

INSPECTION REPORT

YEOMAN PARK SCHOOL

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122952

Headteacher: Mr P Betts

Reporting inspector: Mr M G Whitehead
21061

Dates of inspection: 9th – 13th June 2003

Inspection number: 249402

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	3 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Hall Road Mansfield Woodhouse Mansfield
Postcode:	NG19 8PS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Freeman
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21061	Mr M G Whitehead	Registered inspector	Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' and students' achievements How well are pupils and students taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11041	Mr M Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' and students' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20024	Mr P Wright	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
19386	Mr T Watts	Team inspector	Science Art and design Modern foreign languages The Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students?
27409	Mrs S Hunt	Team inspector	English Citizenship Educational inclusion, including race equality Special educational needs The post-16 department	
28106	Ms M Majid	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Humanities Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Yeoman Park School is a day special school for pupils with severe, complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties; their ages range from three to nineteen years. Approximately one third of the pupils and students have additional autistic spectrum disorders. There are 91 pupils on roll, comprising 60 boys and 31 girls; among these are seven children who are below statutory school age. There are 85 pupils who are white British and the remainder are from minority ethnic groups including Asian and Indian. One boy and three girls attend part time and there are eight boys and six girls who have dual registration with Yeoman Park and the nearby mainstream secondary school. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are two pupils from Derbyshire who attend the school. The school is situated in the residential area of Mansfield Woodhouse and draws its pupils from Mansfield and the surrounding districts. A comparatively high proportion of the pupils – approximately one third – are entitled to free school meals. The school shares a campus with a mainstream secondary school, a mainstream junior school and a mainstream infant school. This facilitates joint activities between this special school and the mainstream provision in the area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Yeoman Park School is a good school in which pupils make good, and often very good, progress. Levels of achievement are high resulting from the high and often very high quality of teaching. The school benefits from strong leadership by the headteacher and the effective support of the governing body. Taking account of the high quality of teaching and the strong leadership and management, this school provides good value for money, despite the relatively high cost of educating each pupil.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership of the school.
- Care and support of pupils and students provided by the school are very good overall; they receive excellent additional support from the team of highly skilled professional therapists who work very closely with pupils, teachers and parents.
- The quality of teaching overall is good and there are many examples of very good and excellent teaching, very well supported by the work of the teaching assistants.
- Provision for the education of all post-16 students is very good and they receive very good and often excellent teaching. They are extremely well prepared for life after school.
- The use and development of communication in all its forms are very good.
- The school promotes very good attitudes and personal relationships between its staff, pupils and students.
- The communication between the school and parents is very good.

What could be improved

- The role of governors is not fully developed; they do not act as a critical friend nor take a sufficiently active role in the decision-making processes.
- The activities taking place in the school hall are constantly interrupted as it is used as a main thoroughfare.
- The pupils are not protected from bad weather when they arrive at, or depart from, school.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently across subjects.
- The roles of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning are not effective enough.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then, the school has made good improvement. There are now revised care procedures and the school week has been lengthened in line with requirements, which now state that pupils must receive a minimum of 25 hours per week. The arrangements for monitoring and recording attendance have been improved and now meet requirements. The school has not been totally successful in balancing the subject allocation for pupils in Years 1 to 9.

A professional development programme has been introduced, which has had a positive impact and this is continually improving. There has been some improvement in the quality of individual education plans but the targets are not yet specific enough. The assessment and recording practices have been developed successfully and are now being revised to reflect the changing complex needs of the pupils being admitted to the school. There is still a need to improve accommodation for subjects requiring specialist provision. The school no longer has a covered entrance and this shortcoming needs to be addressed in order to provide protection for pupils as they arrive or depart during inclement weather.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The major focus on communication development throughout the school is of a very high standard and clearly benefits the pupils and students. This is further enhanced by the very good support from the speech and language therapists, the occupational therapists, the physiotherapists and the music therapist.

Last year there were eight students who left the post-16 classes and four achieved ten credits in the Accreditation for Life and Living skills (ALL), whilst the other four gained a wide range of Open College Network credits. The units included: the environment; home management; work-skills and the community. There were also two pupils in Year 11 who achieved the whole of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Transition Challenge; they passed eight modules in each of the five different sections. Another Year 11 pupil achieved 12 Open College Network credits.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good. Pupils and students enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good; pupils and students enjoy their lessons and stay on task.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The relationships between staff, pupils and students are very good, as are the relationships between pupils and their peers.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and the procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good.

All members of the school thoroughly enjoy their whole-school assemblies where they celebrate together the good things that have happened in each class. The Friday assembly is a time when the whole school is able to enjoy everyone's successes. During one assembly, the whole school celebrated the 21st birthday of a member of staff by singing and signing 'How do you feel now you're one year older than you were last Friday?' This delightful occasion was a clear reflection of the deep trust, care and understanding that are shared between all staff, pupils and students in the school. Politeness abounds in the school between all adults and pupils; the adults are exemplary in the role models that they present to the youngsters.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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 in English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education is good overall; there are many times when the teaching is very good. Some excellent teaching was seen in English, history, physical education, personal, social and health education, religious education and science. The vast majority of lessons are well planned and teachers take great care to make sure that the work is matched to the individual needs of the pupils and is also sufficiently challenging to give them a feeling of achievement when they succeed. A small amount of teaching lacks pace and is rather tedious but this is the exception rather than the rule. There are times when the work could be more challenging, especially for the most able pupils in the school and there was one occasion when the lesson was not prepared well enough. Throughout the school, the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good; this is reinforced effectively through the use of signing and symbol exchange. Teachers also work closely with parents and make sure that home and school work effectively together to help pupils as they gain new skills. This is the nature of much of the good quality homework that is done by pupils, usually with the help of their parents.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good; it is broad and relevant to the learning needs of the pupils, despite some minor inconsistencies in Years 1 to 9. Small groups make visits to events outside of the school as a part of the broader curriculum. However, there is insufficient use of ICT across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Personal development is promoted effectively. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is developed through very many different areas of study. These elements are also enriched through whole-school activities including assemblies and concerts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school offers a high level of care to all pupils and students. Procedures for the medical care of its pupils are excellent. The pupils also benefit greatly from the extremely high quality speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, music therapy and interaction that are available to them.

The school works closely with parents and arranges special meetings when they may come and discuss the work of their children. There are two of these meetings each year, but the school is always willing to meet the parents at any time if there is any cause for concern. The school is also very supportive of parents and provides special classes to help them learn Makaton signing. This has a very beneficial effect upon the progress that their children make and helps parents to communicate with them even more effectively. The school provides particularly good lessons in communication, and these help to develop the pupils' literacy and general communication skills both at school and at home. The focus on developing communication skills permeates the whole curriculum and is a strength of the school. The school's care provision is also a strength, as there is a wide variety of very high quality provision available throughout the week in the form of therapy, support and guidance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. His relaxed and supportive manner puts the staff at their ease and they feel supported and valued.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The very supportive governors are clear about the school's priorities for development. However, the governors do not act as a critical friend and their role is not fully developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Effective systems are in place for monitoring, evaluating and using data to inform planning and setting school targets. Team leaders are developing their skills in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in their own subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources, including staff, are used well to support pupils' learning.

The staffing and resources are good and the accommodation provides satisfactory facilities in most areas, though there is room for further development to improve the provision for some specialist teaching. The headteacher is well respected by the teachers and governors and has a very clear vision for the future of the school. The school is very effective in applying principles of best value in all its financial dealings and makes good use of ICT in its administrative and supportive work concerning pupils, students, staff and the local education authority.

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 comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. The school works closely with parents. The school keeps parents well informed about the progress of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents and are of the opinion that the school's approach to homework is in need of some clarification to parents. There is need for a policy that is clearly agreed and understood by parents and is consistently applied by the teachers. This should recognise the great deal of shared working between school and home and its relevance to the concept of homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It would be inappropriate to make comparison between the attainment of the pupils and students in Yeoman Park School and the attainment of pupils in mainstream schools. Yeoman Park School caters for pupils and students with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and, therefore, their levels of attainment are extremely low. However, their achievement is high and the progress they make throughout the school is good; by the time they reach the post-16 classes, they make very good progress in speaking and listening. Throughout this report, judgements will be made on the progress that pupils and students make as far as their individual gains in knowledge and understanding are concerned. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference in the progress or achievement of different groups of pupils, be they grouped by age, gender, ethnicity or ability. Pupils and students also perform equally well in almost all subjects.
2. Pupils' and students' achievements in literacy and numeracy are good. They make good progress in their communication skills. There are many pupils who have extreme difficulty in speaking and it is vital that they learn to communicate in other ways. These pupils learn to sign, and to communicate through exchanging pictures or symbols. Many pupils are able to communicate in a variety of different ways, even though they are unable to speak. Progress in writing for pupils in Years 3 to 11 is satisfactory and this is an area in which they show most difficulty because of their specific and special needs. Younger pupils are successful in counting objects up to 15 and recognising Arabic numerals 0–15. The older pupils are successful in recognising numbers to 100 and are able to use number in practical situations, including shopping and preparing food and drinks. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has greatly improved the teaching and learning; it has broadened the areas of study and enabled pupils to achieve more.
3. Students in the post-16 groups are making very good progress in all areas and this is a direct result of the very high quality of teaching that they receive. Pupils grow in maturity as they work their way through the school and, in all subjects, they make good progress. They gain well in mathematical competency and they also do well with their studies concerning personal, social and health education. This is an area that is of prime importance to them and an area in which they gain not just knowledge but also self-esteem.
4. Progress is good in science and pupils achieve well. In Year 9, they learn how to grow a runner bean from a seed; they examine the petals of flowers under a microscope and are amazed by their discoveries. They use computer electronics to help with their investigations and use an interactive whiteboard to record and save their findings to disk on a computer.
5. Pupils and students also make good progress in art and design, design and technology, humanities, music, physical education and religious education.

