution of classroom support staff to pupils' learning are excellent. Pupils and students work very hard and their levels of concentration and perseverance are often remarkable. They have a very good understanding of their own learning because staff are very skilled and patient in allowing them to show what they have learnt and to express their feelings and opinions.

A significant strength of the school is the teaching of basic communication skills and, in particular, the use of electronic devices and signing to enable pupils to participate fully in lessons. Teaching is less effective in mathematics because the work is not matched closely enough to individual pupils' needs and does not build on what they have learnt before. A major factor in the pupils' achievements is the effectiveness of the work of the various therapists working in the school. However, some pupils miss the same lessons every week because they are withdrawn for therapies. This is due to a lack of flexibility in the timetabling and is unsatisfactory.

In ICT insufficient attention is given to the teaching of basic computer skills and the delivery of the National Curriculum lacks rigour in this respect. The lack of a subject co-ordinator contributes to the variability in this provision. Music is not taught throughout the school in a systematic manner because the school has been unable to appoint a specialist. However, inspectors find that this is satisfactory in the classes where it is taught regularly and that music is used well in PSHE, French and physical education lessons and assemblies.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. There are many very strong features to the curriculum including the provision in English, PSHE and physical education, the range and quality of activities outside lessons and links with the local community and other education providers. The provision at St Joseph's is very good and students are very well prepared for life after school. Shortcomings in the provision for mathematics, ICT and music are largely, but not entirely, due to staffing issues.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for all aspects of the pupils' personal development. This is reflected in the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The pupils' self-confidence and independence demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's efforts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Formal procedures are satisfactory. Day-to-day care, both within school and the residential provision, is very good. Procedures for academic assessment and the use of this information in planning what pupils will do next are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very strong leadership. The school's aims and values are spelt out in the school prospectus and extremely evident in daily practice. However, many aspects of management are just satisfactory, including the delegation of responsibilities, staff development and monitoring.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school and are currently very active in reviewing its finances and changing population. The chair has a high profile as a member of the school community. However, the governors are not as active as they could be in monitoring the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school identifies appropriate priorities in its development plan. Monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is inconsistent.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Specific grants are used effectively. Very good use is made of available staffing and resources. The use of modern technology is good.

Staffing and learning resources are good overall. The accommodation is adequate overall. The new accommodation for St Joseph's is excellent. Previous issues regarding the accommodation for physical education, art and design, design and technology and science remain but there are no significant concerns about pupils' progress in these subjects. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are very positive about the work of the school. They speak very highly of the quality of care and commitment shown by staff and the learning opportunities and provision of therapies. All of those parents who responded think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school is well led and managed; the teaching is good and the school has high expectations; their children like school and behaviour is good. <p>A very high percentage of parents think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school works closely with them; they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on; the staff are very approachable. 	<p>A very small number of parents think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> their children do not get enough homework; they would like more regular contact with residential carers.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. Arrangements for homework are good. Overall, the school has a very good partnership with parents. This is a particularly positive outcome given the number of pupils who live a considerable distance from the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well overall throughout the school and in many areas there have been good improvements or previous high standards have been maintained. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 and students attending St Joseph's achieve well in a very good range of externally accredited and nationally recognised courses. These include ASDAN, Certificate of Achievement, City and Guilds, OCR National Skills Profile, Number Skills and Communications and ALL (Accreditation for Life and Learning). The good, and sometimes very good, results show that the school's assessment procedures are effective and challenging targets are being set for individual pupils and students. The staff are, in most subjects, very well aware of what the pupils know, understand and can do.
2. St Joseph's students benefit from the very good provision, which is matched well to their needs. Consequently their progress is consistently good or better in all aspects of their academic and personal development. By the time they leave school the students are very well prepared for adult life. They achieve well academically and their personal development, particularly their social development, is very good indeed. Their independence and self-confidence are promoted extremely well.
3. Pupils in Years 1 to 11 make very good progress in the key area of communication. This is because of the outstanding provision and use of electronic aids and other methods, such as signing and using pictures and symbols, with pupils who have little or no verbal skills. These pupils constitute an increasingly high proportion of the school's population. Some pupils have individualised devices and aids designed and made by highly skilled and innovative members of the educational support staff and therapy staff teams. The contribution of speech and language therapists is very high quality. Similarly pupils make very good progress in physical education. This is the case in relation to the development of their skills in games and sports and other areas of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Pupils and students participate in, and achieve considerable success in, competitive sports locally and nationally. But also, the very high quality of physical aids, notably but not exclusively powered wheelchairs, and the excellent work of the physiotherapists and occupational therapists have a very positive impact on the mobility and independence of another large group of pupils.
4. This successful promotion of pupils' communication skills and physical mobility, combined with very good lessons, result in pupils making very good progress in PSHE and citizenship. Progress is also very good in design and technology, particularly home economics. This includes the acquisition of a wide range of skills for everyday living not just food studies. Again, very innovative techniques and resources were seen which, for example, enable pupils with considerable physical disabilities to use sharp knives safely and to great purpose. In other subject, progress is good overall and it is sometimes very good in reading, science, art and design, French, geography and history.
5. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in writing (in terms of handwritten or wordprocessed text) and this is acknowledged by the English co-ordinator as an area for development. More significantly at this time, pupils' achievements are variable in mathematics, ICT and music and overall standards are not as high as they should be in these subjects. In mathematics, standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection. In the last year there has been a lack of rigorous and systematic marking and assessment and

subject management has been weak. This has resulted in a significant number of pupils, particularly the more able, repeating tasks that they have already successfully completed and are now too easy for them. In some cases, pupils have been set tasks at a lower level than previous work. Consequently, pupils' progress in this core subject is currently unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 7 to 11. The school makes very good use of modern technology to promote pupils' communication and mobility, as explained above. However, the teaching of the key ICT skills in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study is not planned or taught systematically within the classroom or ICT suite and the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is variable. The provision of music in the school is rather ad hoc. Where it does occur it is satisfactory and sometimes good but the provision for some pupils is inadequate. In ICT and music the lack of a subject co-ordinator, to provide direction to, and overview of, the provision, is a major factor in these shortcomings. The mathematics co-ordinator was absent at the time of the inspection.

6. The children in the nursery make good progress overall towards the national early learning goals described in the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's Foundation Stage curriculum. The children do not fully achieve any of them because of their learning difficulties; but, because of the very good teaching and teamwork between educational and therapy staff, they make very good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. They make good progress in physical development, but there are not enough opportunities for outdoor play.
7. Pupils with additional special needs, such as profound and multiple learning difficulties and sensory impairments (PMLD) make progress at a very similar rate to other pupils. There is no significant difference between the progress of girls and boys. The consistent review and regular updating of targets, combined with very good academic and therapeutic provision, support this good and very good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour displayed by pupils are outstanding. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection where a few incidents of poor behaviour were noted and some opportunities for personal development and independence were stifled by too much support. Personal development is now a strength because of excellent relationships and provision for individual needs. Pupils and staff work in harmony to ensure that each pupil is as independent and involved in decision making, as far as circumstances will allow. St Joseph's students do not have sufficient skills to complete the Ofsted student questionnaire. However, these students and pupils in Years 7 to 11 have very positive views of school. These views were elicited in both formal and informal discussions between inspectors and pupils and students with sufficient speech and through the use of their communicators.
9. Pupils and students return to school on Monday mornings happily and quickly settle to the routines of the day. Students returning to St Joseph's meet weekly with support staff to raise issues or concerns which are noted and acted upon. An 18th birthday had been celebrated and shared with several peers. This had enabled them to display in another setting the excellent social skills they have acquired both within school and in a range of planned opportunities out of school. For example, pupils visiting restaurants and cafés choose drinks from the menu, order from the waiters and pay the bill. Other students learn to write cheques and to withdraw money from a cash machine. They are fully involved in planning for their own future and choose which colleges to visit. Not

surprisingly school clubs are very well attended. This is because of the high quality of the provision, for example for organised sports and cooking activities and for the social opportunities of meeting friends from other classes.

10. No instances of bad behaviour were observed during the inspection. No unkind remarks were heard. Behaviour is consistently good within the classrooms, during breaks and in the residential setting. No pupil has ever been excluded and almost no incidents of bad behaviour have been recorded. Boys and girls are at ease with one another. Respect for the individual is evident in every area of school life. Pupils have very high self-esteem and this is evident in every interaction with them. They are comfortable in the company of people of every age and behave appropriately for the occasion. They banter with each other and with staff out of school. However, they have the skills to deal with formal situations and treat visitors with a pleasing natural courtesy. They show reverence and respect when attending assemblies. They model the courtesy and respect with which they are treated. They are patient and kind, waiting for peers to speak and sometimes checking if they should interpret for them. They encourage each other; 'Isn't she doing well?' said one pupil watching a friend using a new mobility aid. Another reached out to help a peer having difficulty grinding seeds with a pestle and mortar.
11. The positive attitudes and personal development of pupils are helped considerably by excellent support for communication and very challenging activities. Sport provides many opportunities for pupils to test themselves physically and demonstrate their independence because expectations are very high. This includes the physical and social challenges of taking part in local and national competitions in, for example boccia and swimming events. Through living and working together and solving problems the Kielder Challenge results in excellent personal development for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and their mainstream peers. signing, symbols and a wide range of very well used electronic aids support speech. This minimises pupils' frustration and helps to ensure the inclusion of all pupils in all activities both in class and socially. Pupils are able to express preferences and emotions and even share jokes together. 'You can't make me taste that!' tapped out one pupil with a grin on his face during a lesson on Ancient Egyptian recipes.
12. The rate of pupils' attendance is 91 per cent. This is lower than it was at the time of the previous inspection and is now average for schools of this type. This is due to the change in the pupil population and authorised absence is mostly due to medical needs. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive at school promptly and lessons generally start on time. Registration procedures have improved and now meet statutory requirements with registration taken both morning and afternoon.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Many lessons were observed covering a wide range of activities in the nursery, all subjects of the National Curriculum and a good sample of learning opportunities at St Joseph's. Teaching and learning were very good or excellent in two-thirds of them and excellent in a tenth of them. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when less than a fifth of the teaching was very good or excellent and nearly a tenth was less than satisfactory.
14. The management of pupils by all staff and contribution of classroom support staff to pupils' learning are excellent. The relationships between pupils and adults, both in lessons and at other times during the school day and in the residential provision, are exemplary. Pupils and students work very hard because they enjoy school and want to learn. In many lessons, their levels of concentration and perseverance are remarkable

and, for example, in tennis and boccia lessons and after-school clubs, inspectors observed great determination to succeed and a keen competitive spirit. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own learning because staff are very skilled and patient in allowing them to show what they have learnt and to express their feelings and opinions. A significant strength of the school is the teaching of basic communication skills and, in particular, the use of electronic devices and signing to enable pupils to participate fully in lessons. The pupils who have good academic skills but very severe physical disabilities use very sophisticated devices to great effect to communicate their learning, opinions and needs. Many pupils have individualised vocabularies, which are arranged to enable them to select appropriate words and phrases in different lessons and social situations.

