

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN GRANT SCHOOL

Caister-on-Sea

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121265

Headteacher: Gerald Hampson

Reporting inspector: Ian Naylor
20906

Dates of inspection: 6th May – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 255056

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 -19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St George's Drive Caister-on-Sea Great Yarmouth Norfolk
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Trevor Wood
Date of previous inspection:	06/05/98

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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20906	Ian Naylor	Registered inspector	English	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
9352	Malcolm Weaver	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1358	Glyn Essex	Team inspector	History Geography Modern Foreign Language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Special educational needs
30071	John Pearson	Team inspector	Mathematics Citizenship Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
14563	Graham Pirt	Team Inspector	Design and Technology Information communication Technology Physical Education	How well is the school led and managed?
18461	Vanessa Wilkinson	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Science	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10668	David Walker	Team Inspector	Post 16 Religious Education	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

John Grant is community mixed day special school for pupils aged 3-19 with severe learning difficulties. The attainment of pupils on admission is significantly below what would be expected of pupils' mainstream peer group nationally. Currently there are 111 pupils on roll including 19 pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), 24 with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and six with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although three pupils are from a non-white ethnic background there are no pupils whose first language is not English. Nearly half of all pupils have free school meals which is high for a school of this type. The school is part of the Great Yarmouth Educational Action Zone. Since its last inspection the school has expanded considerably from 75 pupils to its current roll. The present population includes ten pupils who are part of an inclusion project. Recognition for the school's commitment to its staff, pupils and parents has been acknowledged by gaining re-accreditation from the nationally recognised Investors in People Award. Extensive building work and expansion of classrooms has recently been completed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

John Grant is a good school in which there are some very good features. The good leadership and management promotes effective teaching and learning thus ensuring the good achievement and progress of pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching has a similar impact on learning which ensures pupils make good progress.
- The curriculum is good and is very well supported by the school's very good links with the community.
- The very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, behaviour and personal development mean that their attitudes and relationships are of a high quality.
- The very good links with other schools provide good opportunities for pupils to experience lessons in a mainstream setting.
- The school promotes pupils' personal, social and health education very well and this increases their self-confidence and success in these areas.
- Very good teaching results in very good achievement and progress in the Foundation Stage.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very clear direction for the school.

What could be improved

- The availability of nationally recognised courses for pupils aged 16.
- The opportunities for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to work alongside pupils of their own age.
- Aspects of accommodation are unsuitable for the curriculum needs of pupils, for example the school hall, provision for Post 16 pupils and access for PMLD pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1998. All the key issues from that inspection have been addressed well. There has been a good improvement in teaching and this has impacted positively on pupils' achievements. The curriculum has been significantly improved and now provides better learning opportunities with a good balance of time given to subjects. Good procedures to find out where pupils are in their learning have been introduced. There have been satisfactory developments in the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Staff and governors are now involved in monitoring of teaching and learning. Despite some remaining inadequacies in accommodation many areas have been upgraded and learning resources have been significantly enhanced.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Achievement and progress are very good in the Foundation Stage and good in each of the other year groups. In all the subjects achievement and progress are good, except in music where it is satisfactory. Pupils in the Post 16 Unit make good progress overall. There is particularly good progress in pupils' speaking and listening skills because teaching of communication skills is good. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in reading. Progress in writing is best in Years 1 to 9. Pupils make good progress in the skills of numeracy because of the good use by staff of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils with autism and those with behavioural difficulties achieve well. Pupils make good progress in their personal and social skills. The progress of PMLD pupils is satisfactory overall, although their progress is hampered because there are too few opportunities for them to learn alongside other pupils of their own age. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls. The whole school targets for achievement by Years 2, 6 and 9 in 2002 have been met. Several pupils make good progress in their social and communication skills when they integrate into mainstream lessons.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very eager to take part in lessons and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff. In lessons, visits out of school and during inclusion into mainstream classes, pupils' conduct is of a very high standard.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils make very good progress in their personal and social skills and enjoy excellent relationships with staff and with each other.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. This is due to pupils' medical conditions and illnesses. Unauthorised absence is low.

Pupils show great interest and excellent enthusiasm for all the activities presented. There are many examples of pupils being helpful to one another. Pupils take good advantage of many opportunities for personal responsibility.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 15
Quality of teaching	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 and learning are good overall across the school. Eight out of ten lessons are good or very good and the remainder are satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. In English, mathematics, science and personal and social education teaching is good. It is good in the remaining subjects except for music where it is satisfactory. Communication skills are taught well. Pupils with PMLD are taught well. Teaching for all groups of pupils including those with autism is effective because the needs and abilities of pupils are well understood. Teachers use a wide range of relevant and well planned activities and this engages and interests pupils thus ensuring that learning is good. Teachers and co-educators work together very well and have very good relationships with pupils. Teaching could be further improved by more consistent assessment of P-Levels (measurement of attainment under Level 1 of the National Curriculum), the use of signing and information communication technology.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned to provide a good range and balance of learning opportunities for pupils. A particular strength is the provision for personal, social and health education. There is good provision of additional activities to

	support the curriculum such as visits out of school, lunchtime and after school clubs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. High standards in moral and social development have been maintained. Spiritual development is good, whilst cultural development has significantly improved since the previous inspection mainly because it is included in teachers' planning and is now very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There are very high quality procedures for the child protection, health and safety and welfare of pupils. Staff and governors are involved at all levels in ensuring the best levels of care. There is very good liaison with other professionals and outside agencies. Procedures to find out where pupils are in their learning have been vastly improved and are now good.

The school is successful in sustaining a positive partnership with parents. Information for parents continues to be good overall, particularly in pupils' end of year reports and annual reviews. There is a strong contribution from the local community to pupils' learning, through very good contacts with local schools and organisations. In particular a number of pupils have very good access to mainstream school experiences. The use of P-Levels to describe pupils' progress is still at an early stage of development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Leadership and management of the school is good overall. The very good leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher sets a superb example to all staff. There are good management systems in place that provide effective support to staff and pupils.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development through their visits to the classrooms and discussions with staff. They share the headteacher's vision for raising standards in teaching and pupils' achievements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are very detailed plans, based on careful consideration by the headteacher, staff and governors, for future developments. The headteacher and governors have very good procedures for determining the performance of teachers. A future goal is finding out if improvements made to teaching and the curriculum have had a positive effect on pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's financial systems are very comprehensive and finances are managed effectively. The process of setting the budget is well established and involves appropriate personnel. Specific grants are spent wisely and give good support to teaching and pupils' achievements.

There are a satisfactory number of staff for the number and learning needs of pupils. Despite many recent building improvements, the accommodation does not meet all the curriculum needs of all pupils; for example, access to classrooms for PMLD pupils. There are good resources, equipment and materials for teaching.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a happy atmosphere in school. • Staff are very approachable, kind and caring. • Parents are made to feel welcome. • The school is well known and respected locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The style of the open evening for parents in the Post 16 Unit. • Activities for pupils after school. • Information about how parents can help to promote their child's achievement.

The inspectors agree with all the very positive views of parents about the school. Senior managers are aware of the need to consult parents more closely about the preferred type of parents' evenings. There are several lunchtime clubs and activities for pupils and a successful after school gym club. Transport arrangements do prevent further after school activities for many pupils. The school does have a dialogue with parents about homework and is constantly seeking to improve understanding of how parents can best help their child's academic achievements at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' achievements and progress have improved significantly since the last inspection. They are now good overall between the ages of three to 19, with little variation between year groups, although children by age five, make the most rapid progress. The evidence from lessons shows that achievement is good overall, and often very good. In addition analysis of pupils' work, individual education plans (IEPs), annual reviews, reports and teachers' records, indicate that progress over time is also good.
2. Achievement and progress is good in all subjects except music, where it is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, achievement in the Early Learning Goals is very good. Across the school there is frequently very good achievement in speaking and listening skills because teachers place a lot of emphasis on communication skills. There is good progress in reading skills. Achievement and progress in writing are good in Years 1 to 9. However, in Years 10, 11 and Post 16 there is insufficient attention given to independent writing skills. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to improve standards and this has resulted in better progress of pupils in their literacy and numeracy skills, particularly up to Year 6.
3. The achievement of pupils by Year 11 is good, however, the lack of a nationally recognised course for the few more able pupils restricts the further progress they might make, for example in independent writing skills. Achievement is good in the Post 16 Unit, and is now being further successfully promoted through the recent introduction of accredited courses such as the Accreditation for Life and Living Skills (ALL) scheme and the National Skills Profile.
4. The school uses its own system for measuring and comparing information about each pupil's levels of achievement on the P-Levels through its EPAR (educational planning and reporting database). The information it provides gives an important indicator to staff that progress of pupils in most subjects is improving throughout the school. For example, over 60 per cent of pupils have moved up at least one P-Level and another 16 per cent have moved up two P-Levels over the past two years. This scheme has been used well to set challenging whole school targets for achievement, in English, mathematics and personal and social education. These have all been met.
5. The achievement and progress of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) is satisfactory overall. Progress over time is affected by the narrowness of age appropriate experiences. Achievement and progress are good for those with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The communications skills of autistic pupils are satisfactorily promoted by the use of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and symbols.
6. Opportunities for children in the Nursery to join mainstream nursery lessons has helped their confidence, social integration and language skills to improve. Similarly five pupils in Years 1 to 6 make very good progress in these same skill areas through attending weekly lessons in local first schools. Two pupils in Years 7 to 9