6. Geography is studied as part of the humanities curriculum and the younger pupils clearly enjoyed their lesson as they worked extremely hard to learn about the geography of their own school. They were clearly delighted as they followed a route which led them to the school kitchen where they recognised the cook and admired the equipment she uses to prepare food for their lunches.
7. Music is used very effectively throughout the school to support learning and the pupils are constantly progressing in their knowledge and ability to perform songs. They learn quickly and clearly enjoy what they have learned. School assemblies are greatly enhanced by the use of music and song. Pupils and students respond to the music, which is used to cue different parts of the collective worship. Pupils make good progress in gaining social and communication skills as they greet each other and enjoy each other's friendship.
8. From Year 10 upwards, pupils and students follow a variety of accredited courses in ASDAN and ALL. Post-16 students who are in the Manor School (the neighbouring mainstream secondary school) follow courses through the Open College Network accreditation and its learning for life course. Pupils and students gain a wide variety of passes and/or certificates of completion.
9. All pupils and students make good progress in religious education. Pupils learn about all major world faiths and, throughout the year, they celebrate different festivals. This helps to raise their awareness of our multicultural society. The school makes sure that all statutory requirements are met concerning the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education.
10. Progress in ICT is satisfactory but it is not used enough in the teaching of other subjects. Pupils do not use ICT as much as they should when presenting their work or searching for information about other subjects. However, there has been some improvement since the last inspection.
11. Teachers set individual targets for each pupil and student and these are recorded in their individual education plans (IEPs). They are reviewed each term, or more frequently if required. The achievement of children in the nursery groups and the students in the post-16 groups is good. Pupils in Years 1 to 11 make satisfactory progress in reaching their targets, despite the learning difficulties with which they have to cope. This is possible thanks to the dedication and hard work of all staff, particularly the teachers and teaching assistants.
12. School targets are set concerning the provision made by the school and the standards being achieved by the pupils and students. These targets are carefully matched to the school's capability and they are challenging. The school is making good progress in meeting those targets. This has resulted in improved standards and increased opportunities for students to follow accredited courses.

Pupils' and students' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils and students have very good attitudes to school. They behave well both in and out of lessons, display enthusiasm for school and have very positive attitudes to their work. Pupils are delighted to come to school in the morning and meet staff

enthusiastically and smile at them. Many pupils do not want to stay at home when they are unwell.

14. Pupils enjoy social occasions, for example in a school assembly, pupils enthusiastically sang 'Happy Birthday' to a friend and presented cards that they had made to a staff member who was shortly to be married. All members of the school community share the caring atmosphere. Pupils' personal and independent skills are well promoted because the school has a climate of mutual respect, careful planning and concern.
15. Staff in the nursery and reception class build strong relationships with children and with each other. Children learn to trust staff well because of the constructive and intense way staff support and work with them. For example, in a nursery lesson observed during the inspection, children sang well together to thank God for a happy day and, in a Year 3 geography lesson, pupils worked well and confidently together to make a boat and sail it on a water tray.
16. Most pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite to staff and well mannered. In classroom snack time, pupils eat sensibly and those who eat in the dining room display good table manners. Pupils display care and concern for others. In a post-16 lesson, a student was helping another student who has hearing difficulties to identify which food he wished to cook. In the lower school, a pupil prevented another pupil with profound multiple learning difficulties from putting his hand in his mouth. Pupils play well together and integrate well. Lunchtime is an orderly occasion where pupils engage in friendly chatter and enjoy one another's company. Pupils learn to sign and say 'thank you' and are encouraged well by staff. The school has a marked absence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism. Exclusion rates are very low; no one was permanently excluded and only one pupil was subject to a fixed-term exclusion during the previous academic year.
17. Where pupils are given the opportunity to develop their independence, they respond well. For example, taking turns to deliver registers to the classroom and return them to the office. They learn to make choices; selecting toys to play with, choosing different fruit to eat at snack times or choosing a special book to read.
18. Pupils in the post-16 department display very good attitudes. They have very good relationships with staff, make very good progress, develop self-assurance and confidence and collaborate well with each other. They successfully complete ongoing work experience at a local farm, local cafés and supermarkets and are well prepared for adult life.
19. Attendance at 88.7 per cent is satisfactory. The majority of absences are due to illness, hospital or doctor's appointments; there is very little unauthorised absence and punctuality is good. This school has the lowest percentage of unauthorised absence when compared with the rest of the county's special schools.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching for all pupils at Yeoman Park School is good and for students in the post-16 department is very good. In all classes, pupils benefit from the high quality of teaching that pervades the school. Teachers make sure that the work is carefully matched to the different capabilities of pupils in the groups. A strength of the school is the way in which teachers and support staff work unstintingly, using many different forms of communication (augmentative communication), in order to make sure that all pupils and students are fully included in all activities and have a clear understanding of the whole lesson. They plan lessons carefully to make sure that they are challenging to the pupils and that they are also interesting and enjoyable; the work is also carefully matched to the wide range of ability there is amongst pupils within the same class. The teachers and teaching assistants work well with the pupils and manage their behaviour well; this can be very challenging because of their special needs. Pupils with autism are also managed well and staff make sure that they enjoy the work planned for them.
21. The high quality of the teaching has a very positive influence on the way in which pupils and students learn. There is clearly an eagerness amongst all of them to get to school. This is borne out by the delightful greetings expressed by each and everyone on arrival at school. Parents also say that their children are keen to come to school. They are equally keen to get into lessons and enjoy them, learning as much as they possibly can. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and soak up the experiences with which they are presented, whether they are in the form of observation, story, investigation, experiment or discovery. This results in high achievement by the pupils. Students in the post-16 groups are even more highly motivated by the outstanding teaching that they receive. This is reflected in the ethos within the post-16 department, as students live and work as young adults, respecting each other and helping and supporting each other when necessary. They are justly proud of their own achievements and those of other students within their peer group.
22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good throughout the school. This is clearly an area that has developed well since the last inspection with the effective introduction of National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in line with the national guidelines. These are areas where the school is now strong in its effectiveness and the school complements the teaching of literacy and numeracy with the highly skilled teaching and use of augmentative communication.
23. All teachers and teaching assistants are acutely aware of the individual needs of the pupils and students. They work closely with the speech and language therapists, the physiotherapists and the occupational therapists. This helps pupils to benefit from ongoing support in all of these areas throughout the whole of the school day. The school's therapists work very closely with the teachers as well as the pupils. They provide a great deal of support and guidance concerning the best ways of managing and helping the pupils to receive the best possible learning experiences. Care is taken to make sure that boys and girls receive appropriate attention and the staff work very effectively in helping pupils to develop good and proper relationships with each other. The older pupils and students discuss relationships, they are helped to learn appropriate social behaviour and receive education concerning sex and drugs awareness. This is taught well and much of

this is due to the very good relationships that there are between the staff and the pupils and students.

24. Teaching in science is good and often very good. Teachers work well with pupils and carry out practical experiments and investigations, which the pupils really enjoy and from which they learn a great deal about the subject. Teaching in art and design is good and teachers make sure that the pupils and students use a wide range of media and that all are able to progress at his or her own rate, whilst presenting demanding challenges to them. The course involves paper sculpture, clay modelling, making puppets and stained glass windows as well as the more traditional skills of painting, drawing and print making.
25. The quality of teaching in citizenship, personal, social and health education, physical education and humanities is also of a high standard. This good teaching ensures that all pupils receive a generally broad education and it is certainly an experience that they enjoy and from which they benefit greatly. The work is well organised, especially in the upper part of the school, where students follow nationally accredited courses. These are taught at different levels that are appropriate to the pupils' needs, and are a great incentive to many pupils. Pupils learn well and make good progress in their social and personal skills because lessons are well planned and take account of the widely differing needs and abilities of the pupils. Staff have very good relationships with pupils, and they use signing, role-play, games and pictures to help pupils' learning. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject, and they are good at encouraging pupils to be as independent as possible. Many opportunities are taken for pupils to do things themselves, from taking registers to the office, to going to the fish and chip shop for a meal. At lunchtimes, pupils are encouraged to help themselves as much as possible, and many of them help their friends as well.
26. Teaching of ICT has improved and is now good but there is insufficient use of this technology in other subjects and throughout the school in general. Opportunities are missed to use computers, printers and other electronic devices to add an extra dimension to the teaching or simply to improve the presentation of the pupils' work.
27. It was not possible to observe any music lessons during the inspection but from the scrutiny of the school documents and recording of pupils' work in the previous two terms, it is clear that the teaching that was provided was of a high standard. Music plays a very important part in the teaching of many other subjects. It is also used to create an ambience before, during and after whole-school meetings or events.

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

28. The school teaches a good range of subjects and topics overall. The nursery children enjoy a good selection of activities to begin their education in the school, based on national guidelines that have been well adapted by the school. Pupils in Years 1 to 9 are taught a satisfactory range of subjects. All of the required subjects are taught, but the balance between them varies through the school. This depends on how teachers in each section of the school feel about the appropriateness of the various subjects for

their pupils. For instance, some pupils have very little history and geography, whilst the amount of art and design, design and technology, religious education and physical education increases as they get older. Subjects such as physical education have an especially good plan of what should be taught in the long term. In other subjects, however, there are times when the topic approach to the long-term planning can get in the way of clarity about which subject is being taught, and how much time is actually spent on each subject. The considerable amount of time given to personal and social development, and to English and communication, is mainly appropriate. However, a large amount of time is also given to 'other' activities, which are basically therapy of different kinds, and are mainly for the lowest attaining pupils. The school is continually seeking to balance the needs of the pupils with the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education.

29. Staff are re-developing the long-term planning for the increasing number of pupils with the most profound and complex learning difficulties. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a good curriculum that is based on nationally accredited courses. This is approached through a variety of activities that aim for independence skills of many kinds. These are well matched to the learning needs of pupils of all abilities. A large part of the plan of study is for personal and social development, including citizenship. Pupils in the post-16 groups have a very good curriculum that is very well organised and aimed particularly well at their learning needs at all levels. The long-term plans are very good and are based on national schemes, which ensure progress.
30. Pupils' literacy skills are well supported in lessons throughout the school. English lessons take very good account of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers and other classroom staff are very good at communicating clearly with pupils. They use clear speech, stress the key words and use signing. They also use symbols and objects of reference very well, either singly for individual items and activities, or sequences of activities. For example, they were used to illustrate the growth and care of runner bean plants during a science lesson. Writing and reading are encouraged in other subjects.
31. Pupils' numeracy skills are also well supported throughout the curriculum, as well as in mathematics lessons that are based effectively on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers create opportunities to include counting, number skills and measuring in many lessons such as physical education, French, science and design and technology.
32. The range of activities offered to pupils outside of school hours is very good. These activities include a monthly 'Saturday club' which runs activities for different groups of pupils. A recent day was on the theme of circus skills, and was very much enjoyed by many pupils. There are also regular evening clubs, often run by outside coaches, such as ones for indoor tennis and other sports and games. Summer clubs and play schemes are also organised during the main holiday each year. Some are an extension of regular schooling, such as one recently on symbol exchange. Some of the events are open to youngsters from outside the school. There is a toy library in the school, which is open to mothers and young children from the local area.
33. There is a good plan of what should be taught to develop pupils' personal and social skills. This plan includes many aspects such as personal awareness, and

learning to dress, drink and eat independently. There is massage and other sensory experiences for those with more complex needs. The more able pupils learn to make choices, often using symbol cards, electronic switches or real items. This involves learning about relationships and sex education, families and friends, and people's feelings. Health and personal hygiene are also important aspects.

