

INSPECTION REPORT

WELCOMBE HILLS SCHOOL

Stratford upon Avon

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number:132202

Headteacher: Ms J Clark

Reporting inspector: Averil R Anderson
23733

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th January, 2003

Inspection number: 249449

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blue Cap Road Stratford upon Avon Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV37 6TQ
Telephone number:	01789 266845
Fax number:	01789 204121
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Walker
Date of previous inspection:	None. New school in September 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss A Anderson	Registered inspector	Geography, modern foreign languages, English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further?
Ms C Marden	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr C Tombs	Team inspector	Religious education, Foundation Stage	
Mrs D Morris	Team inspector	English, special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements
Mrs M Cureton	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, history	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs M Last	Team inspector	Music, citizenship	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs R Adams	Team inspector	Mathematics, physical education	
Mr J Plumb	Team inspector	Science, educational inclusion, including race equality	
Mr B Emery	Team inspector	Art and design, design and technology	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Ltd
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham on Sea
North Somerset
TA8 1AN

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
Standards	
Pupils' and students' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' and students' achievements	
Pupils' and students' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
POST-16 PROVISION	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Welcombe Hills School, Stratford upon Avon is the result of a merger of two all-age special schools, one for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and one for pupils with severe learning difficulties, in September 2000. Until September 2002 the school operated on split sites, secondary and primary, whilst one site was refurbished and had new accommodation built on to the existing building. This meant that some pupils had, in effect, three changes of school within two years. The school is a generic special school for 110 pupils aged five to 19 years. It has been asked by the local education authority to take a further eleven pupils. When the headteacher took up her post in September there were 121 pupils on roll, therefore there are more pupils than the approved figure at 121 pupils aged five to 19 years. The nursery has places for 14 full-time equivalent pupils, at present there are 26 part time pupils. Four children without special educational needs also attend the nursery. Eighty-eight pupils are boys and 59 are girls. The majority of pupils (60 per cent) have moderate or severe learning difficulties with approximately 38 per cent of pupils having autism, emotional and behavioural or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Ninety-four pupils are from a white British background, one from a white (other than British or Irish) background, two parents preferred not to say and information was not obtained about 22 pupils. Twenty-two pupils are entitled to free school meals. The attainment of pupils on entry is significantly below national age-related expectations. One hundred and twenty-one pupils have statements of special educational needs, 15 are currently undergoing statutory assessment. The school population is static. Pupils rarely arrive or leave during the school year. A new headteacher took up position in September 2002 and temporary appointments were made to fill the position of deputy headteacher, which became vacant in January 2003.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Welcombe Hills is a good and improving school with some very good features. All pupils achieve well. Teaching is good and often very good. Management of pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships throughout the school are excellent. The respect pupils have for each other's feelings, values and beliefs is also excellent. Leadership and management by the new headteacher are very good, as is that by the governing body. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership and direction provided by the new headteacher supported by a very effective governing body.
- Achievement in speaking and listening, the Foundation Stage and French. Mathematics and history at Key Stages 2 and 3, art and design and science at Key Stage 4 and careers at Key Stage 4 and Post-16.
- Quality of teaching, particularly planning and the management of pupils.
- Procedures and provision for personal development including social, moral, cultural and spiritual development which leads to excellent relationships, very good behaviour and respect for the feelings and values of others.
- Effectiveness of school links with parents.

What could be improved

- The accommodation.
- Accommodation and staffing for Post-16 pupils.
- Provision for autistic pupils.

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

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key
Speaking and listening	A	A	A	A	very good A
Reading	B	B	B	B	good B
Writing	B	B	B	B	satisfactory C
Mathematics	B	B	B	C	unsatisfactory D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	B	B	poor E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	B	

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

Pupils achieve very well in speaking, listening, communication skills and French due to very good teaching. Achievement is also very good in the Foundation Stage, mathematics and history at Key Stage 3, science and art and design at Key Stage 4 and careers education at Key Stage 4 and Post-16.

Pupils with additional special needs also make good progress. The provision made to meet the particular special educational needs of the pupils is good. They benefit from good educational inclusion and from very good support from teaching assistants so that they achieve their individual targets well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good
Personal development and relationships	Excellent
Attendance	Very good

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, they quickly settle to lessons, work hard and are interested in their activities. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and respond well to instructions and play very well together. Relationships are excellent; this is a consequence of the very good role models provided by the staff. Pupils spontaneously help each other and celebrate each other's work. Attendance is very good, there is little unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good and often very good throughout the school. Teachers know pupils extremely well and expectations are high. Teaching at Foundation Stage is very good because of: the teamwork of all staff and their knowledge of how young children learn and of their special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, resulting in excellent personal relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory with some good features.

The curriculum is good and provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which serve the interests, attitudes and special needs of pupils well. Provision for nursery and reception pupils is a particular strength. Careers education is a strong feature of provision in Key Stage 4 and Post-16.

The school successfully provides pupils with a caring, supportive environment which results in pupils feeling secure. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in place but the school is yet to develop a common understanding of levels of attainment; therefore not all assessments are consistently maintained and this impacts on the school's ability to set targets and track progress effectively. The school is aware of this and has already begun to further develop practices and procedures to ensure an effective system is in place.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. After a very short time in post, the headteacher has proved herself to be an outstanding leader with a determination to improve the overall performance of the school. Together with her senior staff she manages the school well and they provide very good role models for teaching. Three members of the senior team are new, temporary appointments and have not yet been able fully to tackle all their management tasks due to a continued difficulty in staff recruitment.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The governors are fully involved in the life of the school and have provided excellent support to parents and staff during a difficult transitional period. They too, have not yet been able to become fully involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school continues to investigate the best methods of identifying its strengths and weaknesses and has just begun to introduce good procedures. The school has identified this as a major focus in its

	detailed development to fulfil their monitoring responsibilities.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's management of its finances is very good. The use of information and communication technology to support the school's work is highly effective. The school uses its money wisely to promote the education and welfare of the pupils.

Continued difficulties in recruiting staff have interrupted the school's plans for development and significantly affected the ability of the new senior management team to concentrate on important issues such as target setting, formal monitoring and judging for themselves the effectiveness of their school. However, upon the move to the new building, the headteacher and staff rightly put the pupils' wellbeing, comfort and safety at the forefront of their work. This has enabled pupils to feel part of the new school quickly and is strongly applauded by parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and management • School working closely with them • Good information about children's progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Provision of more speech therapy

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. At present there is no homework policy and homework is inconsistent, although if parents request it, teachers will provide it. Speech therapy was adequately provided for within the requirements of pupils' statements until the loss of a speech therapist last December.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' and students' achievements

1. Pupils' standards of achievement are below the national average due to their particular special educational needs. Pupils across the school achieve well in their lessons because of the good support and teaching that they receive. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning achieve very well in all aspects of learning. Their progress is checked carefully during their time in the nursery and reception classes, and they improve their skills in all areas due to high quality provision, particularly the teaching.
2. Achievement and progress in English are good. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject; particularly good progress is made in speaking and listening, where pupils benefit from some good strategies to improve their language and communication skills. Reading skills are developing well. This is due to a good phonics programme that helps younger pupils to build words and recognise letter sounds. Older pupils build well on these early achievements. Writing skills are also developing well. Pupils benefit from regular and consistent opportunities to think and write creatively. Those pupils who have additional special needs, benefit from alternative strategies, such as signs, symbols or the use of switches and information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their language, reading and writing skills, and they make good progress in lessons.
3. Achievement in mathematics is good across Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, and is very good for the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 3. Numeracy skills are developing well. The good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has made a significant contribution to the good progress that pupils make.
4. Achievement in science is also good, and is particularly good in Key Stage 4, where very good achievement is secured by demanding teaching and accreditation, which motivates the pupils and promotes very good learning of scientific concepts.
5. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory. Although the use of ICT is good in some subjects, such as English, not all subjects make effective use of the new technology. Lessons in the subject remain to be developed. The equipment is still not fully installed and the level of technical support is low, leading to only satisfactory improvement in pupils' skills.
6. Achievements in French, art and design and careers are particular strengths. In these areas, pupils make very good gains in learning due to high quality provision and a very good range of activities.
7. Achievements in design and technology, history and physical education are good. Pupils have a wide range of skills in design and technology. In history, the strong multi-sensory focus of lessons helps pupils to understand thematic 'living history' well. This is a striking feature that is helping to improve pupils' historical skills, knowledge and understanding. In art and design, achievement is good overall, although better achievement at Key Stage 4 is linked to high quality work, particularly from higher attaining pupils who undertake the entry level accreditation in art and design. Although pupils achieve well in physical education, the limitations in accommodation for games and gymnastics hinder the progress that pupils make in these particular areas of the subject.

8. Achievement in music, geography and religious education is satisfactory and pupils make appropriate gains in learning about the skills and knowledge of these subjects as they move through the school. Insufficient challenge is provided for pupils of higher attainment, particularly in music.
9. Achievement within the Post-16 department during the inspection, was good overall. The progress of these students over time is less successful due to specific weaknesses within the provision. The facilities for independent living skills are poor and local college facilities are unsatisfactory. This impacts on how well students do and inhibits their progress significantly.
10. Pupils with additional special educational needs achieve well in lessons and make good progress towards achieving their targets. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties benefit from very good support for their physical needs. This helps them to maintain their positions so that they can access lessons well. They use a good range of additional strategies, such as signs, symbols and ICT switches to enable them to communicate their needs well, and make appropriate choices. Pupils with autism achieve well overall, although, at Key Stages 1 and 2, achievement is only satisfactory. This is because of inconsistent application of the specialist strategies available and because lessons are sometimes too long. In other parts of the school, autistic pupils achieve well. They benefit from good use of signs, symbols and the new picture exchange communication system, in which staff have recently received training. This is working well and helping to promote independence in learning. The recent loss of a speech therapist is having a negative impact upon pupils' progress. Pupils with behavioural difficulties achieve well due to the use of good behaviour plans and consistent support from staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and in lessons. They enjoy coming to school and show pleasure when seeing their teachers and special education assistants as they arrive in the morning. Pupils quickly settle into the school routine. They are interested in their lessons and are often enthusiastic about the activity they are carrying out. For example, in a science lesson they were fascinated when iron filings shaken on a piece of paper covering a magnet showed the magnetic field. Older pupils take an active part in the lunchtime clubs.
12. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite to adults and respond well to instructions. They move sensibly around school and will hold doors or gates open for visitors. During lunchtime there is a pleasant social atmosphere in the dining hall while pupils eat their lunch with their friends. Attendance is also very good with very little unauthorised absence. Most authorised absence is due to medical reasons. Within the last year there was one short term exclusion.
13. The relationships within the school community are excellent and a strength of the school, this is a consequence of the ethos of the school and the very good role models the staff provide. There is a very high level of respect shown by pupils for each other. Pupils are aware of each other's needs and will help each other spontaneously. They value the work of other pupils and celebrate other pupils' work. For example, in an infant class, pupils took delight in recognising different aspects of pictures they had created in the style of Lowry. As well as taking responsibility for helping each other they also show independence in their own learning, for example in an ICT lesson pupils were prepared to sort out their own problems and generally only require minimum help with their work.

