

INSPECTION REPORT

DOVE HOUSE SCHOOL

Basingstoke

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116626

Headteacher: Mr Colin House

Reporting inspector: Mr R Baker
19946

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 249365

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Moderate learning difficulties
School category:	Special
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sutton Road Basingstoke Hampshire
Postcode:	RE2 5SU
Telephone number:	(01256) 351555
Fax number:	(01256) 329749
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Howard
Date of previous inspection:	9 th – 13 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19946	Mr R Baker	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
9173	Mrs S McDermott	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27058	Mrs K Cannon	Team inspector	Science Modern foreign languages Life Skills	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development English as additional language
21397	Ms Ingrid Bradbury	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography Personal, health and social education Citizenship vocational	How well does the school care for its pupils or students?
22948	Mrs Mary Vallis	Team inspector	English History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
16227	Mr Jim Phillips	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dove House is a school with 104 pupils aged 11 to 16 with moderate to severe learning difficulties. In addition, there are nine pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The school serves the east Hampshire area and is based in Basingstoke. Of the pupils on roll, 72 are boys and 32 are girls. All pupils attend full-time. All Year 10 and 11 attend local colleges on a part-time basis. The school is popular with parents and has a waiting list. There are no pupils who come from families whose first language is not English. Nineteen pupils are entitled to free school meals (18 per cent) and the socio-economic area served by the school is not particularly deprived. All of the pupils come to the school with statements of special educational needs. The school is organised into 11 classes, two classes in each year group and a mixed age class for pupils with ASD. Approximately half of the pupils in Year 9 are disapplied from the standard assessments tasks. Some pupils have additional difficulties, which include emotional and behavioural difficulties and sensory and physical difficulties. Attainment on entry is well below the national average; since the last inspection, it is reducing year on year and the unit of ASD pupils has been added. Additionally, the curriculum organisation has been changed since the last inspection and subjects are now taught by subject specialists in specialist rooms and, within the core subjects, to sets within year groups. As the school was initially built for primary-phase pupils, space is at a premium. Recently the school has improved the range of examinations on offer to pupils and all are offered at least three forms of accreditation. The school has strong links with Brighton Hill School, a sports college, and with the Basingstoke Consortium, which provides opportunities for work-related activities.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Dove House is a good school with some very good and excellent features. It is a caring school that supports its pupils very well and provides very good and appropriate learning opportunities. It is effective and provides good value for money, particularly because all pupils who leave Dove House go on to work or full-time education. It has made very good progress since the last inspection as the quality of both teaching and the curriculum has been significantly improved. However, standards in literacy, while satisfactory, need improvement, as do elements of some foundation subjects.

What the school does well

- The provision for information and communication technology, physical education and art and design is excellent and it is very good in mathematics and science.
- The quality of provision for and the progress of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and the extent of their inclusion into the school.
- Careers and vocational education, the development of life skills and preparation for leaving school and progressing into the adult world.
- The quality of teaching and progress, particularly in Key Stage 4.
- The quality of relationships throughout the school, pupils' personal and social development and their very good behaviour and attitudes.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities.
- The headteacher's vision for school development, its excellent aims and values, the strategic use of financial resources and the shared commitment of all staff and governors.

What could be improved

- The pupils' achievements in reading and writing.
- Elements of the provision for design and technology, music, humanities and modern foreign languages.
- The attendance of the pupils.

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

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in a number of key areas. The school has reorganised the curriculum and made it subject based, designing rooms specifically for this purpose and appointing subject specialists in many areas. All unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and teaching and learning are now well monitored. Assessment procedures have improved and are now very good. Tutor time has been reduced and procedures put into place to ensure that this time is very well spent in reviewing pupils' 'access targets'. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good and life skills and citizenship play a major part in this improvement. The schools playing fields have been fenced and many improvements made to the grounds. The school has successfully integrated a group of pupils with ASD. The scope and range of accreditations have improved. The school has a very good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	very good	A
reading	C	C	good	B
writing	C	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	A	A	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	A		

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

Overall, taking into account pupils' learning difficulties, pupils' progress is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11 as a result of consistently good or very good teaching. Overall, pupils enter the school with attainments which are well below national averages, make very good progress and leave with standards which are below national averages. The GCSE results represent excellent achievement for the more able pupils and other accreditations represent very good progress and achievement for all pupils. In English, pupils generally make good and sometimes very good progress in speaking and listening skills and as a consequence, by Year 11, pupils answer questions well and express their views clearly. Progress in reading and writing is satisfactory. The over-concentration on spelling, phonics and handwriting has left too little time for pupils to read books and write independently. The lack of a whole school approach to the development of reading and writing skills further limits pupils' progress in these areas. More able pupils read with some confidence but few can write sentences with confidence. Pupils with specific learning difficulties make the least progress mainly because there is too little diagnosis of their individual difficulties.

Pupils' achievements and progress in mathematics are very good. In Year 7, pupils make good progress in their skills with money, gain a good understanding of area and more able pupils can work out the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes using the dimensions of length and width. Throughout Years 8 and 9, pupils, including those with ASD, who are fully included in the class discussions and group activities, make very good progress. By the end of Year 9, most pupils have a good grasp of addition and subtraction of numbers to 20, coin values, odd and even numbers and common fractions and can use these to solve problems. By the end of Year 11 a small number of able pupils successfully complete the GCSE mathematics examinations; these pupils are confident in their application of number operations to investigations and problem solving.

The pupils' achievement in science in all years is very good overall. Within lessons it is frequently very good or excellent, but an analysis of their work over time indicates that their progress is restricted because of their weak literacy and handwriting skills. Pupils make excellent progress during their time in school in all aspects of the curriculum for ICT. In Year 11 all pupils achieve some form of public accreditation. In art, throughout the school, pupils make excellent progress. They develop skills in using clay and use sketchbooks to research the proportions of a human face when drawing. They are confident in different media, including printing, drawing, use of textiles and three-dimensional sculptures.

Pupils make very good progress in Life Skills which is an excellent combination of a number of areas including food technology, personal, social and health education and citizenship. In physical education lessons, pupils experience a wide range of both indoor and outdoor games according to the time of year and make very good progress. All pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology, French, geography, music and religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and they concentrate and co-operate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The clear structures and high expectations ensure that behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Staff know pupils well and provide excellent role models. Relationships throughout the school are generally excellent.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance levels are below those in similar schools.

The caring and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and they respond well. The very good teaching overall makes a major contribution to the school's generally high expectations of how pupils behave. Pupils who have good rates of attendance are making good or very good progress in their learning. However, the school has noted that pupils who do not attend regularly fail to reach their learning targets and make insufficient progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	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.

The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 3, and very good in Key Stage 4. Overall, it is very good and a significant strength of the school. In Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching was excellent in one in five lessons, very good in nearly a quarter, good in nearly one in five and satisfactory in four out of ten lessons. In Key Stage 4, teaching in a quarter of lessons was judged to be excellent and in a further quarter good; it is very good in a third and satisfactory in just over one in ten lessons. None of the teaching in the 76 lessons observed was judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection.

A consistently strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the excellent management of pupils together with the excellent relationships between all within the school. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is nearly always good and often excellent. Lessons are generally very well planned and pupils know what is expected and gain a sense of achievement through their success, resulting in them working at tasks with enthusiasm and interest. Teaching is very good overall in mathematics, science, and Life Skills (which includes PSHE and citizenship) and excellent in physical education, art and

information and communication technology. Particular strengths in these subjects are the teachers' subject expertise, their enthusiasm and the challenging tasks set. In English, history and French, the quality of teaching is mainly good. Teaching is satisfactory in music, design and technology, geography and religious education.

Teaching of the key skills of numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is very good. It is satisfactory in literacy. The use of ICT throughout the school in support of learning in most curriculum areas is good and improving in most subject areas. The development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. A strength is the very good development of speaking and listening skills in all curriculum areas. However, teaching to promote pupils' reading, spelling and writing skills across the curriculum is less effective. The quality of teaching of communication, personal and social skills, with pupils having difficulties within the autistic spectrum, is excellent. Learning support assistants are effectively involved in lesson planning and preparation and they provide skilled support for pupils' learning. Resources are very well used overall, as a result of thorough planning and preparation of lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It has also achieved its aim to provide a 'curriculum that goes beyond the classroom and prepares pupils for the adult world of work, leisure and potential parenthood.' The provision for extra-curricular activities and careers and vocational education is excellent.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good overall. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The procedures for monitoring and promoting of good behaviour are excellent and there is very good educational and personal guidance for pupils. Assessment procedures are very good.

Child protection procedures are good and links with parents are very good. Teachers generally use assessment very well to monitor pupils' progress and set appropriate learning targets in their lesson planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has effectively created considerable positive change. The senior management team is effective and the role of subject leaders is well developed.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very supportive and shape the direction of the school very well. They ensure that the school's aim 'of making a difference' is reflected in all its work. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good but there are shortcomings in the evaluation of standards of literacy.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes excellent use of all its specific grants and money is very well spent.

The school has suitably trained teaching and non-teaching staff. The accommodation is satisfactory but there are too few classrooms. Resources are good overall and there are excellent resources for information and communication technology and physical education. Financial controls are very good and the budget is very well managed. The evaluation of the impact on teaching and learning on spending decisions is very good. The school is successfully getting best value out of resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents feel that their children like school, work hard and are making good progress.• They think that behaviour is good and that the school is helping their children become responsible and mature.• Parents feel that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed.• They feel that the school works closely with them and helps them with problems or concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision for homework.• Year 11 pupils remaining in school until the end of the term.• That the school should develop post-16 provision.

The inspectors agree with the parents that the provision of homework is inconsistent. The leaving date for pupils in Year 11 is set by the local authority and, whilst the inspection team sympathises with the parents' view, this matter is outside its remit. The school was initially established as a primary school, but now caters for pupils aged 11 to 16. Consequently, the school lacks sufficient space for the age range of pupils who currently attend. There is insufficient space to retain pupils over the age of 16.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. All pupils enter the school with attainment that is well below national averages. Most have poor language skills and a significant number have additional specific learning difficulties. Pupils who have been diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) have additional emotional and communication difficulties and some have obsessive behaviours. The attainment of pupils on entry is varied but most pupils entering the school in Year 7 are working towards Level 1 or have just achieved Level 1. A small number of more able pupils have reached Level 2 in certain areas of the core subjects, for example, in the more practical aspects of science. However, standards on entry are falling as the local authority has a policy of integrating as many pupils as possible into mainstream classes. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the school and there are no pupils in the school whose home language is not English. Generally, pupils achieve the targets set within their individual educational plans (IEP) very well and most pupils make good or very good progress, apart from the few pupils who fail to read adequately because their specific learning difficulties have not been adequately diagnosed.
2. During the five years pupils remain in the school, most make very good progress and almost all pupils who leave obtain accreditations in more than one area, including some General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSE). In 2002, 14 pupils took the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum Tests and Tasks in mathematics and science. Pupils were not entered for English and their standards were teacher assessed. In English, well over half of the pupils were at Level 2 and the remainder were at Level 1 or 2. In mathematics over 40 per cent of pupils attained Level 3 and approximately 20 per cent were at Level 2; the remainder were at Level 1 or W. In science, half of the pupils obtained Level 3. and a further 10 per cent Level 2. These results were achieved by staff reading questions for pupils. During the same year, seven pupils achieved GCSE grades in mathematics and four in art. In addition, all pupils gained certification in a good range of other examinations in art, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and accreditations in the Youth Award Scheme (YAS), the Transitional Challenge (ASDAN), the National Skills Profile (NSP) and the Trident Awards. By the end of Year 11, pupils' standards have improved sufficiently for them to be able to transfer to college where almost all complete their courses or take up employment where they remain successful. Overall, pupils make very good progress and leave with standards which are below national averages. The GCSE results represent excellent achievement for these more able pupils, and other accreditations represent very good progress and achievement for all pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11. These achievements are the consequence of very good teaching and the excellent relationships in the school which foster very good attitudes to school on the part of the pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
3. Overall, most pupils in the school make very good progress, taking into account their levels of learning difficulties. In English, progress in speaking and listening skills is good and sometime very good and by Year 11, pupils answer questions well and express their views clearly. Progress in reading and writing is satisfactory. The over concentration on spelling, phonics and handwriting has left too little time for pupils to read books and write independently and the lack of a whole school approach to the development of reading and writing skills further limits pupils' progress in these areas. More able pupils read with some confidence but few can write sentences with confidence. Pupils with specific learning difficulties make the least progress, mainly because there is too little diagnosis of their individual difficulties. The school is aware that pupils have difficulties in gaining accreditation in English and is addressing this issue within the subject development plans. While pupils make good progress in speaking and listening skills across the curriculum, there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their reading and writing skills and so progress is adversely affected.
4. Pupils' achievements and progress in mathematics are very good. In Year 7, less able pupils

make good progress in their skills with money. Others gain a good understanding of area and more able pupils can work out the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes using the dimensions of length and width.