15. A major factor in the pupils' achievements is the effectiveness of the work of the various therapists working in the school. This is referred to throughout this report and includes speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and specific support for pupils with sensory impairments. However, due to a lack of flexibility in the timetabling, some pupils miss the same lessons every week because they are withdrawn for these therapies. Given the large number of therapists and the hours they work this is unsatisfactory. It is not acceptable for pupils to miss half a term or a whole term of, for example, history lessons to receive their therapeutic support.
16. The teaching of English, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages and physical education is very good. Teaching is good in science, art and design, PSHE and citizenship. Common strengths of the teaching are the planning, expectations, relationships and use of resources. The provision of homework is good and, for example, it is set to primary age pupils in French. Care staff, in the residential provision, provide good support with these tasks.
17. Teaching is less effective in mathematics because the work is not matched closely enough to individual pupils' needs and does not build on what they have learnt before. Too much attention is given to basic number skills to the detriment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of other aspects of mathematics, such as shape and measures. In particular, there is insufficient challenge in the work set to the more able pupils. In ICT insufficient attention is given to the teaching of basic computer skills and the delivery of the National Curriculum lacks rigour. The lack of a subject co-ordinator contributes to the variability in this provision. Music is not taught throughout the school in a systematic manner because the school has been unable to appoint a specialist. However, inspectors find that this is satisfactory in the classes where it is taught regularly and that music is used well in PSHE, French and physical education lessons and assemblies.
18. Pupils with additional special needs make good gains in learning against the targets set in their IEPs in Years 1 to 6 and very good progress in Years 7 to 11. Occasionally more specific target setting would make judging progress easier. The consistent use of very good communication aids, and teaching which is particularly well adapted to meeting the needs of individuals contribute positively to this learning.

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

19. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are good overall. All National Curriculum subjects are taught to primary aged pupils and there is a good balance of time between subjects. The learning opportunities for those students who are over 16 are very good with appropriate provision being made to prepare them for the next stage of their lives. Children in the Foundation Stage receive very good opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding incorporated in the early learning goals. Throughout the school very good use is made of augmentation aids to help pupils share their thoughts and ideas. There is very good planning to ensure children develop independent life skills. In Years 7 to 11, the provision is restricted in mathematics because it is largely limited to number work and in music because composing skills are not taught systematically. The wordprocessing element of ICT is taught throughout the school and ICT equipment is used well as a tool of communication. However, applications such as data handling and control are not systematically planned and the skills associated with the subject are not systematically taught.
20. Provision has improved since the previous inspection. The curriculum is now consistently balanced throughout the school, the times allocated to subjects are appropriate and provision in science is good. The school continues to provide speech, occupational and physiotherapy to ensure that all pupils maximize their opportunities to develop physical, communication and independence skills.
21. The provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is very good. Teachers show flair and originality in adapting the curriculum to engage pupils who benefit best from sensory stimulation. Some of the children in the nursery benefit from spending some of the week with their peers in mainstream schools. No older pupils currently benefit from this challenge although some pupils join with the community in out-of-school activities such as scouts. Pupils with PMLD join the rest of the school for assemblies and lunchtimes. They enjoy the company of students from St Joseph's in some of their lessons. The therapy provided to meet individual needs is consistently of outstanding quality. However, the school has been unable to resolve the conflicting needs of pupils to have access to the curriculum and to therapy. This has resulted in inequality of opportunity for some pupils who regularly miss the same lessons. This is unsatisfactory.
22. Good links have been made with local primary and secondary schools. This has enhanced the curriculum and enabled individual nursery children to spend some of their time in mainstream classes and older pupils to be involved in exciting and interesting team building projects.
23. Staff have maintained the school's very good links with the local and wider community to support pupils' learning. This means the school is well-known and pupils have the self-esteem and confidence to participate actively in community life. Pupils use local facilities for sports, shopping and leisure and this supports the development of their independence and life skills. They do work experience in local businesses. Pupils have the opportunity to work with peers from other schools, such as during the Kielder Challenge. Last year a team of pupils from St Peter's High and St Rose's reached the national final. The school is presently supporting bids for technology status with two mainstream partners. Speakers from the Citizen Advice Bureau, benefit agencies, police and the fire brigade regularly visit to help broaden the pupils' knowledge of these services. Careers advice, work placements and experiences at colleges are particularly strong for the oldest students.

24. St Joseph's, the extended education unit, provides very good opportunities for students to benefit from a very good range of vocational courses. When appropriate, more advanced students are taught, with appropriate support, at the neighbourhood secondary school or the local further education college. Links have been forged with local industries when work placements are considered to be appropriate and other work related activities are planned in and around the school – for example, involvement in the nursery, work with the gardener and at the local horse-riding centre.
25. The Kielder Challenge initiative is a very good example of pupils from St Roses working with pupils from other schools, being involved in adventurous activities and competing against other teams. Staff from the school and representatives from the career services talk to students about 'the next step', helping them to identify targets they have for their future and be objective about what they can achieve. The weekly students' meeting enables students to play an important role in decision-making about the daily routines, giving them very good opportunities to take on roles of responsibility.
26. The school provides excellent enrichment throughout a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which include residential visits, lunchtime and after-school activities including boccia, cooking and craft clubs for both day and resident pupils. Teams take part in inter-school competitions including soccer, swimming and athletics.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good overall. The school provides pupils with relevant, imaginative and rich experiences, which make a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and these are strengths of the school. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when the pupils' social development was good and their cultural development was satisfactory.
28. Spiritual development is promoted very well through both planned experiences and incidental opportunities. Assemblies, which meet the criteria for acts of collective worship, are well planned and make an excellent impact. They are skilfully prepared to ensure that pupils' own experiences are linked to the school ethos that celebrates them as individuals. For example, during a whole school assembly, a suitable song, 'Walk On' introduced a football theme. The idea of 'the best team' was explored and the concept of working hard to be a star was highlighted with moments of silence giving pupils excellent opportunities to reflect on this message and apply it to their own lives. Signers helped pupils with speech impairment to take part in the singing. The assembly made a significant contribution to the pupils' knowledge of their own self-worth.
29. In identifying further opportunities to enhance pupils' self-esteem, opportunities are identified for them to share their knowledge and skills. For example, a pupil read the lesson at a recent ecumenical service in the local cathedral. Celebration of Christian festivals add to pupils' understanding of spiritual themes and the school gives them introductory insights into the spirituality of other world religions. Moments of wonder are planned within subjects. For example, there is a hushed expectancy and a vibrant response to the shaking of a soft drink can to give a practical demonstration of a volcanic eruption. The strong caring ethos throughout the school and the mutual respect that is evident make a very positive contribution to the spiritual climate in which the pupils learn.
30. Provision for moral and social development is very good. There is a clear moral code in the school, which enables pupils to feel safe and confident enough to express themselves. Pupils receive clear messages about what is expected of them in lessons

and during play and lunchtimes. The pupils understand and appreciate the rules that are in place to ensure their wellbeing. They are supported further by an excellent programme of PSHE, which enables pupils to consider the correct decision and the sensible choice of behaviour. Moral issues are also tackled very well through discussions where pupils decide which is the most appropriate behaviour. Pupils raise money for a very good range of local, national and world charities and, as a result, they learn to empathise with the more vulnerable members of society.

31. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their social skills. The older pupils have opportunities to work and socialise with pupils from mainstream schools. The oldest students organise a weekly meeting to discuss the running of St Joseph's. There are several residential trips at home and abroad, which enable pupils to become more independent and self-reliant. These opportunities ensure that, by the time they are 16, students are developing secure independent skills as they plan for the future. In discussion one student said, 'I am now in St Joseph's and that was my first step to being independent. I am now finding out all about different colleges and starting to go and visit them. I have been thinking about the other courses I could do'.
32. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils have the opportunity to appreciate cultural diversity through the study of great faiths and through collective worship. The introduction of artefacts gives the pupils clear insights into the society of different cultures. For example, children in the nursery have an early experience of Chinese culture by handling a parasol, fan and streamers, smelling soy sauce and China tea and listening to Chinese nursery rhymes. Other pupils benefit from the successful 'Comenius Project', which involves communicating with schools in France and Germany. There are opportunities for the oldest students to visit these schools and students from these schools visit Stroud. Studies in art include the works of Picasso and Lowry and a full range of music is played as an integral part of assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

33. The quality of care for pupils at school and boarders is very high. This is an important priority for all staff. It reflects the strength of the teamwork within the school and results in the excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
34. Very good support and guidance is provided for pupils through the excellent provision of specialist and support staff, who work as part of the school team to meet pupils' individual needs. Personal development and achievement are monitored by all staff on a daily basis and recorded in pupils' files. This is then used very effectively to inform future targets and care plans. Pupils come to school very willingly because they enjoy being with their friends and teachers. Excellent behaviour is achieved through the very good provision for moral development and the excellent relationships between everyone in school. Achievements in personal development are acknowledged and rewarded and used to further promote pupils' self-esteem, confidence, mutual respect and relationships. The school is a very caring community.
35. The school's health and safety policy has been updated to address the concerns of the previous inspection concerning evening fire drills. The school now follows the recommendation of the local fire brigade and hospital. The bursar is the new co-ordinator for health and safety and is developing systems to audit, monitor and review health and safety within school. Risk assessments have been completed for classrooms, visits out of school and use of the school minibus. Staff are busy completing them for the residential accommodation at the moment. All pupils have detailed individual risk assessments relevant to their physical and medical needs. A

qualified nurse is always on duty to cover first aid and medical requirements. All staff have attended training in basic first aid, physical handling and fire awareness.