make good progress in science and mathematics during lessons at a local high school. Students in the Post 16 Unit attend weekly link courses at the local college of further education and as a result have made good progress in their social development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. This aspect has been maintained at a high standard since the previous inspection. Pupils have very good attitudes to school, behave very well and enjoy very good relationships with staff, visitors and each other. Their enthusiasm for school is excellent. This can be seen when pupils arrive each morning relaxed and smiling, ready for the day's work. They are very eager to take part in their lessons, where they become thoroughly involved in the wide variety of experiences that teachers provide for them. They are motivated by lessons that are pitched at the right level. Students at Post-16 say they "enjoy school and find the work interesting and hard – but not too hard."
8. The behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations and positive encouragement provided by the staff. They listen very carefully to instructions and settle down to work quickly. Pupils are very polite and helpful to each other, for example by holding doors open for those who use wheelchairs. On visits out of school their behaviour is excellent. During the midday break pupils play together happily, with no bullying or other intentionally repressive behaviour. Those pupils who have challenging behaviour as part of their special educational needs behave very well most of the time and respond well to the strategies set in their individual behaviour plans.
9. The development of personal skills is very good. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the staff and with each other and are very eager to introduce themselves and talk to visitors. They know each other very well. They help their classmates, show pleasure at each other's success in lessons and are very patient, for example when another pupil takes time answering a question or is slow at moving from place to place. Pupils act independently wherever possible and are encouraged in this by staff providing sensitive assistance only when necessary. There were many examples of pupils helping to prepare drinks at snack time, tidying up after lessons, collecting their own meals from the serving hatch and hanging up their own clothes in the cloakroom. Pupils develop very good personal and social skills because teachers set them individual targets that are followed both in and out of timetabled lessons. Most pupils, for example, make very good progress in achieving their personal targets in the dining room when having their lunches.
10. The level of attendance has dropped markedly since last September across most classes in the school and is well below the national average. This is due to pupils' medical conditions and illnesses. Therefore, attendance is unsatisfactory. However, unauthorised absence is low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching and learning at the last inspection was satisfactory overall with a significant amount that was unsatisfactory and this was a key issue of concern. Since then there has been considerable improvement and the school has made a determined effort to ensure that standards of teaching have improved. Teaching and learning are now good overall and this has a significant impact upon the progress pupils are now making. Very good teaching is a frequent feature in

each year group and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is despite the large class sizes and the very broad range of pupil abilities and special educational needs in each class.

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and a strength of the school. Teaching is good in all the subjects except music where it is satisfactory because it lacks detailed knowledge of pupils' levels of ability. Although there are several teachers who are new to the school this term, the general level of support given by senior staff and other colleagues has meant that they have settled quickly into the school and adjusted well so that there is no apparent effect on the high standards that prevail.
13. Teachers plan very well. Lessons are highly organised and well prepared. Planning is usually shared with co-educators so that they are fully aware of what the teacher wants pupils to learn. Teachers are also good at letting pupils know what they are going to be doing and what they will learn. Planning is based around teachers' very good knowledge of pupils' abilities and needs. Teachers' subject knowledge is also good. The recording of what pupils learn is very good and forms the basis upon which teachers assess and plan the next step in pupils' learning. The detailed use of individual education plans (IEPs) and behaviour management plans enables teachers to structure activities, manage behaviour and set targets for achievements to suit each individual. When a few teachers are more assured in gauging pupils' achievements against the P-Levels, there will be better overall measurements of pupils' progress over time. Teachers do not always create sufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own or each other's work.
14. There is excellent teamwork. Teachers delegate group activities and individual sessions for pupils to co-educators extremely well. Co-educators take this responsibility very seriously. They attend many training activities to promote their level of expertise in areas such as signing, use of symbols and PECS and many other essential skills. This means that the quality of their work is very high and they give very good support to pupils' learning. There is an enthusiastic approach from all staff together with high expectations of pupils' participation, behaviour and involvement. This creates a good climate for learning. Most lessons are a hive of activity with various challenging activities arranged for different ability groups of pupils. Pupils' IEPs and behaviour plans are displayed on classroom notice boards so that all staff have access to them and this strategy works well.
15. There are many very effective lessons. These often present pupils with challenging activities using a variety of mediums from different subjects, in ways that make them think, communicate their views and give them chance to record in some way what they have learnt. For example, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 7 and 8, pupils take part in recreating a scene from Macbeth. Pupils' imaginations are fired when they watch the staff acting the parts of the three witches. Pupils create music and sounds to accompany the play, draw the plans for scenery and create facemasks for the witches. They do this with great enthusiasm and confidence, using percussion instruments effectively to create the right sound effects, crayons to draw the scenery and paper plates as a basis for the masks. The teacher and co-educators make the lesson a challenge, whilst giving constant encouragement. They get pupils thinking and talking about what they are doing and why, expressing their feelings and giving their views about what they had achieved. The outcome is very good learning and a lot of enjoyment.

16. A very successful lesson in numeracy, with pupils in Years 1 and 2, is extremely well planned for each level of pupil ability. Teachers are highly organised, use good management skills together with very good knowledge of pupils' needs. Co-educators are deployed very effectively. Pupils are involved in relevant and meaningful number activities that hold their interest and attention. The teacher introduces the tasks for pupils in a clear unambiguous way, uses signing to ensure understanding and takes every opportunity to consolidate number skills. Good work is recognised and praised. Consequently pupils' ability to concentrate and control their behaviour is very good. They are highly motivated to succeed and learning is very good.
17. Teachers promote pupils' communication skills well in lessons by the use of signing, PECs, symbols, and other augmentative aids. However, the impact of signing for a few pupils is lessened because there is not a whole school approach. Not all teachers and staff use signing as much as they should. This means that there is a lack of continuity from one time of the school day to another and between activities such as lunchtime and assemblies where signing is not universally used. The use of information and communication technology in the subjects is satisfactory but could be extended further in English and mathematics for secondary age pupils.
18. Teaching of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties is good. Co-educators work very well to engage pupils in a wide range of stimulating and appropriate activities. However, the large size of the class and the lack of opportunity for pupils to mix with pupils of a similar age restricts the range of age appropriate teaching and this has an effect on pupils' progress over time. Teaching of pupils with autism is similarly good, again given the context of large classes. Teachers use specific teaching strategies well, such as PECS and symbols. Careful attention is given to behaviour management of those pupils who have behavioural and emotional learning needs.
19. Homework is used satisfactorily. It is usually in the form of simple tasks, such as familiarity with PECS charts, reading or social skills tasks. Teachers respond to requests from parents for homework on an individual pupil basis.

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

20. The school has achieved significant improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection. Two key issues for action relating to the curriculum were identified at that time. These were to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum and to develop better subject planning. Staff have worked hard, under the very effective leadership of the deputy headteacher, on both of these issues with the result that the curriculum is now good and well placed to develop further. A whole school curriculum plan has been devised which helps to ensure that pupils are presented with suitable learning opportunities in each year group. All elements of the statutory curriculum are met including those for sex and drugs education. Subject planning has been satisfactorily established for all subjects. A weakness that remains is the lack of national recognised courses for pupils aged 16.
21. The school has planned well, especially through staff training, for the increased number of pupils with autism who have been admitted to the school since the last inspection. The school has developed its provision of various sorts of alternative communication equipment and strategies, such as signing and symbols, in

response to criticism in the last inspection report. There has also been a considerable increase in the number of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Provision for these pupils is satisfactory and improving. Changes have been made to their curriculum which was previously narrow and limited in the access it provided to the National Curriculum. The school has identified this as a priority for further development. It has a clear vision of the action needed to improve the opportunities for the inclusion of these pupils within the school, which are currently unsatisfactory, and is seeking to overcome practical difficulties such as the nature of the school buildings.