14. Pupils with additional special educational needs have positive attitudes to their lessons. They are keen to be involved fully in all activities and behave well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good and often very good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the course of the inspection. Teachers know pupils extremely well; they are sensitive and caring but have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour and challenge pupils to produce their best in their work and the way they behave in lessons and around the school. This high quality teaching along with the excellent relationships between teachers and pupils has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.
16. Teaching is particularly good in the Foundation Stage classes where teachers' knowledge and understanding of individual pupils and of their learning and emotional needs leads to high standards of achievement. For example, in one lesson activities involved children on a one-to-one basis or in small groups learning to hold and use a pencil correctly, completing allotted tasks, water play and cutting out shapes in pastry. An outstanding feature of nearly all the teaching throughout the school is the manner in which teachers address pupils' learning in the basic skills. Very good examples were observed in English lessons where teachers use the National Literacy Strategy framework very successfully to introduce and develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening, for example in a literacy lesson with Year 9 pupils studying the story of 'the Blitz'. Pupils read and used the vocabulary of the text well and conveyed their own feelings and ideas about the characters. Throughout the school, across most subjects, the teachers strive to improve pupils' literacy skills. They encourage pupils to speak wherever possible; they support their speech very effectively with signing and encourage pupils to do the same. Similarly, numeracy teaching is not confined to mathematics lessons; there are many occasions when teachers of other subjects encourage pupils to use their knowledge of number and shape for example. Within mathematics lessons teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively; particularly good is the way in which teachers encourage pupils to think about the ways in which what they have learned in the lesson can be used to help them both at school and in their personal life. For example, in a Year 11 lesson about using appropriate standard measurements the plenary session was used very well for pupils to reflect upon what they had learnt and what measuring devices they would use in given circumstances. In other subjects teachers skilfully use the subject to develop pupils' ability to think about what they are doing, for example in science lessons pupils carry out investigations which require them to think about how things have changed or what has happened as a result of the investigation. In a Year 9 design and technology lesson the teacher asked a pupil making a small wooden box 'What will happen if you try to glue these two pieces together?' The pupil reflected and came to the correct conclusion. In an art and design lesson, Year 9 pupils working in clay were encouraged by the teacher to explore what the clay feels like and to think about how it can be shaped and worked most successfully. These very good examples of teachers encouraging pupils to think about their work had a very positive effect not only on their learning but also on the intellectual, physical and creative effort which they put into their work.
17. In all lessons, a major feature is the high quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils which allows teachers to challenge and encourage pupils who often lack confidence or are reluctant to apply themselves to a task. This along with the very good management of pupils and teachers' knowledge of pupils' individual learning targets, makes a major contribution to pupils' learning and good behaviour. Teachers'

knowledge of the subjects they teach is good, in some cases, for example art and design where the teacher is a subject specialist, very good. Lessons are conducted at a good pace, pupils successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding and show great enthusiasm, for example towards the end of a design and technology lesson a pupils said to the teacher, 'Oh, can't we carry on for a bit longer?'

18. A few lessons, although generally satisfactory are conducted at rather a slow pace and have little impact on pupils' learning, this is usually due to the teachers' lack of subject knowledge.
19. Teachers make good use of the home/school books to exchange information between school and home. In many ways, this forms part of the pupils' homework as strategies that are used at school are encouraged at home.
20. Teachers plan for, and provide, good educational inclusion throughout the school. Pupils with additional special educational needs are taught effectively. Consistency of planning and the setting of targets appropriate to their needs ensure that pupils with, for example, complex needs or medical conditions all obtain the level of support which enables them to take a full part in lessons.
21. The term special education assistants (SEAs) is used within the report to include all the support staff whatever their official title. Their work is invaluable throughout the school. They work well with teachers and are vital to the wellbeing of the pupils. Many of the SEAs work closely with individual pupils to ensure that they can take a full part in lessons and have a clear and positive impact on the educational and social development of these pupils.
22. Day-to-day assessment and recording of what pupils know, understand and can do is good but teachers are not yet confident in levelling pupils' work using P-scales¹ or National Curriculum attainment levels.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with additional special needs is generally good. Teachers know pupils well and provide good support to ensure inclusion. SEAs work very hard to enable these pupils to take a full and active part in school life.

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

24. The curriculum is good and provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which serve the interests, attitudes and special needs of pupils and students well. Pupils study all national curriculum subjects. Statutory requirements are met in all respects. There are no disapplications from National Curriculum subjects. The importance of communication, especially numeracy and literacy, fully informs the curriculum at all stages of pupils' development. Strategies are good. Augmentative means of communication are well used and a good level of this provision underpins all curricular planning. The school has good strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy which fully reflect national initiatives.
25. The organisation of the school day allows for a wide range of well-attended clubs to flourish during the lunch period, which support pupils' social and intellectual

¹ A measurement scale used to recognise the progress pupils make before they reach Level 1 of the National Curriculum, developed by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in 2001.

development. A well-focused programme of social training to take place during lunchtime is at an advanced stage of preparation. When this provision is added to formal lesson time, the school will meet national recommendations for the length of the school day. Special programmes, including sensory stimulation, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, music therapy and speech and language therapy, are offered to pupils according to the requirements of their statements. Statutory requirements are fully met.

26. Extra-curricular provision is very good and includes theatre trips and a wide variety of outings. Weekly football, dance and drama clubs take place after school. The recent whole school production of *The Wizard of Oz* delighted parents and participants. There are good opportunities for residential experiences, such as those provided by The Calvert Trust, for example. Interesting visitors are invited to the school to share their lifestyle and interests with the pupils. The school is socially inclusive in the opportunities it gives for nursery pupils to be educated with their mainstream peers. It is planned to undertake joint projects with neighbouring schools in the very near future to widen the social experience of older pupils and further aid inclusion. Good links with the local college allows pupils in Key Stage 4 to study a very good curriculum off site. Equality of opportunity is well supported within the school. Despite the setting of some groups for key skills, there are mixed ability tutor groups and a proportion of lessons, such as personal, social and health education (PSHE), are taught within them. Citizenship is an integral part of the revised and extended PSHE programme. All pupils are given the complete options for lunchtime activities and all have the same opportunities for visits and rewards.
27. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 is good despite some failure to address aspects of autism. In Key Stage 1, lessons are taught round themes likely to appeal to pupils' interests and enthusiasms. Lessons are well adapted to follow the requirements of the National Curriculum. Balance, progress and continuity are ensured by the teaching of a two-year rolling programme, so all pupils receive their full entitlement. At Key Stage 2, the curriculum is similarly planned over four years. At this key stage, specialists teach subjects such as music and swimming to prepare pupils for transition to the secondary department. Provision in Key Stage 3 is good. Social development of pupils is well supported in the carefully constructed mixed-ability tutor groups, in which pupils are taught religious education, PSHE, careers, design and technology, art and design and drama. Pupils are banded into ability groups for all other areas of study; this has a very positive impact upon pupils' progress. The level of nationally accredited courses is high and includes unit awards for maths, English, science, ICT, art and design, design and technology and French and entry level in English, mathematics, science and French.
28. The curriculum is satisfactory for Post-16 students, many of whom improve on accredited standards achieved in Key Stage 4. Students also work towards accreditation within the ASDAN youth award scheme in their study of the 'Transition Challenge' and 'Towards Independence' modules. Key skills are a strong feature of provision, and include problem solving, working with others, careers planning and setting personal targets to improve learning, besides the usual skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The local college provides taster courses and 'springboard' courses, which aim to build students' skills, expand their horizons and improve their social competence. The school aims to prepare students for life after school by giving them a range of adult experiences in the community. It is successful in this, but there is insufficient emphasis on the practical aspects of preparing for independence despite a weekly afternoon devoted to independent living skills. The accommodation,

typical classrooms similar to those used by much younger pupils, does not provide a suitably adequate learning environment for young adults and this is unsatisfactory.

29. Careers education is a significant strength. The level of preparation of pupils and students to become economically active is very good. Pupils receive lessons in careers as early as Year 9 from specialist advisers who have good local knowledge of employment possibilities. All have careers interviews to prepare them for transition, which results in useful action plans. Pupils' records of achievement give an overview of their attainment at the end of Key Stage 4. In Post-16, a well-presented progress file brings this up to date. Well-supported work experience, both within the school and outside it, is a key feature. Students work one day a week or for two consecutive weeks as appropriate. Provision is supported by the school's strong and effective links with local businesses, which offer placements in manufacturing, hotel and catering work, animal care and horticulture. Good links with parents enhance provision. Achievement in careers education is accredited by the Warwickshire Educational Visits Partnership.
30. The curriculum is further supported by a good programme of PSHE, including sex education and lessons on the dangers of drug abuse. These lessons are successful in their aim to increase pupils' self-awareness. The emphasis on the nature and handling of a variety of personal relationships in this aspect of curricular provision is a significant strength.
31. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and contributes to their kind considerate behaviour, their positive attitudes to work, and to the excellent quality of their relationships and personal development.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school goes to great lengths to maintain a climate within which all pupils are valued for their uniqueness. As a result they flourish and grow and learn to respect others and to be respected. They become aware of their responsibilities in the wider school community and of a shared set of values and expectations. Through assemblies, lessons, lunchtimes and clubs pupils celebrate the school's and each other's achievements and empathise with each other's concerns and sadness. Staff plan opportunities for pupils to understand human feelings and emotions in lessons, such as history, art and design, English and drama. In religious education pupils explore the values of others and learn to recognise that all religious teachings and stories seek to promote tolerance and justice and reconcile conflicts. School journeys to the Lake District evoke feelings of wonder about the natural world, while the star-lit roof of a 'cave' in the soft play area, mesmerises a girl in the reception class. In some lessons, artefacts, such as a lighted candle in a darkened room are used well to promote reflection. In history, a tape recording of a World War Two air raid and bombs dropping, both thrills and excites and provides an excellent backdrop for discussion on wars. Across the school, teachers encourage and value pupils' questions and opinions and, through deliberately planned cross-curricular links, help them make connections between one area of learning and another.
33. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Although there are no overt school rules, a positive and supportive climate helps pupils gain a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. All staff and governors provide very good role models through the quality of their interactions with pupils and with each other – emphasising the principles of fairness, mutual respect, politeness and caring. Together, staff have worked hard to provide a safe, secure and attractive learning environment, within which pupils can develop moral insight and good behaviour. Senior pupils also set

good examples for younger pupils to follow in their polite behaviour and mature attitude to work. The curriculum is planned and organised to be socially inclusive and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. In sports clubs, pupils learn the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour. Opportunities are provided in assemblies and in PSHE, citizenship, English and history, for pupils to explore and develop moral ideas and values and to study the lives and work of famous people of moral virtue. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and regularly raise funds for a number of charities. Senior pupils take part in community work in an old peoples' home. Achievements, for work, behaviour and sport, are celebrated in special end of term assemblies.

34. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Because the school fosters a sense of community, pupils from a very early age are encouraged to work co-operatively, to take responsibility and exercise leadership. Children in the nursery, for example, are proud to take the register back to the office and happy to tidy up after an activity. Senior pupils are equally proud to show visitors around the school and to take a responsible post in the mini-enterprise scheme. Work experience, careers and college links prepare pupils for the world of work and life beyond school, although the absence of an independent living skills area limits their development in this area. Class councils and committees give pupils the opportunity to voice opinions, influence change, and to understand democracy. The successful, whole-school production of the 'Wizard of Oz', performed at the Warwick Theatre provided all pupils with a positive co-operative venture and a corporate goal – those not performing on stage helped with the props, costumes and art work. Through circle time they learn to take turns, to listen to others and to understand and debate a range of issues. Residential experience gives pupils the opportunity to relate to others, to learn about living together away from home, and to be responsible as a group member. The good range of clubs and summer school further extends pupils' personal, social and communication skills. The personal tutor system is an effective way of monitoring pupils' individual education plans and in particular, for checking pupils' progress on their PSHE targets and the experiences being offered.
35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and is evident in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits, to different places of worship, theatres, historical sites and art galleries, which all reinforce their knowledge and understanding. Opportunities are provided through literature, religious education, art, history, French, drama and through special events like the 'Living History Week' to enable pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage and the richness and diversity of other cultures. Performers from the Inter-cultural Service are regular visitors to the school. They present positive images of different cultures as they work with pupils in dance, music and drama, or cook a range of Asian, African or Caribbean foods. The library has a satisfactory range of books to support pupils' cultural development and there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills and appreciation.
36. The curriculum for pupils with additional special needs is good. Tasks are suitably differentiated to meet their needs so that they can achieve at their own level, particularly in English lessons. Full inclusion in all subjects with their peers is a strength.