36. Satisfactory child protection procedures are in place and the headteacher is designated responsibility. However, arrangements to ensure all staff are trained have only been implemented very recently. A number of minor health and safety matters were reported to the governing body. For example, painting hazard stripes on a low wall near to the school office would make it more visible.
37. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good. Overall they have improved since the last inspection and they are described in a clear school policy. However, there is no co-ordinator for assessment and procedures are not strictly adhered to across all curriculum areas. Pupils are firstly assessed, either at home or at their previous school, by a visit from the headteacher and another member of staff from St Rose's School. On their first day at St Rose's the pupils spend a day being assessed academically and physically by both teachers and therapists in order for their needs to be evaluated and planned for. The school uses baseline testing and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) early learning skills performance check-lists, hereafter referred to as 'P-scales', alongside National Curriculum levels to help assessment become more finely tuned. The school is planning to introduce the increasingly widely used 'B-squared' assessment throughout the curriculum to make assessment even more precise in assessing pupils' academic attainment.
38. Very good assessment procedures are used on entry to the school nursery. These are used very effectively both academically and with the speech and occupational therapists to plan activities and modify programmes of work for individual children. This continues right through the school including for students at St Joseph's. Teachers make good assessments and monitor pupils' progress well in English, science, design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages. Assessment is satisfactory for mathematics. It is, however, unsatisfactory in music and ICT. Very good assessment is used in history, physical education and PSHE and citizenship. It would be advantageous if this very good practice could be shared with the rest of the school. From these assessments and the pupils' individual statements of special educational needs (SEN) an IEP is produced. These IEPs always contain clear, achievable targets for PSHE and citizenship and behaviour but there is some inconsistency as far as targets for literacy, numeracy and other academic skills are concerned. The IEPs contain clear strategies for teaching and learning linked to each target and this is good practice.
39. The ongoing records of achievement are good. They are full of photographic as well as written evidence of pupils' and students' achievements, with the best examples of work giving clear dated, annotated evidence of their targets being met.
40. The school makes very good provision for the requirements of pupils' statements of SEN. This includes the style of teaching opportunities, for working in small groups or one-to-one and access to a range of therapies. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively to ensure that annual and transition reviews of pupils' statements are carried out to the new Code of Practice requirements. Parents, carers, therapists and, where appropriate, external professionals attend the meetings. All older pupils and students and those younger pupils who are judged to be able to cope also attend reviews and this is good practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents have extremely positive views and opinions of the work of the school. They are particularly pleased with the quality of care and commitment shown by staff and the range of experiences available for their children through the curriculum, therapies and extra-curricular activities. All parents who expressed an opinion, say teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. They say that their children enjoy school, behave well, try their best and make good progress. Most parents agree the school works closely with them, answers any queries they have and keeps them very well informed on how their child is getting on. Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments.
42. A number of parents were unsure about the school's provision for homework. Inspection findings show homework is used well by the school, and supported by parents, to build on what is done in class. Due to the wide range of the pupils' SEN this is not always written work but may appropriately include following programmes devised by the speech and language therapists for communication or the physiotherapist for mobility.
43. The school effectively promotes a very good partnership with parents by keeping them fully informed on what is happening in school. The parents' handbook, monthly newsletters and the open-door policy gives parents access to information about school organisation, social and fund-raising activities, events in the school calendar and how they can be involved. The use of home-school books gives parents and staff daily contact to share information about pupils, particularly those with communication difficulties. Parents of boarders are contacted by telephone when necessary although a small number of parents would like more regular contact with residential carers. Very good written reports on progress are provided and form part of pupils' annual reviews. These cover all areas of the curriculum and help parents to know their child's achievements and the targets they are striving to meet. The school works very well with parents to find placements for school leavers. However, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents have some omissions in statutory information, such as the school policy on providing for pupils with additional SEN.
44. Parents make a good contribution to the work of the school. Homework and the use of home visits by therapists enable parents to support their children at home. Parents who live locally respond to requests to help with riding, swimming and other sporting activities. A number of parents help to organise social and fund-raising events such as the garden fete in the summer. This is also used as an annual school reunion for past pupils and their parents and is very well attended. Letters received by the headteacher show that some parents support the school long after their children have left. Parents attend meetings with teachers or school events, such as the Christmas play when they can share in their children's achievements, whenever possible. For some this is difficult because of the distance they have to travel.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. Leadership is good with very good features and management is satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are long serving and show remarkable commitment to the school in the time they give to both the day and residential provision. The headteacher is approaching the end of a very long career with many years dedicated service to this school. The school's aims and values and are highly appropriate both in relation to the pupils' needs and the very strong Christian ethos. They are spelt out in the school prospectus and they are extremely evident in daily practice.

46. The school identifies appropriate priorities in its development plan. The plan does not make it totally clear who is responsible for all the different targets and the links with the school budget are at times tenuous. Teachers with significant responsibilities are in the main effective in fulfilling their roles. However, many aspects of management are just satisfactory, including the delegation of responsibilities, staff development and monitoring. There has been a considerable programme of training over the past year and a half. Arrangements for the performance management of full-time teaching staff, including the headteacher, are in line with national requirements and guidance. However, there are insufficient opportunities for senior staff to engage in this activity and the arrangements for other staff are underdeveloped. Monitoring of teaching and curriculum planning is inconsistent by both subject leaders and the governing body. Subject leaders are rarely given a budget to manage themselves. Although this inspection is positive about teaching and learning and pupils' progress over time in most subjects, this variability in management practice has resulted in less positive outcomes in mathematics, ICT and music. Aspects of all these issues were raised in the previous report and, because progress has been slow, improvement in leadership and management has been satisfactory overall.
47. A major achievement since the previous inspection has been the construction of the splendid new teaching and residential accommodation for St Joseph's. This was funded entirely by the efforts of the whole-school community and illustrates the very strong support for the school from staff, governors, parents and the community at large. The strong leadership and very clear commitment of all the staff to continuing improvement are best illustrated by comparing the findings of the previous inspection and this one on the quality of teaching and learning and the pupils' achievements. However, the school's capacity to succeed with further improvements in the future is dependent on its finances and staff developments, particularly in relation to developing their skills to meet the needs of pupils with more complex difficulties.
48. The governors are very supportive of the school and are currently very active in reviewing its finances and changing population. These are major factors in the school at this time. Financial planning is satisfactory overall and improving but there is some variability in practice here. The school's income is derived in the main from pupil fees. These are lower than in many other non-maintained and independent schools. Last year there was a considerable overspend in the budget turnover figures. The school bursar is working closely with governors in analysing the school's finances and planning for future. The intention to increase the fees in the near future is prudent. Specific grants, particularly those related to special educational needs, are used well in accordance with their stated purpose, as can be seen from the pupils' very good progress. Very good use is made of available staffing and resources. The use of modern technology is good overall.
49. There are good numbers of teaching and other staff to support the learning needs of the pupils. This is an improvement on the situation reported at the time of the last inspection, when the staffing was considered to be sufficient overall, with generous support staffing. Some teaching staff are very experienced and others are newer to teaching. They are qualified in a range of subjects, including special educational needs. There are, however, no specialists for several subjects, such as ICT and music. Teaching and classroom support staff are deployed according to their strengths, and are sometimes given opportunities to move to a different group of pupils, instead of being with the same class for many years. Classroom staff work very well together in teams throughout the school.

50. There are other support staff who work closely with the pupils, mainly in a therapeutic role, especially physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. In the residences, staff are well qualified at each level of work. Kitchen staff, maintenance staff for the buildings and grounds, and administration staff (including office, financial and resources people) work well to keep the school running smoothly. Numerous visiting professionals also help the school effectively, such as for medical and nursing needs, wheelchair maintenance, advice in different subjects, social services, careers, and sport coaching.
51. The accommodation is adequate overall to allow the staff to deliver the National Curriculum and other learning opportunities provided by the school. The grounds are extensive and well maintained, as are the buildings. Some of the buildings are new, and are very well appointed, especially the day and night premises in St Joseph's. There are good and spacious rooms for these students and the youngest children in the nursery. Areas for therapy are also good. The specialist room for home economics is equipped well and very effectively used. Many classrooms are used as subject rooms, such as for geography, history, mathematics and French. This sometimes leads to lessons starting late because pupils have difficulty moving around the school but this happens less often than previously reported. There is a good library with an extensive selection of books. Many areas of the school are brightened by displays, although many of these are produced by staff, rather than being examples of pupils' individual work. Strong Christmas displays remained in the hall at the time of the inspection in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
52. There are specialist rooms for several subjects such as science, art and design and design and technology but these are not organised and used in a satisfactory manner. Others, such as the small ICT suite, are well set up, but not used as frequently and as positively as they could be. The school hall is, in principal, too small for indoor physical education. However, this inspection finds no evidence of this having a significantly negative impact on pupils' progress. This is very much the same picture as was noted in the last report, although the completion of the new block at St Joseph's is a very good improvement to the accommodation.
53. The school has good resources to help pupils' learning. Most of the school's efforts have gone into its resources to help pupils to communicate using electronic aids, to move around the school as quickly and independently as possible and to be in a position in which they are comfortable and alert enough to pay good attention to their learning. These are the priority areas for many of the pupils and the school's provision in these vital areas is excellent. The equipment and materials for subjects such as English, ICT, French and home economics are good. They are also good in the nursery and St Joseph's. Most resources are organised and looked after well, whether in classrooms, subject specialist rooms or the resources room. The library and ICT suite contain books and computers that are accessible to all pupils. In order to take pupils out to enrich their learning, the school has three minibuses. At the time of the last inspection, the resources for learning were thought to be satisfactory in the main, so the present situation is an improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The headteacher and governors should now:

1) Raise standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring all pupils, but particularly the more able, are provided with tasks that are well-matched to their previous achievements and mathematical ability and build progressively on what they already know, understand and can do;
- providing more learning opportunities in aspects of mathematics other than number.

(Paragraphs 5, 17, 19, 46 and 76 to 80)

2) Raise standards in ICT by:

- developing a structured programme of teaching of the key skills of ICT for all pupils, particularly the more able;
- increasing the use of ICT across the curriculum;
- appointing a subject co-ordinator as soon as possible.

(Paragraphs 5, 17, 19, 38, 46, 49 and 108 to 115)

3) Raise standards in music by:

- using existing staff skills to provide regular lessons for all pupils who should study music under the National Curriculum;
- appointing a subject co-ordinator as soon as possible.

(Paragraphs 5, 17, 19, 38, 46, 49 and 121 to 124)

4) Improve the school's finances and overall management by:

- increasing the school's income;
- providing more opportunities for senior teachers to participate in performance management;
- providing more opportunities for subject leaders to monitor teaching and the curriculum and to manage their own budget;
- increasing the governors' participation in the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 5, 46, 48, 80, 102, 114, 121 and 124)

55. The headteacher and governors may like to consider the following minor points:

1) Raise standards in writing.

(Paragraphs 5, 67 and 72)

2) Make sure that pupils are not repeatedly withdrawn from the same lessons for therapies.

(Paragraphs 15, 21, 75, 76, 101 and 105)

3) Consider addressing identified shortcomings in the accommodation.