22. The school has developed effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. It has improved the provision of extra-curricular activities, both at lunchtimes and after school. There is a very good programme of personal, social and health education both within the formal curriculum and at other times in the school day, for example, during morning breaks, which are used very effectively to work on areas such as social and independence skills. There is good provision for careers and vocational education for secondary pupils and the local careers service makes a valuable contribution to pupils' Transition Reviews.
23. The curriculum is very well supported by the school's very good links with the community and its educational partners. These help to provide good opportunities for integration by a number of pupils into mainstream schools. The school makes very good use of the locality, for example, for visits to places of historical interest. The collaboration with local high schools, such as the "Exchange Business Link", is doing much to enrich the curriculum. The school is also beginning to see real benefits from its membership of the Education Action Zone. For example, from the funding provided to support a local high school teacher giving lessons at the school in French and German. The school is also planning good developments such as the sharing of resources and the writing of common policies with its partner schools.
24. The school makes very good arrangements for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall, the improvement since the last inspection is good. There has been particularly good improvement in provision for cultural development, which was unsatisfactory last time. Assemblies are well planned and develop a sense of community within the school. Religious education provides pupils with a good knowledge of Christian traditions, as well as introducing them to those of other faiths. At the end of each day pupils are given opportunities for reflection. Pupils' achievements are valued by teachers and are celebrated through colourful displays.
25. There is an emphasis on moral issues, including environmental matters, such as the need to recycle rather than throw away. Pupils are made aware of the school's expectations of work and behaviour and develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. They respond well to rewards and sanctions.
26. Pupils are encouraged to work and play together. Personal, social and health education provides pupils with many opportunities to discuss matters that relate to their own welfare and the society in which they live. Teachers demonstrate respect for all pupils, and take every opportunity to encourage a positive self-image. Success is praised and acknowledged, for example, in the weekly celebration assembly. Pupils' awareness of others is enriched through the school's association with the local community in various activities and in the wide range of links with other schools and colleges. Pupils are expected to take on

responsibilities such as tidying up at the end of a lesson, and returning the register to the office after registration. Pupils exercise responsibility in many activities, for example, fund-raising for charities.

27. Many lessons make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the cultures and traditions of other countries. Pupils' cultural understanding is appropriately reinforced through visits to theatres, museums and places of worship. Visitors, such as African musicians and Indian dancers contribute well to the cultural focus in music and art. The English curriculum includes stories from other cultures. Popular culture is emphasised well. Pupils in the Post 16 Unit read national newspapers to find items of interest about other countries.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school has sustained the very good quality of recording and systems for promoting the health, safety and welfare of pupils that were noted in the last report. There are very good child protection procedures, which are well understood by staff and which are used very effectively. Teachers and co-educators are aware of the need for vigilance and they constantly check the well being of pupils. The school takes effective action to support children looked after by the local authority.
29. The actions taken to meet health and safety requirements are very good. There are risk assessment records in all areas, for example, in the subjects of the curriculum and for the manual handling of pupils and for visits out of school. There is a health and safety co-ordinator and a co-educator who has responsibility for risk assessments in manual handling and for training staff in safe handling procedures. The governors are appropriately involved in a regular health and safety check of the school buildings and site. They carefully plan to address any areas of concern identified. An experienced school nurse provides good support for the medical needs of pupils. Procedures are in place for the management and reporting of any injuries that occur during school time. There are also good arrangements for recording the storage and administration of prescribed medicines to pupils.
30. Staff work very closely with staff from external agencies, such as educational psychologists and specialist teachers for pupils with hearing impairment who provide support for pupils in the school. These links are highly effective and contribute to the very good care that is provided for pupils. There are strong links with the health service and there are a number of clinics held at the school by the school doctor and consultant paediatricians. There are also similar links with social services. The school also receives satisfactory support from the speech and language therapist who provides programmes for individuals pupils.
31. Since the last inspection the school has developed a good computerised system (EPAR) for recording pupils' achievement and progress. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when recording and assessment procedures were considered a key issue for action. The recording system appropriately enables teachers to assess pupils' achievement against a range of learning objectives, which are drawn from assessment materials such as the National Curriculum Level Descriptors and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's P-Level assessments. At the moment teachers' understanding of how to apply these criteria to pupils' work is still being developed and refined. The information that is being entered onto the system in a few instances is underestimating the levels achieved by pupils. This has been recognised by the

school and work is already being done to check the accuracy of the assessments that teachers make and to provide them with clear guidance.

32. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The actions taken by staff to check and promote appropriate behaviour are very good. For example, reward systems used are similar in each class but modified to reflect the age, ability and interests of pupils. For the majority of pupils they are effective in promoting very good behaviour. Good recognition is given to pupils' achievement through a weekly assembly.
33. The school has identified specific methods of manual handling and uses these well to manage the behaviour of pupils who have behavioural difficulties as part of their special needs. The deputy headteacher and a trained co-educator ensure that these methods are implemented consistently and that all staff have regular refresher training. The recording of any incidents involving these pupils, such as the use of physical management and control strategies is tightly controlled. There are very good risk assessments for these pupils when they are involved in activities, particularly during visits out of school.
34. The recording and promoting of pupils' personal development are very good. The school's programme of personal, social and health education, citizenship and other very good opportunities for moral and social development provide very good support and guidance for pupils. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning or be involved in setting targets for themselves. This has been recognised as an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school continues to be successful in sustaining the positive partnership reported at the last inspection. Parents value the school. They feel comfortable in approaching staff with comments and suggestions and feel that they are listened to. The school regularly carries out its own survey of parents' views on a wide range of issues and informs parents of the findings and action being taken.
36. Several parents are keen to support the school and have become involved with the recently rejuvenated parent school association. Parents raise money for the school through social and fund-raising activities that help to buy a range of learning resources and support to residential visits made by pupils. Several parents also give valuable help in classrooms, for example, in food technology lessons. They also help pupils on riding activities, with swimming and on day and residential visits. Parents make a satisfactory contribution in supporting their children's work at home and in school. Parents value the home-school book and see it as an effective means of communication between them and the school.
37. Information for parents from the school continues to be good overall. Parents are involved in regular reviews of their child's progress together with target setting for future work. Parents feel the reviews are effective because they are well organised and involve specialist external support agencies. Staff make comprehensive written end of year reports to parents that provide a very clear indication of pupils' learning in all subjects. Appropriate information is also given to parents at the start of the academic year so that they know the curriculum topics that their child will study. The school issues a good newsletter to parents each term giving information about school events and other activities. The prospectus and annual report are produced in a friendly and informative manner but several

minor omissions are evident in what should be reported to parents. The school is aware of these issues and is to address them during the summer term.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. Overall the leadership and management of the school is good and has been sustained at the level noted in the previous inspection. There have until recently been gaps in the senior management team for some time and the newest member has not yet had time to settle in. This has had a slight effect on the overall effectiveness of the leadership. However, the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. They provide very clear direction that is shared by all and the school benefits from this in the quality of work being undertaken. The school's membership in a cluster of local schools, along with the consideration of Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) in order to improve accommodation for the pupils, reflects their outgoing vision.
39. The effective monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior staff is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the good progress made by pupils. They have had training in how to observe other teachers teach and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Observations are well documented and findings are given to teachers. There is a programme of visits planned across curriculum areas and teaching staff.
40. The school has good systems in place for the planning and identification of relevant targets linked well to the school budgeting process. The quality of the three year school development plan has been maintained since the previous inspection. It is based on discussions with staff and governors, and is informed by regular checks of quality. Although the review of planning at the end of the year is detailed and rigorous it does not yet fully assess the effects that developments and targets have on pupils' learning. The role of the subject leaders has improved since the previous inspection, leading to good developments in curriculum and assessment. Plans to integrate PMLD pupil into age appropriate classes have not been fully realised.
41. The way in which governors carry out their role has improved since the previous inspection. The governing body shares the headteacher's commitment to school improvement. It is very supportive of the headteacher, has great confidence in him and the decisions that he makes. It also shows initiative through its own work in the school. Governors are involved in, and knowledgeable about, the curriculum, staffing, accommodation and the financial aspects of the school. They have been fully involved in decisions about the building and modification programme as well as the recruitment and appointment of staff. Governors maintain a clear vision of raising standards for the benefit of the pupils. To this end they measure the effectiveness of the school through their own checking systems, including making regular visits into classrooms as well as having staff provide them with information. They consider themselves part of a team with the staff.
42. The headteacher and governors have successfully implemented the Performance Management (a system of appraisal) process for teachers and the headteacher has also held professional development interviews for the co-educators. This process has been improved since the previous inspection and contributes to the successful teaching seen in the school.
43. The school's financial systems are very comprehensive and finances are managed effectively. The process of setting the budget is well established and

involves appropriate personnel. The work of the headteacher and administrative secretary is effective in enabling governors to have a clear view of the school's finances to ensure that monies are fully accounted for and spent efficiently. Although there was a large amount of money unspent at the end of the year, this was set aside to meet the cost of the various building projects that have now been completed. Spending overall is carefully prioritised. However, spending on the subjects is less well targeted and subject leaders are not asked to give reasons for how they will spend any money they are allocated by the headteacher.