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

37. The school successfully provides pupils with a caring, supportive environment that results in pupils feeling secure and giving them confidence to develop both

academically and socially. This is a result of the very good knowledge staff have of their pupils and an understanding of their needs. In addition they show very high commitment to the welfare of the pupils.

38. The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils attend school regularly. Where there are long-term unauthorised absences the headteacher works hard with parents to find a solution to the problem and has been successful in reintegrating pupils back into school. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and for dealing with any incidents of bullying are also very good.
39. Child protection procedures are in place and the headteacher is the person with responsibility for child protection within school. Some staff are unaware of who is the responsible person for child protection and whom they should go to if they have any concerns and this is unsatisfactory. Therefore there is a need for training in this area. However, the above failings have already been addressed and further training is planned for later in the term.
40. Procedures for health and safety are satisfactory. The governors last reviewed the health and safety policy in 2001 and it is overdue for review now. The school took the sensible decision to delay the review until the relevant risk assessments had been completed, this will happen in early February. At present governors are not taking a fully active role in monitoring the health and safety of the site. They rely on the site manager's report as chair of the health and safety committee and this is unsatisfactory. Under the statutory regulations a paid employee of the school cannot be chair or vice chair of a governing body committee. The arrangement for the dropping off and picking up of pupils at each end of the day is constantly under review by the headteacher. She reports that there have been significant improvements in these procedures. There are significant remaining problems, some of which are due to the poor design of the car park. The turning area is too tight to allow the larger bus to turn so it has to back in. Some pupils have to cross the roadway when vehicles are moving out to get to cars parked in the middle bays. The practice of disembarking ambulant pupils first, who then have to wait for those in wheelchairs to come off the buses, is unsatisfactory. There is no covered area for the pupils to wait in and they can get very cold and wet in inclement weather.
41. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. Teachers keep records of different aspects of pupils' personal development and these inform the individual education plans. Pupils' annual review of their statement of special educational needs show that they make good progress in their social development. Individual education plans are of good quality, targets are used well and they contribute positively to pupils' progress.
42. Good assessment procedures and systems are in place and records of pupils' progress are being built up. Teachers' day to day knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do is good. Targets for English, mathematics, science and personal development are set at pupils' annual reviews as appropriate. Teachers do not have a common understanding of the national attainment levels, (both National Curriculum and P-scales) and pupils' records of attainment over time are not accurately or consistently maintained. School statutory targets are set but because of the insecurity of the assessment levels, they do not yet have a major impact upon raising standards throughout the school.
43. The assessment of pupils with additional special needs is good. Annual review procedures are effective and specific targets are set and regularly reviewed to ensure

progress. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is used positively and to pupils' advantage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The new school has quickly developed a very good partnership with parents.
45. Parents are very supportive of the school. They are confident that the school is well led and managed and that staff would deal with any concerns they may have sympathetically. Parents feel that the school provides them with good information about their children's progress and it works closely with them for their children's benefit. Parents say their children make good progress. The one area a significant minority of parents would like to see improved is the amount of homework teachers give to the pupils. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. At present there is not a homework policy and homework is inconsistent, although if parents request homework teachers will provide it.
46. The school provides very good information for parents about their children's progress through the annual reviews of statements of educational needs, annual reports, reviews of individual education plans and consultation evenings. The combination of these results in parents having a clear picture of what their children know and can do. Information about the life of the school and the curriculum is satisfactory. The headteacher has introduced a new system this term with the two acting deputy headteachers sending out separate newsletters for the junior and senior school. These newsletters contain information about what topics are going to be taught, dates for parents' diaries as well as celebrating pupils' achievements.
47. The school values parents' views and encourages them to take an active role in school. There is a monthly coffee morning where parents can meet socially. The Friends of Welcombe School are also very active and raise substantial amounts of money that the school uses to purchase additional resources, most recently, four digital cameras. Parents also help in school and the school is particularly grateful for parents help with unpacking after the move to the current site. The lack of a consistent approach to homework limits some parents' ability to actively support their children's education and this is unsatisfactory.
48. The headteacher is currently obtaining views from members of the school community about priorities for the future and as part of this process she will be consulting parents.
49. Very good links are established with the parents of pupils with additional special needs, and they are fully involved in the target setting process.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. However, the potential effectiveness of the senior management team has not yet been fully demonstrated as, at the time of inspection, they had only been in post for three weeks. Since her appointment in September 2002 the headteacher has proved herself to be an outstanding leader with the determination to improve overall performance in the school. The governors were fortunate in being able to appoint such an experienced and highly motivated headteacher who, upon appointment, rightly placed the comfort, safety and wellbeing of the pupils at the forefront of her work.

51. Having achieved the move into the new buildings successfully the headteacher and governors are now concerned with putting agreed procedures in place to identify and meet more clearly the pupils' individual needs and to record their progress more specifically. The capability of the headteacher and governors to further develop the school is very good and is only limited by the time and personnel available.
52. The school's aims are comprehensive and fully detailed in its strategic planning documents. The targets themselves reflect the continuing difficulties facing the school in meeting the individual needs of all its pupils. The school is striving to address these targets in a period of stability now that the immediate difficulties of merging the previous schools have been mostly resolved. The staff are fully committed to raising standards and many are conscious of the new demands put upon them by working with the wider range of pupils' needs. For example, the support staff are actively seeking to improve their skills and keen to undertake more training in the techniques of learning support so that they may help pupils become more independent learners.
53. The chair of the governing body is highly committed to the success of the school, is a regular visitor and wholeheartedly supports the work of the headteacher and the staff. The very close co-operative relationship which exists between the governing body, the parents and the school staff has been a major factor in the school's current effectiveness. The governing body comprises of knowledgeable and committed members who all give of their time freely to support the school by regularly visiting classes and meeting staff. This gives them a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils and what facilities and support are needed by staff to ensure they receive their full entitlement. Many of these governors have supported the school through its transition from two former separate establishments to establishing a new school on the recently developed site. Governors have demonstrated their understanding of the difficulties faced by staff and parents in catering for the wider range of pupils' needs by providing good support, a listening ear and ensuring that all those involved understand the time it takes to establish an effective and fully operational new school. The procedures for monitoring the work of the school, including those relating to targets for the staff, and the quality of the school's work in providing high-quality teaching and learning for all of its pupils are in place but not yet fully effective. These, too, have been affected by instability and staffing and at this early stage in the school's development are now recognised as a major factor for attention. The school development plan is a useful, if lengthy, document which has included sections which, although vital in the early stages of its life are no longer necessary. There are plans to streamline it in the future.
54. Overall the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, the role of the senior managers is, by necessity, limited because of the extra responsibilities they have had to assume. Procedures for performance management have been appropriately completed and all the staff are included in the process. Although many whole-school issues have been addressed through training there has been a delay in implementing some agreed targets.
55. The arrangements for meeting the needs of the pupils with suitably qualified and experienced staff are satisfactory overall but are affected by the necessity to rely on too many part-time and temporary teachers. Continuing difficulties with attracting sufficient applicants for vacancies and long-term staff sickness have created problems for the headteacher and governors in maintaining staffing levels. Difficulties also arise when pupils frequently experience a change of teacher or where teachers share a class. They have insufficient time to plan between themselves or with their support staff and this is a weakness. There is no consistent approach to pupil management.

56. The delegation of duties amongst the staff is satisfactory and makes best use of their skills in most cases. However, there are a few staff with strengths not fully used because of the need to ensure coverage of class teaching. The headteacher is aware of these difficulties. For example, the music co-ordinator, who is an experienced and skilled practitioner, only teaches music in one key stage because she shares responsibility for a class with another part-time teacher.
57. Recent problems in appointing permanent senior managers have led the governors to make three temporary appointments from existing staff. These new postholders show a clear commitment to fulfilling the tasks they have been given within the next two terms. However, they also have existing responsibilities which create a large amount of work, some of which they feel unable to complete effectively. For example, while they have completed the necessary interviews concerning performance management procedures they have not been able to monitor closely the effectiveness of teaching in their own specialist subject. Given the changes that face the staff in meeting the needs of a wide range of pupils this is a significant difficulty as the school cannot quantify the success of its teaching and learning in all subjects. However, the difficulty in recruiting staff in this area is well documented and is out of the school's immediate control. The induction of new staff is satisfactory
58. Although the accommodation is satisfactory overall there are a significant number of weaknesses which impede pupils' learning. Two schools catering for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs have been amalgamated and brought together on one site. In this process insufficient storage space has been provided on the selected site and so wheelchairs and standing frames have to be placed in corridors. This impedes the independent movement of non-ambulant pupils. Opportunities for their personal development are limited because it is often difficult for them to have total control of their own independent mobility whilst on the school premises. Backwash problems in the hydrotherapy pool and difficulties in maintaining the correct chemical balance have resulted in pupils in pain and distress not having access to the comfort of the warm water at times when they would benefit from the experience. Concerns about younger pupil access to the hydrotherapy pool and the stairs to the resource area are in the process of being overcome by the addition of high door handles.
59. The school has no playing field of its own. The one sometimes available for leisure during winter lunchtimes and for Key Stages 3 and 4 lessons belongs to a neighbouring school. Although the school meets statutory requirements for physical education this lack of such a facility has a significant constraint on the teaching of the National Curriculum requirements for physical education. The school hall has a number of deficiencies which impact negatively on the teaching of physical education and cause unnecessary distress to pupils. Because of the low ceiling in half of the hall and the way the light fittings are designed they automatically open up when knocked, this makes the teaching of ball skills in the hall very difficult. During the inspection a pupil accidentally hit a light fitting with a ball and on it opening he became distressed as he blamed himself and was reluctant to stay in the hall. There is no water supply in the design and technology room and the art room is too small to accommodate a kiln or display work in progress. These accommodation deficiencies constrain what can be taught effectively in art and design and design and technology. A poorly clad pillar is positioned in the entrance to the reception class and, despite the constant monitoring of children in the class, the accident record kept by the school indicates that three children bumped their heads on this inappropriately placed pillar last term. Both libraries are too small for whole-class teaching. There is insufficient administrative space. There is no internal communication system between classes or

the administration area and the school covers a large ground space. There is no secure gate to the school car park. The car park is so small that buses find it difficult to turn and there is no sheltered area to protect non-ambulant pupils as they are waiting for the buses to make safe manoeuvres before picking them up. Accommodation for Post-16 students is inadequate. It is too small to accommodate all students at once. It has no dining area, flat for independent living or leisure and recreation area and this greatly limits students' opportunities for learning vital skills necessary for everyday living.