(Paragraphs 52, 65, 86, 87, 92, 125 and 127)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	10	49	20	9	0	0	0
Percentage	11	57	23	10	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	56
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

Pupils' and students' achievements 2001-2002

Passes were achieved in courses and examinations as follows:

AQA

6 passes	Multi-sensory introduction to Britain 1750-1900
5 passes	Investigation of sound
1 pass	French – Entry 2
1 pass	French – Entry 3

ASDAN

8 passes	Towards Independence: Sound & Music
7 passes	Towards Independence: Creativity
13 passes	Towards Independence: Independent Living
5 passes	Towards Independence: Horticulture
6 passes	FE Award Level Up Challenge

City and Guilds

3 passes	Preliminary Cookery Award
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OCR

3 passes	CoA Mathematics Syllabus A – Entry 2
1 pass	CoA Mathematics Syllabus A – Entry 3
6 passes	National Skills Profile - Number Skills
6 passes	National Skills Profile - Communication
4 passes	Accreditation for Life and Living Skills – Core Skills - Numeracy
3 passes	Accreditation for Life and Living Skills – Core Skills – Communication

There were no entries for standard assessment tests

Sporting achievements

Many pupils and students participated in a wide range of athletics, games and swimming competitions and assessments both locally and nationally achieving considerable success. Details are published in the governors' annual report to parents.

Three pupils from St Rose's and five pupils from two other schools in Stroud worked together as a team in the HSBC Kielder Challenge gaining a place at the national championships in Northumberland in September 2002.

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	55	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.1
Average class size	7.0

Education support staff: YN – Y13

Total number of education support staff	41
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1089

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,603,023
Total expenditure	1,629,970
Expenditure per pupil	26,720
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,446
Balance carried forward to next year	-26,947

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
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 = 57%

Number of questionnaires sent out	56
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	0	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	25	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	41	6	3	25
The teaching is good.	81	19	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	25	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	91	6	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	31	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	91	9	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	81	9	0	0	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	22	0	3	6

Other issues raised by parents

A very small number of parents expressed the view that they would like more regular contact with their children or their carers when they board at school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected for their age in all areas of development. The range of their learning difficulties is considerable. Some have no speech and others have only a small vocabulary. Many find it difficult to express their views or ideas and some are unable to move unaided around the classroom or play with the available toys or equipment because of their physical difficulties.
57. Overall, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, especially in the range and detail of the planning. Children achieve well and often make very good progress against each of the early learning goals. However, because of the severity of their learning difficulties, they do not reach these by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage.
58. Teaching is very good overall. The professional support staff and the teacher with overall responsibility for the nursery form a very effective team, who continually prepare programmes of work for each child to ensure that they make the progress of which they are capable.
59. The teacher and all staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the nationally recommended Foundation Stage curriculum and early learning goals. They know the children very well and are sensitive to their needs. Children who have mobility difficulties are always comfortably positioned and adults are skilled in holding and caring. All staff have high expectations for the children's learning and this is reflected in the very good quality of the planning that supports classroom teaching and speech and language and physiotherapy sessions. Staff are very effectively deployed and provide high quality support and encouragement for individual children. They are equally good when they lead lessons. Very good use is made of electronic communication aids and many children use them independently to communicate with adults and other children during activities. Adults are beginning to teach children to sign. Assessment is done well and children's achievements are recorded regularly. This information is used well to make individual assessments and to set targets in each of the learning goals. The very good quality of the teaching ensures that learning is ordered, well controlled and progressive. In the calm atmosphere children quickly accept their role as learners and try very hard. They enjoy their successes often expressing delight and awareness.
60. Parents are a key element in this partnership of learning. They are welcomed into the nursery where they have regular opportunities to talk with the staff and exchange information. There are excellent links between the nursery and a local primary school. This allows for some children to gradually be included in a mainstream class where they are supported by an adult from the nursery and still spend a portion of their school time at St Rose's.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. The nursery provides a stimulating, friendly and safe environment in which children respond well and gain in confidence. The excellent relationships between all staff and the children and the well-established routines, such as circle time, help children feel secure as they become increasingly independent and aware of the needs of others. Routinely they take turns, share equipment and work in small groups. These interactions promote their confidence and self-esteem. Those with more advanced

personal, social and emotional development persevere for good lengths of time on activities that they choose, such as playing with toys and examining how they work or being fascinated by the roller ball as they move to change the pictures on the computer screen. Less able children form positive relationships with adults as they roll a large ball to them and expect it to be rolled back. Some children are more comfortable playing by themselves, pressing levers and turning handles on a display board to create different sounds. All staff work hard to help children establish routines that include eating, toilet training, making patterns and answering their name during registration. Good use is made of picture timetables to help children become aware of, and respond to, these routines.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Adults focus mainly on speaking and listening, often with the aid of additional strategies such as the use of pictures and electronic aids. Words and sentences are recorded by an adult who encourages the children to listen to the recording by pressing the switch. A small number of children speak in simple sentences or phrases. They join in the singing of nursery rhymes and make the correct actions at the appropriate times. Some do not communicate spontaneously or initiate conversations with staff or other children, although all children make eye contact with the adults who are working with them. Very good use is made of circle time and the principles of the National Literacy Strategy. Children listen attentively to stories read from a 'big book'. Many children are beginning to recognise their own names as they are taught to feel the letters. They respond well to the encouragement to make marks and the more able children over-write their own names and follow the dotted line to extend their competence. Adults provide very good opportunities for children to paint. They enjoy this activity and confidently paint patterns that include straight lines and curves that are both wide and narrow. All these activities provide very good preparation for later writing skills. More able children recognise the names of some of their classmates. The most able children realise that words convey meaning and are beginning to use the computer keyboard to type individual words and make up simple sentences.

Mathematical development

63. Routinely, children are given many opportunities to count up to five objects and more able children enjoy counting forwards and backwards to and from ten. Adults expertly develop counting skills with children when, for example, they count the number of jelly cakes being dropped into hot water. Good links are forged with language development when, for example, adults follow up the story about 'Elmer the Elephant' in the big book' by carefully intervening in children's play to put models of animals into pairs. Speech therapists make a very good contribution to children's language development by challenging the more able to collect 'all the yellow teddy bears', count them and place them inside yellow containers. Precise questioning challenges the children to think things out and match the objects together. These children receive very good insights into such mathematical language as 'large' and 'small' and are able to apply their counting skills to the set tasks. Some children can point to a large then a small object and in their artwork they use segments of fruit to print simple patterns. Children are introduced to mathematical songs to reinforce their knowledge of number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. This early learning goal is effectively developed through children taking part in a wide range of physical and sensory activities. Children are given opportunities to use their sense of touch to observe everyday items such as water, jelly and fruit. They are beginning to understand that a roller ball, when moved, changes the images on a computer screen. The more able children are beginning to learn about the life cycle of human beings as they are shown pictures of babies, children, adults and old people. Adults plan effectively to ensure that children's natural curiosity is encouraged when, for example, a child who cannot move around the nursery independently is comfortably and safely placed by sand and water trays. She quickly experiments with these materials and shows obvious pleasure when the sand flows through her fingers. She shows her preferences by playing with the dry rather than the wet sand. However, the nursery classroom organisation does not direct children's interest sufficiently. There are too many activities available rather than having easily identified, specific areas to enable children to focus on one particular planned experience. The adult-directed activities are very well planned. For example, the circle time activity that introduced the children to China enabled them to benefit from a rich language and cultural experience.

Physical development

65. Children's good progress towards this early learning goal benefits from well-planned sensory activities as well as adult-led activities. Physiotherapists are skilled in working with individual children to help them develop their balancing and walking skills. The more physically challenged children are encouraged to move their heads when they are in the soft play area observing changes in light patterns projected onto the ceiling and wall. Children benefit from well-organised water therapy sessions where they learn to relax and move their bodies to change position in the water. They enjoy regular nature walks around the school grounds and the more mobile children enjoy using small equipment such as hoops and balls in their games and races. However, the absence of a properly designated outdoor play area restricts their development. The less independently mobile children do not have suitable equipment such as swings or vehicles to develop their sensory experiences and their imaginative play. Lunch and break-times are used well in promoting independence and the development of greater motor co-ordination.

Creative development

66. Children are given many different opportunities to work creatively using a wide variety of materials and equipment. Through cutting, folding and gluing they create patterns and self-portraits using different shapes, colours and textures. They use crayons, fingers and paint confidently to create patterns and line drawings, some of which show an excellent quality of texture and light touch control. Music is used very effectively to create different moods, to attract and maintain children's attention and, through using rhymes, to promote learning. Individual children use imaginary talk when playing with the toys.

ENGLISH

67. Achievement and progress are good for all pupils and students. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The new co-ordinator, who only works part time, has worked extremely hard at implementing strands of the National Literacy Strategy without any literacy training. In fact there is only one member of staff in the school who has received literacy strategy training as part of her college course. The teaching of communication skills is very much improved and this has had a very positive impact on

standards. Another factor in the improvement in the standards of communication has been the successful partnership of the very good speech and language therapy provision with the English co-ordinator and with all staff. This results in very good achievement in speaking and listening. Progress in reading is good owing to a good use and concentration of reading skills in lessons. An increased use of ICT provision has improved writing throughout the school. However, the co-ordinator recognises the need for a more concentrated effort by staff to improve further the basic writing skills of the more able pupils. She has yet to devise a policy or scheme of work for writing having worked extremely hard on the reading and communication schemes of work. There is accreditation for older pupils and students in the form of ASDAN, Certificate of Achievement units and the OCR National Skills Profile Communication.

68. Pupils and students make very good progress and achieve very well in improving their speaking and listening and communication skills. By the end of Year 6 pupils, including those with PMLD and complex communication difficulties, pay attention and respond very well to others. They learn to communicate using appropriate means, for example eye pointing, signing and using symbols, various kinds of communication voice boxes, boardmaker and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). They recognise and respond well to objects of reference such as eating cherries in a literacy session and staining their mouths and fingers as did the children in the story 'Apple Green and Runner Beans'. A teacher and speech therapist were seen working very effectively as a team with Year 4 pupils functioning at a low level of communication. The pupils were able to give each other the toy bear, toy horse and make the toy duck quack. All teachers and support assistants consistently use pictures, photographs and symbols effectively to gain the attention of the less able pupils. Communication boards, the use of communication machines and visual timetables provide a successful structure to the school day and enable pupils to understand what will be happening next. Pupils and students express their feelings through signing, communication boxes, vocalisation and body movements. A more able Year 7 pupil expressed his feelings when confronted with a tin of mouldy sardines, cornflakes and unhealthy pieces of smelly rotting food during a literacy session based on the character 'Mr Twit'. By the time they are in Year 9 many pupils have built up a good repertoire of signs. For example, a pupil with a hearing impairment signs to indicate that hearing levels are alright. Pupils have increased their understanding of language and respond to requests. More able pupils develop their language skills further and increase their vocabulary. When the teacher asks a group of Year 7 to Year 9 pupils to smell the over-ripe cheese and asks them if they find the smell horrid, they respond in sentences such as, 'Yes, I agree' and 'No, I would like to eat some at lunchtime'. There are very good and comprehensive feeding programmes for pupils and students with PMLD supplied at each mealtime for teachers and support staff to follow.
69. Signing and communication generally becomes more fluent as pupils move into the secondary department and particularly at St Joseph's. For example, in an excellent drama session, Years 10 and 11 pupils performed a Greek play 'Osiris and Isis'. Two pupils used their communication boxes to say their lines clearly and with feeling. In another literacy session, when Years 10 and 11 pupils were completing the self-advocacy section of their ASDAN course, pupils said, 'Please help me. I need your help'. They all appreciated the difference between asking for things in a polite manner as compared with asking for it rudely, by using the tone of their voices and facial expressions to convey meaning. To encourage awareness of conversation and for students to appreciate what a good conversation is, the teacher and support assistant were encouraging a group of Years 12 and 13 students to express their likes and dislikes and, in turn, to find out about each other's likes and dislikes. Working with a student with complex communication difficulties a support assistant found out through

the use of a communication box that the student did not like working alone in his bedroom. Communication is linked very well with music. For example, pupils responded well using their signing to sing songs and hymns during an excellent assembly. In another session students sang and signed, 'He's got the whole world in his hands' and showed that they know that the earth is round and can find countries they have visited on a globe. A number of students in this group expressed a lot of pleasure during this lesson.