5. Throughout Years 8 and 9, pupils, including those with ASD who are fully included in the class discussions and group activities, make very good progress. By the end of Year 9, most less able pupils, with the support of apparatus and number lines, have a good grasp of addition and subtraction of numbers to 20, coin values, odd and even numbers, common fractions and the use of the main units for measurement of length, weight and capacity. They know and name the main geometric shapes. More able pupils apply their understanding of addition and subtraction to money and measurement and solve simple problems using these units. They convert digital to analogue time correctly and carry out surveys, recording data and drawing appropriate graphs. They understand co-ordinates and locate places on simple maps. The most able pupils have a good understanding of, and use, mathematical symbols, including 'greater than' and 'less than' and a basic knowledge of probability. They understand fractions, know about mean, mode and median when working with data, measure more accurately, using grams and millimetres, and make sensible estimates of weight, length and capacity.
6. In Years 10 and 11, when pupils work towards various accreditations, pupils develop well their understanding of place value and make good progress in practical mathematics activities using coins, scales and graded measuring containers. In a module of work for GCSE, pupils read a thermometer and make good estimates of temperature, responding to challenging questions. Some interpret information from graphs, read a train timetable and calculate distances. By the end of Year 11, a small number of able pupils successfully complete the GCSE mathematics examinations; these pupils are confident in their application of number operations to investigations and problem solving. Most Year 11 pupils understand place value, find the sum and difference of two numbers and know about negative numbers. They use multiplication and division more confidently and find factors and multiples of given small numbers. Teachers plan very well for the use of numeracy in all subjects and so pupils make very good progress across the curriculum.
7. Achievement in science, in all years, is very good overall. Within lessons it is frequently very good or excellent, but an analysis of pupils' work over time indicates that their progress is restricted because of their weak literacy and handwriting skills. In Years 7 and 8, pupils experiment with magnets and know that opposite poles attract. They experiment with changing materials and examine the links between liquids and solids, or work out simple problems involving forces. By the end of Year 9, they classify living and non-living things and identify materials that are irreversibly changed, for example, by heating. They identify the nutrients in different foods and conduct experiments into body temperatures and insulation. They accurately identify the body's major organs, and understand the reproductive system, which is linked to sex education and basic health and hygiene. Older pupils in Year 10 and 11 explore aspects of the environment and pollution. They use computers to experiment with light sources or test their own bodies for pulse and heart rate differences. In all years pupils are encouraged to estimate and record their findings, using prepared worksheets and tables, or by drawing and labelling their experiments.
8. Pupils make excellent progress during their time in school in all aspects of the curriculum for ICT. In Year 11 the majority of pupils achieve some form of accreditation. In Year 7, most pupils print off materials from the Internet, use the database to produce colourful graphs and use spreadsheets to produce record cards from an address file. All pupils develop their keyboard and word-processing skills well. They show very good skills in changing font, size of print and designing skills when they produce a wrapper for a chocolate bar. Year 8 and 9 pupils are beginning to use computers with confidence for a variety of purposes. They are able to use a scanner to add pictures to their text. Pupils know and understand the use of picture and text boxes when using a word processor to its full extent. They have an excellent understanding of the use of colours and confidently use clip-art to improve the visual effect of their word processing. By the end of Year 11, pupils have produced a cover for a CD-ROM in full colour and designed notepaper and business cards. All pupils confidently log on to the Internet and quickly find a suitable website by using a search engine correctly. They use 'drop-down menus naturally and save work automatically. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good and so pupils make

very good progress in the application of their skills in ICT.

9. In art, pupils make excellent progress in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. In Year 7, the pupils develop skills in using clay and use sketchbooks to research the proportions of a human face when drawing. They are confident in different media, including printing, drawing, textiles and three-dimensional sculptures. In Year 8, the pupils' observational drawing becomes more accurate and, by the end of Year 9, the pupils are able to produce pottery of high quality and design and make excellent collages using texture and form well. The excellent teaching in Years 10 and 11 helps the pupils to achieve highly and enables the pupils to work with textiles very well, producing excellent batik and repeating printed patterns. In all years, the work of famous artists is studied in depth, extending pupils' knowledge of different styles and techniques.
10. All pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology because the well-planned projects, designed by the teacher, help them to build on their previously learned skills. However, too little attention is paid to the planning and designing of an artefact by pupils before they make it, although the articles made are of high quality, albeit often achieved with a great deal of adult help.
11. Life skills is an excellent combination of a number of areas including food technology, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. All these aspects prepare pupils well for life after school and this is a strength. The pupils make very good progress, particularly in practical skills, when the staff have consistently high expectations. Provision for the teaching of citizenship is developing well within the personal, social and health education and the life skills curriculum, and its impact is evident in the pupils' improving social skills, particularly those on the autistic spectrum. Pupils' emotional needs are well supported through the good opportunities for personal, social and health education. Additionally, further contribution to pupils' emotional wellbeing is made in the tutor time, at the beginning and at the end of each day, when pupils' access targets and behaviour throughout the day is assessed with them.
12. Pupils achieve well in history by the end of Year 9. Pupils in Year 7 understand that we can find out about the past in a number of ways such as looking at pictures and artefacts. Pupils in Year 8 make comparisons between life in modern Britain with life during the time of the Tudors and Stuarts. With help they complete family trees. They use photographic evidence well to compare farming now with farming in the Middle Ages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography in Years 7 to 9 and progressively develop their mapping skills and their knowledge and understanding of local and world geography. They show a good understanding of river systems and of the water cycle.
13. In French most pupils make adequate progress, taking into account their learning difficulties. However, pupils' progress over time is less assured because of timetable arrangements.
14. Pupils in Year 7 are introduced to musical notation and encouraged to 'read' music as they play. They learn the names of the notes and, in one lesson, the most able performed a sequence of notes well. Satisfactory progress is a result of the progress made by pupils in clapping out rhythms, accompanying classical musical pieces such as 'Swan Lake' with percussion instruments and making up chords. Pupils also know that there is a Pentatonic Scale and use it when they play the keyboards. Pupils in Year 7 are introduced to the various instruments of the orchestra. Pupils' musical experiences are further extended in Year 8 when they explore music through a theme and perform 'bird songs' and music that illustrates the movements of a fish. By the end of Year 9, pupils are able to name most of the common notes, understand the use of chords and have a good understanding of classical musical styles, dynamics and harmony.
15. Pupils in all year groups make excellent progress in athletic activities. They respond very well to the excellent teaching of throwing and running techniques and improve rapidly in their performances. By Year 11, they have a good knowledge of athletic events and categorise them correctly. In physical education lessons, pupils experience a wide range of both indoor and outdoor games according to the time of year and make very good progress. These activities include exercise and fitness programmes, swimming, indoor games such as table-tennis, outdoor

adventurous activities, such as rock climbing and canoeing, and orienteering. Several pupils make excellent progress and are selected for county teams to take part in special tournaments and competitions. School teams regularly feature as winners of local and county events.

16. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education during their time in school. In Year 7, pupils are introduced to Christianity and know that the Bible is in two parts and is an historical record. They can identify which stories come from the Old Testament, for example, the story of Noah and the Ark and which are from the New. Pupils also know about Judaism and visit a synagogue. Through the celebration of various religious festivals, for example, Easter and the Chinese New Year, they gain an understanding of the other religions in the world.
17. Pupils in Year 8 continue to make satisfactory progress when they compare various religions. Towards the end of Year 8, pupils study symbolism and in Year 9, this work is extended to include the concept of Love and relationships. In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to be well motivated within their religious knowledge lessons and so make satisfactory progress. In Years 10 and 11, pupils understand that they live in a multi-ethnic society and know that they must tolerate the different beliefs and traditions of other cultures who live in Britain. They show good recall of previous learning when they compared religious artefacts from Judaism, Islam and Christianity.
18. The range of external accreditations available to pupils is very good overall and provides very good opportunities for pupils to focus their learning during Years 10 and 11. Pupils also make very good progress in the school's work related curriculum that includes careers education, work experience and the additional opportunities provided by their attendance at college.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. As at the last inspection, pupils continue to have very good attitudes to school and learning. Parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school. When they arrive, most are happy and look forward to their day, greeting teachers and friends alike with a quick comment and a smile. Pupils try hard to meet their teachers' expectations and work to the best of their ability, especially because they are motivated by very good quality teaching. This was evident, for example, in a Year 7 ICT lesson when pupils working on Logo were faced with concepts of forwards and backwards and through trial and error eventually worked out how to get the 'roamer' to move in the required direction. Pupils' very good, positive attitudes to learning are seen in most lessons, and are a positive feature of school.
20. The caring and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and they respond well. Staff are quick to celebrate their successes and pupils' individual access targets are used very well to ensure that pupils understand that they must participate fully at all times. The very good teaching overall makes a major contribution to the school's generally high expectations of how pupils behave and pupils are willing to join in fully in all activities, even when the task in hand is difficult and requires patience and concentration.
21. Behaviour in and around school is very good, for example, in the dining hall at lunchtimes and when pupils are moving around the school. Excellent behaviour was observed when older pupils visit the local college as part of a programme for inclusion; they were seen to integrate very well. There are strategies for any instances of poor behaviour and the staff are skilled at dealing with any such difficulties quickly and with firm and kindly intervention. There are high expectations of courtesy and respect at all times during the day. Staff are excellent role models and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and between the staff themselves are the foundation on which pupils' very good behaviour is based. In the tutor sessions and in many parts of the curriculum, including life skills and PSHE, teachers make positive reference to the way pupils behave and when pupils are upset for any reason they listen to pupils and counsel them with sympathy and understanding.
22. There have been two short-term exclusions during the last year and all necessary procedures are fully in place. Throughout the school there is an obvious absence of oppressive behaviour,

including bullying and racism. Boys and girls work and socialise together very well and, while there is the usual banter between them, there were no instances during the inspection of interactions between pupils getting out of hand. Staff are always at hand and very accessible to the pupils. Teachers use every opportunity to help pupils recognise their worth as individuals and so pupils develop a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Pupils show good respect each other's feelings.

23. When given appropriate opportunities pupils show very good initiative and are willing to take responsibility. This was seen, for example, when a small group of older boys check daily to see if the school is clean and reports to the headteacher. Again in a physical education lesson, pupils collect up equipment quickly and in ICT sessions log on to their computers immediately they arrive into the class. In English pupils are encouraged to develop their independent learning skills, for example in choosing books they wish to read, and in physical education when they are encouraged to develop a new skill. A special feature of the school is the way pupils work hard with sustained concentration and take pride in their achievement. Pupils' self-esteem is regarded as very important and achievements, both large and small, are praised. Additionally, in almost all lessons pupils showed interest, enthusiasm and involvement in their work. For example, in a Year 7 music lesson, pupils were very keen to accept the teacher's challenge and prove to themselves and to their peers that they could play repeatedly a group of notes in the right sequence.
24. The attendance of the pupils is unsatisfactory and has deteriorated since the last inspection. The rate of attendance for the year 2001/2 was 88.2 per cent, with a high amount of unauthorised absence that compares unfavourably with similar special schools. Attendance improved in the autumn term of this academic year, but has dipped again recently. Most pupils attend regularly, but there are a few pupils who have long term absences for medical reasons. Also, there are a small number of pupils who do not like coming to school and who have insufficient support from their families to improve their attendance. Pupils who have good rates of attendance are making good or very good progress in their learning. However, the school has noted that pupils who do not attend regularly fail to reach their learning targets and make insufficient progress.
25. The punctuality of pupils is satisfactory. Nearly all pupils rely on the time keeping of taxis or local authority transport. Many pupils arrive in time for a prompt start to their morning tutor period, although this session is not as useful as it could be to consolidate reading and writing skills because a significant number of pupils arrive at varying times up to 9.15am. For the rest of the day, pupils move around promptly and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

26. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 3, and very good in Key Stage 4. Overall, it is very good and pupils make very good progress, a significant strength of the school.
27. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 3, and very good in Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching was excellent in one-in-five lessons, very good in nearly a quarter, good in nearly one in five and satisfactory in four out of ten lessons. In Key Stage 4, teaching in a quarter of lessons was judged to be excellent and in a further quarter good; it is very good in a third and satisfactory in just over one in ten lessons. None of the teaching in the 76 lessons observed by inspectors was judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection.
28. A consistently strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the excellent management of pupils. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils, knowing their needs and personal targets very well and allocating them to working groups according to their needs, capabilities and the nature of the task or topic being studied. They use the school's 'star chart' reward system very effectively to motivate pupils to achieve their targets, such as listening to others, taking turns or not calling out answers, and review each pupil's achievement at the end of lessons. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is nearly always good and often excellent.
29. Lessons are generally very well planned with clear learning targets that are well matched to each working group or individual need. Pupils know what is expected and gain a sense of achievement

through their success, resulting in them working at tasks with enthusiasm and interest.

30. Teaching is very good overall in mathematics, science, and Life Skills (which includes PSHE and citizenship) and excellent in physical education, art and information and communication technology. Particular strengths in these subjects are the teachers' subject expertise and enthusiasm. They use their knowledge of the subject very well, understanding pupils' difficulties and providing appropriate experiences to enable them to improve their standards and grasp the underlying concepts. For example, in science, pupils in Year 11 were enabled to understand the basis of plant classification and identification by following a carefully stepped sequence of comparing obvious characteristics of leaves and making 'yes or no' choices, to using more complex classification keys. Pupils are highly motivated to complete challenging tasks as a result of the teachers' enthusiasm, proficiency in demonstration, and clear explanations; they enjoy their success or improved performances. This was well illustrated in a swimming lesson in which pupils improved their stroke and breathing patterns.
31. In English and history, the quality of teaching is mainly good. The very good relationships and good use of resources, including ICT and the Internet, lead to effective learning experiences for most pupils. Good use is made of questioning to develop pupils' understanding such as when discussing rationing during the 2nd World War with pupils in Year 9. However, there is often a heavy reliance on worksheets, reducing opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing for a range of purposes and in some lessons more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In French, while teaching is good, the organisation of the timetable creates a lack of continuity and planning for progression of experiences according to pupils' achievements.
32. Teaching is satisfactory in music, design and technology, geography and religious education. In design and technology the teaching of the practical making skills in a wide range of products and structures and use of tools is good and often very good. However, there is insufficient attention given to pupils' research and design skills or to their evaluation of their work. In music, planning fails to take into account modern popular forms and so pupils fail to develop knowledge and understanding of the music they listen to every day. In geography there is too little attention paid to planning for the development of pupils' literacy skills. In the best teaching in religious education lessons, pupils are challenged to think for themselves. However, there is an over reliance on the use of worksheets in many lessons.
33. Teaching of the key skills of numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is very good. It is satisfactory in literacy. For numeracy, very good opportunities to develop and apply skills with number and measurement and to consolidate pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary, for position or sequence, such as first, second, before, after, on, under, left and right, are identified in schemes of work and planned in lessons. For example, the use of a range of measurements in science as part of experiments and investigations, counting, measuring time and distance, and positional and sequence vocabulary in physical education, and using scale and co-ordinates in geography. The use of ICT throughout the school in support of learning in most curriculum areas is very good and improving in most subject areas. It is particularly well used in mathematics, where pupils have regular use of appropriate software to practice and extend their number skills and solve problems involving the range of mathematical operations, for example, the use of progressive, challenging programs on coin values and the use of money. Teachers have very good skills in the use of the interactive whiteboards that are installed in almost all classrooms and use them well to illustrate the main learning points in lessons, for example, using a program on the classification of animals to teach and discuss the criteria to recognise mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish with pupils in Year 11.
34. The development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. A strength is the very good development of speaking and listening skills in all curriculum areas. Pupils are included in discussion, encouraged to discuss their ideas and become confident to talk in front of their peers, visitors and to an audience, such as during school assemblies, performances or concerts. They become attentive listeners and learn to value the ideas of others as a result of the clear personal targets and the positive daily attention given to those pupils who find this difficult. However, teaching to promote pupils' reading, spelling and writing skills across the curriculum is less

effective. Worksheets are not checked for readability and undermine pupils' confidence when they are too demanding. Additionally, individual targets for improving reading skills are not shared with all teachers to ensure effective planning of appropriate approaches, and for use of materials, to support the progress in reading of those pupils with significant reading difficulties. Opportunities for writing are not sufficiently planned in all subject areas and the use of easy-to-answer worksheets or charts, to record information, limits pupils' writing to single words or brief statements. This is unsatisfactory and does not promote a positive ethos for writing throughout the school.