60. There are a number of positive features. There are plenty of toilets including toilets for pupils with a physical disability all carefully positioned around the building. These help to ensure pupils' personal needs are met with privacy and dignity. The sensory room and soft play areas are of good quality and there are sufficient rooms to be used by therapists. The use of such facilities contributes positively to pupils' progress. The sensory garden and play area for the youngest children are of good quality and contribute successfully to their physical development. The modern and refurbished science room makes a very valuable contribution to teaching and learning in science.
61. Resources to support teaching and learning are good. Teachers make effective use of a range of equipment and reference material both in the library and in their classrooms. ICT has not yet fully impacted upon the work in all subjects so that pupils are not yet able to reinforce their computer skills by applying them to other work.
62. Educational development and opportunities throughout the school are supported well through detailed financial planning. Priorities for spending are clearly identified through the school improvement plan and governors have been prudent in ensuring that sufficient money has been reserved for unexpected expenses arising from the move into new accommodation.
63. The school administration staff provide very good support to the school which enables it to run efficiently on a day-to-day basis. The use of technology to support the administration procedures is very good. The school is currently trialling an innovative and comprehensive database which incorporates information across a wide range of sources. This has substantially improved the school's access to information on staffing, salaries, training and personal records.
64. All monies accruing to the school are used effectively for the designated purposes and linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. There are secure procedures to ensure that other money donated to the school is used wisely and the school has secure procedures for the accounts, book keeping and petty cash. The school is part of the local education authority consortium which ensures that it achieves best value when purchasing resources and services. The administration staff explore opportunities persistently which benefit the school and ensure that no accounts are settled until any complaints or difficulties are resolved. The few issues raised in the most recent auditor's report have been satisfactorily addressed.
65. Leadership of the provision for pupils with additional special needs is good. Procedures are well established and rigorous.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. To improve provision further the headteacher and governors should:

- a) Work with the local education authority to improve the accommodation, with particular reference to health and safety requirements mentioned to the governors as well as those in the report.
(*Para refs: 39, 58, 59, 67*)
- b) Improve accommodation and staffing levels for Post-16 students by:
- i) working with the local education authority to provide adequate facilities for:
 - teaching;
 - developing independent living skills, such as a dining area, a 'flat' to contain sleeping, living and kitchen areas; and
 - a common room for leisure activities which is large enough to safely accommodate all students at the same time, to enable the curriculum to be successfully taught; and
 - ii) appointing permanent teaching staff and a full-time departmental leader to lead the Post-16 department.
(*Para refs: 59, 67, 68*)
- c) Improve provision for autistic pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
- i) ensuring staff are trained in appropriate strategies and that these are used consistently to meet the needs of this group of pupils;
 - ii) reviewing the planned timetable to ensure that lessons are not too long and are appropriate to the needs of the pupils; and
 - iii) setting up small steps of learning and monitoring these regularly.
(*Para ref: 10*)

Three minor issues for improvement which are already highlighted in the school's development planning are:

- a) improve the use of assessment procedures by ensuring that all members of the teaching staff are confident and capable of accurately using national attainment levels;
(*Para ref: 42*)
- b) ensure that all members of staff, whatever their position, are regularly reminded who is the named person for child protection matters and that training in this area continues; and
(*Para ref: 39*)
- c) ensure a consistent approach to the setting of homework across the school.
(*Para ref: 47*)

POST-16 PROVISION

67. Achievement by students in the sixth form was good overall during the inspection but it is less successful over time because of the weaknesses in the provision for students. Despite the best efforts of the teaching staff the provision in the sixth form is unsatisfactory. This is due to a number of factors. The new accommodation was built to accommodate eight pupils; when the new building opened there were 18, some of whom are in wheelchairs, and this is unsatisfactory. Thus, students lack appropriate teaching space. This meant that a second base had to be found immediately. The second room now in use is part of the Key Stage 4 suite and has no facilities other than hot and cold water. It is apart from the sixth-form base and does not give students any sense of having moved on to further education. There is insufficient space for students to meet as a group without posing a serious health and safety risk,

consequently the all important aspect of further education, group discussion and decision making is unavailable to Welcombe Hills students and this is unsatisfactory. The new facilities are totally inadequate even for the numbers for which they were built. Facilities for developing independent living skills, probably the most important feature for the students, are inadequate. There is no dining area, no flat and no common area for leisure and recreation. This means that students have very limited opportunities to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and experiences on site. The school has made every attempt to make up for the lack of its own facilities by using the local college of further education. Unfortunately, the college facilities are also inadequate for the needs of the students and the time taken travelling does not justify the experience.

68. The department is staffed by part-time, permanent and supply teachers and there have been several enforced changes recently. Whilst the calibre and dedication of both teaching and support staff is in no way in question, this inevitably impacts on the progress and continuity for students. It also means that there is no departmental manager who can oversee the Post-16 provision and this is a significant weakness. At present the Key Stage 4 curriculum co-ordinator oversees the sixth form and this is neither practical nor effective.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	70

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	36	31	19	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	147
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.7	School data	0.27

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

Qualifications achieved

Key Stage 4

8 pupils entered for AQA Entry Level in:

English	100% pass
Mathematics	100% pass
Science	100% pass
French	100% pass

Post-16

ASDAN YOUTH AWARD SCHEME

12 students achieved Bronze/Silver Award
 2 achieved the Transition Challenge
 8 completed 5 modules each in the Towards Independence Scheme.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	94	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	26	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 – Y14

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.85
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8.6
Average class size	9.6

Education support staff: YN – Y14

Total number of education support staff	32
Total aggregate hours worked per week	884

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	1,341,390
Total expenditure	1,218,265
Expenditure per pupil	8,401
Balance brought forward from previous year	122
Balance carried forward to next year	123,125

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	147
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	16	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	62	30	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	37	3	1	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	38	17	1	29
The teaching is good.	78	16	1	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	21	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	9	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	24	1	0	11
The school works closely with parents.	67	26	3	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	66	24	4	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	26	4	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	25	8	4	22

Other issues raised by parents

The question of speech therapy and pupils' entitlement to it if it was on their statement of special educational need was raised at the parents' meeting. After a scrutiny of a selection of statements, the team came to the conclusion that pupils' entitlements were being met according to the wording on the statements.

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

69. The quality of provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This is because teaching is always good and most often very good and excellent in all areas of the Foundation Stage. As a result children make very good progress towards national expected standards, although the level of special educational needs of the majority prevents them from reaching these standards by the end of the reception class. Children have very positive attitudes and this contributes to their very good progress. They separate from their parents with the minimum of fuss. They have total trust in the staff who receive them. They enter their classes with an eager sense of anticipation.
70. Children attend the assessment nursery from the age of two on a part-time basis. Four places are reserved for children from mainstream schools and their attendance has a positive impact on the progress of others, providing good role models in terms of their language skills, personal independence and reasonable behaviour. The majority of children, with a range of special educational needs, enter the nursery with poorly developed skills in the six areas of learning. This is confirmed by high quality initial assessment, including information provided by pre-school support services, and is used well to plan individual programmes. By the time children reach the age of five, they have made very good progress in all areas of learning. Constant praise and encouragement, coupled with careful planning of individual targets, helps to secure this very good progress. The nursery and reception classes are now in a good position to adopt the QCA P-scales in line with the school.
71. Excellent leadership and management of the Foundation Stage contribute greatly to the overall very good teaching. Seamless teamwork between all members of staff is a particular strength, as is the consistent, patient, astute and effective management of some children's idiosyncratic behaviour, and the use of signing, pictures and symbols to ensure everyone is included. The senior special education assistant is particularly skilled and makes a very good contribution to the overall quality of the provision. There is a well-balanced range of relevant activities that match the different learning needs of the children. The classrooms and surrounding areas are stimulating, and children's work and achievements are well displayed. Resources are plentiful, well organised, easily accessible, and used effectively to enhance children's learning. Children also have access to the hydrotherapy pool, soft play area, and sensory/light room. Outside, there is a well designed, partly covered play area which is securely fenced and includes a sensory garden and attractive wind chimes. Resources outside include bikes, scooters and trolleys and climbing and balancing apparatus. Excellent relationships and care for the individual child permeate the whole curriculum. Close co-operation and partnership with parents has a beneficial effect on the progress children make. Regular communication is maintained through home-school diaries. In this way, information about toilet training, dietary needs or behaviour issues are shared. Parents are also invited to observe children in the classroom. Speech therapists and physiotherapists work closely and very effectively with the school staff and parents.
72. The nursery is purpose built and provides a safe, secure and challenging environment. However, the reception class is not as attractive or well designed and is in need of further development. It also has some potentially dangerous features; these include a concrete pillar just inside the door and free access to the school from the

toilets, sited outside the classroom, as they are in close proximity to the hydrotherapy pool and the stairs to the resource area.

Personal and social development

73. The children make very good progress in this key area of their development. They quickly understand school rules and routines because regular reference is made to a pictorial timetable. They sit, concentrate and take a full and active part in circle time activities. They learn how to take turns and share. Children with autistic spectrum disorder understand routines and are familiar with instructions such as 'check your schedule'. Children start caring for themselves, for example, helping to put their coats on and indicating when they want to go to the toilet. They are encouraged to take class registers back to the office and tidy up their room with the support of a member of staff. Structured opportunities are provided for children to make choices and to learn and work together, through playing alongside one another, and through direct adult intervention. By the age of five they have made very good progress in dressing and undressing, feeding and toileting. They understand what is acceptable, and unacceptable, behaviour as a result of consistent management and high expectations.

Communication, Language and Literature

74. Children make very good progress in communication, language and literacy, which are developed throughout the day, across the curriculum, through structured and unstructured play and through lessons with a specific focus. Signing and symbols are consistently used to develop children's language and speech. Appropriate use is made of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to encourage children to choose a biscuit or drink at snack time. Relevant stories, like 'Owl Babies' are read to children in an exciting way that commands their attention. Very good props, which the children can see and touch, enliven the characters and maintain their attention. Good questioning, for example 'How is the mother owl different?' directed at children in turn, confirms their learning and understanding and enables more able children to express opinions and share ideas. Most children are developing an interest in books. In unstructured play they browse the big books and other books in the reading corner. They hold the books the right way round and carefully and correctly turn the pages. Many children are beginning to make purposeful marks with a pencil or crayon.

Mathematical development

75. Children make very good progress in acquiring early number skills and mathematical language. They do so through a range of classroom and exploratory play activities. The very good resources, for example the 'shop' or the 'home corner' encourage children to take on adult roles. Timely interventions by staff and appropriate questioning ensure that the play becomes more purposeful as they model the appropriate mathematical language. Games, songs and rhymes are used well to reinforce one-to-one interaction. A balloon is blown up and on the count of ten, released, to everyone's delight as it flies around the room. At registration, those children who are present are counted, as are the disappearing 'Five Speckled Frogs' and 'Ten Green Bottles'. Basic shapes are identified through making body shapes in physical education, through the game, 'Pass the bag, What's in the bag?' and through programs on the computer which require them to recognise and match shapes. While playing in the playground or soft play area children develop their mathematical ideas of position, size and space. Children with autistic spectrum disorder complete

their one-to-one set task at their work stations, for example matching inset puzzles, because they are comfortable with the routine and expectations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Children make very good progress in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them make sense of the world. Cross-curricular topics and seamless changes from one activity to another ensure that children make links from one area of learning to another. Daily routines and patterns to classroom activities are well established. The digital camera is used effectively to take pictures of the class and their achievements and to remind children of recent visits and visitors. Through well organised visits they become familiar with the local shops, the river Avon and important places in Stratford. They enjoy using the computer. More able children use the mouse or a few keys to change images on the screen. Less able children use special switches to interact with the computer or to change the lighting effects in the sensory room. In physical education, and through the rhyme 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes' they learn their body parts. While making cheese scones, they learn about the utensils they use, for example, a grater and sieve, and some of the characteristics of the ingredients – butter is 'soft' and flour is like 'snow'. All children enjoy exploring materials such as sand and water and learn to pour carefully from one container to another or construct a toy train circuit and then move the train along the track.