70. Pupils' and students' achievement and progress in reading are good throughout the school. The National Literacy Strategy has been adapted well to meet the needs of all the pupils and students and this is despite only one member of staff having had recognised training in the literacy strategy. By the end of Year 6 more able pupils read simple books; they appreciate and understand a variety of 'big books' such as 'Red Train' and 'Handa's Surprise'. The less able pupils are matching flash cards depicting the characters of the Oxford Reading Tree scheme books. Pupils match simple words on the computer, identify key words and recognise their own names. All classes use the library regularly. Pupils handle and look at books well and by the end of Year 6 the more able know the conventions of reading, for example following text from left to right, top to bottom and page order. Pupils with PMLD clearly enjoy stories told with the help of props that use the senses. For example, during a literacy session based on 'The Big Blue Whale', pupils shuddered in response to misty puffs of water being sprayed on them. While reading 'Anna's amazing multi-coloured glasses' pupils with PMLD actually wore multi-coloured glasses. The use of puppets captures and holds their interest and promotes their understanding. They anticipate what will happen next in a well-known story and many study and interact with pictures and photographs.
71. By the end of Year 11, the more able pupils discuss characters in their reading books. With the use of her voice box, a Year 10 pupil described the 'tickity witch' in her story as being very small. When asked, 'Where do Irish people come from?' this pupil replied, 'Ireland, of course'. Pupils, including ones with PMLD, take themselves off to the library to change their books independently. With the use of mechanical aids they are able to turn the pages of their reading books very efficiently. The more able students at St Joseph's are reading for enjoyment. One Year 12 student enjoyed discussing his appreciation of novels written by Philip Pullman.
72. Writing skills develop satisfactorily throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 the more able pupils produce a drawing to accompany writing and they can track, overwrite and sequence. They appreciate the use of commas, speech marks, exclamation marks and question marks. The less able pupils copy under or over a model making horizontal, vertical and circular lines and, with support, they make and complete patterns. They progress from scribble within a letter shape to colouring the shape in neatly. By the end of Year 9 more able pupils continue to overwrite and some write their name independently. They identify rhyming words, for example 'van' and 'man', 'net' and 'jet' and 'tub' and 'rub'. More able pupils begin to group letters and leave spaces between them as they write separate words. By the end of Year 11 more able pupils are independently writing their action plans for their ASDAN courses, for example writing, 'I can speak clearly', 'I know' and 'I need help in class using the computer'. Years 10 and 11 pupils watch videos and write a comment on them. By the time students are ready to leave St Joseph's they achieve their ASDAN award in communication. A more able Year 12 student did some creative writing based on the Harry Potter books. More able students use ICT to reproduce their work. Less able students use their switches to indicate preferences and support staff scribe for them.

73. Each pupil has a file entitled 'Levels of Support needed by pupil'. In this file staff can see at a glance whether a pupil is able to manage, for example 'with gestural help', 'physical help', 'able to discriminate the consonant blends well but needs a lot of help with symbols' or 'writing is helped by ICT'. This is an invaluable aid for staff to enable them to give pupils and students their full support.
74. Literacy skills are taught very well through other subjects. This has been achieved by the very hard work and co-operative manner of working between the teachers in the school and the speech and language therapists who give very effective support to developing communications. Vocabulary is taught well and pupils are helped to recognise letters and sounds. For example, during a Year 4 science session more able pupils read back what the teacher had written about the experiment on pushing and pulling. During a cookery/science session for their ASDAN accreditation Years 10 and 11 pupils explained how substances change during cooking, for example when the dough produces crispy shortbread biscuits and the jam melts in the tarts and becomes very hot and runny.
75. In all lessons teachers plan well and clearly identify what they expect pupils to learn. They select work to suit individual needs and use the very good resources in an imaginative way. This grabs pupils' interest and they respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. None of the teaching seen was less than good and the majority of the teaching was very good or better. Effective strategies are underpinned by good assessment of pupils' and students' progress, which ensures that activities are well matched to their ability. However, targets are not always as specific as they could be in pupils' and students' IEPs. Teachers and support assistants manage pupils and students well using a great deal of praise and encouragement. Their knowledge of the pupils and students and the strong relationships they have with them ensure that they get the best from them. The library is used well to foster a love of books and stories. English contributes very well to the pupils' and students' spiritual, social and cultural development through the contents of its lessons. There is, however, an equality of opportunity issue with the number of pupils and students missing lessons owing to therapy sessions. A little more flexibility would prevent them missing the same period of English every week. The co-ordinator does not have a delegated budget. However, she has recently completed an audit of resources and resources and accommodation are good.

MATHEMATICS

76. Overall, pupils' progress and achievements are unsatisfactory. This is partly because the planning and teaching in several parts of the school does not take sufficient account of pupils of differing levels of ability. It is also because almost all of the teaching is directed at learning number skills. Some pupils often miss lessons because of their regular attendance at therapy sessions, and this slows their progress in mathematics.
77. All pupils and students with PMLD make satisfactory progress in very basic skills such as learning to handle items, to make a choice between two items or to learn that they can control things. Up to the end of Year 6, the more able pupils make satisfactory progress in learning numbers. The most able pupils recognise numbers to ten, count to ten, or higher with a lot of help, and recognise some coins. They do not, however, make satisfactory progress in learning about different shapes, ways of measuring length, weight, capacity or time because these aspects are not taught very often. Up to the end of Year 11, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Even the most able pupils may stay at the same level of work for a year or more, or in some cases be doing easier work than previously completed successfully. Some pupils, for instance, do addition sums that are

much easier than they can do, or go back and do the two-times table, when they have previously done work with the eight-times table. The most able pupils add amounts up to 100 and subtract numbers in tens. They also do simple multiplication and division sums. Basic two- and three-dimensional shapes are recognised, and the most able pupils also recognise and use coins to £1, with a lot of help.

78. During their time at St Joseph's students make good progress and they are achieving well by the time they leave. Their work is approved and certificated by official organisations outside the school. All students have good opportunities to develop their skills with money, especially through the practical shopping trips each week and their banking and budget lessons. In these, students achieve well and are becoming much more confident in using and looking after their own money. They use ICT, and they learn to draw graphs showing, for example, their preferences for drinks, television or music.
79. The teaching of mathematics was satisfactory overall in lessons during the inspection. However, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are unsatisfactory in the long-term. There is too little work carried out on aspects other than pure counting skills, so pupils are not making progress in using money, telling the time, knowing shapes and colours, or measuring weight, distances or capacity. Teachers are very good at encouraging pupils' communication skills, both in terms of their listening skills and in the ways that pupils are encouraged to respond. The teaching of pupils up to Year 6 is satisfactory. The lessons are planned in detail, although sometimes there is too much reliance on one activity such as counting songs or doing sums in books. The teacher has positive and happy relationships with the pupils and they are well motivated. In Years 7 to 11, the teaching is not satisfactory. The lesson planning is very sketchy. Pupils may move from challenging to easy work for no apparent reason. Too many lessons are based on worksheets and the marking is not carried out well. This means that pupils are not motivated by enough variety in their work and are not getting the immediate feedback that they need if they are to improve. The more able pupils are often doing the same work as the less able younger ones. This does not challenge them sufficiently. During the inspection, classroom support staff and a replacement teacher took the lessons, and they managed well, with very positive relationships and a lively style. This was especially so with a very good lesson using a robot that pupils programmed to follow a track in the hall. The pupils were very keen, were all involved, despite the great difficulties that some have with their communication, and they had to think hard. They thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and worked very well as a group. The teaching in St Joseph's is good. Lessons are well planned and they follow a clear long-term plan. The computers are often used, as well as other equipment. Much of the work is practical and very well aimed at increasing the students' independence. All staff have friendly and positive relationships with the students and the work is challenging and very relevant to the students' needs.
80. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented up to Year 6. However, lessons throughout the school frequently do not follow the recommended structure or follow a systematic long-term sequence. The courses that are approved by outside organisations for the oldest pupils are very good. The resources are sound and are often used well by staff. There is a good method of checking how well pupils are progressing but this is not always used accurately. Pupils have individual targets for mathematics but there can be up to ten targets for each pupil and this is far too many. They are not always clear and it is often not easy to tell when a pupil has achieved them. There has been some monitoring of the planning and teaching but this has not been particularly successful in identifying areas that could be improved. This situation is not as good as at the time of the previous

inspection. The teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11 is not as good as it was then. Monitoring has not been developed effectively and ICT is not used to the extent that it was previously. The taught curriculum is not as broad and balanced as previously.