35. The quality of teaching of communication, personal and social skills for pupils with difficulties within the autistic spectrum is excellent. Teachers responsible for the special class have acquired very good skills in meeting their needs and, through very good dissemination of their training, have enabled the rest of the staff to use effective teaching strategies to meet these needs when the pupils with ASD are included in their lessons. Teaching in the individual and small group sessions focusing on speech and language is excellent. For example, pupils are effectively taught to use full sentences rather than to speak using single words or phrases by being challenged to describe everyday events in well-chosen photographs such as 'The man and the lady are watching television'. Excellent strategies are used to enable the pupils to extend their tolerance of change and develop social awareness.
36. Teachers generally use assessment well to monitor pupils' progress and set appropriate learning targets in their lesson planning. They carefully assess pupils' learning and know what they need to learn next. There are good systems for effective recording of pupils' progress that enables evaluation of the progress they make over time. However, in English, there is too much reliance on the adopted computer software in this process, which narrows the focus for learning targets to be used within the English department and is not supported throughout the curriculum.
37. Very good use is made of time. Lessons start promptly and pupils are quickly introduced to the lesson objectives and how they are linked to previous work. Lessons generally continue at a brisk pace, maintaining pupils' interest and attention and plenary sessions effectively review pupils' learning. Learning support assistants are effectively involved in lesson planning and preparation and in consequence they provide skilled support for pupils' learning. Resources are very well used overall, as a result of thorough planning and preparation of lessons. The school's policy for homework has recently been reviewed and is it now available at parents' request; this makes its provision inconsistent across subjects.

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

38. The school provides pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 with a good range of learning activities. It provides a very good range of especially relevant activities for pupils in Years 10 and 11. This shows very good improvement since the previous inspection when a key issue was to comply fully with the statutory requirements for a balanced curriculum. The school also failed to provide adequately for geography, history and PSHE and not all schemes of work were in place. All of these deficiencies, except for schemes of work in subjects taught by part-time staff, have now been addressed. The school meets statutory requirements for providing the National Curriculum and religious education. It has also achieved its aim to provide a 'curriculum that goes beyond the classroom and prepares pupils for the adult world of work, leisure and potential parenthood.'
39. There are significant variations in the quality of schemes of work which are used to plan lessons throughout the year and these reflect the quality of the subject curriculum. For example, schemes of work in art and ICT are excellent and good in mathematics, science and physical education. PSHE and life skills are very good. However, in some subjects such as music, drama and a modern foreign language, schemes of work are inadequate. Schemes of work in other subjects are at least satisfactory.
40. The school ensures that pupils in Years 10 and 11 have very good opportunities for national

accreditation of their work. The exception is currently in English and this is listed as a target on the school's improvement plan. The most able pupils take the GCSE in art and mathematics and all other pupils sit entry level in mathematics, science, ICT and art. There is also very good curricular provision for pupils to gain accreditation in nationally recognised certificates through the ASDAN and the Trident award schemes, which are vocational and work related qualifications. Within the timetable there is a greater time allocated to physical education, life skills and work related activities than is seen in a mainstream school. This balance is effective and meets pupils' needs and this time is very well used by staff, with pupils achieving high standards in these areas of the curriculum and showing much enthusiasm for the opportunities they receive.

41. The implementation of the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy is satisfactory but there is still much to do to ensure it is having sufficient impact on the raising of standards. Staff have been trained in the strategy and it is incorporated into subject policies and schemes of work. Key words are used very well in many subjects and are displayed in each classroom. A common approach to spelling has been adopted and teachers promote speaking and listening well. However, there are too few opportunities for reading and extended writing within English itself and too little planning for reading and writing across the curriculum.
42. Provision for extra-curricular activity is excellent. There is a wealth of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school. In addition, there are other out of school and residential experiences which promote learning and contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take full advantage of these opportunities and show commitment and enthusiasm. High quality teaching is provided by staff from the local secondary school which has Sports College status. Coaches from Southampton Football Club and Hampshire Cricket Club enhance opportunities for physical education and made a valuable contribution to the quality of this provision. There are after-school art and ICT clubs, where parents sometimes work with pupils. These present opportunities for pupils to complete assignments and consolidate learning. All pupils have the opportunity for residential trips, for example, to Exmoor or 'Calshot' or to the 'Privett Centre'. Here pupils can relax in beautiful surroundings, practise life skills and engage in outdoor pursuits.
43. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Local employers help prepare pupils for life after school, for example, through work placement interviews. They also welcome them for work experience, for example, at the local crèche. Pupils visit the fire station and receive visits from the police, the RSPCA and a visually impaired resident. They use local facilities such as the bowling alley and swimming pool and entertain elderly residents to tea. Community links are strengthened further during community service, with some pupils providing help in the garden for local neighbours.
44. The constructiveness of the school's links with other schools and colleges in the area is excellent. Productive links with the local Sports College have provided pupils with a broad range of physical activities. Through the special schools' programme the school has links with a language unit, with benefits for both schools, with pupils from the unit making use of the school's ICT facility. There is very good involvement with the Basingstoke Consortium and Basingstoke College provides a rich and rewarding range of work-related courses.
45. The school's provision for careers and vocational education is excellent. The co-ordination of the careers programme is very well organised and thorough, ensuring the various opportunities to experience the world of work are linked and relevant. The school links very effectively with the 'Connexions Service' to provide advice on careers and to steer the pupils towards appropriate jobs and further education on leaving school. By the end of Year 11 most pupils have an idea of what is available to them, are able to make a considered choice and can "sell themselves". In parallel the school organises, together with the Basingstoke College of Technology, the work-related curriculum that gives the pupils a very valuable chance to experience employment in a range of settings, from hairdressing and hotel work to carpentry and garage jobs. This then culminates, for most pupils, in longer blocks of work experience, when they learn to be punctual, dress appropriately and learn what it is like to go into work every day for two or three weeks. Within school the Youth Award Scheme is very effective in building up pupils' independence and self-

esteem in practical and community activities. In addition the life skills lessons are extremely valuable in complementing the careers programme. During the inspection week pupils underwent mock interviews with professional volunteer “employers” and gained very worthwhile experience in how to present themselves. At Dove House, pupils with special needs, who otherwise would find the world very daunting, are given every opportunity to leave school and take on useful and fulfilling employment.

46. The school pays very good attention to issues of inclusion. All pupils are given every opportunity to be fully involved in all aspects of school life. As far as it is possible, the school implements a policy of inclusion in all aspects of its work and this includes those pupils who are on the autistic spectrum.
47. Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and its quality has been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils are given opportunities to consider the beliefs of Christianity and other major world faiths in religious education. In assembly, pupils listen respectfully to a prayer and each assembly has a clear theme. However, on occasions, insufficient time is given for pupils to reflect on the theme outlined in the assembly. Pupils show they have respect themselves and others, for example, when a pupil, who was learning to play a brass instrument performed, they clapped his efforts. Again, pupils show a sense of empathy with others and show concern and compassion. A good example of this was the concern a pupil showed for a classmate who had his arm in a sling. Pupils are given every opportunity to value the achievements of others and in many classes good work is shown to the group and valued and praised. Certificates are awarded in a weekly assembly and the ‘star system’ makes a major contribution to pupils’ spiritual development as it develops pupils’ ability to work for long-term goals. In art, pupils show an appreciation of beauty and are able to channel their creativity into their work.
48. Provision for pupils’ moral development is very good overall. Teachers and their assistants work well together and have excellent relationships with the pupils. They provide excellent role models and make it clear what standard of behaviour is expected in lessons, around the school and in the community. Pupils show that they can distinguish between right and wrong and show confidence in their actions. This is demonstrated by the group of pupils have the responsibility to ensure that the school is always clean and tidy and by the pupils who regularly help to clean the hall after lunch. Life skills, including elements of personal health and social education, makes explicit what is expected of pupils and helps them to become clear about what is right and wrong. All classes have codes of conduct displayed and pupils have helped to develop these rules. Discussions are also sometimes extended to other areas. For example, in a Year 11 religious education lesson, pupils expressed their concern about the way slaves were captured. The tutor time, at the beginning and the end of the day, provides very good opportunities for pupils to discuss whether if they have met their access targets, supporting their moral development.
49. Social education is very good overall. Pupils have respect for each other, as well as for themselves; for example, some older pupils demonstrated this by holding doors open for visitors and constantly asking the inspection team if they needed anything done for them. Lunchtimes are well ordered, social occasions and there are very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for clearing up. Pupils learn to have good table manners and take part in social conversations, eating together in a friendly way and socialising together well in the playground. The pupils work very well together in pairs and in small groups. There is very little friction between pupils; they often look after each other very well, and take care of their own property, as well as things belonging to their classmates or the school. They are learning to become good citizens and valued members of society. They give polite consideration to visitors. The various extra-curricular activities and the social occasions provided by visits and sporting activities all make a very good contribution to pupils’ social development, as do the opportunities for residential visits and field trips.
50. Provision for pupils’ cultural development is good. There are some good opportunities to learn about their own culture and other cultures in music and English, and excellent opportunities in art and design. In religious education pupils learn about values and beliefs of other faiths. Through

these experiences pupils develop an ability to recognise and understand their own culture and the cultures of other races. Pupils are well aware that they live in a multi-ethnic society and the school, through the assemblies and through discussions in classrooms, ensures that pupils develop an appreciation of the diversity and inter-dependence of cultures. This was observed in religious education when pupils in Year 11 compared and contrasted the religious artefacts of differing religions. In other lessons pupils study the lives of famous writers, artists and orators such as Martin Luther King. All these experiences add to pupils' cultural development. However, the contribution made by music to the cultural development of pupils could be greater.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. Overall, the school has good procedures for the health, safety and welfare of the pupils in its care. The systems for health and safety are good. The governors and senior staff carry out regular and effective risk assessments of the site to ensure there are no hazards. Each subject leader is responsible for safe working practices in their classroom, but the safety standards are not sufficiently high in all areas. In design and technology, the workshop is cluttered and hazardous, the kiln does not have a proper flue and guards are not always in place on the machines. Awareness of health and safety in the science laboratory is very good. The recent appointment of the science co-ordinator as the health and safety representative bodes well for consistently safe working areas across the school. A key issue at the last inspection related to health and safety hazards on the playing field because of the lack of suitable fencing. Since then the school has landscaped the grounds and erected fencing to prevent dogs using the sports area. At the end of the day the front drive is very busy with taxis and mini-buses, but any potential accidents are prevented because all staff chaperone their pupils off site and keep a vigilant eye on safety. A small number of health and safety issues were raised during the inspection and were promptly dealt with.
52. The school has good procedures for child protection. The assistant headteacher is the person designated to link with the child protection agencies and regularly attends local authority training sessions. In practice all staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse and many have had recent effective training. However, it is unsatisfactory that the secretarial staff, who deal with first aid and welfare, have not been included in the latest training on child protection guidelines.
53. Welfare and first aid systems are very good. Accidents are recorded meticulously and parents always informed should the staff be concerned. Medical needs of particular pupils are well known by all staff and the secretarial staff carefully note when medicines are administered. There is no dedicated medical room, but if pupils are feeling ill, they sit quietly and comfortably under the watchful eye of the office staff. Trips out of school are planned very well, with the welfare of the pupils being paramount.
54. The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Registers are completed correctly for the morning and afternoon sessions and any unexplained absence is followed up within a day. The school's own attendance book is used very well to track the absence rates of each class. Currently, the overall attendance rate is unsatisfactory because there are three pupils on long-term sick leave and some pupils whose nature of special need means they are finding it difficult to settle into regular school attendance. Staff have been working very carefully and sensitively with these families who find it difficult to persuade their children to attend regularly. In a few instances this works well and the pupil returns to more consistent attendance patterns. Pupils are actively rewarded in the achievement assembly if they have "made a difference" and improved their attendance.
55. The school has exemplary systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. In a special school where there are increasing numbers of pupils with ASD, all the school staff work together very effectively to make sure routines are regular and expectations consistent. Achievement is made a challenge to be enjoyed and striven for. The award of "star cards" is highly valued by the pupils. The staff make the end-of-week reward assembly a very special occasion so the pupils genuinely appreciate the

winning of trophies and certificates for high achievement and good behaviour. Rewards are of high quality and involve exciting trips to theme parks or the theatre in London. Pupils who have “made a difference” are given special mention. However, the school is also clear that inappropriate behaviour and lack of effort will not be tolerated. The headteacher has involved the school community well in managing its own behaviour and consulted the school council on how misbehaving pupils should be helped to improve. The council representatives were clear that pupils who receive “negatives” should be named in assembly. Although at first staff were reluctant to highlight these pupils, the idea is proving effective. The headteacher sets a challenge in assembly to these pupils to improve and celebrates success the next week.

56. The systems for monitoring and eliminating bullying are excellent. The outstanding relationships and careful vigilance by all staff ensure that any potential bullying is nipped in the bud. The school council is used as a very effective sounding board for bullying issues and a “bully box” is available for confidential notes from pupils who feel they are being picked on. It is extremely rare to find any bullying, but should it occur the school has very effective systems to settle the matter.
57. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ personal development are very good. A major and very effective focus of the pupils’ time at Dove House is developing their ability to live independently in the wider community. Throughout the school day, whether in lessons, at assemblies or during lunchtimes, the pupils are encouraged to be sociable and useful members of the school community, providing a very good grounding for life beyond school. Pupils are given responsibilities around the school, ranging from collecting the registers to helping clear up at lunchtime. Citizenship is very well promoted through the school council. A wealth of day trips and residential visits ensures the pupils are given a rich taste of experiences and a chance to perfect their social skills. In school, the life skills classes are an excellent opportunity for the pupils to gain confidence in personal development in supportive surroundings. Each pupil has appropriate targets to improve their personal development and these are monitored carefully at the regular reviews. However, the personal development of some pupils is marred by their lack of reading, which on occasion hampers their good progress in life skills in other areas.
58. Excellent support and guidance is provided for pupils with ASD and its effectiveness is evident in the way pupils are included in lessons with their peers for a significant part of each day. The system of using ‘visual’ achievement reward cards and a timetable prepared with, and by, the pupils each day makes an excellent contribution to each pupil’s secure knowledge of his/her daily programme and creates a positive attitude to achievement. An example of the excellent strategies used to support pupils with ASD, to enable them to overcome anxiety, is the way a ‘story-line’ is developed with each pupil to prepare them for significant events or changes of routine. One pupil in Year 9 was happy to go with peers to the hall to take part in the Key Stage 3 SAT tests after having the ‘story’ of what was to happen written out with him and rehearsed several times in school and at home during the week before.
59. Some of the pupils with ASD have particular additional communication difficulties such as articulation or sequencing difficulties and very good support is funded by the school to provide a speech and language therapist to assess needs, monitor progress and share skills with unit staff to develop programmes.
60. The school’s procedures in relation to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice are good and well established. Annual reviews of each pupil’s progress and needs are suitably comprehensive and parents are fully involved in contributing to discussion about their child’s progress and future targets. However, for some pupils, such as those with speech and language difficulties, there is seldom an input from the Health Authority and this is unsatisfactory.
61. A significant minority of pupils have specific learning difficulties and insufficient investigation and diagnosis of their needs is carried out to enable teachers to meet their learning needs effectively. These pupils do not make the progress that is expected of them, particularly in relation to their reading and writing skills. There are insufficient links and partnerships with other professionals to enable effective multidisciplinary collaboration in diagnosing these learning difficulties and developing more effective learning programmes. The support the school receives from the Health

Authority for such pupils is inadequate.