44. Effective tendering systems are in place and very careful consideration is given to purchases to ensure that best value is gained from service providers. The school takes full account of the need to use public money well. The school is energetically pursuing repayment by the local education authority for its shortage in funding over recent years of the school's nursery, otherwise the school could be short of money for its planned activities during the next academic year. Good use is made of specific grants and other funding such as that from the Education Action Zone, for example, to provide a full time information technology technician.
45. The school has a satisfactory number and range of qualified staff for the curriculum it provides. The steady increase in pupil numbers has been matched by an appropriate increase in the number of teachers and co-educators. Although the number of pupils in each class is higher than average for other similar schools, staff are satisfactorily deployed.
46. All staff are provided with good opportunities to undertake training enabling them to meet the high expectations set by governors and the headteacher and the school's desire to improve. This is reflected in the effective contribution that all staff make to the teaching and learning process. There is a comprehensive induction programme for all new teaching and support staff.
47. The considerable growth of the school in recent years has led to the continued development of the school site. Since the last inspection there have been improved subject specific facilities, such as design technology, science and art, as well as class bases. The school hall continues to be too small and the facility for indoor physical education is therefore significantly restricted and is unsatisfactory, particularly for secondary age pupils. The school has provided a library space which, although small and part of a corridor, is appropriately stocked. There are no leisure facilities for pupils in the Post 16 Unit. Despite the large amount of work that has been undertaken and the increase in classroom space by the addition of mobile classrooms, the overall accommodation is still unsatisfactory for the number and the curriculum needs of the pupils in the school. Access and opportunity for some groups of pupils is significantly restricted because of the narrow corridors and doors. The site is very well maintained and kept in very good order.
48. Resources within the school are good overall. The resources in English, design technology, information and communication technology and physical education are very good. They are good in science, religious education and music and satisfactory in all other subjects and the Post 16 Unit. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry, which is well below average, the good progress that pupils make and the efficient use of monies available, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. *To sustain and further improve the good quality of teaching and achievement, the headteacher, staff, and governors should:*
- (1) Introduce nationally recognised courses in English, mathematics and science for pupils at 16. (Paragraphs 3,20,67,73, 80)*
 - (2) Create more access for pupils with profound learning difficulties within the classes alongside pupils of a similar age. (Paragraphs 18, 21,40, 5, 88, 70, 77)
 - (3) Continue the improvements to accommodation, so that facilities are suitable to the age range and curriculum needs of all pupils. * (Paragraph 47, 93, 113, 126,104)

* *Included in School Development Plans*

Minor issues that the headteacher and Governors may wish to included in their Action Plan:

- Ensure that teachers make accurate assessments when using the P-Levels to measure pupils' individual levels of achievement. (Paragraphs 13, 31, 87,113)
- Create opportunities in all year groups for pupils to assess their own work and understanding. (Paragraph 13, 70, 88)
- Subject leaders should include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of their subject and give reasons for how they will spend any money they are allocated in an action plan. (Paragraph 43)
- Increase the use of information and communication technology across the subjects, particularly for secondary age pupils in English and mathematics and for PMLD pupils. (Paragraph 70, 77, 111)
- Develop a more coherent approach to the use of signing across the school. (Paragraph 17, 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	21	36	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	30	52	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	111
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	46

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	86.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.47

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	93	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y15

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.5
Average class size	10

Education support staff: YR – Y15

Total number of education support staff	38
Total aggregate hours worked per week	900

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	1,092,722
Total expenditure	1,048,873
Expenditure per pupil	9,535
Balance brought forward from previous year	113,322
Balance carried forward to next year	43,849

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	111
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	18	4		
My child is making good progress in school.	60	25	11		
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	32	8		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	11	16	25	4	11
The teaching is good.	71	18		4	
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	71	25	8		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	16			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	21	4		
The school works closely with parents.	67	28			
The school is well led and managed.	67	18	8		
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	16			8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	16	8	25	8

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

Key strengths

- Very good teaching
- A wide range of play activities
- Good links to mainstream nurseries
- Adults are very good role models

Areas for improvement

- Link recording to the whole school computer system

50. The learning opportunities provided for children under five are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The work prepared for children reflects the requirements of the Foundation Stage Curriculum very well. The early learning goals are very effectively incorporated into lesson plans and they provide a very good focus for achievement. There are also very effective opportunities for children to learn alongside those from local mainstream nurseries. The teacher makes very good use of the local community to enhance children's learning. For example, they visit places such as 'The Sealife Centre' to support the topic 'Under the Sea'.
51. Teaching for children under five is very good and there is very effective team work between the teacher and co-educators which ensures that all children have very good opportunities to learn and make progress. The teacher provides very clear guidance to staff about their roles and responsibilities and this enables them to give very good support to teaching and learning. Adults provide very good role models for children's behaviour and play skills thus helping them learn how to participate in activities.
52. Assessment by the teacher is good because there is daily checking of children's responses to activities and there is good evaluation of how effective lessons have been. Teacher and co-educators know children very well and share information about children's achievements to plan experiences that promote good learning. Procedures for recording information about children's achievement and progress are good. The school's computerised system has been updated to include the early learning goals from the Foundation Stage Curriculum and information about children's learning is to be transferred to it this term.
53. The accommodation for children under five is satisfactory. The school has a suitable safe area for outdoor play and children regularly use the very good hydrotherapy pool, which makes a significant contribution to their physical and personal development. Staff provide good opportunities for imaginative play through the organisation of areas within the classroom, such as the beach house. The classroom provides a stimulating environment to support learning.
54. Children's language and communication develop very well. Those with language are confident to explain what they are doing because adults extend their vocabulary effectively. The teacher and co-educators constantly make verbal and signed prompts and provide good opportunities for children to develop and improve their communication skills. They encourage children to describe what they are doing or thinking during their play. For example, sensitive suggestions about their

play in the beach house help to develop children's imagination and extend their vocabulary. Children with little spoken language are very well supported through the consistent use of alternative communication systems such as signing and symbols. All the action songs children join in with are signed for them and they learn to ask for things they want by exchanging a photograph or symbol for them. For example, children make choices about their drinks at snack time by pointing to a photograph of the one they want.

55. Children develop good literacy skills because adults constantly encourage them to look at books and to sit with them and hear stories. For example, children sit quietly, listen well and take part in the story 'Dillon the Duck'. They can name or point to things in the pictures when asked. Children handle books appropriately and turn the pages carefully. Higher attaining children can tell the front of the book from the back and can say how they know. Children develop early reading skills because they learn that photographs and symbols provide information. For example, they put a photograph of themselves on the board to indicate that they are at school and they point to a picture of an activity to indicate that they want to take part. The teacher plans good opportunities for children to develop early writing skills when they take part in creative activities such as printing fish and sea creatures using sponges and when they learn how to handle pencils and crayons to make marks on paper.
56. Staff help children to develop very good mathematical understanding and constantly remind them to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example, during snack time when adults encourage them to talk about the jug being full or empty of orange juice. Staff provide very good opportunities throughout the day for children to practise what they have learned. For example, children make very good progress when they take part in the many counting rhymes and songs that are provided. The teacher is aware of children's individual abilities and while the majority of children learn numbers to five, she makes sure that appropriate challenges are given to more able children. Daily routines help children recognise time and concepts of before and after.
57. Children's personal development is very good because adults have high expectations of them to participate, to behave appropriately and to be independent. Children respond well, they are keen to contribute to activities and they are very independent. They have very good relationships with adults and are beginning to be aware of each other. They play co-operatively and wait patiently for their turn particularly during familiar routines such as the greeting session at the beginning of the morning and afternoon. Children persevere even when they find tasks challenging because adults provide very good encouragement and ensure that they are successful.
58. There is good progress in physical development and very good progress in developing water confidence and early swimming skills. There are good opportunities for children to learn how to control their movements to perform simple actions, for example jumping like a frog and rolling, throwing and catching a ball.
59. Children make good progress in developing their creative skills because they are given good opportunities to use a wide range of different materials and media to create pictures. The teacher plans very good opportunities for them to listen to music, for example during the taped physical education programme. Children also have good opportunities to make music themselves. The teacher plans a good

range of activities that encourages children to explore the world around them, for example, when they learn about the different jobs people have and about the world around them. Children's learning is effectively reinforced through stories, creative activities and when they visit places such as a local farm to see lambs and chicks or when they look at the plants and flowers growing locally. Children are beginning to use computers to support their learning. They use the touch screen to make the fire engine and ambulance siren work. They make good progress because staff work with them to ensure that they develop their understanding of cause and effect.

60. Links with parents are highly effective. There are very good induction procedures for both parents and children. These include regular communication about children's achievements and their care needs through the home-school book and by telephone. There is also a parent and toddler session every Friday afternoon, which enables parents to meet with each other. Staff involve parents in their child's learning by showing them different types of play skills and demonstrating activities that will help parents to encourage their child's learning at home.

ENGLISH

Key strengths

- The quality of teaching is good
- Speaking and listening skills are developed very well
- Teamwork between teachers and co-educators supports pupils' learning very well
- The preparation and planning of activities is very good
- Very good use of drama and role-play
- Good use of symbols
- Good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness

Areas for improvement

- Access to accreditation at age 16
- More opportunities for independent written work, especially for pupils aged 11-16
- Greater use of ICT programs
- Opportunities for pupil self-assessment
- Consistency in use of signing

61. Achievement and progress are good. Teaching is good overall. In many lessons it is very good. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when achievement was satisfactory. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact upon teachers' planning and pupils' learning.
62. Pupils make very good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can listen carefully to the teacher reading from a 'Big Book' in a class group and show that they have understood by responding to questions using one word answers or by signing. They follow the storyline, recall and say the characters' names. They join in singing nursery rhymes or familiar songs. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, extend these skills. Many can respond to questions using short sentences or phrases. They can talk about what is happening in a story and sequence events. Pupils' learning is good and they concentrate for long periods and show perseverance with the tasks they are given. Pupils with autism make good progress in their communication skills by using their PECS word wallets. Pupils with profound and multiple learning needs make eye contact with objects and indicate their choice.