34. Very good use is made of the community to add to pupils' wider social learning. There are frequent visits to places such as local banks, cafés, the library, bowling alley, shops and supermarkets. These visits are a very important aspect of pupils' social development and independence training, especially for the older pupils. In physical education, pupils make especially good use of community facilities for swimming, games tournaments and bowling. The local parks of Rufford and Clumber are visited regularly. Pupils have also visited farms and have been into Nottingham on the Robin Hood train line. Older pupils have recently visited sheltered housing so that they can have a better idea of what choices may be open to them when they leave the school. Groups of pupils take part in residential visits.
35. Other places in the community are used very well as part of the school's careers development. These are places that provide placements for work experience, and they include a café, two supermarkets, the library, an elderly people's luncheon club and a school farm at the adjacent secondary school. Many pupils have work experience within the school, in the office, in the kitchen or working with the caretaker. Their careers guidance begins in Year 9, and is very well supported by staff from Connexions who give very good advice to pupils and parents about what options may be open to them when they leave the school. Families benefit greatly from the help and advice that is given. The school is working closely with the local college of further education to develop courses that are suitable for Yeoman Park students.
36. The school has good links with several other schools and colleges to help pupils' wider social development and independence skills. One of the post-16 groups works within the adjacent mainstream secondary school. Yeoman Park students have their own separate lessons, but share social and dining facilities with the mainstream sixth-form students. There are also links for younger pupils with the schools that are very close by. A number of pupils attend some lessons such as art and design, design and technology and physical education at these mainstream schools. However, these links depend on additional funding from the local education authority. There are also good links with several colleges, especially the one to which many pupils expect to go when they leave Yeoman Park School. They have 'link' courses and other courses that are especially created for pupils and students with learning difficulties. These include brick-laying, painting and decorating, catering and pottery.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

37. The provision for pupils' and students' spiritual development is good. It is supported by the good relationships in school, which contribute to a positive climate in which pupils learn to respect themselves and others. Assemblies

provide very good opportunities for acts of collective worship. During a whole-school assembly, there was a warm, welcoming atmosphere and the pupils displayed very good attitudes and behaviour, saying 'hello' to their friends and enthusiastically singing happy birthday to one pupil. Opportunities for promoting the pupils' spiritual development occur in the celebrations of major religious festivals and during visits to places of worship. For example, older pupils have visited a local church and have looked at the statues, altar and stained glass windows. In religious education lessons, pupils gain an awareness of other religions and are taught to be familiar with, and to respect, their beliefs and stories.

38. During science lessons, pupils respond with awe; for example, in a middle school lesson, pupils were amazed as they looked at dandelions, daisies and buttercups under a microscope. Pupils watched with wonder as caterpillars crawled on their hands. An excellent lesson with a post-16 group of students, which focused on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', was a magical experience and made a significant contribution to their spiritual development. Pupils are encouraged to show their work in class and to be proud of their achievements. At the end of the day, pupils have time to reflect on the experiences that they have during the school day. However, opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are not part of subject planning.
39. The arrangements for moral and social development are good. Staff provide exemplary role models and help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong and to be aware of the impact of their actions on others. This is promoted throughout the school. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility; for example, pupils deliver the register in the mornings and are able to find specific resources in the classrooms. The school rewards achievement and good behaviour during 'team assemblies', where there are smaller, more intimate groups. Pupils show respect for each other and are sympathetic towards each other's needs. For example, a student in a post-16 group was very concerned about another and said, 'I'll look after her'. There is a programme for personal and social development and citizenship which provides good support for pupils and students in many aspects of their independence, self help and social skills. The school provides positive, corporate experiences through assemblies and school productions; for example, the school has recently produced their own version of a well-known stage show called 'Moggies'. Post-16 students, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, are given the opportunity to develop their social skills when working towards nationally accredited qualifications. A very good aspect of the school's provision is the emphasis on helping the pupils to learn age-appropriate behaviour and the school works hard with parents to reinforce this aspect. The pupils are provided with a wide range of experiences within the community.
40. Provision for cultural development is good. A strength is the contribution made by religious education in the study of major world faiths and cultures. Pupils have opportunities to look at photographs and handle artefacts that bring home to them the characteristics of other faiths and cultures. Pupils are given opportunities to explore their own cultures; for example, there was a 'Victorian day' when the local museum provided a wide range of artefacts and the pupils dressed up in Victorian

clothes. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in drama activities based on English literature; for example, in a lesson on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', pupils and staff enacted a scene with Titania, Oberon and Puck. The school took part in National Poetry Day when a pupil read a poem by R L Stevenson.

41. At the beginning and end of assemblies, the pupils listen to classical music. The school had an artist in residence and the impressive group work that came from this visit is on display in the school foyer. Pupils also have the opportunities to share cultural experiences from other countries when the school holds cultural activity days; for example, they have looked at maps and pictures and experienced making and eating the food from France, Italy and Germany. Less able pupils and students in Years 10 to 13 experienced different cultures through a sensory approach as they went on an imaginary journey and visited a Native American 'pow wow'. One pupil was delighted to play a drum, wear a 'magic' blanket and join in the dance. There is a display in the school showing the pupils celebrating Chinese New Year by making dragon masks, face painting and eating rice with chopsticks. The post-16 students learn about themselves and others through their work experience placements. However, the school does not fully help pupils to appreciate that England is a multicultural society.

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

42. The school has very good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' and students' welfare. The school has adopted the policy of the Local Area Child Protection Committee, which is clear and concise. The headteacher, who is the designated child protection officer, is well aware of his role and has received current up-to-date training. He has arranged cascade training for teaching staff and is shortly to extend this to all other staff at school. Records are good and the school liaises well with the statutory authorities.
43. The school has excellent procedures for the medical care of pupils, which are very effective, understood and applied by all staff. The school benefits from a large number of health support staff including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, paediatric nurse and visiting paediatrician, all of whom provide excellent medical care for pupils as well as support and guidance for staff and parents.
44. Arrangements for feeding and the safe moving and handling of pupils are very effective and are well understood and applied by staff. Staff display a very high level of support and concern for the welfare of pupils and, as a result, pupils' confidence and trust are increased and they make good progress in their learning and are able to rise to challenges.
45. Pupils are well supervised at lunchtime and at break and are therefore able to continue to develop their confidence and skills. Transport is well organised and both drivers and escorts understand the special needs of the pupils and students that they carry. There are very good and comprehensive feeding programmes for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) supplied at each

mealtime for teachers and support staff to follow.

46. The school arranges regular health and safety inspections, which are carried out by staff and governing body members. They also arrange a formal termly risk assessment, carried out by a safety officer from the local education authority. The fire alarm is tested regularly and regular fire drills are held. There is adherence to the school health and safety policy.
47. Procedures for the monitoring of good behaviour and the elimination of poor behaviour are satisfactory. The behaviour and handling policy is very brief and is presently being re-written to reflect a whole-school policy on behaviour management. The school promotes effectively an anti-racial policy through all its work and the policy statement is contained within the personal, social and health education documents. The school is careful to ensure that pupils do not access the Internet without an adult being present and, thus, the Internet viewing is closely monitored by staff.
48. At present, staff use their professional expertise to minimise unacceptable behaviour, and pupils displaying difficult or challenging behaviour have their own individual behaviour plans. Staff emphasise praise and encouragement and the use of phrases such as 'good sitting', 'good listening' or 'good speaking' when pupils behave well. This is very effective and behaviour overall in the school is good.
49. The school monitors attendance well. The education welfare officer attends when needed. The school contacts parents for an explanation on the first day of absence. An electronic system is used and registers are marked neatly, correctly and comply fully with legislation.

Assessment

50. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The procedures for assessment are developing; however, this is an improvement since the last inspection. There is now a policy for assessment and recording and, for the past four years, the school has used baseline testing and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's early learning skills performance check lists, hereafter referred to as 'P' scales, alongside National Curriculum levels to help assessment become more finely tuned. The school is planning to introduce Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (PIVATS) throughout the curriculum to make assessment even more precise. Data concerning the progress of each pupil is carefully presented to parents on a regular basis at parents' evenings. Teachers' records and school reports show that pupils across the school make good progress in meeting the targets set.
51. Good assessment procedures are used on entry to the school nursery. These are used effectively, both academically and with speech and occupational therapists, to plan activities and modify programmes of work for individual children. This continues right through the school; teachers make clear assessments and, from these assessments, along with the pupils' individual statements of special educational needs, IEPs are

produced. Some of these IEPs contain clear, achievable targets in literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education, however, a large number of them do not have more specific and measurable targets. The school is developing clear strategies for teaching and learning linked to each target and it is anticipated that this will improve after staff training in PIVATS has taken place in the near future.

52. The school makes good provision in line with pupils' statements of special educational needs. This includes the style of teaching opportunities for working in small groups or one-to-one teaching and there is ready access to a range of therapies. In addition, when pupils and students are admitted late to the school, statements are updated to reflect their present needs. The deputy headteacher works effectively to ensure that annual and transition reviews are carried out according to the new Code of Practice. Parents, carers, therapists and, where appropriate, external professionals attend the meetings. All older pupils and students and those younger pupils who are judged to be able to cope also attend reviews and this is good practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has developed very close relationships with parents and provides a good level of support. This has a very positive effect on pupils' progress. Parents have very positive views of the school. The overwhelming majority of parents, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, thought their children were making good progress at school. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. The school works closely with them and is helping their children become mature and responsible. Inspection findings agree with all these positive views.
54. The school brochure is of good quality; it is parent friendly and contains all information that parents need to know, regarding facilities and what is taught in school. The governors' annual report is similarly well produced and contains all statutory information. The school provides a termly newsletter giving up-to-date information on events, staff appointments and pupil activities.
55. The school has been very successful in forging links with parents of nursery children. Parents are invited into school for a personal interview prior to their children's admission and have a tour of the school, meet class teachers and the headteacher. Children start school on a part-time basis and there is constant dialogue with the school regarding children's progress. The home/school diary provides an invaluable link with parents and a constant means of communication between parents and school. Many parents use the diary to inform staff about what their children have done after school or at the weekend. This enables staff to have an additional dialogue with children and to improve their communication skills. Parents are able to contact school at any time to discuss their children's progress or if they have any concerns.
56. Each school section (lower, middle or upper school) holds two formal parent evenings per annum where parents are able to meet class teachers and teaching assistants to discuss their children's progress and receive formal presentations concerning the curriculum and other important developments.