62. Procedures are very good for assessing the progress pupils are making and are effective in monitoring pupils' progress throughout the school. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection when assessment and recording were at an early stage of development. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are also very good. For example, they are excellent in mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education, and very good in science and art; this is a significant strength of the school. For example, in mathematics, the very good development of a progressive attainment checklist of specific, clear learning targets for each element of the subject provides a secure base for the assessment of the pupils' skills. Assessment is good in English and history and satisfactory in geography, music, design and technology, religious education and in French. In some subjects, such as art and life skills, the pupils use self-assessment booklets specifically designed for them to record their own progress. This is a very good feature. All pupils receive marks for the effort they make in a subject and for what they attain. All subjects have recording sheets showing targets for the pupils and records of the achievement of these targets. The individual target setting overall is very good and over time gives a very good indication of pupils' academic progress. When the pupils enter the school, a baseline assessment in mathematics, English and personal and social development enables the school to set appropriate individual targets for the pupils and this is good practice. The school keeps very good records of each pupil's learning and behaviour each year and the learning element is graded according to the individual help the pupils need to access the National Curriculum. All pupils have individual learning plans linked to the statements of special educational needs and these plans support the pupils' academic and social development well.
63. The co-ordination of assessment is very good. The teacher responsible analyses the pupils' results thoroughly, and the records across the majority of the curriculum do show the good and very good progress the pupils make. The school sets targets against the skills planned for each subject, however, these are not all linked to the full range of levels of the National Curriculum, which would give a better picture of the pupils' progress against the curriculum, and this is an area for development. However, the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is good, except in reading and spelling because the data is not analysed in the department to determine the pupils' difficulties and there is no use of standardised testing to monitor progress or carry out an error analysis for detailed target setting.
64. The system of rewards for work in class and progress in behavioural objectives culminates in the achievement assembly held each Friday. The very good atmosphere of celebration for pupils' work has a very positive impact on the emphasis the school has created for pupils' success in all areas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Parents are very supportive of the school. They are very appreciative of the individual support and care given to their children with special educational needs. Parents particularly like the fact that their children love coming to school, behave well, are taught to be mature and responsible and that they, as parents, feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive comments.
66. Some parents are not happy with the amount of homework given to their children. The inspectors concur with the parents' concerns and agree that the homework requirements are not clear. The school has various policies and statements on homework but until the school consults governors and parents, as well as staff, and comes out with an unambiguous agreement supported by the majority, parents will be unsure as to the school's approach. Currently, the provision for homework is inconsistent throughout the school. The home-school books are a useful means of communication between parents and the class tutor, but they are only sporadically used for messages about timetable changes or necessary equipment and are not used enough to support homework and reading.

67. Otherwise, the quality of information provided to parents is good and has improved since the last inspection. The regular newsletters are detailed, “up-beat” and give a very good overview of what the pupils are learning. Parents and pupils new to the school are settled in very well and the preparatory information provided to the parents of pupils with ASD is excellent. The annual governors’ report to parents is informative, but omits some legally required information (status and term of each governor, date of election of next parent governor, address of the chairman of governors, GCSE results, more detail on SEN policy). The school is open and welcoming and provides much good quality information informally and verbally.
68. The school has very effective links with parents. At the time of the last inspection links were judged to “be sound and improving”. Clearly there has been an improvement in the links with parents since the last inspection. The school values the views of the parents and rightly feels their input benefits the education of their children. A useful survey of parents in 2000 is about to be repeated. Following the comments from some parents that they found the annual reports confusing, the school has reviewed their content and format. The annual review and report are now a combined document, which allows the parents to have a more accurate picture of how their child has progressed in learning over the year and to share with the school ways of helping them learn more. All subjects of the curriculum are covered, but sometimes there is insufficient accurate information on progress in reading and writing. Recent parent partnership courses have given parents good insight into the teaching of English, life skills and ICT.
69. The contribution of parents to their children’s learning at school and at home is good. The active Friends of Dove House association organises successful social events for the parents and children and raises money for the school. The summer picnic is always very popular and provides a welcome opportunity for parents to meet and support the school. Although the attendance at the annual meeting for the governors to report to parents is minimal, nearly all parents turn up for their child’s annual review meeting. Some parents are conscientious in hearing their children read at home, but this good practice is not sufficiently widespread. Similarly the home-school diaries are not used enough for parents and class teacher to communicate about pupil progress. This is particularly important when most parents do not come to the school each day. Overall, the good impact of the parents’ involvement on the work of the school helps the pupils to have consistent support between home and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The leadership and management of the headteacher and the senior management team are good. The headteacher, who was appointed in 1996 just before the last inspection, fulfils his duties very well and provides a very clear educational direction for the school. He has a vision for the school, encapsulated within the school’s mission statement of ‘making a difference’. The school’s aims and objective are shared by the staff and permeate the work of the school. Since the last inspection, when there were issues related to curriculum organisation and teaching, he has worked very hard at developing the curriculum and improving teaching and learning and has ensured that the school has made very good progress overall in relation to the key issues identified. The curriculum is now subject based and mainly taught by specialist teachers. This has meant a re-organisation of the teaching areas in the school and the setting up of subject bases, the appointment of teachers and developing the skills of existing staff members. Throughout this process the governing body has actively supported. They are well informed of the progress made in relation to the school improvement plan and are fully involved in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of their spending decisions.
71. An interesting feature of the school are the ‘Leadership Group Meetings’. These are attended by governors and school staff. Through these meetings the governors, the headteacher and senior staff review the school’s monitoring of teaching and learning and the improvements within subject areas. Subject reviews are prepared for by classroom observations and the writing of a report, for the governors, on the progress of the subject by the co-ordinator. Currently, the advice and guidance provided for teachers in their preparation for their subject review within the Leadership Group meetings lack a sufficient focus on cross-curricular issues. This makes it possible for the members of the Leadership Group to be unaware that a group of pupils may underachieve in a

particular area, for example, in reading and writing in all subject areas. However, these meetings, together with the careful monitoring and guidance of teaching and learning by senior staff, have ensured that the quality of teaching is very good overall and, in most areas of the curriculum, pupils' achievements and standards continue to rise. However, the monitoring of the work of the part-time teachers is less effective than it is for all other staff and this affects the overall quality of teaching and learning in these areas. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively and Year 11 pupils now achieve an increasing number of accreditations, fulfilling one of the aims of the school. All this work is supported by clear performance management objectives and appropriate training and support for staff undertaking co-ordinators' roles.

72. The leadership and management of the governing body are very good. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and contributes effectively to shaping the direction of the school. The astute and supportive chair of governors gives consistently loyal support and has been a steady influence through the school's significant changes. Governors give good commitment to developing the school's aims and appreciate the good information given by the headteacher to help them undertake strategic decisions. There is a shared intention for improvement and the school has very good capacity to improve further. The governors' annual report to parents is clearly written, giving a good account of how the school meets its responsibilities, although there are some issues not included. The overall monitoring of the school's performance is good.
73. The very good school ethos is reinforced through very good respect for individual differences and its all-inclusive provision to ensure that all pupils, including those with ASD, have full access to the curriculum. The school complies fully with the Acts for Sexual Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability.
74. The school's improvement plan prioritises aspects of the school's progress carefully, identifying key personnel and, while it does not contain detailed costing, all initiatives are fully funded. The plan is regularly evaluated by all governors and staff, and updated frequently so that the good monitoring of the school's performance ensures effective action. Very good financial procedures are undertaken by the very efficient school administrator. The budget is very well managed and strategic use of resources including the use of specific grants, is excellent. Daily administration is efficient and new technology is used effectively to inform governors and parents, although the school is still to use ICT to record and monitor attendance.
75. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is very good. There is a very good programme for the professional development of teachers. This training has raised the quality of teaching significantly since the previous inspection. This is very well illustrated by the use of specific grants for ICT to ensure that the whole-school policy for ICT is effectively implemented. Good quality support and professional training are readily available for all staff and this has increased staff confidence and effectiveness in the promotion of educational inclusion, particularly of pupils with ASD. The emphasis the school places on creating a secure, safe and interesting learning environment is at the heart of its success with inclusion. Additionally, the deputy headteacher has provided very good support for the induction of new staff and those beginning their teaching careers.
76. Resources are good and teachers use them well to help pupils learn. However, library stock is limited and there is a lack of space for pupils to undertake quiet, reflective study. Resources in ICT and in physical education are excellent and they are very good in mathematics and in life skills. In all other subjects they are good apart from in music, geography and religious education where resources are satisfactory. The other exception is French where resources are unsatisfactory.
77. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, although there are some inadequacies in the provision. The overall space in the school is insufficient to teach the full range of Key Stage 3 and 4 National Curriculum subjects as there are too few classrooms. The library is too small and, while it is useful to place it within the English department, it does restrict its use for other subject areas. The library space is also used to teach French and so only a few pupils can be taught at the same time. The music and drama room is adjacent to the humanities room and noise levels can disrupt lessons. There is no provision for parents to meet and there is a lack of small rooms that

can be used for withdrawal or interviews. On the positive side, the headteacher and the governors have done all they can to improve the curriculum provisions in the school and make very best use of the space available. There is a very good workshop area and very good specialist rooms have been created since the last inspection for science, mathematics, ICT, art and life skills. The hall is of a good size and good use is made of a central covered area. Plans have been drawn up to extend the school and these should solve some of the issues of space.

78. There have been considerable improvements to the outside areas of the school during the last two years. There is an 'all-weather' playing area and a well marked out court. The school has developed a woodland walk and has designed pleasant recreation areas for the pupils with seats. The school's playing field has been fenced since the last inspection and is now secure. The playing fields are well maintained and are marked out for sports and athletics. The school site is very clean and well maintained by the cleaner in charge. There is very little graffiti and the excellent vigilance of members of the school council, who check the litter regularly as part of their duties and report to the headteacher daily, ensures that the school grounds are always neat and tidy. Teachers make the very best of the accommodation and mount attractive displays in classrooms and around school. This greatly enhances the school and provides a stimulating and exciting learning environment.
79. The audit report from the local authority auditors confirmed the inspection findings that financial procedures are very good and very well supported by the use of new technology. The work of the school administrative officer is of high quality and is enhanced by the effective links maintained with the local authority financial advisor who supports in matters relating to the school budget. Spending decisions are closely linked to the priorities for improvement and the school has good systems to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services that it purchases; it appropriately seeks several quotations for major items of expenditure before making a choice. All financial matters are monitored by the administrative officer who prepares a monthly budget monitoring statement for the governors. The school is currently carrying forward a large sum of money but by the end of the next financial year these funds will be spent on additional staffing and on the proposed building work. The school office is very well run and provides a positive welcome for visitors.
80. There is generally an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers and well-trained support staff to teach the National Curriculum when one takes into account the use of part-time teachers to teach drama, French and music. Class teachers and support staff work very well together to offer very good levels of support for pupils; all members of staff are equally valued. Teaching assistants offer particularly effective support to pupils with ASD.
81. The school uses the principles of best value comprehensively. The very good teaching, the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes and the excellent provision in ICT and physical education all contribute towards Dove House being an effective and efficient school which gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. To improve the good quality of the school's provision further and to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- i. Improve the standards of pupils' achievement in reading and writing by:
 - introducing a whole-school policy for literacy;
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to read and write regularly in all subject areas and regularly monitor their progress;
 - reducing the use of worksheets to encourage the development of writing for a range of purposes;
 - investigating fully, using a range of health and educational specialists or professionals where appropriate, the difficulties of pupils who fail to make progress in literacy skills and develop more effectively targeted programmes for them;
 - providing opportunities for accreditation in English in Key Stage 4;*
 - increasing the opportunities for homework to involve both reading and written work; and
 - encouraging pupils to read for pleasure and for information.

(Paragraphs: 3, 7, 25, 31, 34, 41, 57, 61, 63, 66, 71, 83, 84, 86, 87, 89, 91, 104, 105, 121, 127 and 148.)

- ii. Improve the standards and provision in design and technology, geography, French, and music by: **
 - monitoring more carefully the work of part-time teachers to ensure they all follow school policies consistently;
 - ensuring that teachers who work part-time are fully involved in the Leadership Group Meetings; and
 - addressing all the areas for development listed in the subject reports or referred to within the aspects.

(Paragraphs: 10, 12, 13, 14, 32, 33, 38, 39, 50, 51, 61, 62, 76, 77, 80, 87, 115, 117, 147, 148, 150, 151, 153, 157 and 158)

- iii. Improve attendance, so that the school aims of 'making a difference' can be a reality for all pupils.