63. Secondary age pupils continue to show very good speaking and listening skills. In Years 7 to 9 more able pupils, after watching videos of famous scenes from literature such as Macbeth, remember and name the main characters and show some understanding of the storyline. One pupil can talk about the scene he has drawn and how he made the effect in crayons of a “scary heath” where the witches met. Others talk about the sounds they make with percussion instruments to create the mood of the witches’ scene for their role play. Other pupils use words such scary and spooky to describe the three witches. Less able pupils speak some of the lines from the play and mimic the characters. They experience the sounds and react to staff. Pupils work hard, show a high level of involvement and concentration and co-operate fully with staff. In Years 10 and 11, pupils listen to stories about other cultures and understand that the characters come from Africa. They name some animals from the same country. More able pupils discuss their ideas with staff about the story, answer questions and say what they want to write. Less able pupils listen well and carry out instructions about what they have to do next. Learning is good; all pupils work hard and sustain their interest for significant periods.
64. By Year 6 pupils’ achievement in reading is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress when they follow the story in a ‘Big Book’ such as ‘Teddy at the Fair’, and more able pupils can anticipate what happens next. Lower attaining pupils identify with the characters in the story from the use of puppets by co-educators. Many pupils begin to recognise initial letter sounds of words in the story, and can name other words or parts of the body starting with the same sound. More able pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. They can identify ten words beginning with the letter ‘r’ and recall letters of the alphabet. They can put words in a speech bubble in the right place in a picture and begin to understand what an adjective is. Less able pupils can recognise and sort the letters of their name. Pupils with autism follow the symbols on their PECS chart to choose an activity. Pupils with profound and multiple learning needs track objects, recognise and choose different shapes and colours.
65. Pupils’ achievements in reading are good by Year 11. In Years 7 to 9, more able pupils consolidate their reading skills and continue to make good progress. They read short sentences from a play. Less able pupils recognise words on flashcards that fit the story. Pupils with profound and multiple learning needs react with head movements, eye contact and sometimes verbal utterances to visual images. In Years 10 and 11, pupils make good progress when they use a storyboard to follow the sequence of a story. Teachers’ records and assessments show that most pupils make steady incremental progress in their reading skills as they move between year groups. Learning is good because pupils show interest in their work and understand what they have to do and stay on task well.
66. Pupils make good progress in their writing skills by Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show improvement in their handwriting skills. More able pupils hold a pencil correctly and write over the teachers’ model. Less able pupils trace letter shapes with their fingers. Pupils with profound and multiple learning needs achieve good looking at and handling of materials. In Years 3 to 6 more able pupils can write their own names independently, but most still need significant help from staff to achieve recognisable letter shapes or to write within lines. A few more able pupils, with support, begin to write their own stories or news and there are good examples of work on poems and descriptive writing.

67. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing skills by Year 11. In Years 7 to 9, more able pupils show an increase in their spelling skills. They spell simple words consistently well and attempt more complex ones, for example, when writing their news. There are good examples of poems written by pupils; for example, poems about cats after being inspired by reading the poem 'Cats' by T.S Elliot. In Years 10 and 11, this earlier progress is not always capitalised on, particularly with the more able pupils who are capable of undertaking more independent writing. Work is not always challenging enough. This process would be aided by the rigour of a nationally accredited course for this age group. Nevertheless, several more able pupils successfully use simple word processing to complete their work. Less able pupils use symbols to help them put sentences together. Autistic pupils can use the PECS symbols and storyboards to help them write a simple profile of a character from a play. Pupils with profound and multiple learning needs make good progress in tracing around objects with their fingers, feeling shapes or holding a brush to apply paint or glue to paper. Learning is satisfactory and pupils show an increased ability to do things for themselves without adult support.
68. Achievement and progress in the Post-16 Unit are good. In an English lesson, students successfully read, discuss and write about topical events that interest them, using pen or word processing skills as appropriate. They show great concern and awareness during discussion and in their writing of some of the issues raised by the news story about the disappearance of a local child.
69. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are adapting the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) successfully to the varied needs of each pupil. There has been a significant impact from this on pupils' achievements in their literacy skills and this is shown by the overall good improvement in their P -Level scores. Teachers make detailed plans, demonstrate a high level of knowledge and understanding and match work carefully to each pupil's level of ability. There is excellent teamwork with co-educators, and high expectations of pupil participation. Staff work very hard to challenge and engage all pupils. A very good feature of teaching is the link to personal, social and health education where literacy skills continue to be planned and taught in very practical and relevant contexts such as break-time drinks sessions or at lunchtime. Similarly, literacy skills are well promoted in other subjects. Many teachers and staff successfully use signing, symbols and augmentative communication aids such as PECS for pupils with little or no speech or for autistic pupils. However, there is scope for more consistent use of signing across the school.
70. The subject is well led. There is good curriculum planning together with good resources of materials and equipment, all of which have been much improved since the previous inspection. The subject leader with the help of the deputy head monitors the subject well across the school. The curricular themes chosen for each term give good opportunities for teachers to support pupils' cultural development. The library is now a very good resource but there is not enough planned use of it by teachers or pupils. Resources are good. The use of information technology to support literacy is satisfactory but could be developed further, particularly for pupils aged 11-16. There are few opportunities given to pupils to check their own work or understanding. The development of PECS is good and well supported by a co-educator who has had the necessary training and who gives very good specific instruction to pupils on an individual basis. Many classrooms are too small for the inclusion of pupils who need wheelchair access.

MATHEMATICS

Key strengths

- Teaching is good
- Use of the National Numeracy Strategy is good
- Pupils' IEPs support the subject well
- Good use is made of PSHE time to reinforce maths skills

Areas for improvement

- Relevance of activities at Years 10 and 11
- Accreditation by age 16.
- Use of ICT

71. Pupils make good progress overall in their mathematics lessons. This is because of good teaching that successfully matches work to the learning needs of the majority of pupils. There has been a good improvement in the curriculum and a corresponding improvement in the progress made by pupils since the previous inspection. Pupils by Year 2 have begun to make good progress in mathematics. This is because of good teaching that challenges pupils and carefully builds, step by step, upon their existing knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning tasks are made as meaningful as possible. For example, a successful lesson in counting up to 10 is built around the morning attendance register, as pupils assemble photographs of everyone present, count them, match them to numerals and decide how many pupils are away. After completing further counting tasks in small groups, the pupils again apply their skills to count out biscuits and drinks for their snack time.
72. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also make good progress. Good teaching makes lessons interesting by providing practical activities, with well chosen resources, that pupils enjoy. For example, they stand on a large number line and move up in steps according to numbers they make by throwing a dice. This motivates them to continue their learning in small groups, where they use dice and dominoes to make numbers to add together. New learning is introduced in very fine steps, using very detailed and clear explanations and demonstrations. Opportunities are taken to stretch higher attaining pupils.
73. By Year 11 achievement is good for the majority with tasks very clearly matched to their abilities. Pupils in Years 7 to 9, for example, create addition tasks by throwing dice. They discuss whether the sum would be the same if the numbers had been thrown in the opposite order. Teaching is less successful for a few more able pupils in Year 11. This is because lesson topics are not always suitable for the range of abilities in the class and do not challenge more able pupils sufficiently. These pupils do not have the challenges, for example, of working towards nationally recognised qualifications.
74. Achievement and progress are good in the Post-16 Unit. In numeracy, students learn to handle money and budget. Each week they apply their skills when they visit a local supermarket. They are expected to find a couple of items on a shopping list and pay for them. They then visit the cafeteria, where they may purchase a drink and biscuit or cake within their allowance.
75. Pupils with PMLD and those with autism make at least satisfactory progress in each year group.

76. Teaching and learning are good. This is particularly because teachers have used the National Numeracy Strategy to improve their planning and delivery of lessons. Teachers know pupils' abilities and work well with co-educators to support pupils' progress. Pupils' good progress over time in mathematics reflects the high quality of teaching they receive. Some examples of very good teaching were seen. In these lessons, a particularly good understanding of the pupils' individual learning needs ensures that they are set tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult. High expectations by staff of pupil participation and effort create good interest from pupils who are motivated to succeed. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and work hard.
77. The subject is managed well by the coordinator, who provides good support for class teachers. Sufficient time is allocated to mathematics on pupils' weekly timetables. There is a good curriculum for mathematics, consisting of topics adapted to the learning needs of the pupils from the National Numeracy Strategy. All aspects of mathematics are adequately covered. The subject is satisfactorily resourced, although there is still scope for wider use of information and communication technology. Inclusion of pupils with PMLD is made difficult because of the small size of some classrooms and the large size of some classes.