57. Annual reports are enclosed with annual reviews; they are detailed and contain good information about what pupils have studied, progress made and targets that have been set, though in some cases, targets are not clear enough. Parents are invited to all annual reviews and the vast majority attend. The school actively encourages parents into school to help and many take the opportunity to do so. They help in a considerable number of ways such as helping with swimming, rebound therapy sessions, school trips and assist in the toy library. Their help is much appreciated by the school.
58. Parents are concerned about the amount of homework that is set for their children, according to the questionnaires that they completed. The school needs to communicate clearly with parents so that there is a clear understanding about what constitutes homework and how it can be of help to the pupils and students. The school provides useful courses for parents such as usage of Makaton, symbol exchange and a sibling support group. The community room is available for use by parents and the school has a large toy library and offers the use of it, not only to parents but also to all members of the community.
59. The Friends of Yeoman Park School, to whom all parents belong, is a lively body and arranges successful social functions such as the Christmas fayre, barn dances, race nights, barbecues and fashion shows. They raised approximately £1,500 for school funds last year and their work is much appreciated.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The leadership of the school is strong. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction to the school's work and this is demonstrated in the positive changes made since the last inspection and in the good quality of the school's planning for development. This is a school that has clear priorities for improvement and which makes good progress towards them. Working relationships between the headteacher, his deputy and the other members of the senior management team are very positive and mutually supportive. The team is already developing new ways of working that will help to raise standards in the school; for example, there are plans to ensure that team leaders develop their skills in classroom observation. Staff feel valued and supported by the senior management team.
61. Management of the school is good. There is a commitment to developing a team of people with the skills, knowledge and understanding to meet the increasing range of special educational needs of the pupils. The school's development plan is a comprehensive document which provides a clear focus on what needs to be done and the action needed for achievement. It contains specific criteria for success, clear lines of responsibility and estimates of the costs involved. The targets set in the plan are appropriate and link to the three-year overview, ensuring coherence.
62. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities conscientiously and effectively and is very supportive of the school. It is deeply committed to the school's success and demonstrates this in a range of different ways; for example, the chair of governors

makes regular visits to the school where staff can speak to her, both formally and informally. This generates a feeling amongst staff of being both valued and supported. Governors are well informed about what goes on in school and have a clear understanding of issues surrounding the education of the pupils. There are clear procedures to ensure all statutory requirements are met. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and of the areas that need to be further developed. However, the role of the governors is not yet fully developed; they do not yet act as a 'critical friend' or take a sufficiently active roll in the decision-making processes of the school.

63. The school has a good number of teachers for the pupils on roll and the range and complexity of their special learning needs. There are a very good number of therapists and medical staff providing excellent support for pupils' personal learning needs. These include full-time nursing cover, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. There is a very good number of teaching assistants, who are well qualified by experience and/or training. New members of staff are well supported by the induction and mentoring arrangements in place. Teaching assistants report how effectively they were inducted into the school on arrival and therefore were quickly able to make an impact by supporting learning in the classroom.
64. Provision for staff development is good and is linked to the school development plan and targets derived from the effective performance management procedures. The school's commitment to train and improve the expertise of all staff is valued highly by the teaching assistants who appreciate very much the opportunities they have to improve their professional skills. This is reflected in the professional way staff conduct themselves around the school and the very effective support that they give in lessons.
65. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. The school makes good use of the accommodation to provide an effective learning environment for pupils. Most classrooms are large with suitable access for pupils with a wide range of physical needs. However, the accommodation for class M2 is unsatisfactory, as this is also an access route to other classrooms. The music room, soft play area, hydrotherapy pool and sensory and light room are used very effectively and extend the range of provision for all pupils. However, there are no specialist areas available for science, art and design, ICT or design and technology. The main hall in the centre of the school is used for assembly, dinners and physical education. This means that physical education lessons can be subject to disruptions from staff and pupils using the hall as a thoroughfare. The school no longer has a covered entrance and this shortcoming needs to be addressed in order to provide pupils with protection as they arrive and depart during inclement weather. The secure play area, with its safety surface, enhances the play and social activities of pupils. The school is very well cared for by the caretaker and cleaners.
66. The school's strategic use of resources is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school budget and have efficient financial control arrangements in place. Spending decisions are considered carefully to ensure competitive prices are attained. Grants which are provided for specific purposes,

for example new initiatives, are managed well. The financial administrator and her administrative assistant are very efficient and make a significant contribution to the school's success. The use of ICT to support the management systems of the school is very good.

67. Although the school's core income and expenditure per pupil are high compared with other special schools, standards are good overall and the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils make good progress. The headteacher, governors and staff work closely together to successfully achieve the school's aims. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to improve the quality of education provided by the school, the headteacher and governors need to:
- (i) develop the role of governors so that they are able to act as critical friends to the headteacher and senior management in a full and supportive manner; (Paragraph 62)
 - (ii) ensure that the activities taking place in the school hall are not interrupted by people passing through by planning and using alternative routes through the school or using the hall as a corridor only when it is not being used as a teaching room; (Paragraphs 65 and 149)
 - (iii) provide a covered area that can be used by taxis and minibuses in order to allow pupils to get in or out of their transport whilst being protected from inclement weather; (Paragraph 65)
 - (iv) ensure the effective use of ICT in all subjects so that the pupils can access and use information and present their work more effectively; (Paragraphs 105, 129, 132, 135 and 154)
 - (v) ensure that subject co-ordinators are able to monitor the teaching within their subjects. (Paragraphs 97, 112, 136 and 155)

The following minor issues should also be addressed:

- Targets on pupils' IEPs should be made sharper so that they can be easily assessed. (Paragraphs 51 and 57)
- Organise therapy sessions so that they do not result in the same lesson being missed each week by the same pupil(s), thus avoiding inequality of opportunity or access to the curriculum. (Paragraph 69)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

69. Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is good overall and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Since September last year,

the school has had a support team led by a member of the teaching staff. This is developing very well and, at present, the school's support team is effective in its work with pupils who display extremely challenging behaviour. In addition, the same team supports pupils who are integrated part time into local mainstream schools. Behaviour plans are in place for the challenging pupils, and advice and support are provided by the school's educational psychologist who works closely with the co-ordinator and her team. All school staff have received the training in Treatment and Education of Autistic Children and other Children with related Handicaps (TEACCH), and modified methods and strategies have been developed. These are working well with all pupils on the autistic spectrum. Staff respond well, on the whole, to pupils' moods and have developed a successful and flexible approach to engaging pupils' attention. Links with health professionals are very good; the various therapists and other medical professionals make a significant contribution towards meeting the pupils' additional needs. The therapy provided to meet individual needs is consistently of outstanding quality; however, there is the conflicting problem of pupils having access to the curriculum and to therapy. This has resulted in inequality of opportunity for some pupils who regularly miss the same lessons. This is unsatisfactory.

POST-16 PROVISION

70. Provision for students over the age of 16 is very good and is a strength of the school. It offers a relevant curriculum that matches the students' needs very well. Students have very positive views of the provision they receive and the way it prepares them for life beyond school.
71. The main post-16 provision is accommodated in the local secondary school and, although the students' classroom is small, they are able to access the specialist facilities. The mainstream sixth-form students act as mentors for Yeoman Park post-16 students; this works extremely well and there is a very positive inclusive feeling between both groups of students. Post-16 students with more complex and profound learning difficulties are taught in the bungalow classroom attached to the main school. Over the next two years, however, it is planned to extend the post-16 provision at the secondary school to accommodate all the post-16 students on the same site, whilst continuing to maintain the inclusion with the comprehensive school.
72. The present co-ordinator has been in post since last September; however, she retires at the end of the term. Unfortunately, owing to timetabling problems over the past year, she has only been able to visit the secondary school site once per week to teach religious education. This has created a rather fragmented leadership and management issue. It is to be hoped that co-ordination of both post-16 groups of students will be more cohesive in the future. At present, the two groups of students are mainly taught separately, however, they do join together for certain subjects each week. During an excellent creative arts lesson, all 21 students performed 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' after decorating the school hall like a sensory forest.
73. The very good standard of students' achievements and behaviour is the result of

teaching which is always at least very good. Teaching of the one group of post-16 students with PMLD was consistently excellent. All teachers plan their lessons very well, informed by their deep knowledge and understanding of the students' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are sensitive to the students' range of needs but challenge students to make their best efforts. Expectations are high; in an English lesson, students with PMLD were fully involved with a sensory story based on Gareth Gates. Students with very complex difficulties were able to communicate using flash cards, signing, symbol exchange and electronic communicators. They responded well to the 'Music Man' which was created within a disco setting; one student with verbal communication exclaimed 'I can't believe this!'

74. All staff, both teachers and teaching assistants, in the post-16 departments are very skilled at signing and using other forms of communication with the result that students and adults always interact well. For example, very good instructions on an interactive whiteboard were given to students during an ICT lesson; students responded excellently achieving high standards in basic computer skills.
75. Teachers use assessment effectively to monitor student progress. Comprehensive records are maintained on students and these are used to ensure that students' individual and behavioural needs are met in lessons. There are opportunities for students to gain accreditation, these include ALL (Accreditation for Life and Living skills), OCN, ASDAN and RSA. The department is looking into the possibility of extending the Learning for Life (OCN) accreditation to incorporate students with PMLD. There is an additional need for the department to consider offering more advanced accreditation to meet the needs of higher attaining students in the future.
76. Students' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well through the core skills curriculum. Within this area of the curriculum, students practise their listening, signing, speaking and observational skills with symbols, for example, so that they become effective in communication in all its forms. Students develop their basic understanding of numeracy in practical settings such as handling money. Higher attaining students can deal with simple money transactions when they go on visits into the community, for example to a leisure centre or to a local café. Much of the students' work within the core skills area of the curriculum is related to preparing for adult life. It is related to problem solving, and the excellent and very good teaching which challenges students within a supportive and caring environment enables them to solve problems and overcome obstacles. Teachers are very skilful in non-intervention strategies; they wait for students to attempt answers or tasks and the students respond well to this approach. For example, higher attaining students followed very clear worksheets and cooked soup and rolls for themselves during a survival cookery session, receiving the minimum of support from the teacher. During a religious education lesson for pupils with PMLD, they experienced and were able to compare weddings from two religions – a Christian and a Jewish wedding. The excellent use of objects of reference, such as the Bible, confetti, rings, a wedding register and the use of a large switching device to activate the 'Wedding March', contributed to the great enjoyment of the group.
77. Students are able to choose options through the vocational skills part of the curriculum. Among many varied options, they can study aromatherapy and

massage, and an introduction to livestock using the secondary school's own farm to look after pigs, hens, sheep and lambs. They garden and grow plants and vegetables on the main school's allotment, selling the produce they grow.