(Paragraphs: 24, 54 and 74)

* *Already planned within the school improvement plan.*

** *The issues in French and music have generally already been identified by the school.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	17	21	15	24	0	0	0
Percentage	22	27	20	31	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	104
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	6.8	School data	5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	Under 10	Under 10	14

National Curriculum Test/Task and Teacher Assessment	English*	Mathematics**	Science**
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 1	36 (23)	5 (17)	5 (13)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2	63 (45)	21 (40)	10 (34)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 3	0 (19)	42 (30)	50 (36)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4	0 (3)	0 (6)	0 (9)

*All pupils are Teacher Assessed in English. **In Mathematics and Science the figures quoted are the 2002 Standard Assessment Tasks and Tests. Figures in brackets are for similar schools.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	11	11	22

Accreditation obtained by pupils by the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

MATHEMATICS			
General Certificate of Education (GCSE)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
C			
D	1		
E		1	
F	2	1	3
G		3	4
Total	3	5	7
Certificate of Achievement (OCR)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	6	4	Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)		2	Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)	3		Not entered
Total	9	6	0
Entry Level (OCR and EdExel)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered	Not entered	13
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	Not entered	4
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	Not entered	5

Total	0	0	22
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ART			
General Certificate of Education (GCSE)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
C		2	2
D	1		
E	5	3	1
F	3		1
G	1		
Total	10	5	4
Certificate of Achievement (WJEC)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered	3	Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	2	Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	2	Not entered
Total	0	7	0
Entry Level (WJEC)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered	Not entered	7
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	Not entered	5
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	Not entered	6
Total	0	0	18

SCIENCE			
Certificate of Achievement (SEG)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	9		Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	1	2	Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)		9	Not entered
Total	10	11	0
Certificate of Achievement (EdEx)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered	Not entered	
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	Not entered	18
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	Not entered	3

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)			
Initial Award in Computer Graphics (RSA)	Number of pupils accredited		
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	1	Not entered	Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	1	Not entered	Not entered

Level 1 (Pass)	9	Not entered	Not entered
Total	11	0	0
Initial Award in Computer Graphics (OCR)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered		1
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	2	1
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	8	2
Total	0	10	4

National Skills Profile (RSA)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)		Not entered	Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	7	Not entered	Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)	2	Not entered	Not entered
Total	9	0	0
National Skills Profile (OCR)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered		Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered		Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	8	Not entered
Total	0	8	0
Entry Level (OCR)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered	Not entered	12
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered	Not entered	3
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	Not entered	3
Total	0	0	18

OTHER ACCREDITATION			
Youth Award Scheme Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)			
Level 2 (Merit)			
Level 1 (Pass)	10	8	6
Total	10	8	6
Transitional Challenge (ASDAN)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)	Not entered		
Level 2 (Merit)	Not entered		
Level 1 (Pass)	Not entered	8	11
Total	0	8	11

National Skills Profile (OCR)			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Level 3 (Distinction)			Not entered
Level 2 (Merit)	11	16	Not entered
Level 1 (Pass)			Not entered
Total	11	16	0
Trident Award			
Grades	2000	2001	2002
Gold	3	4	3
Silver	8	5	
Bronze		4	17
Total	11	13	20

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
99	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8.4
Average class size	9.5

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	246.25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	750,642
Total expenditure	707,258
Expenditure per pupil	6,258
Balance brought forward from previous year	76,922
Balance carried forward to next year	120,306

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	104
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	35	0	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	46	19	3	5
The teaching is good.	73	24	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	30	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	30	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	16	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	24	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	22	3	3	3

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

ENGLISH

83. There has been satisfactory improvement in English since the previous inspection. Teaching has improved and the key issue of pupils in Key Stage 3 being taught by non-specialists has been addressed. However, there are still weaknesses. The over concentration on spelling, phonics and handwriting has left too little time for pupils to read books and write independently.

Strengths:

- The excellent relationships make lessons pleasant experiences and contribute to good speaking and listening.
- Team teaching.
- A co-ordinator who is open to trying new ways of working.

Areas for development:

- Results of tests and assessments should be analysed more closely to ensure standards of reading and writing are improving.
- Pupils with specific learning difficulties have their need fully diagnosed.
- Planned opportunities for extended writing within the subject and across the curriculum should be introduced.
- Monitoring of reading to ensure pupils have opportunities to read from a wide range of sources should be undertaken.
- Teachers reduce the number of worksheets.
- The provision of opportunities for national accreditation in English.

84. Standards of attainment are well below the national average in reading and writing. In speaking and listening they are well below average for pupils with additional speech and communication difficulties but below average for other pupils. Currently, pupils are not entered for national tests at the end of Year 9 but teachers make their own assessment. There is no national accreditation for pupils at the end of Year 11 and this is a weakness. There are no observable differences between standards reached by boys and girls.
85. Pupils' achievements in speaking and listening are good and sometimes very good. Pupils in all years listen with consideration to the speaker. They take turns and speak politely, using their limited vocabulary to good effect. The direct teaching of subject-specific vocabulary is having a positive effect on increasing vocabulary. Playing word games encourages pupils in Year 8 to speak in whole sentences, with one pupil clearly and effectively explaining the rules of the game. By the end of Year 9, pupils quickly adapt their speech for the audience and setting, for example, switching easily from the banter of the playground to the formality of the classroom. Social language is developed well both through direct learning and through very good opportunities for pupils to get out and about in the community and college. This means that by the end of Year 11 pupils have the speaking and listening skills necessary to cope in life beyond school. Pupils with speech impairment make equally good progress because the school has ensured that they receive a speech and therapy programme delivered by a highly effective support teacher. The achievement of pupils on the autistic spectrum is outstanding. High quality teaching has ensured that the majority of pupils make good eye contact, listen carefully to the speaker and speak when appropriate.
86. Pupils' achievement in reading is satisfactory and older pupils take responsibility for their learning in this respect. They have good knowledge of phonics through direct teaching and through their individual learning program using the computer. The school's reading records show that a significant number of pupils fail to maintain progress over time. The limited opportunities to read aloud both within English lessons and across the curriculum constrains progress. Tutor time set aside for this activity is used and monitored inconsistently. There are insufficient monitoring systems to ensure that all pupils are having access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction at a

level suitable to them, and reading does not contribute sufficiently to pupils' cultural development. By the end of Year 9, more able readers read independently at home and school for pleasure and for information. They make good use of the school library and are able to discuss the plot and characters from their chosen book. Less able pupils are still at the early stages of reading although they use picture clues and make some use of the context and initial sounds to decode words. By the end of Year 11, a small number of more able pupils achieve well, reading unseen texts with a good degree of accuracy and understanding. Reference skills are good and pupils routinely use dictionaries to good effect. However, many pupils have not yet achieved the skills necessary to cope with reading at a simple level in everyday life. Very high quality teaching ensures that pupils with additional special needs achieve satisfactorily in reading because their needs are often not effectively diagnosed.

87. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory. Pupils generally form their letters correctly and space words evenly. Consistent practice has helped them achieve this level, but some pupils are spending time practising skills they have already mastered. Most pupils achieve their individual targets for spelling on the computer, organising themselves well and recording their own scores. However, their learning is not consolidated by opportunities to use spellings in independent writing. Too little time is spent within English and across the curriculum on extended writing and there are too many worksheets used. This constrains progress. By the end of Year 9, pupils complete a number of structured written tasks successfully. More able pupils write in sentences but do not yet form paragraphs. They supply one-word answers or finish sentences on worksheets. Very competent support staff ensure that pupils of all capabilities are able to complete tasks. A poetry lesson helped pupils demonstrate their creativity and allowed them to express strong feelings about the Iraqi conflict: 'A little boy cries, he's been injured by bombs, soldiers wait for a gas attack, wrecked cars lie burned out in the street.' By the end of Year 11, the most able pupils complete worksheets and charts unaided. They write for a number of practical purposes but all pupils have insufficient time for creative writing. Good support for writing enables less able pupils to contribute to group and whole class work. For example, they complete worksheets on Hamlet and suggest that he is angry, bitter, cruel and vengeful and that Scrooge is bad-tempered, bossy and miserable. Withdrawing pupils for drama or French during the periods set aside for writing is unhelpful.
88. Teaching seen was good overall, and ranged from outstanding to satisfactory. Team teaching is effective and is a strength of the subject. Positive, warm relationships and excellent pupil management are characteristics of all lessons and make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. The learning environment is supportive and encouraging and pupils try hard and behave well. Pupils of mixed ages on the autistic spectrum made excellent progress in one lesson because of the teacher's subject knowledge and awareness of how such pupils learn best. Clear, simple instructions and a high degree of challenge led pupils to read words in a game, speak in whole sentences and write on the interactive whiteboard.
89. In two very good lessons on the media, pupils understood well that particular newspapers were directed at particular markets and how advertisements were seductive. 'Tabloids get boys interested in women' said a Year 10 pupil while a Year 11 girl noted 'I would be irresistible if I bought that perfume.' Where teaching is less successful there is a lack of balance between acquiring skills and using them creatively. This means that too much time is spent on phonics or reading on the computer or in practising handwriting. Too little time is spent in group or individual reading or in writing for a wide range of purposes.
90. Provision for drama is satisfactory. All pupils have the opportunity to work in small groups with a part time specialist teacher. Teaching is satisfactory and the subject contributes well to improving pupils' creativity and speaking and listening skills. Pupils enjoy the subject and have good opportunities for moral development through opportunities for discussion, for example, 'What would make the world a better place?' However, there is insufficient lesson planning, no schemes of work to show progression and no formal recording of assessment.
91. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has introduced an

individual learning system, which contributes to the very good independence skills of pupils, although over-reliance on this system has narrowed the curriculum. Support staff are well managed and well deployed and resources are sufficient and used well. There has been insufficient monitoring of the subject's performance to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress in reading and writing to enable them to obtain national accreditation at the end of Year 11 in line with other subjects or to read and write at a sufficient level to cope in everyday life. Staff have received training in the National Literacy Strategy and show enthusiasm for it. Common elements such as key words and spelling approaches have been incorporated well across the curriculum but there has been insufficient planning for raising standards through opportunities for reading and independent writing in all subjects.

92. Regular visits to the theatre including visits locally and to London contribute well to social and cultural development, as does the study of Shakespeare and Dickens. The use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning in English is good.

MATHEMATICS

93. Pupils' achievements and progress in mathematics are very good, as are standards, taking into account pupils' learning difficulties.

Strengths:

- Consistently very good teaching enables pupils to make very good progress.
- Very good assessment criteria are used well to set individual targets for achievement.
- Very good evaluation of each pupil's progress and appropriate modification of approaches helps them overcome particular learning difficulties.
- Very good opportunities are provided for pupils' achievements to be accredited.

Areas for development:

- For some pupils, there is insufficient use of practical and structured base ten materials to help them to become more confident in their skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of number.

94. Overall, in relation to their different capabilities and learning needs, pupils make very good progress in mathematics. Excellent class management skills and high expectations of good behaviour enable lessons to proceed smoothly, so that pupils maintain very good attention and concentration and learn from listening to each other's explanations and answers to challenging questions. Excellent relationships enable pupils to work confidently, ask for help when needed, explain their thinking and discuss their mathematical ideas with the teachers and learning support assistant. Very good planning, teamwork and preparation by the teachers and learning support assistant ensure that pupils work in compatible groups at tasks well matched to their needs and are well supported in their learning. Teachers plan very well for the use of numeracy in all subjects and so pupils make very good progress across the curriculum.
95. Very good use is made of computer programs, graded to match and effectively challenge the mathematics skills of the pupils. They enjoy the challenges, work with confidence and are motivated effectively by the sense of achievement they feel when they complete the program correctly and more quickly than before.
96. In Year 7, less able pupils make good progress in their skills with money. Very good use is made of computer software to reinforce learning in the use of money and understanding of coin values. Well-planned and prepared practical tasks develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of areas and perimeter, with good use of hands as non-standard units for measurement. Others gain a good understanding of the fact that area is 'the space within a shape' and how to measure it using squared paper. More able pupils can work out the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes using the dimensions of length and width.
97. Throughout Years 8 and 9, pupils, including those with ASD, who are fully included in the class

discussions and group activities, make very good progress. Work is very well matched to pupils' learning needs and very good use is made of the interactive whiteboard to illustrate the learning objectives. Very good, clear, learning objectives based on pupils' previous learning enable less able pupils to discover the relationship between length and width in finding the area of regular shapes and more able pupils begin to use measurement accurately. Good extension work, provided for pupils who finish their tasks, further develops their application of their knowledge of fractions when working with irregular shapes. A scrutiny of work shows that, by Year 9, most less able pupils, with the support of apparatus and number-lines, have a good grasp of addition and subtraction of numbers to 20, coin values, odd and even numbers, common fractions and the use of the main units for measurement of length, weight and capacity. They know and name the main geometric shapes, use tally charts to collect data and understand basic bar charts and pictograms. More able pupils make very good progress and by Year 9 can apply their understanding of addition and subtraction to money and measurement and solve simple problems such as the cost of 4 items at 15p each. They convert digital to analogue time correctly and carry out surveys, recording data and drawing appropriate graphs. They understand co-ordinates and locate places on simple maps and follow directions, moving forwards, backwards and making half or quarter turns to left or right. The most able pupils have a good understanding of, and use, mathematical symbols including 'greater than' and 'less than', and a basic knowledge of probability. They understand fractions and know about mean, mode and median when working with data. They use measures more accurately such as grams and millimetres and make sensible estimates of weight, length and capacity.

98. In Year 10, pupils begin the course work towards accreditation according to their levels of attainment. Very good discussion on strategies for addition enable less able pupils to confidently add by counting on from the given number which they 'keep in their head'. They develop their understanding of place value, for example, identifying the highest and lowest numbers made from three or four digits. Good use of practical mathematics activities using coins, scales and graded measuring containers along with good support, encouragement and use of praise by the LSA enables more able pupils to confidently add amounts of money, measure weight and volume accurately and improve estimation skills. In a module of work for GCSE, pupils read a thermometer and make good estimates of temperature, responding to challenging questions. Some interpret information from graphs, read a train timetable and calculate distances. Pupils keep a record of own work. Some pupils are insecure in their application of multiplication and division and revert to continuous addition to solve simple questions such as which number is not a factor of 48, and their lack of confidence is insufficiently supported by regular use of structural apparatus, for example, structured base ten materials.
99. By the end of Year 11, less able pupils make steady progress and achieve Edexcel accreditation at level 1 or 2. For example, pupils correctly identify 3D shapes and investigate and record accurately their properties such as, a cuboid has six faces, eight vertices and 12 edges. More-able pupils read scales and measure accurately, have a good basic understanding of shape and space, being able to draw a scale plan of a room and its furnishings. Most pupils understand place value, find the sum and difference of two numbers and know about negative numbers. They use multiplication and division more confidently and find factors and multiples of given small numbers. Their achievements are accredited through OCR and the majority are successful at Silver Level. The most able pupils make very good progress as they follow GCSE coursework and are confident in their application of number operations to investigations and problem solving. For example, they analyse sales data spreadsheets, make comparisons and work out frequencies according to criteria such as colour or size, representing their findings on bar graphs or pie charts. They identify odd, even and prime numbers, have a good understanding of place value, including the zero as a place-holder and know about decimals and percentages. The standard of course work of the pupils entered for GCSE indicates that they are likely to be successful in achieving grades F or G.
100. Assessment is excellent and pupils are increasingly involved in their own assessment. Very good, progressive criteria for assessing attainment have been established across all attainment targets. These are used very effectively for each pupil to set a baseline of attainment, provide appropriate individual learning targets and monitor progress over time. Each pupil's progress is

charted annually and evaluated thoroughly to detect the effectiveness of provision and indicate where modifications or changes need to be made to help them overcome particular difficulties. Additionally, pupils are assessed annually against National Curriculum criteria and their Level of Achievement recorded and reported. There is a need to link these two systems so that overall assessment may become more efficient and effective.