Physical development

77. Children have very good opportunities to develop physically, through a wide range of planned and free play activities supported by the excellent teamwork of the teachers, special education support assistants and additional adult support. Physical development sessions provide activities such as running, jumping, hopping skipping and stopping on command. These activities improve the skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement and help children develop a positive sense of well-being. Quite properly, children warm up before exercise, for example moving in time, clapping and stamping to pop music, and cool down by relaxing on the floor to soft music. Throwing and catching develop the fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Positional language such as 'in and out', 'up and down', is used well so that children begin to understand the meaning. Children listen well and respond to instructions. A parachute is used effectively to encourage co-operative play but also to reinforce the understanding of the language of instruction. Outside, opportunities are provided for pupils to develop confidence, balance and co-ordination in riding bikes, scooters or pushing trolleys or in climbing frames or walking across balancing beams. Fine motor skills are developed through painting, cutting, writing and gluing activities, in which children are shown how to hold a pen, or how to control the amount of paint on a brush.

Creative development

78. Children make very good progress in art and music. Singing is an important part of the day's routines and activities. For example, the day starts with the 'Hello' song and concludes with 'Time to go home'. They enjoy rhymes and songs, which they sing in tune and in time and mostly from memory. They explore musical instruments to determine what sounds they make and which sounds they like. In the sensory room they experiment with a range of switches, colours and patterns. They engage in imaginative play in the home corner, play 'mums and dads' and prepare tea or do the washing up. They enjoy cutting out shapes from playdough and use pastry cutters with care and attention. They take turns and work with great concentration on a class

collage of the 'Rainbow Fish'. This requires them to glue highly coloured circles of paper to create a pattern effect. A display of pupils' artwork shows they have produced black and white shape pictures, print patterns using potatoes and sponges, and spiders' webs using a variety of material.

ENGLISH

79. Pupils across the school achieve well in English, with a particular strength in communication skills, in which they achieve very well. This is because of good teaching and provision for the subject, and the consistent use of signs and symbols to promote interaction, particularly for lower attaining pupils and those with additional special needs. It is also due to some high quality provision for drama, which promotes pupils' confidence in speaking and listening.
80. Pupils benefit from the good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Tasks are well matched to individual pupil's abilities and this leads to good achievement in lessons. Because books are used well, pupils learn at an early age to value their resources and treat books with respect. Their communication skills are developing very well, due to good individual targets and high quality questioning which promotes opportunities for each pupil to talk in class. The loss of a speech therapist is having a negative effect on pupils' progress. The use of communication systems, such as signs and symbols, particularly for lower attaining pupils and those with language difficulties, is a strength which is having a positive impact on all pupils' abilities to communicate. They begin to communicate intentionally as they explore objects, imitate adults, repeat single words and phrases, and start to combine ideas. For example, during a literacy lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils were observed sharing a book with an adult, pointing to pictures and commenting 'green car', 'big train', as they explored the text.
81. Older pupils in Key Stage 2, build on these early skills as they also benefit from good questioning in their literacy lessons to extend their vocabulary and awareness of communication. Higher attaining pupils talk at length about their work and sustain attentive listening to lengthy stories. They respond to questions with relevant answers, exploring the new words that they meet with enthusiasm. Good, focused questioning in one lesson in Year 6, enabled pupils to predict what might happen next in their 'Winnie in Winter' story. Lower attaining pupils used signs and symbols well to explain themselves and to make appropriate choices.
82. By Key Stage 3, pupils listen very well in class. They take turns in conversation and use good varied vocabulary. They benefit from good provision, including interactive games to promote confidence and self-esteem in communication. One class was observed playing an active game in which pupils were required to find out things about each other. They had to ask questions to find out details of other pupils in the class. They did this politely and in a mature way, showing good progress from earlier years.
83. In Key Stage 4, pupils use their communication skills to undertake in-depth study towards their accredited courses. The higher attaining pupils discuss the rules of their games well, making good social use of language. They listen carefully to each other and work co-operatively to offer information about their favourite colours, foods and clothes. Lower attaining pupils can introduce themselves, some using alternative means of communication effectively.
84. Drama is very well used across the school to promote speaking skills and confidence. Whole-school productions, such as the recent 'Wizard of Oz', are a real strength of the provision and make a significant contribution to the high levels of

achievement that pupils make in speaking, listening and communication, and in their personal development.

85. Literacy skills are developing well and pupils in all parts of the school achieve well in literacy lessons. They read good quality texts with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the younger classes, pupils use books well to browse, find information and improve their reading skills.
86. In Years 1 and 2, they were observed reading parts of the 'Three Little Pigs' story. They used expression and characterisation to read the voices of the three pigs, showing good understanding of the different aspects of the text. Pupils of all abilities were fully included in the lesson and were able to join in because of good questioning and support by the adults in the class. Pupils are beginning to make marks on paper, colour pictures and write simple text. The work of higher attaining pupils shows well orientated letters as they begin to write their own names. Other pupils match objects and pictures, use multi-sensory resources to create shapes, decorate letters, and draw pictures.
87. By Key Stage 2, pupils begin to read parts of a big book in whole-class literacy lessons. In Year 4 there was a good example of this as pupils shared 'Farmer Duck'. They could read parts of the story well, make noises and remember the plot. They achieved very good speaking and reading skills as they benefited from some very good teaching and questioning. By Year 6, the highest attaining pupils present written work carefully, writing simple sentences to illustrate their drawings. Poetry writing, in response to a poem called 'Yellow Butter', was exceptional, with some creative ideas expressed by several pupils.
88. Older pupils in the secondary department build carefully on their earlier skills. By the time they reach Year 9, they begin to make good use of ICT to present their writing. Many pupils have written the story of 'The Wizard of Oz' in their own words, using accurate punctuation, verb tenses, conjunctions and adjectives. There are many examples of extended story writing and neatly presented work. Lower attaining pupils make effective use of adult support to scribe for them, and those with additional special needs have opportunities to use switches to make choices and symbols to express their thoughts. They read a good range of books and make appropriate use of the school library to support their work in subjects other than English. For example, in one session, pupils were searching for books about the Second World War to help them find information for their history topic. They understood the library system and knew where to look and how to sign books out. They benefit from the Key Stage 3 Literacy Strategy which has been effectively implemented.
89. Pupils continue to achieve well in literacy in Key Stage 4 as they work towards accredited AQA or ASDAN certification. Examples of different forms of writing are evident in pupils' past work. For example, they have planned a day's outing, applying classification skills well and sequencing information as they created leaflets to inform others about the day. They learn to read transport timetables and work out which trains to catch for a particular purpose. The higher attaining pupils have read and commented on extracts from 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck, and have rewritten the story of 'Romeo and Juliet' following a study of the text. They use vocabulary well to express themselves and present their work very well. Other pupils work towards their ASDAN accreditation. They study shared texts, join in with aspects of the story, show understanding of speech in texts, and read with the teacher. They use a range of resources to put their thoughts down and achieve well as they benefit from the good range of activities and support provided.

90. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good, with some very good features. Teachers know pupils well and make good individual provision to ensure success. A particular strength is the teaching of basic literacy and communication skills. For example, in all areas of the school, good phonics teaching helps pupils to learn about the link between letter sounds and words. They quickly begin to build simple three-letter words in the primary department so that, by the time they reach Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils can spell and write more complex vocabulary. The teaching in the literacy strategy is good and the wide range of activities and resources keeps pupils focused and interested. Teachers have good knowledge of early literacy and they reinforce these skills in many other subjects. For example, pupils are encouraged to discuss and talk about their learning in history, religious education, design and technology, mathematics and science. They benefit from good questioning in many lessons, which enables them to practise their speaking skills. They write accounts of famous people in history, experiments in science and instructions in design and technology. Effective interactive approaches provide many opportunities for pupils to consolidate and improve their skills. The best teaching enables pupils to become independent learners and links assessment to the set tasks. For example, in a lesson in Key Stage 4 and another in Key Stage 3, the link with pupils' own targets led to very good progress in understanding the sequence of events in the story of 'Buddy' and in the study of 'The Blitz'. Pupils were helped to understand Buddy's character and characters from 'The Blitz' because of relevant explanations, quick revision of the story, a delightful atmosphere and planning linked to individual education plans. Because of this, pupils of different abilities all achieved very well. Teaching is less successful when staff are less aware of pupils' prior ability and do not know what their language skills are like. At these times, learning is more limited and the pace of improvement is slower.
91. The subject of English is appropriately managed. Some good extra-curricular activities enhance the provision. For example, local cultural experiences are used frequently to help improve pupils' skills. They have visited the local arts centre, have watched performances of plays in the community, and benefited from visits by actors and a writer. Co-ordinators have a good awareness and overview of the curriculum in their area, but there is too little liaison between departments. Hence, primary and secondary co-ordinators have no time to meet and discuss plans or pupils' achievements. Limited monitoring of teaching has taken place. Resources have been audited, but the libraries in particular, are not well enough stocked to cover all aspects of English. They are too small for whole class teaching; there are too few books for research available to pupils, and a lack of independent use of ICT to explore and search for factual information. Some good accreditation for the higher attaining pupils, and those of broadly average ability for the school, is helping to keep achievement high and provides a good focus for the curriculum. For lower attaining pupils and those with additional special needs, accreditation is less effective and this leads to some inappropriate content and use of resources in relation to their ages. Plans are in place to review this area and improve the provision.

MATHEMATICS

92. Achievement in mathematics is good throughout the school. Pupils have a very positive attitude towards mathematics and are keen to show what they have learnt from the last lesson. Pupils make good progress because of good and very good teaching that focuses on helping pupils to develop strategies to enable them to complete mental calculations with confidence. Very good use has been made of the National Numeracy Strategy to ensure that pupils build upon their mathematical knowledge as they progress through the school. There is no significant difference in achievement between different groups of pupils.

93. The very successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been particularly valuable in providing a consistent approach to teaching and learning at a time of changes in staff. As a result the daily numeracy time is helping pupils to practice and consolidate basic number skills. Good staff training has ensured that lessons are normally well planned and taught well, with pace and imaginative group work activities that are carefully matched to the pupils' learning needs. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of pupils and very good use is made of the plenary sessions at the end of the lesson to help pupils understand what they have learnt. However formal assessments, particularly of the lower ability pupils, are less accurately judged and the levels of attainment records at the end of the year are not yet secure.
94. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils make good progress. Pupils develop sound basic number knowledge. By the age of seven, pupils can count with ease to twenty and often beyond. Pupils can complete simple calculations such as, one more or two more and one less. Pupils recognise common regular two-dimensional shapes, sort objects by attributes and place them in groups of a given number. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties can match objects, count up to five reliably and count out objects up to three. All pupils gradually become more aware of the order of the days of the week and can identify the time of the day by familiar events such as lunch and home time.
95. By the age of eleven, pupils of all abilities have made good progress. Nearly all of the pupils can count and use number confidently when checking how many chairs are needed for the class or the number of mats for physical education. Pupils can complete simple mental calculations such as four and two or six and two makes eight. Pupils recognise and use basic number symbols and confidently count in twos, fives and tens and are beginning to understand how to calculate multiples of two and ten. Pupils can collect data and complete simple bar graphs, recognise common two and three-dimensional shapes and identify their properties.
96. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 make very good progress due to the teachers having high expectations of the pupils. Teachers pay careful attention to teaching mathematical skills and understanding so that pupils are very clear about what they need to learn and how well they are doing. Pupils can count reliably and have good mental recall of addition, subtraction and multiplication. Pupils develop and can explain their strategies to solve problems mentally. Most of the pupils understand place value up to 1,000 and can use this knowledge to approximate. Pupils can add and subtract numbers using two and three digits and they know their two, five and ten times tables. Pupils can interpret information from tables, construct a pictograph and most can collect data using a frequency table. Lower ability pupils can apply their number knowledge in practical situations, they can add up small sums of money when shopping, and some pupils can identify how much change they need from ten pence by counting up from the cost of the item to make up ten pence.
97. By the age of 16 pupils can solve number problems using two digit numbers. Most pupils recall multiplication facts up to ten multiplied by ten. Pupils add and subtract using money and select the appropriate measure when calculating quantities involving weight, capacity, length and volume. Pupils can estimate proportions such as half and a quarter and can recognise and describe number patterns and their relationship such as multiples and squares. Lower ability pupils can complete similar operations when presented visually and in a practical situation; for example in one class most of the pupils recognised that a semi-circle was half of the circle and that two right angled triangles could be placed together to complete a square.