78. The provision for careers education is developing. The school has a service level agreement with the Connexions service. All students have in-house work experience with either the main site or the secondary site during an eight-week period in the summer term. They work with the caretakers, the secondary school farm, the reception and the school office on both sites. The students who are more able go into the community and work in such places as a local café the local charity shop, the council garden centre and a local printing firm. There are visitors from the world of work such as the 'allotment man' and the safety focus officer.
79. There is very good provision for students at a local college of further education where they have access to two courses, 'skills for independent living' and 'skills for adult life'. In addition, there are opportunities for students to join other courses offered by the college such as pottery, joinery, painting and decorating, catering, health and beauty and hairdressing. While students are at the college, they have opportunities to mix freely with mainstream students and adults during breaks and lunchtimes. They have opportunities to extend their social and personal skills by queuing for meals, making choices and paying for their own purchases. This complements the work and the inclusiveness they experience in school and puts it into real-life situations. As a result, students' self-confidence and self-esteem grow very well, they achieve well and take pride in attending college and the work they do there.
80. Students make good progress in their personal development including spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Sex education is well developed and students make good progress in their understanding. Personal, social and health education, often linked with citizenship, is well supported through the curriculum and residential experiences. Students from the secondary site have the opportunity to go away each year on an adventure holiday in the Derwent Valley for a week in July.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	18	35	8	1	0	0
Percentage	8.8	26.5	51.5	11.8	1.5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point. These figures are expressed correct to one decimal place and therefore may not add up to exactly 100.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	91
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	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	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
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
85	1	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
1	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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.5
Average class size	8

Education support staff: YN – Y13

Total number of education support staff	30
Total aggregate hours worked per week	910

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	1,356,883
Total expenditure	1,310,857
Expenditure per pupil	14,405
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,935
Balance carried forward to next year	46,026

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	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.6
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	82
Number of questionnaires returned	19

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	84	11	0	0	5
My child is making good progress in school.	84	16	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	21	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	16	16	5	11
The teaching is good.	79	21	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	21	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	16	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	74	21	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	21	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	16	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	79	16	5	0	0

Please note that the horizontal rows of figures may not add up to 100 exactly because the figures are calculated to the nearest whole number. Each answer by a parent represents 5.26 per cent.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

81. Children make a good start to their school lives in the nursery and reception unit. There are three girls and one boy of nursery age who attend part time, and there are three boys of reception age who attend full time. They make good progress overall and very good progress in their personal and social development. This is because of the consistently good teaching, the teamwork and the very effective organisation of this unit. The teaching in all areas of learning is consistently good and children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

82. The lowest attaining children learn to anticipate personal care routines, and recognise different people and what they do. They look to people's faces and voices, and co-operate with dressing and eating. Higher attaining children learn snack time routines and, slowly, they gain skills in eating and drinking independently, washing and cleaning themselves, brushing their hair and teeth. At lunchtimes, they eat and play together in a friendly manner. In lessons, they join in with games and activities in pairs and small groups, and learn to cope with being away from direct adult attention all the time. They join in with celebrations and know whose birthday it is.

Communication, language and literacy

83. Children make good progress in these areas; they sit attentively in a group and listen to a story about 'The Washing Line'. With some prompting, they take their turn to press a large electronic switch to say 'hello', or look at a picture or a symbol card that is being passed around. The higher attainers understand what is being said to them, but other children need staff to use some signing to help their understanding. Some children answer direct questions, but not always with relevant answers. They understand that written words have meaning, but are not yet able to recognise any letters. They enjoy listening to stories, especially ones they know, and can anticipate the exciting parts. When 'writing', they make circular and straight markings on the page with crayons.

Mathematical development

84. In mathematical development, children make good progress; the most able children sometimes manage to count to five, with help, or will 'add one' or 'take one away'. Children learn the names of the main colours and shapes, such as when going walking along a 'shapes trail' into the hall for physical education. They are developing their understanding of concepts such as 'big' and 'small', 'inside' and 'outside', 'under' and 'on top' as well as the more sophisticated and detailed comparative concepts of 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'; for instance, when

looking at two small objects, one can still be bigger than the other.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Electronic switches are used to control speaking devices, especially for making choices, such as at snack time. Progress is good and the higher attainers operate a toaster, tape recorder, microwave or television with a lot of help. The lower attaining children cannot do this purposefully, and need much full physical help to operate the simple speaking switches. The higher attaining children use the computer mouse, but also need much prompting to remember how it works. They make items with paper, card, play-dough and fabrics, slowly gaining skills in handling materials and tools. Children begin to learn that different people do different jobs and that different places are used for different things, such as the office, classroom, hall and pool. Their understanding of time develops, both in the idea of some things being much older than others and in the structure of each day.

Physical development

86. Children make good improvements to their physical skills. The lowest attainers are often not able to move independently, and their improvement is measured in terms of toleration of lying down, standing, sitting, having flexible limbs or being able to grasp small items such as a spoon. Their water confidence in the school's own swimming pool develops very well in sessions run by the physiotherapists. They enjoy moving around supported by an adult and being splashed. The higher attaining children take part in games, races and exercises, both individually and in co-operating groups. They use the outdoor play equipment as well as the apparatus in the hall for climbing and balancing.

Creative development

87. In their creative development, children progress well, they enjoy the singing sessions, although they are not able to sing the words, and the higher attainers bang or blow simple instruments or clap their hands. At the sand tray, they dig and look for buried toys. The lower attainers need full help with holding an instrument and making a sound with it. In art and design, they choose different colours and materials, and use crayons and paints to make pictures and patterns. Children do not generally play co-operatively together because of the great difficulties they have with learning and/or with relating to other people, because of their special educational needs. In one 'thinking time', children were very hushed and attentive when the teacher dimmed the lights and lit a candle, putting on some electronic 'mood' music for a spiritual and reflective moment.
88. The good rate of progress is primarily due to the good quality of teaching. The teacher is very experienced and has good knowledge of the children and the subjects to be taught. Lessons are planned well and are securely based on a detailed and practical plan of what is to be taught in the long term. Children's progress is checked at least weekly and in each lesson, if appropriate, so that the teacher and supporting staff can alter the planning for the immediate future, if

necessary. The teaching is structured, with a good introduction, followed by individual or group activities that are matched well to the children's needs. Staff are bright and breezy with the children and use clear speech, signing and symbol cards to make sure that all children know what they are saying and know what to do. Children's learning needs are met well by the challenging lessons and well-themed optional activities. Lessons start promptly, run at a good pace and staff have high expectations that pupils will take part to the best of their ability. The behaviour of some children who have behavioural difficulties is very well managed.

89. The Foundation Stage unit is managed and led very well, resulting in the very good organisation of the whole unit, including the effective team approach. The accommodation is good; it is spacious enough to allow children to move around, although the use of two smaller side rooms is limited because some of the furniture and children's equipment is too big to fit easily into them. There is space, however, to have a variety of ready set-up activities on different tables, in different areas of the unit. Staff have the use of a good range of equipment and materials to make the children's learning more interesting and exciting. New staff are introduced to the unit well so that they are effective in their jobs immediately. There is a good plan of what should be taught to the children in the long term. It is relevant to the learning needs of the children and includes many activities that the children find very interesting and exciting. The headteacher, who is the leader, is working on the long-term plan to take better account of the learning needs of the pupils who are increasingly coming into the unit with extreme learning difficulties, as well as those with autistic spectrum disorder. There has been a good improvement in this unit since the previous inspection, when some aspects were already considered to be good.

ENGLISH

90. The quality of teaching and the progress that pupils and students make in English are good throughout the school. All pupils achieve well; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked very hard at implementing and adapting the National Literacy Strategy. She is at present rewriting the English policy and certain aspects of the schemes of work. The teaching of communication skills is very much improved and this has had a very positive influence on standards throughout the school. Another factor in the improvement in the standards of communication has been the successful partnership of the very good speech and language therapy provision working with the English co-ordinator and with all staff. This results in very good achievement in speaking and listening. Nottinghamshire authority has developed a local education authority signing directory for its schools and colleges and the school is used as an exemplar by the authority for its extensive work on communication. To improve communication further, the co-ordinator and the speech therapist plan to run a summer school this July for targeted pupils working on literacy and communication skills. Progress in reading is good owing to the extensive use of a symbol exchange system and signing boards for the large number of non-verbal pupils within the school. Overall, writing remains satisfactory. There is not enough use of computers and activated whiteboards to aid writing, however, the co-ordinator recognises this and she has worked hard with her own class to achieve this with very good results using an interactive whiteboard, and is hoping to train other staff to do the same.

91. All pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening and achieve very well in improving their communication skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils, including those with PMLD and more complex communication difficulties, pay attention and respond very well to others. They learn to communicate using appropriate means, for example eye pointing, signing and using symbols and various kinds of communication voice boxes such as dynavox, dynamite and symbol exchange. They recognise and respond well to objects of reference such as Year 1 pupils recognising and making the animal sounds for cuddly animal toys and puppets relating to the characters in the story 'The Pig in the Pond'. In a Year 2 class, one higher attaining pupil pointed out, signing with great enthusiasm to support speech, that there was a crocodile in the story. All teachers and support assistants consistently use pictures, photographs and symbols effectively to gain the attention of the lower attaining pupils. Communication boards, the use of communication machines and visual timetables provide a successful structure to the school day and enable pupils to understand what will be happening next. By the time they are in Year 6, many pupils have built up a good repertoire of signs. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils during a literacy session expressed their feelings about the monsters in their shared reading book 'My favourite monster'. One Year 6 pupil signed and spoke in answer to the question 'why do we look under the bed?', 'To look for monsters because that it is where they will be!'
92. Signing and communication become more fluent as pupils move further up the school. By the end of Year 9, pupils continue to progress well. When the teacher of a Year 8 class asked which country Barcelona was in; 'Spain' was the immediate reply. In a Years 10 and 11 literacy session, pupils acted out the story of 'Have you seen who's just moved in next door?' During a joint session with post-16 students, Years 10 and 11 pupils performed 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', and one Year 11 pupil played Titania's man servant and spoke and signed very clearly. All pupils and students in this group expressed much pleasure during this lesson. Communication is linked very well with music. For example, pupils responded well using their signing to sing songs and hymns during a very good assembly. There is good support from the music therapist whose intensive regular sessions with non-communicative pupils have helped their progress.
93. Pupils' achievement and progress in reading are good throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils know when to turn the page of the big book and they recognise the characters from their story book. Year 2 pupils could describe all the characters from the book they had read 'The Monkey Puzzle', one pupil using a dynavox to identify certain animals in the story. 'Look', he says, 'there is a crocodile in the story'. Year 2 pupils know the conventions of reading, for example following the text from left to right, top to bottom and page order. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils read simple books, they handle books well and they recognise the characters from the Oxford Reading Tree. ICT was used well during a Year 6 lesson using an interactive whiteboard where pupils activating the board could read and sign the sentences from 'My favourite Monster'. They could activate the board to illustrate the story with the appropriate colourful picture of a monster matching the text.