SCIENCE

81. Provision is satisfactory. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, the specialist teaching room remains unsatisfactory. Leadership is now good with schemes of work being closely linked to the National Curriculum or externally accredited syllabi.
82. By the end of Year 6, achievement and progress are good. Pupils develop a range of knowledge and increase their understanding of scientific processes. They understand the principle of forces and the differences between pushing and pulling. They have learnt about moving and growing and are able to identify bones and joints. They know that muscles work hard when you exercise and that your heart beats faster and you feel hot. Pupils sort materials into categories and understand that they change when they are heated or cooled. By the end of Year 9, pupils' progress is very good and they have a deeper understanding of energy and its sources. They know how humans and other animals obtain their energy and that inanimate objects such as cars, toasters and televisions require sources of energy to make them work. Achievement and progress by the end of Year 11 continue to be very good. Pupils have developed clear routines for setting up an investigation and are able to predict likely outcomes before commencing their work. The use of sophisticated ICT enables all pupils to access the learning opportunities. Achievement and progress in St Joseph's are very good and at times excellent in their ASDAN accredited courses. Students' understanding of the need to recycle much of our waste is very good. They will follow the process from home to the recycling bins and actual waste to a dump and finally incineration or landfill.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and at times very good or excellent. Teaching and learning are good up to the end of Year 6 and get progressively better through to Years 7 to 11. This is sustained in St Joseph's. In the best lessons, pupils' attention is held by a series of well-planned activities that are interesting and fulfilling. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the special needs of their pupils is very good. There is a good balance between teacher input and pupil involvement. In a lesson for Years 4 and 5, pupils enjoyed the practical activity that involved using pedal cars and scooters to investigate and experiment with pushing as part of the topic on forces. When they returned to the classroom the teacher reinforced the learning points very well and held their interest to the very end. By the end, pupils had a good grasp of the forces needed to propel themselves forward. In all of the lessons seen the contributions made by the support assistants were a major strength.
84. In another lesson, pupils with PMLD were investigating the properties of different materials when they were heated. The pupils were all tasked with making a small boat from aluminium foil and floating various solids such as butter and chocolate in it. They first checked the floatability of their boats and loaded them before the teacher floated them in hot water. The results were then recorded on their investigation sheets. This was an excellent learning experience for the pupils. The teacher had ensured that every pupil had full access to the activities through the very good use of ICT and the support assistants. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are excellent. They are on task, very keen to succeed and make every effort during lessons. Lesson planning is to a high standard and all lessons seen were full of pace, with very high expectations of the pupils.

85. Pupils' work is carefully recorded. National Curriculum criteria are used in assessing pupils and appropriate grades are given. For the less able pupils 'P-scales' levels are used as these are more appropriate. The record-keeping in the subject enables teachers to get a clear picture of the individual progress. Teachers use this information well in planning what pupils will learn next.
86. The co-ordinator is a specialist with very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and the pupils' SEN. Department schemes of work, the subject policy and other documentation are clear and to a very good standard. Management skills are very good. The co-ordinator has worked closely with his colleagues to develop schemes of work that are based on the national QCA units. Target setting for individuals is based on 'B-squared' materials and 'P-scales' levels are used. The change in the nature of the pupils' learning needs since the last inspection has resulted in much of the science equipment becoming obsolete. The development of topic resource boxes is a very good one. However, there has been no budget for the subject for the last two years, with bids having to be made to senior managers for development purposes. As a result, the topic boxes are underdeveloped for the teaching of the current school population. The specialist science room is an unsatisfactory resource and is seldom used for teaching purposes. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in the social aspects of the lessons where pupils work together and appreciate the achievements of their peers.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Pupils and students in Years 3 to 13 achieve well because the curriculum is broad, relevant and accessible. There is insufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 11 but no judgement is possible in other years because of a lack of evidence. However, improvement since the previous inspection is only satisfactory because concerns raised regarding accommodation have not been addressed satisfactorily. Good procedures for assessment including photographs and dated comments provide good additional evidence of achievement in Years 3 to 11 and for students at St Joseph's. These comments note the amount of help needed.
88. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 draw the human figure working unaided or with hand-over-hand guidance, as necessary. Some pupils are still at the 'scribble' stage but other pupils draw recognisable figures with features and limbs. Staff records state that pupils thoroughly enjoy their sessions and this is obvious from photographs showing them looking at their display based on the study of Lowry. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are well motivated because work is made very relevant to them. For example posters, based on the work of Warhol and Titian, were linked to pupils' interest in pop culture. The colours were chosen after discussion with individual bedrooms in mind. Pupils understand contrast and complementary colour and watch carefully the teacher's demonstrations of techniques with brushes and rollers. Pupils choose whether to work at an easel, a table or on a tray, applying selected colours with a brush or roller. Excellent relationships mean that there is a true partnership between staff and pupils. The adult only moves a pupil's hand to paint if his or her eyes are looking at the paper. One pupil knows colours of the rainbow, trying to use these as he names them. The influence of artists from around the world has a significant impact on pupils' cultural development. The three-year rolling programme of study means that pupils experience Aboriginal, Indian and African art. Pupils have worked at calligraphy with the help of visiting Japanese students. Pupils have designed and made a Zen garden; pupils with the most complex needs arranged the pebbles.

89. Students from St Joseph's helped to make panels to decorate their walls based on Monet's painting of poppies. They used reference books to research Australian animals before painting the backdrops for a school play. Students complete an expressive arts module when working towards ASDAN awards. They go out to buy some of their own materials and complete their own evaluation sheets. Pupils and students have limited experience of computer-generated art because computers and software are of limited quantity and quality. Not all support staff are comfortable using the programs.
90. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 11, the only years observed. All teaching, except for children in the nursery, is by a specialist teacher who is knowledgeable about the subject but also highly sensitive to individual needs and strengths. The curriculum he has designed is challenging but inclusive because it is so well adapted for the pupils and students of this school. Time is used very well and activities are purposeful and help to keep the attention of pupils because they are challenging. The input of specialist language into communication aids not only helps learning but also encourages pupils to join in group discussions. One pupil explained why she did not like some impressionist pictures by saying, 'The colours don't go together. They don't mix. They're dingy'. Limitations of the cluttered accommodation were evident in a lesson for pupils with the most complex needs. Space for wheelchairs proved limited and the tables were too small to hold the resources comfortably.
91. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has used his knowledge and experience well to expose pupils to a broad range of artistic experiences although they have limited opportunities for three-dimensional work. Social and cultural skills are very well developed through visits to art galleries and sculpture parks and by the visit of a sculptor. Much work is influenced by artists from around the world. The 'Comenius Project' has given the pupils the pleasure of knowing that their work has been exhibited beyond Britain. Resources are satisfactory and are very well supplemented by the resourcefulness of the co-ordinator.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. The school makes good provision for design and technology and in home economics it is very good. Since the last inspection both achievement and the quality of teaching have improved significantly. The schemes of work now provide a much wider curriculum across the school. However, during the inspection very little use was made of ICT. The design and technology workshop remains an unsatisfactory provision. Although resources are now adequate in design and technology, the storage of consumables is not well managed and, therefore, access to materials and equipment is not always straightforward.
93. By the end of Year 6, pupils have worked with a range of resistant materials involving a good introduction to design. During the inspection they were designing a simple bedside lamp and had a good understanding of how to interpret a diagram of an electrical circuit. Pupils are able to state what they would like their lamp to look like. They sketch designs and use reference material to aid them. In home economics, pupils enjoy their cooking activities. They understand basic hygiene and appreciate the need for food to look and smell attractive. They enjoy weighing and measuring ingredients and use blenders and whisks very well.
94. By the end of Year 9, pupils have designed a pair of bookends, investigated packaging and made a presentation box. Pupils have designed and made kites, flown them and made modifications to improve their flying capabilities. They have also investigated control by making a model car that reversed automatically and a robot arm biscuit

feeder with a wind-up mechanism. In home economics, pupils cook a range of foods from other countries. During the inspection they prepared vegetable curry for their lunch. Overall, progress in design and technology is very good. Pupils are challenged and respond very well to the wide range of opportunities available to them. In home economics progress is very good and occasionally it is excellent. The contribution made by the occupational therapist is very good. Pupils are involved in a wide range of activities, which they find interesting. One pupil was making a set of bibs and was using a switch to operate an electric sewing machine and to stitch in a straight line. The concentration required to focus on a point ahead was exceptional.

95. The quality of teaching and learning in both design and technology and home economics is very good and at times it is excellent in the latter. Teachers' planning is very good and ensures that all pupils have access to challenging learning experiences. Teachers have very good understanding of both the subject and the complex learning needs of the pupils. Teamwork is an essential part of the success, with the contribution by support assistants being outstanding. In the best lessons pupils are quickly involved in the activities, have a clear understanding of the tasks and are eager to get on with them.
96. In home economics, pupils are well drilled in the need for hygiene. They prepare vegetables thoroughly using a range of ingenious aids to assist them in holding those that require cutting and slicing. No matter what their special needs, ways are found to get them involved. This is very good practice and ensures equal opportunities, educational inclusion and progress for all pupils. However, the capability for some pupils in wheelchairs to use water for washing and cleaning purposes is hampered by the lack of a sink that can be raised and lowered.
97. The accommodation for design and technology remains unsatisfactory. It is narrow and not well suited for its purpose, despite the efforts of the subject co-ordinator to re-arrange the equipment to make it more accessible. Resources for learning are no better than satisfactory. The main working table within the design and technology room is too small to allow pupils to work in a clutter-free area. This is in contrast with the home economics base where the accommodation is very good, resources are good and very good use is made of both.
98. Both subjects are very well managed with good policies and very good schemes of work. Assessment in both areas is also good. The contribution made by occupational therapists is a strength of the teaching in design and technology. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and a very good one to their social and cultural development.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Geography is an exciting subject at St Rose's. It is taught imaginatively and pupils respond very positively, anticipating their lessons with pleasure. Full advantage is taken of the opportunities provided by the location of the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
100. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6, as do students at St Joseph's. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve very well. By the end of Year 2 pupils have visited rooms in the school asking staff about their jobs. Displays of plastic bags help pupils identify where their mum shops and make connections between home and school. Good practical opportunities contribute to good achievement for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils match animals with their homes. They help with the building of a tepee large enough to enter. This supports their developing knowledge of homes around the world and extends their

vocabulary. Specialist teaching in Years 7 to 11 helps pupils achieve very well. Pupils complete a good amount of well-presented work using a scribe as necessary. The use of aerial photographs helps pupils understand scale and identify features round the school. For example, one pupil wrote, 'I can see the school track and the house I stay in when I don't go home'. Visiting the Cafod website and exploring the work of this international organisation reinforces the pupils' ICT skills as well as contributing to their social development. It also enables pupils to compare life in Stroud with life in other parts of the world including Africa. Participation in the 'Comenius Project' contributes significantly to the pupils' knowledge of Europe, including comparison of life and customs such as the celebration of Christmas. Regular visits to Lourdes give pupils an idea of scale and experiences of different types of weather as well as contributing to their spiritual, moral and social development. Students at St Joseph's study geography as part of an ASDAN course on independent living. Practical experiences reinforce their knowledge of following routes, for example into Stroud or to Gloucester on the bus. They recognise and use a number of buildings and facilities such as the bank, tourist information centre and the cathedral. They match symbols, words and photographs, for example when identifying holiday destinations on a world map as they sing, 'He's got the whole world in his hands'.