101. Provision is very well led, managed and organised and the quality of provision and teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection. The range and quality of the curriculum are very good, being well balanced and relevant to the different learning needs of the pupils and suitably broad to include all the elements of the National Curriculum. The teaching is planned to cover the range of attainment targets, with a clear curriculum map for each year group and pupils being suitably grouped according to their attainment, so that work is set at the right level for each of the three teaching groups. Staff work together very well as a team to plan and share their skills in implementing the Numeracy Strategy developments, ensuring that numeracy makes best use of resources, including excellent use of computers. Provision is thoroughly evaluated each year and a good programme for its future development is in place. Very good use is made of external accreditation to motivate pupils, raise standards and recognise the very good progress pupils make. The subject has made very good progress since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

102. The school's provision for science is very good as is the progress pupils make.

Strengths:

- The high standard of teaching is reflected in the pupils' achievements.
- The relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and so learning is made fun.
- Year 11 pupils are successful in gaining national accreditation.
- The subject is very well managed.

Areas for development:

- There is insufficient expectation of written work.
- There are no displays of the pupils' work to promote their self-esteem.

103. All pupils are examined in science through the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9. Although the results are well below national averages for their ages, they make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts in relation to their previous learning. Year 11 pupils successfully gain national accreditation through the entry-level examinations of the General Certificate of Secondary Education. There are no apparent differences in the achievements of boys and girls.
104. The pupils' achievement in all years is very good overall. Within lessons it is frequently very good or excellent, but an analysis of their work over time indicates that their progress is restricted because of their weak literacy and handwriting skills. In Year 7, pupils experiment with magnets and know that opposite poles attract. They experiment with changing materials and examine the links between liquids and solids, or work out simple problems involving forces. By the end of Year 9, they classify living and non-living things and identify materials that are irreversibly changed, such as when paper is burnt. They identify the nutrients in different foods and conduct experiments into body temperatures and insulation. They know how the human body works, drawing and labelling diagrams of the ear and the eye, and describing how sound and light travel. They accurately identify the body's major organs, and understand the reproductive system, which is linked to sex education and basic health and hygiene. By the end of Year 9, pupils have completed a range of topics. For example, they conduct tests to ascertain water purity or soil density and experiment with sinking and floating properties. They know how to complete simple electrical circuits and begin to investigate the effectiveness of different forces. Older pupils, aged 16, extend their earlier learning to include aspects of the environment and pollution. For example, they classify plants and animals, looking at their respective needs and habitats. They use computers to experiment with light sources or test their own bodies for pulse and heart rate

differences before and after exercise. In all years pupils are encouraged to estimate and record their findings using prepared worksheets and tables, or by drawing and labelling their experiments. However, there is little expectation of original written work and their handwriting is often based on tracing prepared letters.

105. The quality of teaching is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. The excellently planned and structured lessons are lively, fun and fast moving, promoting the pupils' genuine enthusiasm and interest. The teacher uses excellent interactive strategies such as demonstration games. For example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed measuring and comparing the air capacity of their lungs by experimenting with a tank and a bottle of water. Additionally, the teacher used this opportunity to comment that smokers' lungs were less versatile than those of non-smokers. The well-balanced lessons allow for discussion, practical and recording work; opportunities for shared and independent work are very good. For example, Year 9 pupils collaborate well in pairs to conduct a fair test on thermal insulation, recording their thermometer measurements accurately on their worksheets. They follow this up with individual presentations of their findings. Scientific vocabulary is used appropriately, coupled with high expectations of behaviour and good work. The teachers' excellent classroom control and pupil management ensure that maximum learning takes place. There is very good attention to health and safety issues and all pupils organise themselves well in getting aprons and goggles out before beginning an experiment. Relationships are excellent, as is the role model presented by the teacher. Catering for individual needs is more by outcome than by specific planning, and all pupils use the same worksheets, regardless of capability. The pupils' basic literacy skills are addressed through key vocabulary and by the encouragement of their speaking and listening skills. However, there are few opportunities for reading aloud. Effective question-and-answer or brainstorming sessions provoke thought and promote the pupils' awareness of their learning, as do the excellent plenary sessions using an interactive whiteboard quiz to reinforce what has been learned during the lesson. The quality of marking is good, with constructive and helpful comments which indicate that teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' abilities.
106. The curriculum is well balanced and very well managed by a specialist teacher. Documentation meets all statutory requirements, with literacy and numeracy embedded into the planning. Risk assessment procedures are in place. The scheme of work is linked to the National Curriculum for 11 to 14-year-olds, and examination coursework requirements for 15 and 16-year-olds. Record keeping is developing very well and includes the assessment of Year 9 pupils against National Curriculum levels of attainment and the estimation of examination grades for Years 10 and 11.
107. The laboratory is well designed and equipped, although the absence of a fume cupboard restricts opportunities for some experiments. All health and safety aspects are addressed and there is a lockable storage cupboard and a separate lockable cupboard for dangerous chemicals. Resources are good overall. Improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning, is very good.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Standards in art and design are below national expectations at age 14 and 16, except for a small group of pupils who are working at the level nationally expected and are entered for GCSE examinations. All pupils in Year 11 will leave with an accreditation in art and design at the end of this year. The pupils make excellent progress in the subject and this is reflected in the high quality of their work and the care and effort the pupils put into the projects. The pupils' work shows the development of ideas, flair and confidence in its execution, and energy in the use of form and colour. The excellent teaching and the learning opportunities planned for support the pupils' progress. The pupils' work is displayed very well around the school and is valued by the pupils and staff. Information and communication technology is very well employed to support teaching and learning, including Internet research, picture manipulation and for presentation of examples of the work of different artists. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths:

- Excellent planning for teaching and learning, including planning for cross-curricular links.
- The subject is excellently co-ordinated.
- The positive attitude of pupils to their work is supported by the excellent relationships with the staff.
- The excellent self-assessment booklets are available for the pupil to use.

109. The very clear learning objectives help the pupils understand the purpose of the lessons and the excellent use of resources captures their attention immediately. The very good use of questions by the teacher checks the pupils' understanding of the task. In Year 7, the pupils develop skills in using clay, to make masks, using different techniques. They use sketchbooks to research the proportions of a human face when drawing. The excellent planning helps pupils to become confident in different media, including printing, drawing, use of textiles and three-dimensional sculptures. In Year 8, the pupils build on previous learning and their work shows confidence. Observational drawing becomes more accurate, and the work on the artist Rousseau links very well with the geographical aspects of rainforests. In one lesson the warm welcome by the class teacher enabled the pupils to settle quickly. The teacher's careful explanation and example pictures helped the pupils to learn how to draw buildings. The excellent use of the whiteboard to project pictures of building by different architects helped the pupils to understand the range of possibilities in designing a building. By the end of Year 9, the pupils are able to produce pottery of high quality and design and make excellent collages, using texture and form well. The excellent teaching of skills helps the pupils to realise their designs because the teacher has excellent subject knowledge and gives the pupils the confidence to try.
110. In Years 10 and 11, the pupils work towards external accreditation. The excellent teaching of a range of techniques helps the pupils to achieve very well. The older pupils concentrate very well, encouraged by the excellent relationship with the staff. Building on previously learned skills, the pupils produce pottery which is imaginative and skilfully executed. The well-planned progression enables the pupils to work with textiles very well, producing batik and repeating printed patterns, which are excellent. In all years, the work of famous artists is studied in depth, extending the pupils' knowledge of different styles and techniques.
111. The co-ordination of the subject is excellent and the assessment of pupils' work is very good. The overall subject planning, which is excellent, is in line with the National Curriculum and covers all areas of the programme of study. The teacher plans, for example, when the pupils are studying Mondrian's use of line and space, that the links to mathematics are included with the use of rulers and measuring. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development by including art from different countries, such as aboriginal paintings, pottery from North America as well as art from Europe. All pupils are included and the support assistant provides excellent support for individual pupils, which has a positive impact on learning.

CITIZENSHIP

112. Provision for the teaching of citizenship is developing well within the personal, social and health education and life skills curriculum. It is well taught and co-ordinated. Its impact is evident in the pupils' improving social skills, particularly among pupils on the autistic spectrum.

Strengths:

- The school has integrated citizenship very well into its life skills programme.
- The school council provides pupils with very good opportunities to practice skills.
- The school mock elections provide valuable experiences for pupils.

113. Citizenship provides pupils with opportunities to help others, and their success is evident in their excellent behaviour and attitudes towards visitors and in their support and care of their peers during recreation and lesson times. Pupils are proud of their democratic elections for the school council and elected members work hard. For example, minutes from their meetings indicate mature discussions on dealing with bullying and eliminating litter problems. They make sensible suggestions on a range of school topics and are proud of their allocated responsibilities. On a

wider scale, pupils learn how their own elections mirror the election of members of parliament, and they speak enthusiastically of their own visit to the Houses of Parliament. Some have written letters to their local MP to request tickets for the Prime Minister's Question Time.

114. The introduction of citizenship and increased links with the local community indicate good improvement in the school's provision for personal, social and health education since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards in design and technology are below national expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of some of the finished work is very good. The hard work by staff to improve this subject shows in the progress of the pupils. Since the previous inspection, when it was unsatisfactory, there has been an improvement. Teaching is satisfactory overall and, on occasions, it is very good. The teaching of food technology takes place in life skills and is reported in that section of the report. However, planning includes all areas of the National Curriculum.

Strengths:

- The very good range of projects which are well recorded.
- Projects involving resistant materials cover well the making elements of the curriculum.
- There is a good range of equipment.
- The quality of the finished products is very good.

Areas for development:

- Projects lack the design and evaluation elements.
- Teaching does, on occasions, 'over-support' the pupils.
- The subject lacks a list of skills that pupils must learn so progress can be more accurately assessed.
- The workshop requires some tidying up.
- Aspects of health and safety were reported to the headteacher during the inspection.

116. There is no formal planning for individual lessons but the teacher plans each project undertaken in detail. In Year 7, pupils through the very good teaching learn to paint using a small brush and enamel paint. When the pupils are encouraged to work independently the teaching is good; however, there is some over-direction of activities. They are able to decorate the boats they make well and construct a model of a man fishing. At the end of Year 8, they are able to fit an electric motor in a range of models, for example, a model car, and make model land yachts; they can use cogs and cams and make simple pivots in their models. The well-planned projects, designed by the teacher, help the pupils to build on their previously learned skills and, in Year 9, pupils make simple jewellery boxes with well-finished surfaces. They are able to create a circuit and fit a small electric motor to the boats they have made and use a soldering iron to fix the wires in the circuit. The pace of the lessons is satisfactory and this helps pupils to concentrate and understand what they need to do.
117. The pupils continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11, in a very good lesson when the focus was on structures and mechanisms. The pupils knew that the triangulation of a structure gives it strength; they researched and planned their own models, for example, an Eiffel tower or bridge-style structure, and were using their plans to build their designs. The very good relationships between staff and pupils help the pupils to feel confident to ask for help when they need it and to listen to suggestions. The pupils work hard, concentrate well and are confident in using the machinery such as a jigsaw, with some support. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to design the artefacts they are making themselves or to evaluate the products. For example, the pupils could have tested the boats they made in the tank and checked for leaks.
118. The subject co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator for the subject is very committed to

enabling the pupils to produce well-finished artefacts. He makes exceptionally good use of recycled materials, and works very closely with the support assistant to prepare the workshop for the pupils. He is very talented in the way he creates a range of learning opportunities for the pupils through the projects. All pupils are fully included in the lessons and extra support is given appropriately to pupils who find handling tools and manipulating materials difficult. The subject makes very good use of ICT.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Standards are below national expectations by the end of Year 9; however, the pupils make satisfactory progress. This is a good improvement since the previous and it is no longer a significant weakness. The quality of teaching and learning in this subject is satisfactory overall. There is no requirement to teach this subject in Years 10 and 11 and the school adopts this approach.

Strengths:

- Information and communication technology is used well for research.
- The teacher's relationships with the pupils are good.
- The satisfactory pace of the lessons helps to maintain pupils' interest and attention.

Areas for development:

- Clear lesson objectives are not communicated to the pupils.
- The checking of pupils' learning and progress in the plenary session is not undertaken consistently.
- There is insufficient written work to support pupils' literacy skills.

120. Planning is satisfactory and includes all areas of the programme of study. In Year 7, the pupils learn to find places in an atlas using the index and simple grid references. They are able to draw plans of the locality, have a basic understanding of the structure of a volcano and are able to mark the Earth's tectonic plates on a map. They can mark simple grid references on a map, for example, B2 or C2 and identify the features shown. They learn about flooding and flood warnings, and are able to mark most of the countries of Europe on a map. In a lesson the pupils made satisfactory progress in using the index of an atlas and were able to mark different cities on a map of the United Kingdom, such as Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester with reasonable accuracy. The teacher's relationships with the pupils are good although the pupils do at times get over-excited and call out. They work enthusiastically but their reading skills do not support them in finding information in the atlas without help.
121. The pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Year 8, building on their previous understanding. They are able to label the river cycle using the correct terms, know about erosion and weathering and gain a wider understanding of the world as a whole. They are able to make, use and interpret graphs, supporting their learning in mathematics. In a Year 9 lesson, the clear instructions given by the teacher helped the pupils to access the Internet quickly and to use a search engine to find out about building, tourism and leisure in countries as diverse as Brazil and Australia. The pupils worked well and the satisfactory support the teacher gave them helped them to research successfully. Lessons are planned satisfactorily to build upon previous lessons to develop the pupils' understanding of the geography of the world but there is insufficient writing by pupils about their findings. Additionally, in some lesson plans there is little reference to plenary sessions.
122. Assessment is satisfactory but the new co-ordinator has already redesigned record sheets to link

them with the different aspects of the subject; this revision is good and will have a positive impact on the pupils' learning and progress. The subject is satisfactory co-ordinated.