94. Pupils with PMLD clearly enjoy stories told with the help of props that use all the senses. For example, during a literacy session based on 'Mr Mumbles Fabulous Eyebrows', Year 9 pupils were encouraged to feel the bushy eyebrows in the book and listen to the sounds of a mechanical bus. The use of puppets captures and holds their interest and promotes their understanding. They anticipate what will happen next in a well-known story and many study and interact with pictures and photographs. More able Year 9 pupils read fluently using symbol exchange and Makaton signing if communication is limited or non-existent. By the end of Year 11, good progress continues, for example a non-communicative group of Years 10 and 11 pupils were able to read and understand a big book during a literacy session by acting out the story, wearing costumes to depict characters and using objects of reference, such as a water sprayer to depict rain, and brushes and dust pans when the house is described as dirty.
95. Writing skills develop satisfactorily throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, more able pupils can build up simple sentences using symbol exchange; they can colour in outline shapes, staying within the lines, and less able pupils can make marks independently on paper in response to a story. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils can produce a drawing to accompany writing and they can track, overwrite and copy under or over a model making horizontal, vertical and circular lines; with support, they make and complete patterns. Year 9 higher attaining pupils underwrite news; two Year 9 pupils are now able to write independently using simple sentences, describing the work they have done, for example 'we visited a Sikh temple'. By the end of Year 11, higher attaining pupils are independently writing their action plans for their ASDAN courses. One Year 11 pupil has achieved his ASDAN Level 1 using a dynamite communication aid to help towards his communication skills.
96. Literacy skills are taught well through other subjects. This has been achieved by the hard work and co-operative manner of working between the teachers in the school and the speech and language therapists who give very effective support to developing communication. Vocabulary is taught well and pupils are helped to recognise letters and sounds. For example, during an end-of-day reflection period, a Year 3 pupil described how he had beaten the teacher at a game of chess – 'I checkmated her!' he exclaimed. In addition, there is good use and concentration of reading skills in science, for example very good use was made of symbols and sequencing cards to understand the growing cycle of a runner bean. Drama is often used as a vehicle for understanding meaning, for example during a history lesson, Year 11 pupils acted out the relationship between Jesse and Bert while studying the life of D H Lawrence.
97. In all lessons, teachers plan well and clearly identify what they expect pupils to learn. They select work to suit individual needs and are particularly good at adapting resources to meet the needs of pupils with complex communication difficulties. The quality of teaching overall was good and there were times when it was very good. Assessment is currently developing and it is hoped that when this has been achieved, the targets on pupils' IEPs will be more specific. Monitoring by the co-ordinator is not currently taking place, however, the school is aware of this and plans are in place to rectify this. Teachers and support assistants manage

pupils well using a great deal of praise and encouragement. The library is situated in a corridor which is not satisfactory, however, it is well stocked and used well. English contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development through the contents of its lessons. The co-ordinator has a delegated budget and resources and accommodation are good.

MATHEMATICS

98. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' very positive attitudes and the use of the National Numeracy Strategy contribute to the good achievement. The weaknesses of the previous inspection concerning long-term planning and a narrow curriculum have been fully addressed. In addition, the work of trained and committed education support assistants makes a consistent contribution to the good standards pupils achieve.
99. By the end of Year 2, because lessons are planned effectively and there are good methods that ensure they are learning well, pupils make good progress. Teachers and support assistants have a good understanding of pupils' special educational needs and know how best they learn. Because lessons proceed with pace and activities are interesting and varied, learning is good. Higher attaining pupils count objects and pictures from one to fifteen and recognise the numerals. They join in with familiar number rhymes, songs, stories and games. Lower attaining pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact or gesture and participate in shared activities, sustaining concentration for short periods.
100. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress in their use of numbers in simple addition problems. A small number of pupils count by rote up to 20. All pupils make good progress in mathematical investigations and have established the concept of lighter and heavier by using scales. The achievements of pupils with more profound and multiple learning difficulties are good. They are provided with a good range of learning opportunities that enable them to develop an awareness and understanding of shape, number and money.
101. By the end of Year 9, pupils achieve well by paying close attention to instructions, making a good effort in following them and by enjoying participating. In one lesson, for example, pupils are invited to point to numbers displayed on the board and identifying those missing from the sequence of one to ten. The teacher and support staff make this activity 'fun' and, as a consequence, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. In physical education, their understanding and application of number are promoted well by having to make big and small jumps and counting their steps and jumps. A few pupils recognise numerals up to 100 and write each from 1 to 10. They place numbers in the correct order up to 20 and recognise shapes such as a circle or triangle.
102. Pupils make good progress by the end of Year 11. All pupils, including those with PMLD, are entered for externally accredited ASDAN challenges which promote individual living skills and the use of mathematics in everyday life. For example, they weigh and measure in their cooking and use simple mathematical language

with increasing accuracy. Many pupils write numbers to ten, understand 'more than' and 'less than' and measure lengths in metres and centimetres. They carry out simple addition and subtraction, with a few pupils checking their answers with a calculator. However, the school is aware of the need to further increase the amount of number work to these pupils.

103. There has been a deliberate emphasis on providing training for the National Numeracy Strategy and this has enabled teachers to implement it effectively and raise standards. Teachers' planning is good and effective use is made of support staff to take small groups of pupils for activities. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements because the level of support provided is high. Teaching assistants are skilled at supporting pupils of all abilities and this was clearly demonstrated in a lesson for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils who needed it were fully supported to develop practical skills when matching coins and using these to 'buy' items, and higher attaining pupils were enabled to work independently.
104. The practising of numeracy in other areas of the curriculum is well developed. There are good opportunities for pupils to use number words in English and to record skills in physical education by keeping scores. During morning registration times, pupils count out the days of the week and sequence the days' activities. In food technology, pupils independently count and record the numbers wanting toast for their morning break. The subject leader manages the subject well and has worked hard to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy by providing support and training for staff, as well as monitoring the outcomes of some lessons. Subject developments have been identified for the future and these include a review of the scheme of work to ensure that it fully reflects the National Numeracy Strategy.
105. Improvement in the provision for mathematics since the last inspection has been good. The satisfactory standards pupils achieved then have been improved and are now good. The sound teaching identified in the last report is now good. Assessment procedures, including the teachers' use of questioning and opportunities to share the outcomes of activities with the class, are used effectively to identify progress and to plan appropriate tasks for future lessons. However, the school is aware of the need to develop portfolios of pupils' work that show what individual pupils know, can do and understand. The use of ICT throughout the subject is underdeveloped. Where computers were seen in use, the tasks set were helpful and supportive of the lesson objectives. Resources are good and suit pupils' needs well.

SCIENCE

106. Pupils' progress is good throughout the school. This is because the teaching is good and is based very effectively on carrying out good investigations in practical lessons. This is a very good approach to science for these pupils.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learned some of the most fundamental aspects of science, such as how to investigate a simple problem. They understand that different things make different sounds, whether it is musical instruments, people, rustling leaves or animals. Pupils have tasted and smelled a range of fruits and vegetables and have begun to classify materials, according to how they feel or look. Their own bodies are looked at, so they remember the names of the different parts, how they feel, how they see and smell.
108. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand more about how materials differ and how these differences affect the way they can be used. They know that plants need light, warmth and water to grow and they know that people and animals also have needs for food and shelter in order to thrive. Pupils learn more about a range of habitats that animals and small creatures live in and they begin to classify different kinds of creatures, such as insects, fish, birds and mammals. Electricity, magnetism and light are among the forces that pupils learn about, such as where light comes from, that electricity needs a circuit, and how magnets affect only metals.
109. By the end of Year 9, pupils have studied forces in more detail and the higher attaining pupils make an electrical circuit, know that electricity can be stored in batteries and name the metals that magnets attract. They understand that the earth floats in space around the sun and that the moon is smaller and does not give off its own light. The higher attaining pupils know that shadows and darkness are caused by light not getting to a place, whether it is from a fire, light bulb, television or the sun. Microscopes attached to the computer screens are used to look at the parts of flowers and to compare flowers with each other, such as in a lesson with daisies, buttercups and dandelions. Throughout the school, the lowest attaining pupils take part in all lessons, but not as actively as their more able classmates. They generally receive good attention from teachers and support staff and have good experiences, such as in feeling and smelling a range of plants such as mint, lavender and tomatoes. They experience different textures on the skin, and different lights, colours and sounds.
110. Science is not taught separately to the post-16 students but several of the ASDAN modules that they study have a science component. Students continue to make good progress and achieve well.
111. Based on very good knowledge of the subject, teachers plan and prepare their lessons very well. They involve all pupils well at their own levels and only rarely are any pupils not well catered for in a lesson. Teachers work well with their support staff, and all staff make very good use of signing, clear speech and symbol cards when communicating with pupils. This is a very good aid to pupils' learning. A very good range of resources is used to make lessons exciting and interesting and to

meet pupils' learning needs fully. During the inspection, for example, teachers used many different plants: textured materials; a bird's nest; a tank of caterpillars; a box of toy animals; many photographs, symbols and posters; and samples of fur, feathers and scaly skin to illustrate their teaching. Staff have very positive relationships with pupils and manage their activities and behaviour very well. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson slows down when pupils have to wait their turn a long time, and they become restless. Generally, however, lessons are well organised, and teachers' expectations are high. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, and are interested and often excited by what they are learning.

112. The leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and has a clear view of pupils' standards of achievement through the school. There is a satisfactory plan of what should be taught in the long term. This is well targeted at the key areas of science. These are revisited several times over the years to make sure that pupils understand them properly and to expand their understanding as they develop. It means, however, that pupils do not get quite the range of experiences that they might otherwise get. Even so, the clear focus on practical learning means that pupils are getting a good learning experience overall. Pupils' progress is assessed well and the information is used well to develop future plans for their learning. There are clear plans to develop the subject further and effective use is made of outside people and places. The teaching is not monitored on a regular basis by senior staff, but the planning is, mainly on an informal basis. The school has a good range of resources for science and they are used very well. There has been a good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection, when it was considered to be satisfactory for the younger pupils, but unsatisfactory for the secondary-age pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Pupils make good progress throughout the school because the teaching is good and because the range of topics is broad and relevant to the learning needs of the pupils.
114. By the end of Year 2, they have learned some basic skills in painting, drawing and printing to make simple pictures and patterns such as cave drawings, winter scenes and colour-themed displays. They also make items such as paper birds, puppets with paper plate faces and stained glass windows. By the end of Year 6, they have developed their skills well, and the higher attaining pupils draw portraits and paint landscapes. They handle a brush with less assistance and use different printing materials such as fruit, vegetables, sponges and string. Clay is used to make pots and small decorative items. By the end of Year 9, pupils develop their skills in using paper, card and fabrics to make items such as a large wall display by the whole class, to individual woven mats, or magic carpets. They use a range of materials and fabrics to make feely pictures such as Christmas decorations. Their work is often related to other lessons, such as music and drama in 'expressive arts' sessions. Some pupils have produced, for instance, patterns of their interpretation of different moods of music with felt-tip on coloured paper. Throughout the school, the pupils with PMLD take a good and active part in

lessons, often needing a considerable amount of attention and prompting from staff. They are encouraged well to make choices about which colours, materials and shapes they want, for instance. Older pupils do some art work that helps as part of their studies in other subjects, such as illustrating their English topics.