98. Pupils over the age of sixteen are able to add the price of two low cost items and are confident when handling money up to ten pence. Higher ability pupils can calculate higher value items using appropriate written methods to work out how much change they would get from one pound. Pupils can estimate quantities and identify appropriate utensils for measuring liquids and solids such as sugar. Most pupils use non-standard utensils, for example spoons or jugs full and standard metrics units when weighing ingredients.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and very good for the eleven to fourteen-year-old pupils. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons thoroughly so that pupils are able to build upon their understanding and are given frequent opportunities to practice skills and apply their knowledge in practical situations. The youngest pupils practice counting by pegging out washing on a line, matching chairs to the number of pupils in the group and sharing out drinks. The start of all mathematical lessons is very interactive and pupils confidently count objects and complete simple adding on tasks. Older pupils explain their favourite methods of working out the difference between two numbers or multiplying two numbers together. Pupils benefit from the consistent structure of the lesson which aids their understanding of what is expected of them. Pupils can anticipate what comes next; this enables pupils to prepare themselves for the next activity.
100. Lessons are broken up into a series of learning activities that enable pupils to practice and apply new skills to a number of different activities and consolidate their learning, maintaining their interest and involvement. Good opportunities are provided at the end of the lesson to reflect on what they have learnt. For example, a class of ten and eleven-year-old pupils were able to identify two and three-dimensional shapes and then make constructions from interlocking bricks. The pupils described their constructions to the class explaining which three-dimensional shapes they had used.
101. In lessons teaching is characterised by the pace, humour and vigour and pupils responded by working intensively within groups, discussing their findings and giving sound mathematical reasons for their thinking. Well-focused questions, clear explanations and the effective use of resources supported pupils' very good acquisition of skills. For example, the use of a classroom 'shop' containing items that pupils wanted and were priced in multiples of two, three and five, supported their understanding of their continuing activities. Similarly, in another class the use of temperature charts from a national newspaper to collect data to produce graphs depicting changes in temperature over time in different parts of the world gave relevance to the activity.
102. Staff work well together as a team. The teaching assistants are used very effectively to support individual and small groups of pupils to promote their learning. Where teaching is slightly less successful is in the area of developing appropriate individualised strategies to meet the specific needs of the very few pupils with complex communication difficulties in order to encourage and maintain their involvement in the learning activity.
103. Mathematics is lead by two co-ordinators, one of whom is new to the post. The second co-ordinator was absent during the inspection. The co-ordinators have compiled an action plan that appropriately identifies the priority areas for developing mathematics. There is a well established process for monitoring lesson plans that is effective in securing a consistent approach to teaching and the delivery of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. A common approach is used for collating good evidence of pupils' progress, although the work is not always sufficiently annotated to accurately judge pupils' formal levels of attainment. Plans are in place for staff

development sessions to moderate pupils' work to ensure that teachers have a common understanding of the levels of attainment. Many of the pupils follow nationally accredited courses when they are aged 15 and 16, to provide pupils with progression pathways to further education. However, the school is yet to identify an appropriate accredited course for pupils with complex learning difficulties so that their achievements can also be formally recognised.

104. Although the mathematics curriculum provides a broad range of relevant learning experiences, opportunities are missed. The use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning and provide independent access to the curriculum especially for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and those with complex physical and communication difficulties.

SCIENCE

105. Standards of achievement by Years 2, 6 and 9 are good. By Year 11 standards of achievement are very good. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout Years 1 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. The very good curriculum planning and the rigor of the accreditation opportunities in Years 10 and 11 also contribute to the pupils' very good achievement because they really enjoy the courses available to them and take pride in their work. Their keenness to succeed contributes to the very good standards they achieve as seen in a Year 11 lesson where pupils were learning about the composition of the air.
106. By Year 2 pupils make good progress in identifying and sorting different objects according to the type of material they are made from. They are beginning to use correct terms such as 'stick' to describe an object attracted to a magnet. The higher attainers are able to distinguish between materials which are 'bendy' and those which are 'rigid'. Analysis of work and records indicates that pupils are beginning to observe simple associations such as baby animals linked to the correct adult. By Year 6 pupils think well about their science and develop very important life skills such as why it is important to look after their teeth and what foods help to keep their teeth strong and healthy. Pupils with additional special educational needs make good progress as seen when a pupil with severe visual impairment deepened his knowledge and understanding of different types of teeth because of the outstanding support he received from his special needs support assistant.
107. By Year 9, pupils make good gains in their understanding of different types of forces. In an interesting and exciting lesson which focused on deciding the best surface to use for a log flume, higher attaining pupils spoke with confidence about how the force of gravity made a boat move down a flume. In another Year 9 lesson pupils understood that a metal rod with iron is strong and that it needed to be because of the way in which it is used to support a heavy weight. Because teaching is fitted for the purpose lower attaining pupils access the same experiences as higher attaining pupils and because they are fully included in all activities, they also make good gains in their learning.
108. Pupils in Year 11 have grasped that heating materials can change them and that some changes are reversible. These pupils are able to carry out an experiment independently. In a Year 11 lesson which focused on the fact that the wick of a candle needs oxygen to burn, the pupils made very good gains in their understanding of the composition of the air. They also developed very good measuring skills because of the demanding activities given to them by the teacher. Lower attaining pupils are included in all investigative work because the skilful planning between the teacher and

the SEAs results in the support assistants enabling access for these lower attaining pupils. Through all the experiments Year 11 pupils carry out independently and through their follow up written work they make very significant gains in their development of important life skills such as the importance of shutting the door if they were to discover a fire and how to use electrical equipment safely.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout Years 1 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. Very good use is made of visual cues and modelling by the teachers and the effective partnership between the teachers and the support assistants contributes to the pupils good and very good learning. The hands on approach is fitted for the purpose for the pupils and the relevance of the subject motivates them to learn well. Makaton signing is used effectively when required to help pupils to have a better understanding of what is going on around them. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support the teaching of science and this has been recognised as an area for development by the science co-ordinator. Good resources and a very good science room contribute to the quality of teaching and learning. In Years 10 and 11 the very good subject knowledge on the part of the teacher, and her enthusiasm for the subject and commitment to include all pupils in the lesson, results in very good progress. Pupils in these lessons respond well to the high expectations of the teacher and, because relationships are excellent, the pupils are confident to ask questions which in turn results in them gaining a deeper understanding, as seen in a Year 11 lesson on chemical change when the pupils enjoyed observing the yeast and sugar bubbling away in the water in a test tube. The best teaching is characterised by a cracking pace, demanding activities matched to the needs of all pupils and the full inclusion of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs in the lesson.
110. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Assessment is good and it is a particular strength in Years 10 and 11. However, the co-ordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school and there are too few opportunities for her to model good practice so that others can learn from her expertise. Although the curriculum planning is a strength overall too few conscious opportunities are built into the planning to promote pupils' spiritual awareness.

ART AND DESIGN

111. Provision for art and design is good. Overall pupils' progress and achievement are good, sometimes very good. This is due to the high quality of the teaching, very good scheme of work, effective planning and good subject leadership. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good and they showed great enthusiasm for the subject.
112. Due to timetabling arrangements, no lessons were observed in Key Stage 1; however, scrutiny of previous work indicates that pupils use a range of materials in order to explore texture and colour. They paint, print and look at the work of other artists, for example pupils have produced paintings of gardens and flowers influenced by the work of Monet. By the age of eleven, pupils have further developed their skills and explored ways of recording their observations, for example in a Year 2 class using the work of the artist Lowry as inspiration produced very effective two-dimensional shapes of 'matchstick men'. In a Year 6 class pupils have been studying portraits by famous artists and, as a result, using a range of different media, for example pencil and montage, they have produced their own interpretation of portraits which show imagination and reflection. A Year 4 class produced a collage of faces in the style of the artist Rene Magritte, again showing how carefully they had studied the original work and reflected on how they could represent their own version.
113. By the age of 14, pupils have developed a wide range of skills as a result of working in many different media. Scrutiny of their previous work and lessons seen, show evidence of work in clay, printing, drawing and ethnic art. A Year 9 class, working in clay to produce tiles with design influences by Aboriginal art show good understanding of the style, they use spots of paint instead of lines and can describe what the clay feels like as they mould or work it into shape. Lower attaining pupils in this lesson were encouraged by the teacher to experience the sensation of working within a media which can be moulded or shaped easily and they took great pleasure from this experience.
114. By the age of 16, pupils' art and design skills, knowledge and understanding have developed to the extent that the higher attaining pupils can produce work which will be entered for accreditation. A Years 10 and 11 class, in producing a wall hanging in textiles, demonstrated a wide range of technologies and understanding which have clearly derived from their previous work in the subject throughout their time in the school. Scrutiny of their previous work shows that they love visiting galleries, watching visiting artists and producing work influenced by what they saw. Pupils used photography to select their own subjects and produce a photomontage and in work influenced by David Hockney they have used photographs and added other media to complete finished work with strong visual impact.
115. The good, sometimes very good, standard of pupils' work is a result of the high standard of teaching in the subject which is always good and on occasion, for example with the older pupils, very good. This clearly has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils concentrate and show interest and are willing to experiment because they are confident in the teachers' skills and attitudes towards them. Lessons are well planned ensuring that the lower attaining pupils can be fully involved. Resources are used appropriately and teachers display work around the art room and the school generally as a good example of the high standards that pupils at the school can achieve in the subject.
116. The subject is well managed by a subject specialist who has good subject knowledge and skills and shows enthusiasm for the subject which clearly influences and affects

the work the pupils produce. Resources are well managed and there is a limited use of ICT in the subject. The art room, although very attractive, is rather small with limited storage and display areas for work in progress and there is no kiln or suitable location for one; overall the accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory in that it can restrict full coverage of the curriculum.