HISTORY

123. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. At that time history was not taught regularly, resources were unsatisfactory and there were no schemes of work. These shortcomings have been remedied; provision for history is now good and the aims and values of the school are reflected well within the subject. Pupils' progress is now good.

Strengths:

- The very good subject knowledge of teachers is conveyed to the pupils.
- The subject is well managed by an effective co-ordinator.
- Good cross-curricular links support learning in other subjects especially art and literacy.

Areas for development:

- A greater number of visits is required to support and stimulate learning.
- The current good assessment procedures need improving by ensuring a greater match of the skills listed to National Curriculum criteria.

124. History is only taught to pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. There is no requirement to teach history to pupils in Years 10 and 11 and the school adopts this approach. Attainment is understandably below national expectations. However, pupils achieve well in the subject by the end of Year 9.
125. Pupils in Year 7 understand that we can find out about the past in a number of ways such as looking at pictures and artefacts. They identify Romans through the clothes they wore and the tools and weapons they used. They recall the really important events in their own lives to help them to understand chronology. They match pictures and sentences together, for example, when sequencing the Battle of Hastings, and demonstrate literacy as well as history skills. One more able pupil, writing unaided, observed dryly: 'It was unhappy for the English in the Hastings area!' Pupils in Year 8 make comparisons between life in modern Britain with life during the time of the Tudors and Stuarts. With help they complete family trees. They use photographic evidence well to compare farming now with farming in the Middle Ages.
126. The efficient use of an interactive whiteboard helps to motivate pupils in Year 9 who are keen to volunteer their knowledge and complete charts electronically as well as in written form. Good speaking and listening skills are a common feature of all lessons. The good use of artefacts, for example those related to the Second World War, helps to engage pupils' interest and stimulate their understanding. For example, they start to understand what life was like when food was rationed and families were issued with gas masks. There is good cultural development as pupils learn about the lives and customs of Native Americans. Very high quality artwork, including sketches of Indian chiefs and the modelling of masks and pots, reinforces knowledge and understanding and demonstrates pride in very well completed work. Pupils with additional special needs such as autism also achieve well because they are very well supported and adults and other pupils are sensitive to their needs.
127. Teaching and learning are good overall, with a small amount of very good and some satisfactory teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and convey this to the pupils well. Lessons are well prepared and, through teachers' good questioning and support for writing, allow pupils of all capabilities to make good progress. However, there needs to be more opportunities, especially for the more able, to extend their writing. In a very good lesson the brisk pace and high expectations kept pupils focused and ensured behaviour was excellent. Strong relationships meant that pupils helped each other as they identified tasks on a farm and selected the power source needed to complete them. Pupils received instant feedback so learning was positively reinforced. In a satisfactory lesson the tasks were not made sufficiently clear and pupils tended to lose concentration and did not learn as much as they could have done.
128. The subject is well managed by an efficient co-ordinator who has driven the subject forward. She

has compiled schemes of work, linked to the National Curriculum, accessible to the pupils. Visits out do not yet support the otherwise good curriculum. Good oral assessment and end-of-unit tests are combined well with the good recording of information about what pupils know, understand and can do. This assessment now needs to be clearly linked to national standards. There is good use of ICT within lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Standards in information and communication technology are at national expectations by the end of Year 11. Pupils make excellent progress during their time in school in all aspects of the curriculum for ICT. In Year 11 the majority of pupils achieve accreditation. Over the last three years the range of accreditation has been extended and in 2002, four pupils gained an Initial Award in Computer Graphics (OCR) and 18 gained accreditation in the OCR Entry level, 12 at Level 3 (Distinction), three at Level 3 (Merit) and three at Level 1 (Pass).

Strengths of the subject are:

- The excellent provision of equipment is well used by all teachers.
- The subject is excellently co-ordinated.
- Pupils make excellent progress.

130. Teaching is excellent. Lessons are planned within a series of projects that cover the National Curriculum requirements. Within these projects pupils are taken through all the steps to learn the skills within the various areas of ICT, for example, word processing, spreadsheets. Having learnt the skills each project includes 'challenges' which expect pupils to put together the skills learnt to solve a problem or to use the skills within a given task. This very good planning ensures that all pupils develop skills and continue to achieve over time. The teacher has a high expectation of what pupils can achieve and, in all situations, the management of pupils is excellent, aiding their learning.
131. In Year 7, most pupils come to the school with some knowledge and understanding of the use of computer. All interact well with the computers and soon begin to learn to access the e-mail and the Internet independently. Pupils print off materials from the Internet and demonstrate, through a project on the Titanic, that they are developing their research skills. They are introduced to databases and, through collecting data from a traffic survey, know how to use the database to produce colourful and varied graphical representations of the data collected. When using spreadsheets they use cells and type in data accurately as they complete a spreadsheet of the pets their classmates have at home. They also produce record cards from an address file. All pupils develop their keyboard skills and skills of word processing well. They show very good skills in changing font, size of print and design skills when they produce a wrapper for a chocolate bar.
132. The excellent progress in Year 7 is consolidated in Years 8 and 9 and pupils are beginning to use computers with confidence for a variety of purposes. They begin to build their own databases about food and use a spreadsheet to gain information on the physical attributes of pupils in the class, such as hair colour, shoe sizes and colour of the eyes. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to produce a spreadsheet of football scores and a database of items in a catalogue. They use spreadsheets to produce both bar and other graphs. They produce a 'net' on the computer for a chocolate bar wrapper and they are able to use a scanner to add pictures to their text. Pupils know and understand the use of picture and text boxes when using a word processor to its full extent. They have an excellent understanding of the use of colours and confidently use clip-art to improve the visual effect of their word processing. Overall, pupils in Key Stage 3 make excellent progress.
133. During the inspection all pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 were following a course on Logo. The tasks set in each year group were differentiated for pupils of different capabilities and age. The co-ordinator has a three-year programme of areas to be covered during the key stage and plans activities in blocks across the key stage, thus ensuring that pupils repeat the skills each year and so make progress in each area over time. These lesson were well organised and taught and, while pupils in Year 7 were beginning to develop skills in the use of the language, Year 9 pupils show very good

skills and were completing complex programming so that the 'roamer' could draw complex shapes.

134. This excellent progress continues in Years 10 and 11 when pupils follow courses that lead to accreditation. They produce portfolios of work that show clearly that they all have a very good grasp of the basic functions and applications of computers. By the end of Year 11 pupils have produced a cover for a CD ROM in full colour and a written file which shows the way pupils have undertaken the planning of its production. They have also produced the stationery required for a company of their choosing, for example, headed notepaper, business cards and advertisements or menus, in cases where pupils choose a café as their theme. The most able work on the school's newsletter and produce spreadsheets, for example, on the income they can expect from car sales or from a stationery shop. In a Year 11 session, pupils interrogate the Internet to find the cost of houses in a given area and from this work they began to write a 'flyer' for a house they are going to sell. All pupils confidently log on to the Internet and quickly found a suitable website by using a search engine correctly. They then showed excellent skills in the use of a variety of fonts, using different colours and setting out work on a page. They use drop-down menus naturally and save their work automatically.
135. Pupils in all classes work hard in ICT classes and show very good independent learning skills. They clearly enjoy the challenges set and proving that they can achieve them. They show very good enthusiasm and their very good attitudes add to their enjoyment of ICT classes.
136. The co-ordinator has continued to develop the curriculum for ICT excellently as the new portables, with their radio connections to the server, have been introduced. The scheme of work is very good and provides clear direction for all staff. However, the subject improvement plan indicates that, while there has been a very good improvement in the provision in the last two years, there is still a need to develop the subject further. Assessment within the discrete ICT lessons is excellent. The co-ordinator has a vision for the subject in which all teachers develop creative ways to use the whiteboards available in classrooms and improve the use of ICT in assessment and in the writing of IEPs and school reports. The improvement since the last inspection has been exceptional and the new investment has had a major impact on improving teaching and learning. The school has made excellent use of all the funding for ICT available through grants, both for resources and for staff training, and as a consequence almost all staff have good or developing ICT skills. The information and communication technology suite is excellent and while the co-ordinator would now, in the light of experience, wish to re-organise the room, the current arrangement of the furniture provides excellent access for pupils. In addition to the computers in this suite, all classrooms have machines and there are over 20 portables available for pupils' use in any part of the building. The use of radio links allows access to all the software on the server anywhere in the school and also access to the Internet and e-mail. All staff make very good use of these facilities and the use of whiteboards is common practice in many areas and enhances pupils' learning across the curriculum. This is a very special feature of the provision for ICT.

LIFE SKILLS

137. Life skills includes an excellent combination of areas and includes food technology, personal, social and health education and citizenship and programmes to prepare pupils for life after school. The provision for life skills is a strength of the school. This subject was not reported upon at the last inspection.

Strengths:

- It integrates well a number of curriculum areas.
- It has a high profile in the school and pupils enjoy taking part.
- The quality of teaching is very good in practical situations.

Areas for development:

- It should make a greater contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and recording skills.

138. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall in practical sessions. However, there is an over-reliance on the use of photocopied sheets in many lessons and too few opportunities for pupils to write in sentences.
139. Pupils make very good progress particularly in practical skills when the staff have consistently high expectations of the pupils. Excellent use is made of individual education plan targets in the lessons and in the pupils' record books. An initial assessment records the pupils' skills and areas for development and this informs planning. There are good opportunities for community service on four different sites including two old people's homes.
140. The programme makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' social and moral education, including opportunities to work together and to learn how to behave in a socially responsible way.
141. The curriculum planning is very good and all pupils have life skills record books, which cover a wide range of skills. This area supports the practical application of pupils' learning in many areas of the curriculum, for example, mathematics in weighing, measuring, and temperature in cooking. Again the subject supports pupils' geographical skills when they find their way around the locality. Further opportunities are provided to develop pupils' speaking and listening through interviews and when pupils discuss their work.
142. The pupils learn a wide range of skills, which include home technology. These skills help pupils to develop their independence. The younger pupils plan meals, with some help, and they are able to buy the ingredients required with support. They are able to prepare the meal, developing their skills in chopping, cutting, using ovens and preparing different salad ingredients. The pupils are encouraged to choose a balanced diet. Excellent opportunities are available to all the pupils to spend time off the school site at a converted schoolhouse in the country. Here they prepare meals and learn to socialise with each other, playing games such as snooker or cricket.
143. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent because of the high expectations of the staff. The pupils in Year 9 plan a menu with confidence; for example, prepare breakfast without help, including cooking bacon and toast. They know how to make pizzas and choose the topping independently; they make muffins with a range of flavourings and wash up the utensils without help. The support the pupils receive from the classroom support assistants is very good and has a positive impact on their learning and confidence in doing a variety of tasks.
144. The more able pupils in Years 10 and 11 demonstrate good independence in cooking; they are able to make more complex dishes such as apple strudel and know about the importance of hygiene when preparing food. Some pupils need more support when preparing food but independence is consistently encouraged as much as possible.
145. In the life skills lessons several activities sometimes take place at the same time, such as shoe cleaning, sewing and ironing where pupils learn to iron using the correct temperature for the fabric. While these activities are taking place, other pupils make snacks. The pupils concentrate very well and those cleaning shoes do so with gusto, knowing how to handle the brushes and polish well. The very good organisation of these sessions, including the deployment of additional staff, ensures that the pupils succeed in the tasks set for them and make very good progress in practical skills.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

146. Pupils make adequate progress, taking into account their learning difficulties. However, their progress over time is less assured because of timetable arrangements.

Strengths:

- Staff have a very good knowledge of the French language and culture.
- Pupils participate with enthusiasm and interact well with staff and each other.

Areas for development:

- Lack of continuity in the provision for French for some pupils is addressed.
- A written scheme of work.
- Procedures for monitoring or recording the pupils' progress need to be fully implemented.
- The accommodation needs improving, and more resources are provided.

147. Attainment is well below national averages at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. Although within lessons pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the language, over time their progress is adversely affected because there is no continuity to their learning. French is taught to small groups of pupils in Years 7 to 10 through a rotational carousel system. Although this ensures that all pupils receive some French tuition during the course of a year, it creates a lack of continuity. Consequently, the pupils are unable to build on earlier learning and do not make as much progress as they might if they received regular weekly lessons. French is not taught to Year 11 pupils.
148. In all years pupils respond accurately to simple everyday conversations and make real efforts with their pronunciation. By the end of Year 9, they use learned vocabulary and flashcards to give the date, day and month, and describe the weather. They match words to pictures and solve simple word-searches and puzzles. However, the limited amount of written work is restricted to single-word responses to worksheet questions, which provide little challenge. By the end of Year 10, pupils have limited experience of reading or writing simple phrases or sentences in French. Nevertheless, they show interest and ask relevant questions, and relationships with the teacher are very good. They acquire a knowledge of some of cultural aspects, such as when comparing foods and prices, but the limited accommodation and resources restrict further cultural opportunities.
149. The quality of teaching and learning within lessons is good. The part-time teacher has a very good knowledge of the language and culture and uses this well during lessons. However, planning is brief, and there is little difference between the lesson content for different year groups. There are some suitable resources but computers are not used to enhance learning. Although oral sessions are lively and sometimes quite challenging, there is little written work provided. However, relationships are very good and pupils enthusiastically compete with each other to match number cards up to 60. However, errors in counting, such as omitting the 'et' in vingt-et-un and trente-et-un, which are not corrected.
150. The specialist, but unqualified teacher, attends the school on a part-time basis. Consequently, there is no written scheme of work although the teacher does follow a commercial scheme. The existing procedures for recording the pupils' progress are not fully implemented. There are few videos or original artefacts to enhance the pupils' knowledge of the French way of life, and few opportunities for Internet work. The accommodation is in an open library area to one side of the English room. Consequently, the adjacent lesson noises severely restrict the pupils' use of tape recorders in French. There is no display area allocated to French and the subject has a low profile.

MUSIC

151. Pupils' progress in music is satisfactory. The subject is taught only to all pupils in Key Stage 3.

Strengths:

- Pupils show good attitudes to the subject.
- There is a good range of resources.

Areas for improvement:

- Regular assessment of musical skills.
- Teaching a greater range of musical forms.