SCIENCE

Key strengths

- Teaching is good
- Mainstream links for more able pupils
- Activities are practical and relevant

Areas for improvement

- Accreditation at age 16
- Accuracy of assessment

78. The overall achievement of pupils by Years 6 and Year 11 is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
79. The school has done well to improve standards for a large number of pupils by improving the curriculum. Subject plans now provide a clear framework to guide teachers when they prepare work and they ensure that there is a good emphasis on providing opportunities and teaching pupils how to find out for themselves.
80. Teachers' plans and pupils' work show that they have covered a good range of topics. In both the primary and secondary department these are drawn from the National Curriculum programmes of study for pupils up to the age of eleven. The programmes of work developed by the school are age appropriate but there are currently no opportunities for pupils in Year 11 to have their learning accredited. Learning is enhanced for secondary age pupils by the very good opportunities they have to work alongside their peers in mainstream school.
81. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils with PMLD aged five to 16 make good progress because activities are adapted well to reflect their abilities and they are planned to be age appropriate. The youngest pupils experience push and pull by watching cars roll down a physiotherapy wedge and younger secondary age pupils learn about gases when they watch steam and feel the difference between hot and

cold. Pupils look at the resources well and their facial expression and body movements indicate that they prefer the hot water bottle to the cold one. The oldest pupils develop an understanding of sound when they create noises using a wide range of percussion instruments. Pupils clearly understand the cause and effect of their actions that create the noise when the instrument is struck.

82. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topics they study increase well during their time in the school. In their work about forces, for example, pupils in Year 2 find out about forces such as push and pull when they go on a trip to the supermarket to look at the conveyor belts at the checkout and by Year 4 they can correctly name the forces needed to pass a toy car to the teacher or to open a door. The teacher extends their understanding well and a trip to the beach enables pupils to predict if different surfaces, such as sand, have an effect on the amount of force they need to use when pushing an object. Teachers use the local environment well to make learning fun.
83. In Years 4 and 5 pupils find out about the plants and insects that can be found in the school environment and they make informed predictions about what they will find during a mini-beast hunt on the school playing fields. By Year 6, pupils have a good understand the difference between alive, not alive and never living. They sort pictures of animals and models into sets using one or more of their characteristics, for example, if they have fur or if they can fly. Pupils recall past learning well and are able to describe why they make their decisions. The teacher provides good examples for pupils to consider carefully. Activities are used well by teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills. Pupils use a diagram to help them sort the animals into sets.
84. In Year 8 pupils are confident to carry out a simple investigation to show that air is all around us when they learn about solids, liquids and gases. They listen well to instructions and watch the teacher's demonstrations carefully. Because pupils are put into small groups for the practical work they receive a good level of support and this ensures that they take an active part and that the key concepts are reinforced. Pupils know that their windmills turn because of the wind caused by the fan and they understand that air is trapped in a balloon when it is blown up. Teachers make sure that pupils have good opportunities to record their work but they do not always give sufficient thought as to how this can be done more independently by less able pupils. By Year 9, pupils carry out simple investigations with confidence when they find out how air pushes upwards to keep water in an upturned glass. They find out the melting point of different substances such as ice and chocolate. When questioned they can describe what they see and say how they know that the balloon contains air, 'because it is bigger and heavier'. For more able pupils in Year 9 there are very good opportunities for them to learn alongside their peers in mainstream schools. Pupils were well placed in the mainstream lessons they attended and they keep up with the work well. For example, they completed mirror writing activities when finding out about reflections, light and planes.
85. No lessons were observed for pupils in Years 10 and 11 but their work and teachers' plans indicate that they achieve well and have made good progress over time. A lesson was seen, however, for pupils attending a local mainstream school. In Year 10, pupils know that some changes are reversible. They can describe the changes they see when vinegar and bicarbonate of soda are mixed and know that irreversible changes are made when water is added to plaster of Paris.

86. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers place a good emphasis on providing learning opportunities that are as practical as possible and this approach works well. Pupils, of all ages, respond well in lessons, particularly when teachers engage them in interesting activities and experiments. For example, in Year 9 pupils concentrate well in a lesson about gasses because the teacher makes it fun and pupils understand that the teacher will get soaked if the experiment doesn't work. They are excited when they are given a turn to try out the investigations that have been demonstrated. This practical approach, together with a lively pace and the use of good questions helps pupils to grasp ideas. Pupils understand better because they have been involved in investigations and have found out for themselves. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to talk about their learning at the end of the lesson and this helps them to clarify their thinking and make good progress. Co-educators work effectively with individuals and small groups. Teachers pick out, and reinforce, key words and this enables pupils to make good progress in developing scientific vocabulary. There is satisfactory evidence of the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' work particularly in the area of topic research.
87. Teachers need to check the accuracy of assessments because too low a level of achievement has been attributed to the work of some of pupils. Teachers know pupils well and their day to day monitoring of pupils' responses in lessons, the marking of their work and the effective use of questions to test pupils' understanding enables them to plan the next steps of learning effectively so that pupils make good progress.
88. Leadership and management of the subject are good. More opportunities are needed for pupils to be involved in assessing their own progress. Accommodation for the subject is satisfactory but a lack of space in many classrooms restricts opportunities for the inclusion of pupils who have PMLD. Resources are good.

ART AND DESIGN

Key strengths

- Teaching is good
- Attractive displays around the school celebrate pupils' good progress in art
- Co-educators provide good quality support.
- The work of other artists is used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and ideas
- Art contributes well to the spiritual and cultural development

Areas for improvement

- Completed work is not annotated to show what pupils have achieved
- The room designated for art is unsuitable

89. Progress and achievement are good overall. Teaching is at least good and sometimes very good throughout the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when progress was unsatisfactory overall.
90. By Year 6, more able pupils and those with autism begin to demonstrate growing creativity. They re-create 'Sunflowers' in the style of Van Gogh and 'Cat Catching' after Picasso. When sketching and drawing they show some attention to detail. Younger pupils followed a mathematics lesson, in which they had weighed and measured flour, salt and water to make play dough, by using the mixture to 'make' buns and cakes. The activity inspired pupils to express creative ideas, which were

listened to well by the other pupils. One pupil rejected the idea of cutters to make a 'gingerbread man' as others had done, but made a creditable attempt at a freehand one. Less able pupils need much support, but produce effective, simple models. A variety of approaches and teaching methods enable all pupils to achieve well. When pupils are using scissors, health and safety considerations are given due emphasis, and the pupils respond very well, showing a developing awareness of the dangers. A pupil in the class for pupils with PMLD was supported well (hand over hand) to paint an animal shape, following with the eyes and feeling the difference between the rough sand and the soft paint. Both teachers and co-educators know the abilities and weaknesses of the pupils in the primary department very well and staff focus on pupils' particular needs and support good behaviour routines.

91. By Year 11, pupils work with care. They are beginning to develop an interest in the work of artists. Pupils explore line, shape and colour as part of a study of the work of Kandinsky, and use paint and paper to create abstract designs in a similar style. By using a Lazy Susan, they were able to recreate the vivid circular patterns of colour in the original. Pupils also paint African patterns, as part of a multi-cultural experience and use the internet to find examples of African Art. This approach enables pupils to increase their understanding and knowledge of colours used in African art and the patterns that are created. They are encouraged to make short verbal evaluations of their own and others' work and use these to make improvements. However, completed artwork is not sufficiently well annotated to inform others of the strengths displayed by the pupil, or what might be improved. Pupils with PMLD experience the sensation and texture of face paint on their hands and faces.
92. Throughout the school, well displayed artwork portrays many creative ideas. Art makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development, particularly their spiritual and cultural development.
93. In the short time the subject leader has been at the school she has prepared an outline of developments for the subject. There is good variety in the curriculum plan that introduces pupils to a range of media, including textiles. Art is linked well to work in other subjects. The designated room for art and design technology is unsuitable and art is generally taught in the classrooms.

CITIZENSHIP

Key strengths

- Very good support to pupils' personal, social and moral development

Areas for improvement

- A separate curriculum plan for Citizenship for secondary pupils

94. A limited number of lessons were seen during the inspection. However, analysis of curriculum documents and pupils' work, along with discussions with teachers, indicates that pupils make at least good progress. The subject combines elements of personal social and health education (PSHE). Teaching is of good quality.