CITIZENSHIP

117. The school has made effective arrangements for provision in the subject which is well integrated into the curriculum. Since the start of the autumn term the curriculum for personal and social education has been completely revised and extended by the addition of the citizenship topics. This revised curriculum is well written and guides teachers through a progression of activities to challenge pupils and maximise their understanding. The subject co-ordinator has also provided staff with some sample materials and gives feedback on their plans and records.
118. It was only possible to see one lesson of citizenship during the inspection but this, together with evidence from teachers' records and pupils' work, shows that the school has made a good start in introducing the subject into the curriculum. Pupils are extending their understanding of their role in society and systems such as in elections and parliaments.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Provision for design and technology is good. Overall, pupils' progress and achievement are good, as a result of good, sometimes very good teaching. The very good scheme of work, effective planning and good leadership of the subject, all have a positive impact on pupils' achievements. In the lessons seen and in discussions with pupils, evidence emerged of enthusiasm for the subject and the pleasure pupils obtain from making things. Behaviour and attitudes in the lessons seen were always good.
120. Due to timetabling arrangements no design and technology lessons were observed in Key Stages 1 and 2. However, scrutiny of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning, displays and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that pupils' achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. They undertake work in a wide range of materials. For example, pupils in a Years 1 and 2 class have made a chassis in order to make moving vehicles. Good links to science are made, for example, when pupils make simple bread products, the issues of healthy eating, diet and hygiene are stressed. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made very effective puppets in a range of styles and media and other pupils have made houses using card and reclaimed materials. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to study healthy eating, the use of seasonal foods and design a meal to encourage the eating of fruit and vegetables. They design and make biscuits as a gift and study appropriate packaging. All of this work shows pupils developing an understanding of latest technology as the impact of good teaching. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils are building on their experience of designing and making things and are beginning to produce more sophisticated work requiring them to think about problems and solutions. They begin to work with resistant materials having first, as part of the design process, produced their ideas in card. For example a Year 9 class, in making a small wooden box, designed and assembled a version in card, having first produced a net. This gave them insight into the importance of accuracy in marking and cutting materials if the box was to be assembled properly and later when made in wood would be of good quality and attractive. This work and other work on display indicates that pupils have an understanding of the importance of

design in the process of making, that they are developing skills and knowledge in using tools and an appreciation of quality, for example, one girl said to the teacher, 'I don't like this, I don't think it will go together nicely.' Within food technology there is a practical focus on cooking and food preparation. The basic skills of food purchase, preparing and making a meal are enjoyed by all pupils and the very good focus on consumer knowledge is a vital part of preparation for independent living.

121. By the age of 16, pupils have refined their skills and understanding to the extent that the higher attaining pupils can undertake an individual project which they carry through from early design sketches, through working plans to the final production stage and produce a finished article of good quality. The lower attaining pupils complete a finished product too, but with increased support and advice from the teacher. In a Year 11 class, pupils were involved in a food technology lesson producing shortbread biscuits. Very good teaching consistently challenged them to make decisions, 'What should you do now that you have added the sugar?' and 'You have to wash your hands now, why?' This approach impacted very potently on pupils' learning, they describe the food preparation process very clearly and have good insights into the health and hygiene protocols involved. Work in Key Stage 4 is in the form of units of accreditation and pupils work hard to gain awards and are proud of their work and success.
122. The good, sometimes very good, work pupils produce is the result of effective and enthusiastic teaching, very positive pupils' attitudes and behaviour in design and technology lessons and good use of resources. Pupils undertake quite difficult operations, for example assembling a wooden box, because they are confident that teachers will support and encourage them and show them how to achieve success.
123. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has good skills and understanding of the subject, the scheme of work for the subject is of good quality and appropriately interprets the National Curriculum to the needs of the pupils. Planning for design and technology is good. The accommodation is unsatisfactory; there is no running water or sink, limited display areas or storage areas and as no tools are displayed or stored on the walls, pupils cannot become familiar with their names and appearance. Old-fashioned, industrial type workbenches are not appropriate and do not provide the room with a welcoming and educational appearance.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Provision for, and progress in, geography are satisfactory. Geography is not taught during the spring term so it was not possible to make judgements about teaching during the inspection. Any judgements made are from discussions with the co-ordinator and the scrutiny of documents and the small amount of pupils' work that had been retained from the autumn term.
125. By the age of seven pupils are beginning to understand changes in the weather. They make symbols as used in television weather forecasting and present their own weather forecasts. Higher achieving pupils understand that when the wind blows wet socks will dry when hung on a clothesline. By the age of eleven pupils have some understanding of plans and grids. Higher achieving pupils make a plan of their desk and position marks on a grid almost independently. Lower attaining pupils achieve the same outcome but with physical help to complete the task. By the age of 14 pupils have discussed the proposed siting of an airport at Rugby and discuss the reasons

why it would or would not be an asset to the area. They understand the effect this would have on the geography of the area and how it would change for ever.

126. Co-ordination of geography across the school is satisfactory. There are well thought out long and medium-term plans and when monitoring of lessons occurred it was a useful tool for the improved delivery of the subject. Recently there has been monitoring of teachers' planning and their evaluation of the term's work but not of teaching and learning. However, the school has plans for this to be reinstated in the future. Cross-curricular work involving geography does occur across the school but no evidence was provided. Resources are satisfactory but more computer programs are needed to enable pupil research.

HISTORY

127. Provision is excellent. Due to timetabling constraints lessons were only seen in Key Stages 2 and 3. Evidence of learning, however, was gathered from younger pupils.
128. By the age of seven, pupils have studied the passing of time with reference to their own family. They have looked at familiar buildings in Stratford upon Avon and realised how they have changed over time. During the week of the inspection, pupils visited Shakespeare's birthplace, and returned with the smell of lime wash in their nostrils, and the knowledge that Tudor interiors differed greatly from our own. By the age of eleven, pupils have knowledge of the Romans, Victorians and Tudors, and have embarked on a local history study of Shakespeare. All lessons are multi-sensory, highly evocative, appeal strongly to pupils and help them to learn. In one Year 6 lesson, an elderly Stratford resident spoke of helping to ring the town curfew in the Guild Chapel; an activity that would have been familiar in medieval times. He spoke of the awe and wonder he felt when he saw his first car on the Warwick road. He recollected seeing the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre burning in 1926, and meeting the Prince of Wales when he opened the new theatre, with a golden key, in 1932. Pupils listened to his tales with great interest, behaved well and asked sensible questions to improve their historical knowledge.
129. By the age of 14, pupils have a good idea of what it was like to be a child in World War Two. They showed empathy and understanding of suffering during the Blitz in their response to excellent lessons in which they were able to read authentic headlines of the escape from Dunkirk, and hear a recording of bombs exploding. They effectively learned about the Battle of Britain, and how it was won by the use of radar, as the classroom was deftly changed into an 'operations room' and pupils 'scrambled' to attack the enemy, with the aircraft positions 'plotted' with snooker cues on a classroom table. Knowledge of Britain's wartime allies was consolidated, in this lesson, by encouraging pupils to greet each other using French, and American.
130. The highlight of the year is 'History Week' in which, last year, pupils were enabled to visit the reconstruction of a Victorian laundry, look at authentic artefacts, wear Victorian clothes and spend time in Victorian activities such as grating soap, using a dolly and mangling. They were shown a reconstructed Victorian classroom, heard the tale of a chimney sweep and improvised on similar incidents from Oliver Twist. They also made, and consumed, a Victorian trifle. This year plans are well advanced for a week devoted to the Tudors. Tudor storytellers and a Renaissance dance group will visit the school, and there will be a Tudor madrigal group. Pupils will dress in Tudor costume, play Tudor instruments, listen to Tudor storytellers and taste Tudor food. A performance of 'A Winter's Tale' is planned. A local dress hire firm gives all pupils the

chance to wear authentic costume. All teaching during the day will be supported by the school's exceptionally good level of resources.

131. Teaching is highly effective because a multi-sensory dimension is very well promoted. Artefacts are of excellent quality and enthuse pupils, particularly when they are allowed to take an active part in the proceedings. As result, pupils become so interested that class management appears to be effortless.
132. Pupils' excellent learning is fully supported by the imaginative, well-organised and well co-ordinated curriculum. This includes the Key Stage 3 curriculum delivered through drama which is particularly effective. Cross-curricular links are a key strength and help pupils' learning. The school makes excellent use of its exceptional historical environment. Very good and constantly renegotiated links with the community make possible the excellent standard of trips and visits available to pupils. All pupils have visited all the birthplace properties before the end of year 4. An annual archaeological dig supports curricular provision. The subject makes a good contribution to ICT in its use of CD-ROMs and strongly supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Enthusiastic and imaginative co-ordination is the key to this excellent area of study. Co-ordinators work in their own time to ensure successful teaching and learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

133. Provision is satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils successfully use a simple programme to click and drag clothing to dress a teddy bear. They are helped to take photographs, using a digital camera, and encouraged to describe the pictures they have taken. This aids their capacity to communicate. Pupils are helped to record their learning in ambitious classroom displays. By the age of eleven, pupils are aware of the Internet and higher attainers gain access to it with minimal help. In their study of Shakespeare they successfully use a search engine to find and print pictures of an American school's production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. All use a range of ICT tools to present their work. They set up a computer to use 'Word', key in text, print their work and shut down the computer correctly. Some higher attainers redraft their work using the computer. All contribute, in some measure, to an ambitious class presentation using PowerPoint. Pupils consider further applications of the skills they have learned and say what they will do next.
134. Although timetable constraints did not allow lessons to be seen in Key Stage 4, there was good evidence of ICT use in some subjects of the National Curriculum with wordprocessing very well used in a range of subjects. Post 16, students wordprocess their work with varying degrees of help, using a good range of fonts and a variety of styles of text. Higher attainers readily access the Internet, using an Internet search engine, for example, to obtain information about local leisure centres. All name the parts of a computer and know what they are used for. Students use digital cameras to record their work and download and print it, sometimes being helped to construct sophisticated page formats, including text boxes, to display them. A measure of independent learning is a strong feature of their attainment.
135. ICT is a powerful motivator. Pupils and students like using the machines and enjoy the results of their efforts. When a task catches their interest and imagination, they are capable of extended periods of concentration. Higher attainers delight in helping those less competent than they are.
136. Teaching is consistently good. Despite some lack of confidence in using the technology, teachers have sufficient grounding in the subject to plan their activities

systematically so that pupils learn and remember the simple techniques of opening and closing down their computer, for example. Learning objectives in lessons are clear. Explanations are well understood by pupils. Skilful questioning enables pupils to say what they already know, and this consolidates their learning. In the best lessons, activities are carefully adjusted to the capacity of pupils and students. In one very good Post-16 lesson, for example, higher attaining students consulted the Internet with minimal help. The majority of pupils successfully learnt the use of a word processing program, although much repetition was needed to achieve this. In this lesson, lower attainers who had poor vision, were able to activate switches to deliver predictable sounds and sensations, which they enjoyed.

137. The subject curriculum is satisfactory. There are significant constraints due to the number of available working machines and the lack of a network in the ICT suite. There has been over a term's delay in the effective installation of computers, which is not yet complete. This is adversely affecting learning in all curriculum subjects. As a result, cross-curricular use has yet to be consolidated, although it is good at foundation level as pupils use a range of switches in all subjects. CD-ROMs support learning well, and pupils readily access the Internet. Digital cameras are used to display work in such subjects as history. Electronic keyboards are well-used in music. Clipart and Splosh are effectively used in art and design and design and technology. Interactive storybooks are used to good effect in French. Camcorders record attainment in drama. A short video film, which includes artwork and a dramatic presentation on the screen simultaneously, is a striking feature of the school's imaginative use of this area of technology. The school also makes good use of ICT in augmentative communicative devices including widgets to support literacy, and sensory room equipment.
138. The newly appointed subject manager has made a good start on assessing what needs to be done to co-ordinate the subject across the curriculum, further improve the skill level of some teachers, and more fully promote the independent use of the technology by pupils and students. An accredited course is being written. The level of technical assistance is currently too low and leads to an unacceptable level of wasted time which adversely affects pupils' achievement. The need to provide fully working machines continues to be addressed.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

139. Achievement in French is very good both in the 'taster' lessons in Year 6 and across Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress and their full inclusion in lessons is a real strength.
140. Eleven years old pupils have a weekly twenty minutes session of songs and rhymes in French. The rationale behind these lessons is to show the pupils that learning French is fun and to enthuse them for their French lessons in the secondary stage of their education. This is achieved very well. Pupils know and understand the meaning of 'Bonjour', 'Au Revoir', 'Ecoutez' and 'Regardez'. They sing a counting song with much enthusiasm, counting up to ten. They are beginning to remember some colours and higher attaining pupils joined in fully with the song, 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. Lower attaining pupils remembered the words for the first part of the song and joined in the actions where their French failed them. Their lessons are fun and all pupils thoroughly enjoy them.