101. Teaching and learning are very good overall and excellent when taught by a specialist. Teachers enthuse pupils so that they come into the classrooms with positive anticipation that they are going to learn something worthwhile and it will be accessible to them. They are not disappointed. In outstanding lessons that engaged all the senses, pupils experienced something of volcanoes and earthquakes. Excellent relationships with all adults meant that pupils and support staff worked as a team to maximise the use of communication aids, ensuring all pupils were involved. 'It's like burnt ash, smoke and cheese,' said pupils smelling charred wood. One pupil chose the word 'distinct' on his communicator (as 'it stinks' was not available) and smiled when the teacher understood what he was saying. Pupils said it was, 'loud', 'horrible' and 'frightening' as balloons burst. There was quiet and astonishment when pupils watched syrup, illustrating liquid rock, poured from a height to demonstrate the temperature at the centre of the earth. 'Five thousand degrees centigrade is only a prediction then?' queried one pupil. The faces of pupils registered awe as they watched a volcano firework erupting, having understood much of the power and beauty of the 'restless earth'. Pupils with the most complex needs have equal access to the curriculum because it is very well adapted to their particular needs. Sometimes too many activities cause confusion, however, as was seen in a lesson when they were studying the same topic as their peers. As in all lessons assessment was effective both through encouraging comments during the lesson and evaluative written comments after. Homework is very well linked to lessons. The timing of therapy sessions to coincide with the same lesson every week is unhelpful.
102. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist and uses his knowledge of the subject and pupils with SEN to devise a curriculum that is extremely relevant to the pupils. It is well related to the National Curriculum and makes very good use of the local and wider areas and contributes significantly to literacy, numeracy and ICT. There is insufficient monitoring of the planning and teaching of other staff. Teachers are very creative in devising and using their own resources but the subject does not have a designated budget. This means that new staff would have insufficient resources.

HISTORY

103. Very strong leadership combined with good and often very good teaching have led to good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils up to Year 6 achieve well and pupils at the end of Years 9 and 11 are achieving very well. This is despite the school's lack of resources for the subject. Students do not study history after the age of 16.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 start to recognise changes over time through the study of work related to 'When grandma was young'. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 develop skills of communication and literacy as well as gaining historical skills and understanding. They show a willingness to try new experiences, for example when tasting foods known to have been eaten by the Ancient Greeks. The most able pupils select the correct food symbols and stick them in the like or dislike column. Other pupils co-operate with support staff to complete the same activity with the appropriate level of assistance.
105. The achievement of pupils in Years 7 to 11 is very good. This is because very well planned work is taught by a subject specialist who enthuses and challenges pupils by using a wide range of teaching methods. By the end of Year 9 pupils know how time is measured. They recognise periods in history by the costumes worn, for example, 'I know this is William because he has a Norman style helmet on his head'. The excellent use of drama, during a re-enactment in costume in the school grounds, helped pupils understand what The Battle of Hastings was like. Visiting the Gloucester Folk Museum provides insight and practical opportunities for learning about life in Victorian Britain. Problem solving and group discussions, for example, when considering the impact of the railways, are considerably enhanced by very good communication skills, often supported by voice aids. By the end of Year 11 pupils achieve work of high quality leading to nationally accredited units of work. They identify simple facts about pre-war Britain and through looking at artefacts understand a little of life of the times. They complete a menu using a list of rationed goods and some pupils wordprocess their work. Model making reinforces their knowledge of Ancient Egypt and is an example of how highly effective multi-sensory opportunities for learning lead to very good achievement. However, some pupils do not have equal opportunities to achieve well in history because therapy sessions are not planned flexibly and they miss too many lessons.
106. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6 and very good in Years 7 to 11. Excellent relationships and extremely good support staff contribute significantly to all teaching and learning and help promote independence. In a good lesson for pupils with significant additional special needs, the links with other subjects helped them make some sense of what was happening. With much assistance they made simple musical instruments as might have been seen in Ancient Egypt and responded positively as the more physically able pupils played the instruments. In another very good lesson related to Ancient Egypt, which encouraged the oldest pupils to use all their senses, pupils collaborated to make fig cakes. The fast pace of the lesson and high degree of challenge contributed to the excellent behaviour so pupils worked hard and learnt a lot. The inclusion of all pupils was ensured by the effective use of communication aids and by the support pupils gave each other. For example, one pupil gently fed a friend unable to hold the fig cake and others worked in pairs to complete worksheets. Literacy skills were developed as they listed the ingredients from a choice of words or symbols, using a scribe where necessary. Assessment is particularly good both within lessons and at the end of units of work so that teaching builds on the strengths and weaknesses of pupils. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to think and demonstrate their knowledge but could be even more effective if directed more to individuals.
107. The leadership and management of history are very good. The co-ordinator has brought rigour and purpose to the subject. Very good planning means that a highly relevant and

broad curriculum has been introduced which is very well related to the National Curriculum. The subject contributes very strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through high regard for the needs of the individual and the opportunities afforded by drama and visits to a number of museums. Apart from a good supply of costumes, the school has made insufficient provision for its own resources. Those available are of good quality but are on loan from elsewhere or have been collected by the co-ordinator.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. There is, however, a very mixed picture. Pupils who need electronic aids for their everyday communication make excellent progress and they have extremely good provision in all respects. In other subjects throughout the school, teachers sometimes make satisfactory use of computers to broaden their lessons and to give pupils practise in their computer skills, especially in English. However, there are no separate lessons in which pupils are taught ICT skills and, as a result, pupils are not making satisfactory progress. In particular, this has a negative impact on the ability of the more able pupils to access aspects of the subjects of the National Curriculum.
109. There are pupils in the lower part of the school who are more able than those who are ready to leave, and so it is not possible to see a smooth progression of skills through the school. Pupils with PMLD make good progress in learning to use switches that need only a single touch to operate devices such as a recorded voice, a lamp or a toy. By the time they leave the school these pupils have begun to make choices, answer simple questions and join in the 'hello' sessions at the start of the day by using simple switches.
110. Pupils with extreme difficulties in communicating make excellent progress throughout the school. They learn to use specialist high technology equipment to speak their answers, to ask for things and to generally join in with lessons and the everyday life of the school, including mealtimes and in the evenings. Teachers and other staff give them every opportunity and encouragement and plenty of time to use their devices independently. The equipment is specially tailored for each pupil by a member of the speech therapy staff who works closely with the pupils, teachers, other staff and parents. As they develop their skills, many of these pupils learn to use a series of menus on their individual electronic boards to choose between over a hundred different responses or statements.
111. Pupils do not learn how to use computers in separate ICT lessons. Teachers plan a few lessons to include some use of computers as part of their general learning. This works well at times, such as in an English lesson in which pupils were learning how to change the layout of a page. They had previously learned how to change the print style and the colour and size of the lettering. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were learning how to program a small robot that runs along the floor. In history and some other subjects, teachers use the computers to find information, to write a short passage or to find a picture. These occasions are not, however, sufficient to allow pupils to develop computer-related skills in all of the required aspects of this subject. Much of the learning is wordprocessing short passages. Pupils do not develop sufficient skills in, for example, drawing and painting, making graphs and charts or finding information from CD-Rom and the Internet. They rarely have opportunities to learn to use simple spreadsheets to record and interpret information, to control equipment or programs, to use other electronic equipment or to e-mail their friends.

112. In spite of the patchy provision and unsatisfactory progress in the main school, St Joseph's students make good progress. This is because the teaching and learning are good, students learn about different kinds of computers and related equipment and how to use them. Students follow courses that are approved and checked by national organisations. Although the actual levels of students' skills are quite low, they are progressing well because of imaginative teaching in separate lessons, good use of a range of equipment in all lessons and their positive attitudes.
113. In the main part of the school, the teaching in two lessons during the inspection included a good emphasis on ICT, one in mathematics and one in English. In both lessons the teachers were knowledgeable and enthusiastic and the pupils responded keenly and with very good concentration. They learned a lot in each lesson. More frequently, lessons were seen in which the planned computer work either did not take place or was slow typing using a wordprocessing program. This subject supports literacy and communications skills very well and the support for numeracy skills is satisfactory.
114. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory because nobody has separate responsibility for organising it. The subject policy is very outdated. There is no plan throughout the school of what should be taught and pupils' learning is not checked. The curriculum is not sufficiently broad to meet statutory requirements. There is a very recent plan of what might be done to improve the subject, produced by a group of staff, but this does not allocate responsibility to anyone specifically nor does it have any real sense of urgency or vision. Over the years, the resources have been built up well, and they are good. The equipment for the pupils with communications difficulties is excellent. There are computers in every class, as well as in the ICT suite, along with other equipment such as a scanner, a digital camera and a host of switches, roller balls and interfaces. The range of software is mainly good, although there are gaps in several subjects. Staff have received some useful training during the past year. The school hopes to appoint an experienced teacher to teach and lead the subject for one day a week in the future.
115. This is not as good a situation as was reported at the time of the previous inspection. Previously there was good teaching, good progress and a broad and balanced plan of what was to be taught in the long term. The subject was well co-ordinated; there is now no co-ordinator. The good use of communications aids that was reported then is now excellent.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH AND GERMAN

116. Pupils achieve very well. This is because the teaching is very good and there are good learning opportunities for all pupils in Years 3 to 11 to learn French and any for St Joseph's students who wish to learn French or German or both. The provision and outcomes in modern foreign languages and participation in the 'Comenius Project' are to the credit of the part-time teacher who co-ordinates both extremely well. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.
117. All pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve very well in French. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 also make a very good start at learning French. Students at St Joseph's have the opportunity to study French or German or both and those who do so make very good progress, sometimes achieving GCSE standards.

118. The teaching is very good overall and occasionally excellent. In the one lesson that was graded satisfactory there was a rather slow pace to the lesson and some opportunities to allow pupils to speak were lost. All of the other five lessons seen were good, very good or excellent. The common strengths in these lessons were good planning, good pace, very good relationships and opportunities for pupils to speak and very good use of resources, including recorded music. In the best lessons the teacher provided a real and exciting challenge to the pupils and established a very good balance between acquiring new vocabulary, speaking and listening activities and written tasks appropriate to the pupils present. Pupils clearly enjoy French lessons very much. They are enthusiastic and try really hard. Indeed, in discussion over lunch one day four of five pupils present all said that, 'French and PE are the best lessons at school'.
119. Pupils' experiences in modern foreign languages make a good contribution to their learning in numeracy and literacy and a very substantial one to their spiritual, moral, social and, most significantly, cultural development. No use of ICT, such as using CD-Rom or the Internet, was observed during lessons or through examination of pupils' work although some ICT was seen in the high quality displays and resources related to the 'Comenius Project' (in the classroom and corridor).
120. The school has been a participant in this project linking with schools in France, Germany and Switzerland for nearly two years. This has been energetically and efficiently organised by the co-ordinator and has resulted in a very positive contribution to many pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In addition to providing real life experiences of modern foreign languages the work has contributed significantly to pupils' progress in geography, art and design and food technology. ICT and music have been used well in some activities. For example, students from Chemnitz visited St Rose's in October 2001 and three St Joseph's students went to Chemnitz in October 2002. Pupils from Rennes will be visiting Chemnitz and Stroud in spring 2003 and St Rose's pupils have been invited to Rennes in the summer. All participating schools are making a joint music CD and all St Rose's pupils have been involved in this activity.