95. Citizenship is taught well, mainly by class teachers to their own classes. Lessons follow a well planned curriculum that sets out a progressive range of topics for pupils aged five to 16 years. The topics are organised well, to cover areas of learning, including sex education and drugs education, that are relevant to specific age groups. A good range of citizenship topics are introduced to the curriculum for pupils aged 11 years and over. Some of these are taught through religious education, history and geography.
96. In the lessons seen, good opportunities are provided for pupils reach their own decisions about topics through discussion in small groups. For example, Year 10 pupils discuss the purpose and style of advertisements they find in newspapers, Year 9 pupils discuss animal rights, Year 6 pupils talk about what makes them and everyone else special, and Year 4 pupils decide who should do various jobs around the classroom.
97. Pupils, including those with PMLD and autism have good opportunities to develop personal, social and health education and citizenship skills in other settings than their formal lessons. Each pupil has individual personal development targets that are followed up throughout the school day, for example during registration periods, breaks and lunch time as well as in all lessons. The classroom staff have a good knowledge of these and relevant personal targets are also listed in areas such as the dining room, so that all staff can reinforce them with the pupils.
98. PSHE and citizenship understanding is also fostered every day by providing pupils with many opportunities to make positive contributions to their class community. They take time to greet each other at registration, and carry out helpful tasks like preparing beakers for snack times. They help each other to carry things and to move around the school. Personal and social skills are reinforced particularly well in circle time and during the period of reflection at the end of the day, where the rights and responsibilities of group membership are constantly reinforced. Both pupils and staff contribute to a positive, friendly and helpful ethos that encourages the development of good personal relationships and citizenship. This ethos is a major factor leading to the pupils' very good attitudes, values and personal development that are a strength of the school.
99. There is a need to clearly identify and plan for the different strands of Citizenship and PSHE, particularly for secondary age pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Key strengths

- Teaching is good
- There are very good links to mainstream
- Relationships between pupils and staff

Areas for improvement

- Accreditation by age 16
- Access for PMLD pupils

100. Pupils of all ages achieve well and make good progress in design and technology and food technology. This is a very good improvement from the previous inspection when the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory.

101. Teaching is good in design and technology. Teachers provide pupils in Year 2 with good opportunities to learn; for instance, when the more able pupils consider alternative ways to produce and control movement of levers. Teachers' records show less able pupils experiencing sensory areas as they taste and smell food from around the world. Staff provide pupils in Year 4 with a good range of resources when they are making sandwiches. Pupils are encouraged to make choices as they learn the skills to spread butter and fillings and try to cut accurately. By Year 6, pupils design and make a purse out of textiles and create boxes to hold a set number of sweets. In Year 7 pupils are using mitre saws accurately to produce a picture frame with a rebate. Teachers are very aware of pupils' abilities and less able pupils are given more support so that they are able to achieve success. Pupils in Year 9 make two part soap dishes from vacuum formed plastics. They work enthusiastically and take great care in handling the equipment as they learn the sequence to operate the process. Volunteers from an industrial link project provide further assistance in both of these lessons.
102. There are very good links with a local secondary school with pupils and staff from both schools working together. This has led to a number of projects including computer aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM). There is no accreditation for the subject by the end of Year 11 and greater opportunities could be provided to recognise pupils' achievements.
103. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They watch demonstrations attentively and behave well when taking part in lessons. Pupils behave responsibly when operating equipment, such as the vacuum former or mitre saws, in the technology room. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Co-educators are used well to support individual or groups of pupils, for example those with autism, and they help to adapt or provide different work so that all pupils are able to participate and experience success in the lesson.
104. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is now a good plan of what is to be taught. From this, planning for each half term is derived providing interesting and challenging activities to cover all aspects of the design and technology curriculum. Resources for design and technology are very good and there is a well equipped technology room which, although small, is used well by the teacher. The size of the room restricts access and opportunities for pupils with more profound needs.

HUMANITIES (History and Geography)

Key strengths

- Pupils find much to interest them in both subjects
- Teaching and learning are good
- Trips and fieldwork are used very effectively
- Good support is given to pupils' social and cultural development

Areas for improvement

- Reporting what pupils know understand and can do
- Encouraging independent writing skills

105. Achievement and progress are good in both geography and history. Pupils respond well to teaching which is particularly effective in the way it uses practical activities to enrich the curriculum and stimulate pupils' curiosity. Examples of this approach include visits to castles and Tudor buildings by pupils in Years 8 and 9.

Older pupils develop their ability to record information off site by, for example, looking at and comparing facilities in several local villages and completing a survey of litter on local beaches. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit each others' houses, developing their understanding of simple plans by looking at the rooms and their contents and on their trips in the locality. With the help of photographs they begin to add geographical features to a simple map. Pupils with autism learn the sequence of events in the school day through use of PECS.

106. Teaching is good and makes use of a variety of objects and resources to bring both subjects alive to pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, seal letters with wax in their study of the ways the postal services have changed. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 sample Greek food as part of their work on that country. In their lesson on the Romans, Year 11 pupils enjoy working out how to put on a toga and show good recall of various facts from the reading they have done on the subject. They know, for example, that the use of purple on togas denoted high social status.
107. By the end of Year 2, for example, most pupils have improved their understanding of then and now, and of the fact that different countries have different climates. By the end of Year 6, their understanding of the passage of time has further developed by using timelines and they appreciate the ways in which clothes have changed over the centuries. By the end of Year 9, pupils understand some of the differences between their way of life and that of children in an Indian village. By the end of Year 11, pupils use mapping skills to plan journeys. More able pupils understand key words such as epicentre and crust in their work on earthquakes. They are also making good use of the resources of information and communication technology in this topic. However, there is little evidence of the independent written work.
108. The planning of both subjects enables a good range of topics to be studied at an appropriate level, building on the knowledge and understanding acquired at each key stage. The assessment of progress in both subjects lacks detail of what pupils have actually achieved as opposed to what they have experienced. As a result, some of the assessments made underestimate what more able pupils can do. Standards in both subjects have improved since the last inspection, when they were satisfactory. The subject is well led and resources are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Key strengths

- Provision of computers and software is very good
- Technical support is available to teachers
- Teaching is good

Areas for improvement

- Use of ICT to support pupils with speech and sensory learning difficulties
- Accuracy of assessments on P-levels

109. Achievement and progress in information and communication technology is good. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.
110. All appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum are taught. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support the other subjects of the curriculum with pupils recording their work using digital cameras, accessing a range of internet sites and word processing their work as well as exploring

technology to control equipment and their environment. In English and mathematics there is scope for more extensive use, particularly for secondary age pupils.

111. The resources for information and communication technology are very good. Classrooms have a range of computers that are networked across the school. Pupils have good access to the Internet. Work is not restricted to computers but involves a range of equipment that features in pupils' everyday life such as microwave ovens, CD players and remote controlled toys. A technician ensures that computers are always available to support pupils' learning. He is also involved in supporting some of the teaching of information and communication technology. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to augment communication for those with speech or communication difficulties but there is still scope to use communication devices on a much wider range of occasions, for example, with PMLD pupils.
112. Lessons are well planned and based on half-termly projects with clear objectives. This help pupils to make progress and settle to their work because they know what they have to do and what they are learning about. Pupils make good progress in a Year 1 class when they use photographs and names to make choices. Pupils in Year 4 use control technology as they explore switches and understand how they cause an effect on a piece of equipment. Pupils successfully recall the switches they had identified the previous week and then apply the knowledge to the operation of a toaster. Pupils appropriately describe the browning control as a timer switch. Teachers and co-educators provide good prompts and reminders for pupils and encourage them to think further about the switches involved when the toast pops up. Very good use was made of both a remote controlled car and a toy vehicle fitted with sensors in a Year 7 lesson as the teacher used very good prompts to encourage the pupils to predict what was likely to happen to the vehicles as they moved. Work was well planned for the range of pupils in the class and was matched to their needs. In the Post- 16 Unit students receive very high quality support from the computer technician as well as teachers and co-educators to help them search the Internet for news of current events and other items of interest to them. For example, students use a website to locate information about their favourite football teams and pop groups.
113. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has developed a good plan of what pupils will learn throughout their time in the school. Some assessments made of pupils' levels of achievement using the P-Levels underestimate their abilities. There is no discrete room for information and communication technology but accommodation in classes is satisfactory for the work done. Resources are very good for the subject with enhancement of equipment through the Education Action Zone funding which also provides the funding for the technician.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Key strengths

- Good range of activities including a lunchtime club

Areas for improvement

- Written work

114. German is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9 and French to Years 10 and 11. Pupils say they enjoy these lessons and there is evidence that they cope very well with the change of language experience. Due to timetabling it was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection week. This was a good session for mostly Year 7 pupils as part of a lunchtime club. Lessons are taken by a visiting teacher from a local high school. This is made possible as part of the Education Action Zone funding and the close collaboration between the two schools. Pupils are in the very early stages of learning the languages but have clearly made some good progress particularly in their understanding of simple instructions in the short time they have been studying the subject.
115. There is a very limited amount of written work in the pupils' folders as the emphasis is, quite appropriately, on the development of oral skills in the limited time available for the subject. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement about pupils' achievements. Planning, however, shows a good range of activities, both for basic use of vocabulary in the two languages and learning about various aspects of daily life in France and Germany. Provision for the subject has clearly improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.