152. Pupils in Year 7 are introduced to musical notation and encouraged to 'read' music as they play. They learn the names of the notes and, in a lesson seen, the most able performed a sequence of notes well. One of the most able pupils played the tune with care and others accompanied him on xylophones, playing the notes G, A, and E. By the end of the lesson pupils had successfully played two parts in co-operation. This satisfactory progress is as a result of the progress made by pupils in clapping out rhythms, accompanying classical musical pieces such as 'Swan Lake' with percussion instruments and making up chords. Pupils also know that there is a Pentatonic Scale and use it when they play the keyboards. Pupils in Year 7 are introduced to the various instruments of the orchestra and listen to the 'Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra' and to other pieces which illustrate particular instruments such as 'Tubby the Tuba'. In other lessons they listen to music which follows themes such as 'water' and compare the differences in speed, timbre and form of such varied pieces as 'La Mer by Debussy, Sea Drift by Delius and Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides Overture'.
153. Pupils' musical experiences are further extended in Year 8 when they sing songs from popular shows, for example, from 'Mary Poppins,' and listen to Saint Saens' 'Carnival of the Animals' and learn to recognise 'The Swan (Cello)' and 'The elephant (double-bass)'. Again they explore music through a theme and perform 'bird songs', for example, the cuckoo, and music which illustrates the movements of a fish. This work is developed when pupils listen to Beethoven's 'Pastoral Symphony' and begin to appreciate how a symphony is constructed. In further work they learn to play quickly to a strong rhythm and also very quietly.
154. In Year 9, they play castanets and tambourines and listen to, and accompany, Spanish music, developing two-part harmonies. Pupils listen to and learn about the different types of Spanish dances, for example, the Bolero, Tango, Salsa and the Pasadoble. They compose their own 'scary' music after listening to 'Dance Macabre' and understand the use of broken chords and discords in music to provide certain effects. By the end of Year 9, pupils are able to name most of the common notes, understand the use of chords and have a good understanding of classical musical styles, dynamics and harmony. Pupils have good attitudes to this subject.
155. The school does not have a full-time specialist music teacher on the staff but has the part-time services of a teacher who comes in on a regular basis to teach pupils in Years 7 to 9. The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory but planning for the subject is generally limited and does not follow the pattern set for the rest of the school. As a consequence of little monitoring of the subject, the range of music used by the teacher is confined to classical or popular music and opportunities are missed for pupils to learn about modern forms of music such as jazz, five-bar blues and rap. Additionally, assessment of pupils' skills in music is not undertaken regularly although a good set of key skills has been developed for the subject. The scheme of work is adequate and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.
156. The subject is not properly co-ordinated across the school and music does not play a significant enough part in its life, although the school does provide opportunities for pupils to visit theatres; for example, a group of pupils were taken to see 'Carmen'. The school choir is formed from time to time and performs in a schools' music festival. In addition, the school holds an annual Carol Concert. On an annual basis the school is visited by members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and they enthuse pupils through their workshops.
157. The school pays some attention to the use of music to enhance cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to recognise sound and rhythm styles and say which country these come from but the insufficient focus on cultural matters means that music has less of an impact in this area than it might have, although it does make a contribution.
158. During the option sessions at the end of the week there is an opportunity for pupils to learn to play an instrument. This work is undertaken voluntarily by a former teacher of the school. During a school assembly he led a short musical item, performed by pupils, and the whole school enjoyed the experience. Unfortunately, particularly as the school has some staff recruitment difficulties in terms of this subject, the school has no music therapist nor is it visited or supported by the Local Authority's schools' music service. Resources for music are generally good. There is a

successful mixture of tuned and un-tuned percussion, in addition to a number of keyboards. Music makes some contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. Progress since the last inspection has not been maintained as the quality of teaching was said previously to be good. The subject shares a good-sized room with drama. Unfortunately its position is adjacent to other rooms and musical sounds can be over-heard and so break the concentration of those pupils engaged in more academic work. The use of ICT in music is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

159. The school places very good emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education within the daily life of the school and in lessons. It is not taught as a separate subject but is very well embedded into the whole-school curriculum and endorses the aims of the school. It is particularly well integrated into the life skills and the college links for older pupils. There are very good guidelines for work on sex, drugs awareness and health education as well as self-care and self-respect.

Strengths:

- It is very well integrated into the curriculum as a whole.
- The life skills programme makes a particular contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The provision for sex and drugs education is well represented.

160. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Lunchtimes, breacktimes and tutorial sessions are used well to encourage the development of personal and social skills, as do whole school assemblies and after-school clubs. Social gatherings such as Year 9 group breakfast are particularly pleasant occasions. From an early stage in Year 7, pupils gain a basic knowledge of how their bodies work, linked to science and food technology. By Year 11, they know the importance of a healthy diet and the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. They make very good progress. In Years 10 and 11, pupils participate in work related education. The school's excellent links with local colleges enables pupils to participate in a very wide range of occupations and careers training, and most pupils further develop these skills when they leave school by continuing at college or by accepting full-time offers of employment resulting from their work experience placements.

161. As a part of the whole life skills, citizenship and personal, social and health education, staff keep good records of the pupils' overall progress. The outcomes of this provision are apparent throughout the life of the school. Pupils are friendly and helpful and their positive relationships with staff make a valuable contribution in helping pupils to become mature and sociable members of the school and wider community. This is particularly so during off-site visits where they mix with members of the community or provide tea for the elderly in the school environment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Overall, pupils make excellent progress in physical education and many achieve the standards which are in keeping with national expectations at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4.

Strengths:

- The excellent range of exciting activity enables all pupils to enjoy a sense of achievement.
- The excellent teaching and instruction provided by staff with a high level of expertise ensures pupils make excellent progress.
- The excellent partnerships with other schools and organisations enable pupils to benefit from use of a wealth of available resources and facilities.

163. Pupils make excellent progress in athletic activities. They respond very well to the excellent teaching of throwing and running techniques and improve rapidly in their performances. For example, in Year 7, when learning to throw the javelin, they progress quickly through the skills of stance and grip, the use of leaning back with an extended arm, to developing a co-ordinated throw at the best angle to achieve most distance. They are well motivated to improve their own

performances by measuring and recording their baseline distances. Pupils in subsequent years enjoy a real sense of achievement when they compare their performance with that which they achieved the year before. By Year 11, they have a good knowledge of athletic events and categorise them correctly. They remember earlier coaching points on best performance and demonstrate very good progress. They respond very well to the demands of the learning targets for achievement for the Youth Award Scheme and are well motivated to practise and work hard to achieve them.

164. As partners with a local secondary school the pupils benefit from use of the Sport College's dance studio and expert instruction, and make excellent progress. They are excited and keen to follow the excellent demonstration and clear instructions as they learn step routines and sequences. Pupils in Year 8 become confident in performing their steps in pairs and learn well from their classmates. Very good use is made of counting to support the routines, and performances improve as they move to the rhythm of popular music with a strong beat.
165. In lessons, pupils experience a wide range of both indoor and outdoor games according to the time of year and make very good progress. Pupils with particular interest in football and cricket benefit from expert coaching from local and county professionals during after-school clubs. In football, pupils demonstrate very good skills in ball control, passing accurately, receiving with control and moving well into space. A good recent development is the girls' football club. In cricket, pupils are achieving good batting, catching and fielding skills and several are developing good bowling actions. Several pupils make excellent progress and are selected for county teams to take part in special tournaments and competitions. School teams regularly feature as winners of local and county events.
166. The school hall is used regularly for physical education lessons and pupils make very good progress in gymnastics. Lessons are very well planned and equipment is used very well to challenge and develop pupils' co-ordination, balance and movement skills. Excellent teaching maintains pupils' concentration and effort and they learn effectively from quality demonstrations and clear instruction. For example, in an excellent lesson for pupils with ASD, the hall was set out with a challenging circuit of apparatus. There was an effective warm-up of systematic stretches from head to toe and a demanding run both prepared them well for their circuit and promoted fitness and an awareness of the positive effects of exercise. Pupils become self-motivated by their achievements.
167. All pupils in Years 10 and 11 have blocks of lessons in a variety of physical activity including exercise and fitness programmes, swimming, indoor games such as table-tennis, outdoor adventurous activities such as rock climbing and canoeing, and orienteering. Excellent use is made of local facilities, such as a neighbouring secondary school's sports and fitness centre and pupils are effectively taught to use multi-gym equipment safely and purposefully. By Year 11, pupils design their own exercise programmes using the very well equipped gymnasium with a mature and positive attitude. They include the use of running, rowing, cycling and stepping machines and the presses and pulls of the multi-gym in their programmes. They know the muscle groups involved in the different exercises, such as '*triceps, biceps, quads., hamstrings and lats.,*' and demonstrate a high level of fitness and stamina as they work at improving their target performances.
168. Pupils make excellent progress in swimming, using a very good local swimming pool complex. High quality, skilled teaching is provided for the groups and pupils make very rapid progress. Sessions are very well organised and conducted with excellent coaching of skills through an appropriate but demanding sequence of progressive activity. For example, responding to skilled demonstration, pupils progressed quickly from gliding with a float with face in the water, learning to breathe to one side at the correct part of a stroke, to confidently swimming with a very much improved body position and stroke and breathing pattern.
169. Teachers make very good use of assessment in their teaching of physical skills. Very good use is made of the appropriate steps of attainment set out for each element of the physical education programme. Individual targets are set and pupils are made aware of what they need to do to

achieve them, becoming effectively involved in evaluating their own achievements. Very good use is made of school and nationally recognised achievement awards and certificates and in Years 10 and 11 pupils work towards achieving accreditation for the Youth Award Scheme.

170. Leadership, management and organisation of provision are excellent. The curriculum is supported by an appropriate scheme of work and a very well planned and balanced programme of activity for each year group that includes all the required elements as well as extra-curricular opportunities. The school's partnership with a mainstream school in the development of the 'Sports College' provides access for pupils to high quality provision and facilities such as trampolining and dance. The programme is both well matched to pupils' needs and suitably challenging for all pupils, who become excited by and enjoy their achievements. It also makes a significant contribution to their personal, social, emotional and moral development. Subject specialist staff are very well supported in providing this wealth of experiences by several other staff who make an ongoing commitment to enabling the pupils to benefit, including residential opportunities at outdoor pursuits centres. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
171. As part of the very good development plan for the subject, an exciting programme of 'specialist' activity and exercise is being provided for small groups of pupils with particular needs relating to their balance, co-ordination and orientation and spatial difficulties. This is at the early stages of development and would benefit from guidance and support from specialist paediatric and physiotherapy professionals; it has the potential for making improvements to pupils' overall learning skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

172. Pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school. Standards are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3 and 4 but in line with pupils' capabilities. The subject has maintained satisfactory progress since the last inspection, particularly as subject co-ordination is now improving.

Strengths:

- The teaching and learning in some lessons in Years 10 and 11 is good.
- There is good use of information and communication technology to illustrate lessons.

Areas for improvement:

- The scheme of work needs to be reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils.

173. In Year 7, pupils are introduced to Christianity and listen to the story of the Creation, comparing it with their own understanding of how the world began. They know that the Bible is in two parts and is an historical record. They can identify which stories come from the Old Testament, for example, the story of Noah and the Ark, and which from the New. They enjoy listening to the operetta 'Joseph and his Technicoloured Dreamcoat' and this supports pupils' learning of the story of Joseph very well. This work is followed up by a study of 'special journeys' and pupils understand that wars are fought in the name of Christianity, for example the Crusades. Pupils know that life is a journey and they compare the life of Mother Theresa with their own lives and the lives of people they know. From this work they develop a concept of charity and consider what an 'ideal world' would be like. Pupils also know about Judaism and visit a synagogue. Through the celebration of various religious festivals, for example, Easter and the Chinese New Year, they gain an understanding of the other religions in the world.
174. Pupils in Year 8 continue to make satisfactory progress when they compare various religions. In a project about the main events in peoples' lives, they know that Christian babies are Christened, that wedding have vows and that the dead are remembered in certain ways. They compare these events with the traditions in the Muslim faith. Their knowledge and understanding of other religions in the world are extended through work on The Dhamma, the study of Buddhism and the 'Five Promises' and through the comparison of some of the artefacts used in these religions. In a lesson seen, pupils showed a good understanding of where Bhuddism is mainly practised and the

languages in which the stories were originally written, for example, Pali Cannon and Sanskrit Cannon. Towards the end of Year 8, pupils study symbolism and use as a starting point a bunch of flowers, considering their use in Christian rituals such as in marriage, death and war. In Year 9, this work is extended to include the concept of love and relationships. Further understanding is also achieved when pupils compare places of worship across other religions and the artefacts they use. Pupils use a world map well to colour in the areas of the world where certain religions are practised and gain some understanding that religion is linked into the culture of these countries.

175. In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to be well motivated and so make satisfactory progress. In Year 10, pupils understand that they live in a multi-ethnic society and know that they must appreciate the different beliefs and traditions of other cultures that are found in Britain. In a Year 10 class, pupils use the Internet to investigate the life of Martin Luther King, to build his family tree and so make the link between slavery and the search for equality within his work. In other lessons they itemise the benefits and drawbacks of life in our current society and know that the media can distort the truth. Pupils in Year 11 know that in the Hindu religion there are a number of gods, for instance, Brahman and Shiva. They know the story of Rama and Sita. In work, where they are encouraged to state their views, they consider modern day events and make links with history, for example, the persecution of the Jewish race. Year 11 pupils showed good recall of previous learning when they compared religious artefacts from Judaism, Islam and Christianity.
176. Teaching in is satisfactory and in the most successful lessons pupils are challenged to think for themselves and to make personal responses to the matters and issues being discussed. For example, in the Year 10 lesson pupils were asked to think what it would be like to be inside a slave ship and to consider what was happening in the pictures shown. Pupils responded well when they commented on how they thought the slaves were being treated, showing an awareness that the slaves were treated as a valuable cargo but not as human beings. They showed a good understanding of the fact that the slaves were frightened and often tried to escape, often dying or being killed in the process.
177. There is a new co-ordinator who is reviewing the provision for the subject and re-writing the existing scheme of work, particularly for Key Stage 4. The current scheme does not fully meet the needs of the pupils as it includes concepts that are too difficult for pupils to understand fully. The co-ordinator's task is made more difficult because the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire provides little guidance in Key Stage 4 as it focuses wholly on GCSE examinations. The subject is well monitored through the school Leadership Group Meetings. There is a good set of subject skills developed which is used well as a basis for assessment. These records clearly show that pupils are making satisfactory progress over time.
178. Religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual development of pupils and a very good contribution to pupils' moral understanding, particularly when issues such as slavery are debated. In addition, the school assemblies are clearly focused on spiritual and moral aspects and add to pupils' understanding of religious concepts. Parts of the PSHE scheme of work and the tutor time make a further contribution to the moral and spiritual development of pupils, particularly when they provide a short and focused time for reflection. There is a small but suitable range of resources available and the co-ordinator is aware that the new scheme of work will need to be resourced and has planned for this. The use of ICT to enhance lesson presentation and to introduce concepts, for example, slavery, is good.