MUSIC

121. Pupils do not make satisfactory progress overall. After a sound start up to Year 6 this subject is not taught separately to the older pupils in the main part of the school. Instead, teachers use singing to enhance other lessons, such as personal and social education, mathematics, physical education and modern foreign languages. Music is also a major part of some assemblies and of a range of celebratory events at different times of the year. These include contributions to a CD of music and singing produced in partnership with schools across Europe. This evidence shows that there is adequate expertise in the school and pupils have some positive musical experiences. However, the lack of a subject co-ordinator and variable practice by individual teachers means that provision is very patchy.
122. Up to the end of Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in following staff during songs and rhymes. They try hard to anticipate and echo the words, and they express their preferences for different songs that they listen to or join in with. Pupils sign, as well as sing, during lessons and they make very good efforts to play musical instruments, particularly percussion ones such as drums and tambourines. They also play wind instruments, such as a melodica, with help. Pupils with PMLD also make good progress because lessons are taught regularly and well. A small number of pupils receive a music therapy session each week. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not have separate lessons and therefore their progress in music is unsatisfactory. However, music is used in some lessons. In French, for instance, music is used very well and very regularly to help pupils' learning. Similarly in physical education, pupils move to music and learn very well in this aspect of their physical skills. The school is not meeting its statutory requirements in respect to pupils in Years 7 to 9. It is not obliged to teach music to the pupils in Years 10 and 11 and it does not do so. However, students make good progress at St Joseph's. They gain skills well through nationally approved courses such as 'Performing Arts' and 'Sound, Rhythm and Music'. Music is also taught through special events. Pupils learn to sing and echo the words of songs, they listen to a great range of music and develop their taste for different kinds of music. When asked to perform, they play their chosen instrument at the correct time, with help.
123. In the classes where music is taught, it is generally taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they conduct their lessons at a good pace. In one excellent lesson with the younger pupils, for instance, the teacher read a book to the pupils, 'Peace at Last', about a bear that was trying to find a quiet place to sleep. The pupils were first encouraged to echo all the sounds that were disturbing the bear, either vocalising or clapping. Then they chose instruments to imitate them. On the next reading, the pupils each played their instruments at the correct time, pace and volume, and were able to say if they were short or long sounds. Every pupil was very well involved and they all enjoyed the session very much. Consequently they learnt a great deal in this lesson.
124. The school does not have a co-ordinator for music. Consequently, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is a good policy for how the subject should be taught but it is not being followed well. The school plans to send a member of staff on a course in the future to learn how to teach music, although several staff demonstrate that they already have the necessary skills. There is not a system for checking how well pupils are making progress, although a simple chart has just been developed for use with the least able pupils. The resources are satisfactory, including a range of instruments throughout the school, mainly percussion, and a very wide selection of recorded music. Electronic sound equipment is used effectively with the least able pupils and orchestral instruments are borrowed from a nearby centre. Music makes a

very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development and to their social lives. Little has changed since the last inspection. Pupils are still not achieving satisfactorily and there is still not a clear plan of what is to be taught in the long term.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Since the last inspection the quality of provision has improved significantly. The indoor accommodation remains unsatisfactory, although there is no evidence that this has a significant negative impact on pupils' learning because of the high quality teaching.
126. Pupils achieve well and progress is very good and often excellent throughout the school. Pupil's response to the subject was very good and occasionally excellent in all the lessons observed. Pupils enjoy the challenges and fun that are implicit in the lessons, being quick to spot deliberate mistakes in teacher demonstrations. All groups understand that they will perform better if they have warmed up. By the end of Year 6, pupils have appreciated working to music in their dance lessons. They understand that music can have a range of rhythms that can require energetic movement whilst others have a slower tempo where the pace is much less frenetic.
127. Pupils throughout the school develop strong competitive instincts and compete with considerable success at school, county and national levels. They enter the Kielder Challenge, where they team up with able-bodied youngsters from a local secondary school, and last year for the first time they finished ahead of their great rivals from a neighbouring county. Despite the competitive element to their physical education lessons, pupils are still very supportive of one another and know that taking part is the primary goal for everyone. There is a fundamental belief that pupils can succeed in a very wide range of physical activities and many of them are competing at county and national events. Resources are satisfactory with the quality and accessibility of these being good and their usage very good. Accommodation is satisfactory for outdoor activities but the indoor provision is unsatisfactory.
128. Professional coaches provide support for tennis, archery, golf and swimming. Pupils are taught how to watch the ball and to hit through it. In one Year 9 lesson, pupils began by hitting a balloon with their hands, progressing to using a racket for the same purpose. Finally, they were hitting sponge balls at targets across a net. One pupil had found it physically difficult to hold a racket when he first came. He has worked with the physiotherapist and can now hold one and participate in the lesson. The co-ordinator views assessment as a base-line activity that can lead to the involvement of other professionals as enablers.
129. The quality of teaching across the subject is never less than very good and at times it is excellent. The very good subject knowledge of a specialist teacher and a thorough understanding of the special learning needs of the pupils ensure that all of them have access to rich and challenging activities, which are highly motivating. The teaching team is a very strong one and the role of the support assistants in promoting high standards is exceptional. One of the corridor displays has photographs of the boccia team, which is to represent the school at the south western region championships in February. This gives the participants a great deal of pride and self-esteem. Teaching covers the National Curriculum and includes extensive coverage of swimming, athletics, including both electric and manual wheelchair events, and a range of throwing events. The use of music and dance can at times be excellent with pupils clearly enjoying themselves. One youngster with visual impairments responded so well to the music for the first time as a camera captured the moment. The curriculum includes regular visits to Gloucester Rugby Football Club and to Bristol Rovers Football Club. Extra-curricular activities

include horse riding, swimming and archery and make a strong contribution to pupils' sporting achievements and social development. The school has introduced new age curling into the curriculum and this has proved a popular addition to the extensive range of opportunities that are on offer. The demands made by boccia and new age curling are developing a range of skills hitherto beyond the capabilities of these young people.

130. Leadership and management are outstanding. Subject documentation sets out clear aims that are further enhanced by specific goals being set for each of the key stages. The curriculum is delivered in three-year programmes for primary, secondary and PMLD pupils. Provision is good for spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good for social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

131. The provision for PSHE and citizenship is a strength of the school. These learning opportunities are used very well to enable pupils and students to realise their full potential. This excellent provision pervades every area of school life both during the school day and in residential care. PSHE is taught as a discrete subject and it makes a very strong contribution to pupils' and students' personal development and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Citizenship has been introduced since September 2002 and is taught as part of the PSHE programme for all pupils in Years 2 to 7. Citizenship is taught as a separate subject in Years 7 to 13 and incorporates independent living, child protection, justice and morals and world affairs. This is part of the students' ASDAN accreditation.
132. All pupils and students make very good progress. There is a school policy for both PSHE and citizenship and a very good scheme of work, which is relevant to the pupils and students. The pupils in Years 2 to 6 follow the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's national exemplar programme of study adapted to their needs. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 cover a suitable range of topics including personal hygiene, sex education, health and fitness and alcohol and drug abuse. Under citizenship, pupils in Years 7 to 11 cover such topics as transition preparation, interviewing techniques, the law, emergency procedures, needs of individual versus society and socially acceptable behaviour. The main school and St Joseph's work very closely together and the two co-ordinators work well in partnership. The school uses the community to enhance the delivery of the two subjects. For example, as part of their independent living course, St Joseph's students visit a nearby hotel to order and pay for drinks independently. The students go into Stroud town-centre to visit the Tourist Board, the Citizens Advise Bureau and the Benefits Agency. They withdrew money from the bank to buy ingredients from the local supermarket for their City and Guilds cookery examination the next day.
133. At the present time the subject is assessed through the use of 'P-scales' levelling and National Curriculum levels. The school is introducing 'B-squared' assessment procedures and these are being piloted at the present time. Targets in IEPs are very concise for PSHE and citizenship and accreditation is gained through ASDAN, ALL and City and Guilds. Monitoring of teaching does not take place currently owing to time restraints.
134. Teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are planned well and imaginatively and very good discussions take place. All pupils and students, regardless of their individual needs, are incorporated into the PSHE and citizenship programme of study and all needs are fully and well met. They have a very good knowledge of their own understanding in the subject. For example, during a lesson on citizenship a Year 13

student when asked how he was getting on with his fund-raising poster replied, 'Very well actually'. Pupils and students evaluate their PSHE and citizenship lessons and say what it is they liked or disliked. They particularly like step-by-step planned schedules, saying that they, 'wished that they could have had it at transition time', 'diary dates are an excellent idea' and 'are you going to have a Braille version?'

135. In one lesson, pupils in Years 2 to 6 learnt about dental hygiene by studying a large-scale model of a set of teeth and seeing the effects of eating a sandwich. Very good speaking and listening occurred during this lesson with pupils describing how the teeth rotted if not cleaned properly. Another example of very good speaking and listening was during a Year 7 lesson when the teacher asked, 'Why do we wear clothes?' The verbal and voice box answers came back thick and fast including 'to keep warm', 'not to be rude', 'not to be embarrassed', and 'to keep dry'. During a lesson on personal hygiene Year 10 pupils learnt that eating certain strong foods makes their breath smell the same. They identified bad smells such as garlic, cheese and dirty laundry. During a citizenship session post-16 students chose a world affairs topic to research and discuss; among these were the 'war on Iraq,' 'anti-war demonstrations', and 'the stabbing of a policeman in Manchester'. Years 12 and 13 students, as part of their advocacy in citizenship at their students' meetings, raise issues like 'the bulb needs replacing in my bedroom' and 'some of my bed linen is missing'. All staff take their concerns seriously. Communication and reading play a very significant part in all the lessons and pupils and students use ICT to help them write down their thoughts and ideas.
136. The school was asked by the Department for Education and Skills to help to compile a resource pack for 13-to 19-year-olds entitled 'Transition Planning from the ages of 13 to 19 for pupils with complex disabilities'. This was completed last year and is now used in all schools in the south-west area. The large booklet contains such advice as 'What does the jargon mean?' 'Assisting communication' and 'A transition plan checklist for the social services representative'. This is a very valuable tool for the school to be able to share with similar schools in the area.