115. The quality of teaching in art and design is good throughout the school. Lessons are generally planned well, and teachers and support staff use objects of reference well, such as a paint brush to signify the start of the art and design lesson. They also use signing and symbols well when explaining to pupils. This particularly helps the learning needs of the lower attaining pupils. Teachers demonstrate well, such as how to add white to a colour to make it progressively paler in one lesson during the inspection. Pupils are encouraged to be careful and to keep trying and get their work properly completed. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together; they give praise and prompt pupils with good questions in order to help their learning.
116. Art and design is well led and managed by a keen and dedicated co-ordinator who has a good understanding of pupils' standards of achievement throughout the school. There is a good plan of what needs to be taught in the long term, and it is sometimes well linked with other subjects, especially through the expressive arts lessons. The resources are good and they are used well to broaden pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is building up a good portfolio of pupils' work throughout the school, ready to put on the school's website, and there are plans to develop the subject even more. Teachers are not observed routinely by senior staff to check the standard of their teaching, but they complete their own forms, giving details of how well a topic or theme has gone each half term, so they can adjust their teaching in the future. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards and teaching were considered to be barely satisfactory.

CITIZENSHIP

117. Citizenship is taught to pupils of all ability levels and the quality of the teaching is good. The least able pupils are given very good opportunities to choose which activity they wish to do next, from a carefully selected range of options. This gives them a form of control over what they do; it empowers them. The most able develop an awareness of the community in which they live and the society that they will learn to live in when they leave school. They learn a greater range of independence skills such as shopping, completing forms, answering the telephone, cooking simple meals and learning how to relate to other people in public.
118. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and how it applies to their pupils. This enables them to tailor their lessons carefully to meet individual learning needs. Teachers set up targets for pupils, to include in their individual education plans. They enjoy positive relationships with pupils, and delicate issues are handled in a sensitive way. Teaching assistants are used well with individual pupils. Teachers use a range of resources effectively in helping pupils to understand some of the issues, and to practice particular skills.

119. Mostly, this subject is taught within the overall scheme for personal and social development, but a separate citizenship scheme is taught to pupils in Years 10 and 11. The separate citizenship lessons are very well supported by regular and frequent trips to local shops, supermarkets and cafés, and by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. The planning is effective, especially for the pupils in the upper part of the school in Years 10 and above. In these classes, pupils learn citizenship skills through modules within several different nationally accredited courses that are appropriate to their ages and abilities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. Pupils' achievement and progress in design and food technology are good overall. This is because the teaching is good and lessons are well planned. Pupils with PMLD and those with autism experience food in multi-sensory ways. Practical skills, knowledge and understanding about food and hygiene, and challenges to think and act independently, are key areas of learning to prepare pupils for life after school. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement.
121. From work seen, by the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced manipulating, joining and constructing from a good range of resistant and mouldable materials such as fabric, clay, wood and plastic. By the end of Year 6, pupils have looked at how to control equipment and understand that electrical items require a source of power. Pupils with PMLD have experienced taste and texture in food technology. They make their preferences for food very clear by gesture and vocalisation. They are aware of activities and show good eye pointing and facial gesture in response to the multi-sensory stimulus of food. Higher attaining pupils can identify basic cookery ingredients and are aware of health and hygiene rules in the kitchen areas, washing their hands before and after food preparation, and helping to clear and clean tables.
122. For the pupils in Years 7 to 11, teachers set clear objectives for learning, based on secure knowledge of their individual abilities, and manage the available resources well to allow pupils' learning and social development to progress. For example, in a good Years 10 and 11 lesson, pupils worked hard to prepare a simple snack of cheese on toast. A less able pupil identified a cheese grater correctly and used this well with some hand-over-hand support. A more able pupil went independently to various locations around the room to collect the correct utensils and bring them back to his workspace. The teacher repeatedly checked the pupil's understanding by effective questioning and tested his ability to predict what would happen next.
123. The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is good overall. Teachers and support staff work very well together. They have good knowledge and understanding of the pupils' abilities and needs. This leads to good planning and organisation to ensure that tasks are challenging and that effective learning will take place. However, ICT is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning. Activities are well sequenced to enable pupils to make steady progress as their skills are challenged through the making process, and signing is used well to

communicate to pupils who require it. Where the teaching was slightly less successful, the time allowed for the activities was too long for pupils with autism. In food and design technology, opportunities for word- and symbol-reading key words and for reinforcing number work, such as weighing ingredients, were missed.

124. The subject is well managed. There is a good and comprehensive plan of what pupils will learn which is linked well to the National Curriculum and based on a published curriculum designed for pupils with learning difficulties. Resources are good overall and well matched to pupils' needs. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, there is no specialist accommodation for design and technology and this restricts the range of experiences on offer to the pupils. In food technology, the room is well equipped with gadgets, but the single cooker in the room does not promote pupils' independence as they always have to share.

HUMANITIES

125. Due to timetabling of history and geography, only one history lesson was seen during the inspection and this was based on an English literature topic. However, analysis of pupils' work and teacher plans and records confirms that the pupils make good progress in history in relation to their age and ability. In the geography lessons seen, teaching was good overall with one very good lesson and, consequently, pupils make good progress. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when there was some unsatisfactory teaching.
126. History and geography are taught through a two-year cycle. By the end of Year 2, pupils have investigated, through play old toys from different periods of time, and know that things can be moved by different types of transport. They have investigated and explored the school and higher attaining pupils use the knowledge acquired to find their way from the classroom to other rooms in school. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils were helped to find their way to the kitchen and to look at the tools the staff use, such as a mixer and saucepans. Pupils have daily sessions identifying weather conditions. In Years 3 to 6, pupils look at life in the Victorian times and know and understand different types of transport. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils could identify a boat as a form of transport that did not have wheels.
127. By the time they reach Year 9, pupils can identify what activities occur on the same day every week. They continue to learn about Victorian times and enjoy looking at artefacts from this period. They have built a simple weather station and are able to identify which way the wind is blowing and to look at how much rain there has been in one week. They have looked at buildings on the High Street and a variety of different jobs, including the work done by bakers, builders and secretaries. They become aware of the basic skills required to read maps and look at maps of the world and Great Britain. Less able pupils and pupils with PMLD learn to sequence the events of the day, they experience different weather conditions and associate specific people with specific activities.
128. Pupils continue to study humanities in Years 10 and 11. In an excellent lesson with Years 10 and 11, pupils looked at the life of D H Lawrence and his relationship

with Jessie. This was a moving session for all students who empathised with the dramatic presentation of Bert's rejection of Jessie's advances. An excellent contribution was made to literacy as pupils were encouraged by the teaching assistants and by the use of communication devices to describe what Jessie thought of Bert, 'He's gorgeous', and 'I like him'. Less able pupils and students in Years 10 and 11 and post-16 are given a sensory experience of different cultures. For example, in a very good lesson, pupils went on an imaginary visit to an Indian reservation and danced to the beat of an Indian drum. As a result of the very good teaching, the pupils were all captivated by the experience. This was a very effective contribution to help pupils gain an awareness of the cultural diversity in this world.

129. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy; pupils are encouraged to communicate in discussions and to use their writing skills whenever possible. However, there is insufficient use of ICT, including the Internet, to enhance pupils' learning. Work is carefully prepared to make sure that all pupils, whatever their ability, can take a full part in every lesson.
130. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers show good subject knowledge and have appropriate expectations of what pupils will achieve and how they will behave, taking account of their learning and behavioural difficulties. There are examples of very good planning and lessons are well paced. In lessons where the teaching was only satisfactory, the pace was sometimes slow and the pupils did not make sufficient progress. However, the teaching assistants work very effectively with pupils and help and encourage them to make choices.
131. The subject is well led. The subject leader has clear ideas about the development of the subject and monitors the planning of the subject throughout the school. She is in the process of building up a good range of artefacts. However, she needs to ensure that work is not repeated unnecessarily and that pupils consistently build upon previous knowledge. Pupils' progress is clearly recorded using pupil recording sheets.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

132. The achievement in ICT is satisfactory throughout the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, as ICT is now taught as a separate subject and meets National Curriculum requirements. Progress is now satisfactory and staff have all completed government sponsored training in the use of ICT. The quality of teaching has improved and, throughout the school, it is now good. Teaching in the post-16 groups is very good. There is now a standardised approach to planning, including assessment. Throughout the school, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, but it is limited by their lack of previous experience and their individual severe and profound learning difficulties. This is the case, despite the very good teaching that they receive. There is also a very limited number of computers and there is no special computer room for special teaching of ICT skills. There is not enough use of the Internet to enhance learning. ICT is not used sufficiently in other subjects. The school has no outside technical support for ongoing problems and, at the moment, any troubleshooting is done by the subject leader.
133. Pupils in Years 1 to 9 have a range of experiences in cause and effect, using technological equipment, from bubble lights and mixers to televisions and computers. Pupils in Year 1 learn how to switch a foot spa on and off independently, while experiencing its relaxing effect. Less able pupils use a large switch to help them to learn how to control the equipment. During a very good lesson with Years 2 and 3, pupils succeeded in using a blender to make a banana milk shake and thoroughly enjoyed consuming the fruits of their labours. In a good lesson with Years 7 to 9, the teacher made good use of resources, such as a toaster, hairdryer and kettle, and the pupils were able to manipulate these devices. In all lessons, work was carefully matched to the individual needs and abilities of the pupils and this ensured that all pupils were fully included. These same pupils were able to use a graphics program to produce pictures and took photographs with the digital camera. By Year 9, more able pupils can identify and use a range of tools in the graphics program and can identify and name different functions on the digital camera. They can control a remote device by programming it to perform a single command, such as forward and can make it turn a corner. Less able pupils can make the device move across the floor.
134. ICT is part of the accreditation for pupils and students in Years 10 and 11 and post-16. In Years 10 and 11, less able pupils are withdrawn from a craft lesson and taught on an individual basis. They learn how to interact with age-appropriate programs using a simple switch. Less able students in Years 12 and 13 work towards ALL accreditation by learning to operate different types of technology in school, including mixers, CD players and the computer. The more able pupils from Years 10 and 11 join the more able post-16 group, where they take part in the accreditation course. This includes using hardware, connecting the computer, using the mouse, loading software, printing and shutting down the computer. Pupils learn how to use a mouse, including clicking, double clicking, dragging and dropping. They can enter text, using the toolbar to change font and size, change the colour of the font, underline and embolden text and draw boxes. During a very good

lesson with this group, pupils succeeded in entering, saving their work in the correct folder and then retrieving their work for editing. They were able to listen very carefully to instructions and worked collaboratively in pairs. They used word art to write their names and could choose the style, change the font colour and rotate their work. The learning in the lesson was enhanced by the teacher's skilled use of the interactive whiteboard.