141. By the age of 14 higher attaining pupils easily count to 20 and know the names for at least 15 different items of clothing. They know the difference between 'un' and 'une', 'It's to do with male and female isn't it.' They use simple sentences to ask for items of clothing. Lessons are quiet but with suitable bits of light-heartedness and humour which encourage pupils in their learning and concentration. Lower attaining pupils thoroughly enjoy their French lessons, they have fun and the delightful atmosphere throughout the session ensures they are learning. Pupils know the French words for T-shirt, trousers, shoe, sock, hat and jumper. They readily join in with the 'Bonjour' and 'Au Revoir' songs, using the correct words and singing in tune.
142. By the age of 16 pupils are fully involved in completing units of work for their accredited course. They have been working on the 'Au café' unit and confidently remember more than 20 items of food and drink they would want to order in a French café. They speak in sentences and know the need to ask for 'café avec crème' and 'un thé avec au lait' if they want white coffee or tea. They know that the euro is now the currency used in France.
143. The quality of teaching is never less than very good and is sometimes excellent. All teachers involved make lessons really enjoyable and fun, all the while ensuring that pupils, whatever their ability, are learning well. The aims of lessons are very clear to all and are very relevant to the pupils' needs. Teachers and support staff know their pupils very well and their teamwork is very good. Lessons are so interesting and enjoyable that there is very little need for conscious behaviour management; pupils are too happy and busy to even think about misbehaviour. Work is both age and ability appropriate and there is very good use of varying techniques involved to ensure all pupils learn, for example, singing, conversation and items being drawn out of a bag to learn different colours.
144. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. Schemes of work are well in place and attention to detail is marked to ensure that pupils' success in their accredited examination is ensured. Assessment is very good, not only in accredited courses but in all lessons. Ongoing assessment occurs in lessons and is recorded at the end of a lesson. This information is used well in future planning. Resources are good with the build up of tapes and computer resources a priority. The school has a regular residential trip to France for older pupils.

MUSIC

145. The provision for the teaching of music throughout the school is satisfactory overall but there are significant problems in staffing and standards which impact on pupils' progress. The art and drama departments, supported by the music department have recently organised a lively and highly successful musical version of the 'Wizard of Oz' at Christmas. This was well spoken of by parents, staff and friends of the school. However, the energy and enthusiasm for such initiatives is not demonstrated in class music lessons. Of the three lessons it was possible to observe, the teaching overall was satisfactory with one lesson, taught at very short notice by a cover teacher, being very good. In Key Stages 2 and 3 pupils are not sufficiently challenged or motivated to strive for high standards. They mostly comply with teachers' instructions but because the teaching lacks pace and direction pupils underachieve for some elements of the lesson. For example, the use of a 'Hello' song at the start of each lesson regardless of the pupils' ages does not present any challenge at all as most are familiar with the process and have no significant need to greet each other halfway through the day.

146. There is little variation in the content of lessons across year groups and classes so that individual pupil's abilities are not specifically catered for. The curriculum is satisfactory and is loosely linked to other subjects such as history. During the inspection a connection with World War Two was established in the lessons observed but in several instances this link was tenuous and ideas and connections were not explored. For example, when singing 'Don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me' pupils did not understand the significance of the message which was unexplained by the teacher. However in a hastily prepared lesson on a similar theme, pupils showed themselves able to interpret the atmosphere of war by the imaginative use of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Working in pairs they recreated a marching drumbeat, a falling bomb or the stillness between such incidents. This was excellent work and highly motivating showing the excellent response of the pupils when inspired by challenging teaching.
147. The ability and willingness of one support assistant to share her passion and skill in drumming is a strength and of clear benefit to the pupils. She regularly works with small groups of pupils with authentic African drums and introduces them to the techniques of playing. After only a short while they are able to respond to her musical phrases and show that they are enthusiastic and willing to learn. The strength of this facility is not built into the music provision overall and opportunities are therefore lost for more pupils to share and benefit from the experience
148. The music room has little reference or display materials on its walls. The one display concerning World War Two has little relation to musical themes. There are no illustrations of instruments for pupils or staff to refer to when identifying them in listening exercises. The overall management of music is unsatisfactory mainly because the subject co-ordinator, an experienced music teacher, teaches only one lesson each week. She therefore has little contact with pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 and has no time to advise or co-ordinate the work of others. Although the reasons for her current work are understandable and a direct result of continued difficulties in teacher recruitment, the lack of skilled teaching in music is a significant difficulty.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. There is good leadership in physical education and this ensures that teaching and the progress made by the pupils in lessons is good. However, shortcomings in the facilities to teach physical education for pupils of secondary age, limits their attainment in games and gymnastics.
150. By the age of seven, pupils copy, repeat and explore movements showing basic control. Pupils are able to link movements to produce specific effects for example, they walked in a stately fashion using small steps in time to music in an improvised Elizabethan dance whilst their movements were more fluid in the lively warm up sessions. By eleven many pupils can link movements into a sequence on the floor and using apparatus. Pupils move confidently changing directions and speed across mats, over boxes and benches and through and over wall bars. Pupils pay careful attention to their starting and finishing positions for the sequence being performed. Pupils are aware of the effect exercise has on their bodies and respect simple health and safety rules such as only one pupil using the apparatus at a time.
151. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 show reasonably good ball control by striking and returning the ball when playing volleyball. Pupils are beginning to use skills and tactics such as throwing the ball over their opponent's head or placing the ball out of reach. Pupils understand and respect the rules and show good sportsmanship by encouraging one

another or praising a particularly difficult return of service. Older pupils build upon their ball skills by becoming more accurate when throwing and catching. Pupils are increasingly skilful when dodging and marking their opponent. A Post-16 leisure group discussed and agreed to the modifications to the basketball rules to create a four-a-side game.

152. Lessons for the younger pupils follow a common pattern with a lively and fun warm-up routine to music. This enables pupils to control their speed and quality of movement. The main lesson provides excellent opportunities for pupils to explore and practice movements, work in pairs and small teams and reflect upon ways of improving their performance. Staff have a very good understanding of pupils' learning and physical needs, which they use to support and encourage pupils to develop and improve their performance. For example, one apprehensive pupil, by the end of the lesson, confidently climbed up a ladder, travelled across a bar suspended about five feet above the ground and climbed down at the far side. Teachers demonstrate effectively to enable pupils to understand correct body positions, techniques and appropriate attention constantly paid to health and safety enabling pupils to work and perform safely. Good use is made of cross-circular links to help pupils visualise and understand the relevance of their work. For example, a group of younger pupils were able to link what they had learnt in history about the clothes and behaviour of Elizabethan courtiers to understand how they needed to move in their Elizabethan dance.
153. The physical education co-ordinator has shown good leadership. He takes an active part in overseeing the curriculum planning to ensure that the programme meets the requirements of the National Curriculum Programme of Study. He has adapted the scheme of work to compensate for the linked games and gymnastic facilities. The curriculum is enriched imaginatively with residential visits to outdoor pursuits, games clubs and lunchtime activities. The Post-16 pupils access a rich variety of appropriate leisure facilities off site, but the programme undertaken in school is limited by the facilities and they are not sufficiently different from the lessons for younger pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. Overall, the quality of provision is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages and special needs achieve soundly and make satisfactory progress. This is because teaching is always satisfactory and occasionally good, and because of pupils' positive attitudes and very good behaviour. The new subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides satisfactory leadership. An effective scheme of work, which corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus, supports teachers well in their planning.
155. By Year 6, pupils are developing a base of knowledge and awareness of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, which are all represented by faith communities in the West Midlands. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress because teachers present activities that are relevant and well matched to their interests and abilities. In addition, pupils are offered good opportunities to reflect upon, and respond to, a range of experiences. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils listen to and sing some Christian songs. They begin to recognise the symbols associated with Christianity and, in particular, the cross. Their knowledge and understanding is further developed by a tour of the churches in Stratford upon Avon, both Anglican and Catholic, and by noting common symbolic features such as stained glass windows, lecterns, fonts and the crosses on the altars. They talk about the significance of these symbols to Christians and make, decorate and display crosses and stain glass windows to remind themselves of the experience. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils

consolidate their knowledge and understanding of the Bible as a special book, which gives guidance on how Christians should live. They look at a range of Bibles and understand that they are made up of the Old and New Testaments. They begin to understand that stories often contain inner messages and stories. They rehearse their class presentation for assembly – the story of 'Noah's Ark'. Higher attaining pupils have learnt their parts and deliver their lines clearly and with expression. Lower attaining pupils take non-speaking parts and everyone is included. The teacher challenges them, 'Why are we doing this?' and pupils know that God flooded the world to get rid of evil. They conclude the performance by singing and signing 'Who built the ark?' so that all the audience can understand.

156. By Year 11, pupils have consolidated their knowledge and understanding of world religions, practices and values, including Judaism and Buddhism, and are able to think more clearly for themselves about religion and religious issues. They continue to make satisfactory progress because there is strength in teachers' planning and in the positive management of pupils' behaviour. However, sometimes learning targets are too modest for higher attaining pupils and some teachers are too pedestrian in delivery. In addition, overlong introductions have the effect of reducing the role of the special education support assistants to that of mere spectators, as well as making some pupils restless. Resources for the subject are very good but were not particularly evident during the week of the inspection. Pupils in Year 9 consider and reflect on their rights and responsibilities within school, their homes and in the community. Reference is made to the Ten Commandments as sensible rules to live by. The special education assistant with this group is a Muslim and she is able to tell pupils about the Koran, the holy book of Islam, and that the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad also provide guidance. This helps pupils' understanding. Pupils in Year 11 continue their work on the significance of Christian festivals with reference to the Easter story in particular. Good questioning, for example 'How do you think Jesus felt when he was betrayed by his friends?' gives pupils the opportunity to express themselves and share personal experiences with the group. Other pupils listen sensitively, with care and concern. Relationships are excellent and this contributes to a purposeful and productive climate in most lessons.
157. Satisfactory but not sufficiently deliberate links are made to other subjects, to PSHE, art and design, history, drama and citizenship. Literacy skills are regularly reinforced with numerous opportunities for pupils to present their feelings and ideas orally and in writing but ICT is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils' skills of religious enquiry. A scrutiny of the scheme of work, and pupils' displays shows they benefit from a programme of visits to different places of worship and celebrate different religious festivals, for example Diwali. Religious education lessons reflect the school ethos well and clearly make a consistent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are currently accredited in religious education through the ASDAN 'Transition Challenge'. The school is quite properly working towards higher accreditation through the WJEC 'Entry Level', to more appropriately challenge higher attaining pupils.