135. ICT in some subject areas is unsatisfactory as not enough use of ICT to support learning was seen during the inspection week and it was not identified in subject planning. Good examples were seen and these included, in religious education, Year 2 pupils who were able to develop skills in using the mouse and the keyboard while making birthday cards. Very good use was made of the interactive whiteboard in English and this captivated the pupils' interest and imagination. The computer was used effectively in a Years 7, 8 and 9 mathematics lesson to reinforce number skills. There is good use of communication aids for less able pupils and those with communication difficulties, enabling them to be fully included in the lessons.
136. Teaching is never less than good, with some very good lessons. There are very good relationships with the pupils and students. Lessons are well planned and pupils are very well managed, with very good support from teaching assistants, thus ensuring that they stay on task. ICT is well managed by the subject leader, who keeps up to date with what is happening in ICT, plans staff development and has a clear view of future development. The planning is very good, especially for Years 10 and 11 and post-16. However, he does not monitor the teaching of ICT throughout the school and does not have an overview of the use of ICT in other subjects. He is, however, aware of this and has identified it as an area for development. There are three interactive whiteboards, although only one is in use at this time. Staff training is planned so that these can be used effectively. The school has adequate resources to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. The subject leader is in the process of using e-learning credits to improve the software available for the school, particularly accessible software for pupils with PMLD, and the school will be part of the local broadband consortium.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

137. French is planned for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. Evidence shows that pupils' progress is satisfactory. However, there has been no teaching of French for several months because of the absence of any teacher with sufficient skill to teach or lead the subject. Discussions and samples of work indicate that pupils mainly gain speaking and listening skills in a range of appropriate topics such as everyday greetings, sports and leisure interests. Their reading and writing skills are not well developed or supported in French or English. Most of the work completed is in the form of worksheets that mainly centre around colouring, and writing a small number of words. As no lessons have been taught recently, it is not possible to comment directly on the standard of teaching, or of pupils' learning in lessons. However, one related lesson was taught well to pupils in Years 10 and 11,

as part of a European culture series. Pupils took turns to dress in a striped shirt and beret, and went round the class greeting each other, using electronic switches that replied 'Bonjour' when pupils pressed them. This was followed by recognition of French food and drink such as croissants, cheese and wine. Unfortunately, the opportunity was not taken to use the French words for these. After consuming much of the food, but not the wine, pupils helped to stick pictures of the food and drink on the French display board.

138. The school hopes to appoint a new teacher with skills to teach this subject, but in the meantime, the leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The range of topics that are planned to be taught is satisfactory and there are sufficient resources to help pupils' learning in the future.

MUSIC

139. It was not possible to observe the teaching of music during the inspection and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement on achievement made by the pupils and students. However, it is clear from the evidence that was presented by the school that music has been taught at a high standard, at least in line with the rest of the teaching in the school. Music has been taught successfully up to Easter. The school is now awaiting the services of a newly appointed, suitably qualified and experienced member of staff. There has been a considerable, positive impact through music in the school and this permeates many of the activities during lessons. Teachers use music to create a calm and settled mood before lessons begin, or at the end of an exhausting or difficult session. There are very well-established routines within the school and these are often cued by music. This is particularly so when pupils gather for a whole-school assembly. Music and ICT play an extremely high profile and are used to excellent effect. The music specialist has created a whole series of different musical items that can be accessed through tape players, CDs or the memory bank in electronic keyboards. This enables 'non-musical' teachers and assistants to use music very effectively in support of their teaching and in support of the pupils' learning.
140. The headteacher made excellent use of ICT and music during the inspection when conducting a school assembly. At the press of a button, he was able to access music to accompany the pupils as they sang songs and hymns; he played music to present a very calm and reverent atmosphere for a time of silent prayer and reflection and different music to enjoy as they left the hall in a very orderly manner.
141. Music therapy is also used very effectively with some pupils and, through this approach, the therapist is able to help pupils develop and reinforce their learning of communication skills. This may be through audible sounds made by the pupils or by body or eye movement that can represent very specific thoughts, feelings or desires.
142. The school is fortunate in having a very good selection of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In addition, there is a trombone, cornet, flute, violin, autoharp, piano accordion and a set of African drums. These instruments, all of

which are in good condition, enable pupils and students to handle and listen to a wide selection of instruments, to be able to feel the sound they make as they hold them as well as to listen to them. There is a separate music room with a special sound box; this is technology at its best. These facilities create an excellent environment for the teaching of music and the use of music as a therapy.

143. Music is also used as a medium of communication with, and by, the pupils and students. The school has a 'music intensive interaction' policy which it puts to very good effect using the components of music to develop specific language skills. At present, there are six pupils who have music interaction written into their statements of special educational needs and they are given priority as far as the therapist's time is concerned. Each pupil has two 20 minute sessions each week and the times of these are negotiated between the therapist and the teachers to ensure that pupils do not miss the same thing each time and, hence, it does not create any inequality of access or opportunity as far as the school curriculum is concerned.
144. Music has been available to all pupils and students as well as the children in the nursery class. This will continue next term following the appointment of a new music specialist. Planning has already begun for September. The school has a great deal of evidence of pupils' performance in music. One of the highlights of the year was the presentation of 'Moggies' the musical. The school's music provision is also very well supported and receives a grant through the Music Sound Foundation from which resources were purchased to support music throughout the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. Pupils' progress and achievements in physical education are good. The activities on offer to all pupils are also good. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' progress was judged as being satisfactory overall. Pupils are keen to come to lessons, concentrate on instructions and try their best to succeed. This means that they can take full advantage of the teacher's expert guidance. There are very good arrangements for physiotherapy, where pupils with PMLD are very effectively supported by working in groups, as seen in rebound therapy, where the trampoline is used to improve their mobility and body movements. The hydrotherapy pool is also used well and has a positive effect on pupils' development of movement skills.
146. The quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent and is good overall. The co-ordinator of the subject has supported other staff in ensuring that their approach to the teaching of physical education is consistent. Lessons start with a warm up, involve pupils being physically active, include opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and have fun elements. Pupils in Years 1 to 11 show good progress when engaged in physical activities. Pupils enjoy physical education and arrive at the hall and swimming pool full of enthusiasm. They work hard, do not waste time and maintain their concentration and effort throughout their lessons. This was the case during a Year 9 hydrotherapy session for pupils with PMLD. Pupils were very enthusiastic and enjoyed their time and tried very hard in the water. Through encouragement, they began to move limbs, taking great delight in attempting to splash.
147. Pupils in each year follow a rich range of activities in gymnastics, games and dance. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9, they showed that they could perform the movements for an old English folk dance 'Stripping the Willow'. In this effectively planned session, they remembered all their movements from the previous week. Through the teacher's effective guidance of their performance, they improved in skill and confidence whilst enjoying the tasks. In an excellent Years 7, 8 and 9 lesson, pupils enjoyed working towards the 'uniplay skills award' and responded very well to the excellent teaching. The lesson proceeded at a very good pace and there was very good teamwork between teacher and support staff, who know and meet the needs of their pupils very well.
148. A common feature in all physical education lessons is the very positive and definite support given to pupils by staff. Pupils are constantly being encouraged and challenged to take part in activities; even those whose special educational needs meant that they were not over-enthusiastic to take part in practical activities were successfully encouraged to take part and join in the activities. The level of planning is very good. Staff have used units of work from a specially constructed curriculum. Many of these aspects have been adapted to suit the needs of the pupils within the school.
149. Physical education benefits from a good range of resources. One of the best of these is the trampoline which is used both for gymnastic-type activities, as well as

by the school for rebound therapy, both of which are designed to help pupils to develop mobility skills and body movements. Unfortunately, the lessons in the main hall are often interrupted by other groups or individuals who use the hall as a route to other parts of the school. This is distracting for the pupils and the teachers and can cause loss of concentration and focus during lessons. The subject leader manages the department very well. Pupils receive numerous opportunities to participate in games and sports in a wide range of settings in the community. The provision of games and sports after school and weekends is very good. This makes an excellent contribution to promoting the high degree of interest in sport and games in school. The school has achieved national recognition for its very good provision for physical education through the 'SportsMark' award for the quality of physical education and extra-curricular activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. Pupils' progress and achievement in religious education are good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection, as the allocation of time is now sufficient, and pupils with PMLD are now benefiting from the programme. Teachers follow a commercial syllabus, but the co-ordinator is re-writing the scheme using the local education authority's agreed syllabus in order to provide a scheme of work that fits the needs of all the pupils. The pupils show enthusiasm for the lessons and behave very well; consequently, they learn well and remember their lessons with some excitement.
151. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 consider relationships between family and friends and learn about different celebrations, including those of the major world religions and cultures. Pupils in Year 1 learn about Noah and choose animals to put into the ark. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the creation and there is an effective, ongoing collage displaying this event. In a good lesson with Years 5 and 6, the pupils showed very good evidence of previous learning as they were able to associate symbols with celebrations such as Easter, Divali and the Passover.
152. By Year 9, pupils are able to listen to and follow familiar stories. They have acted out the stories of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the Miraculous Catch. They continue to look at celebrations from other religions; for example, they have talked about celebrations and festivals in Buddhism, the five moral precepts and how Buddhists live their lives by these rules. In a good lesson with Years 7 to 9 on the feeding of the five thousand, the teacher created a very calm environment with a water fountain, pictures of the sea and atmospheric music. The pupils looked at flat bread and fish; they were fascinated by the feel and smell of the fish and one pupil commented 'It's dead'. In this lesson, good use was made of pupils' writing skills that are just beginning.
153. In Years 10 and 11 and post-16, pupils and students follow two accredited courses. Pupils and students look at the main world religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. They have visited a local church and completed worksheets about what they saw, including the statues, altar, pews and pulpit. A less able pupil was amazed by the stained glass windows. A Year 10 pupil was

able to compare the visit to the church with the visit to a Sikh temple. As part of the course on independent living skills, pupils have taken part in the Hindu festival of Holi and have celebrated the Jewish harvest celebration of Succot.

154. Teaching is good overall and teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. Lessons are very well planned. The subject makes a very good contribution to literacy, especially speaking and listening skills. When a Year 6 pupil saw a symbol for Christmas, she was able to say 'Santa, ho, ho, ho', and a more able pupil could say that Christmas happens in December. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. However, there is not enough use of ICT, including the Internet, to enhance pupils' experiences and to help secure progress.
155. The subject leader manages the subject very well and is developing a very good programme of work. She ensures that the policy is up to date and that staff have the necessary resources linked to the major world religions. She is aware of the need for more curriculum development and has made a very good start to re-writing the scheme of work. At present, she does not monitor the teaching of the subject throughout the school. The school does not make enough use of visits to the community to allow pupils to see and visit buildings of different religions. Nor does the school make enough use of visitors from outside the school who could visit and talk with the pupils about other major world faiths.