MUSIC

Key strengths

- Planning is good
- Good resources and instruments
- Visiting musicians

Areas for improvement

- Meeting the needs of individual pupils

116. A limited number of music lessons were seen during the inspection. The subject is taught satisfactorily and pupils make satisfactory progress.
117. The specialist music teacher uses good subject knowledge to provide an increasingly interesting range of activities that the pupils enjoy. For pupils up to Year 2, these involve listening to and singing familiar songs, joining in with the rhythm on tambourines and acting out simple stories from the songs. Older pupils by Year 9 gain more musical awareness, for example by learning about pitch and rhythm.
118. The lessons are based upon sound curriculum plans that the teacher is actively developing to include a wider range of activities. At the present time the activities available in lessons are largely pitched at the whole group and do not fully meet the individual learning needs of the pupils. Teaching is only satisfactory, rather than good as in other subjects, because the teacher does not have enough knowledge of the needs and abilities of pupils.
119. Music is seen as an important subject in the school, not only for its own sake, but also as a medium to help pupils to develop their other skills, particularly in communication and social interaction. Music is used well in conjunction with therapeutic and sensory activities for pupils with PMLD. Pupils aged below seven years, for example, are aided in their literacy and numeracy lessons by a range of jingles and counting rhymes. Teachers in primary classes satisfactorily use music to support themes for circle time and for the period of reflection at the end of the day.

120. Music lessons are supported by a satisfactory range of musical events and by professional musicians representing a diverse range of cultural and musical traditions, who visit the school. Pupils take part, for example, in carol singing at Norwich Cathedral, the school's Christmas production and they visit a local musical festival.
121. A good range of instruments and other resources are available; many provided by fund-raising activities that indicate the value placed on the subject by parents and friends of the school. The music room provides inadequate space for large groups or the use of instruments although lessons can often be taken in the adjacent school hall. Although tape recorders, CD players and keyboards are in regular use, pupils have little opportunity to explore musical composition using computer technology.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Key strengths

- A good range of physical activities are provided
- PE supports pupils personal, social and moral development

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation for PE is unsatisfactory

122. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well and make good progress in physical education. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection.
123. The school has adapted the physical education curriculum very effectively to meet pupils' special needs. These activities make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' self esteem and they way they are able to work together. At lunchtimes there are opportunities for pupils to learn football skills. Suitable opportunities are provided for some pupils to develop gymnastic techniques, including an after school gymnastics club. There are appropriate opportunities for athletics in the summer and pupils swim at all times of the year. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make.
124. Pupils participate well because they listen carefully to instructions and know what they have to do. This was very evident in a swimming lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 when the more able make very good efforts to improve their skills. For example, a number of pupils try hard to improve their stroke techniques while the others develop more confidence. Pupils in Year 8 work very well under the guidance of a swimming instructor when they visit a local swimming pool. In Year 9, pupils struggle to co-ordinate their actions to throw a plastic javelin, but they work with determination and effort to improve their throwing action. Because teachers have very good relationships with pupils they co-operate well and are successful. Teaching and learning are very well managed and pupils develop good social skills working in small groups or on their own with an adult. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 11 they work very well at a range of cricketing skills. Those that need more help are supported well by co-educators in a very well organised session. The behaviour of pupils with autism is managed well and they usually participate successfully. Pupils respond well to praise and encouragement and make good progress.

125. Leadership and management of the subject are good and the school makes very good use of limited school facilities, external facilities and qualified instructors. The leader of the subject provides advice and support for other teachers delivering the subject. There is a suitable curriculum for pupils based on the National Curriculum. Pupils with profound difficulties are offered 'brain gym'. Although this is appropriate for most of this group of pupils, some need the addition of more physical elements.
126. The accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory overall. The hall is too small for any purposeful work to be undertaken. This means that alternative sports hall provision has to be used. There is a good hydrotherapy/beginners pool but the pupils have to travel some distance to use a more suitable pool for those who are competent swimmers. Consequently a lot of time is wasted in travelling. There are useful school grounds and playing fields for games and athletics. Resources have been improved since the last inspection and are now very good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Key strengths

- Religious education (RE) is taught regularly to all pupils
- There are good artefacts for pupils with additional needs to use
- Pupils obviously enjoy their lessons
- The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in the school

Areas for improvement

- More able pupils produce little written evidence of what they have learned and there is insufficient well-annotated photographic evidence for less able pupils
- Lessons are sometimes too short

127. The curriculum for religious education (RE) is good overall with a good variety of learning experiences. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils achieve well. They usually make good progress in lessons, in line with the quality of teaching. The subject content is greatly enhanced by the wide use of visits outside the school. Advantage is also taken of the many opportunities to celebrate festivals in a range of religions and to study practices and customs within them.
128. By Year 6, pupils have assembled an RE folder. It is well presented, and contains a number of drawings and photographs of the various topics they have experienced. For example, younger pupils have learnt about friendship and are able to show by drawing posters that 'friends do not fight'. Older pupils have taken part in a Harvest Festival and compared it to the Jewish Sukkoth. They have heard some of the parables of Jesus, such as the Good Samaritan and the Good Shepherd and considered their meaning. Pupils work well together and enjoy the discussion at the end of the lesson, when they are given the opportunity to talk about what they have learnt or achieved in the lesson. For example, more able pupils can recall well several features of a church after their visit, whilst less able pupils talk about the bus ride. An autistic pupil uses PECS to communicate the activity. Teachers combine art and RE as the pupils join together in making a large representation depicting the story of Noah's Ark. Photographic evidence shows how the teacher has greatly enriched the experiences of the pupils on a range of visits to places of worship, though this is not sufficiently annotated to clearly indicate what individual pupils have gained from the experience.

129. By Year 11, pupils consider moral and ethical issues as well as deepening their understanding of the world's main religions. In Years 7 to 9 more able pupils remember the details and have some understanding of the meaning of the word sacrifice after listening to the story of Abraham and Isaac. Less able pupils choose different colours to match their feelings. The teacher successfully encourages them to participate in a good discussion. Their grasp of the concept of faith increases noticeably and the quality of pupils' contributions is good. The teacher planned and executed the lesson well, ensuring that all had an opportunity to participate in the debate and put their point of view. In another lesson pupils consider the Muslim reverence for the Qur'an and the several washings before prayer. More able pupils know that when Muslims pray they kneel on a carpet. Good pupil relationships enhance the quality of participation. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to check pupils' learning and to improve their listening and speaking skills. However, there is insufficient emphasis on a written record by more able pupils of what they have learnt. Pupils with autism achieve well because staff help them to participate.
130. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when pupils' progress in religious education was reported to be unsatisfactory across the school. Leadership and management are good. There is a good balance of activities, such as learning about different religions and thinking about issues of personal morality and human behaviour. There is an adequate range of artefacts of the main world religions to support the curriculum. The length of lessons varies throughout the school and not enough time is allotted to the subject. Pupils raise money to help charity and the subject makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in the school.

POST 16 PROVISION

Key strengths

- Students make good progress in their communication, numeracy and personal and social skills
- Students respond very well and mature into caring and responsible young people.
- A generally high standard of teaching and learning support enables students to develop relevant knowledge, understanding, and skills in preparation for life after school

Areas for improvement

- Increase the range of nationally recognised certificates
- Improve the variety of college link courses available to the students

131. Students make good progress and achieve well. The quality of the teaching is usually good and frequently it is very good. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
132. The Post-16 Unit provides a well balanced variety of learning opportunities. Students make good progress in the key skills of literacy, numeracy, personal and social skills and increased independence. The quality of teaching is good overall. Numeracy and computer skills are promoted well during mathematics and information communication technology lessons, as well as in other areas of the curriculum. The content of what is taught is very relevant. The organisation of the classroom and methods employed take full account of the range of learning needs of the students. English is taught very well.

133. Students' personal and social skills develop well and are reflected in the way they care for each other. During the morning break in lessons, one student offers to make a hot or cold drink for each member of the group, whilst any extra on a tray of cake or doughnuts is left until each has had their share. During this time also they display their ability to converse with friends, or find an activity to pass the time. They show tolerance and respect for each other and value the contribution that less able students make to the group. For example, they clap spontaneously when one student with more complex needs demonstrates that he is now able to operate a tape recorder. During most lessons, the personal and social skills of sharing, taking turns and working co-operatively are reinforced very well. Students organise a Christmas lunch and a Christmas concert for younger pupils, as well as enjoying their own outing to a local restaurant. Students have access to a wide variety of leisure pursuits and make good use of the local leisure centre. They join in the Great Yarmouth Youth Forum with other high school pupils, to discuss the facilities they would like to see in the area and meet the local Member of Parliament.
134. Opportunities for careers and vocational education and guidance are good. Students take part in work experience, for which they are prepared well. The careers service provides good support and match the placements well to students' interests and learning needs. Students successfully write a diary of their placement. In this way, careers education not only develops vocational skills, but also contributes well to the development of communication, literacy, personal and social skills. Students learn to be responsible in the work place as part of citizenship. At college, where they have sessions in drama and ceramics, and whilst on work experience placements, they enjoy good opportunities to learn what will be expected of them when they leave school. Students attend the annual review of their statement of special educational need and present their own views. Parental support at the reviews is good.
135. The Post-16 Unit leader has just taken up her post and has yet to make her mark. The Unit has been well led and managed by the deputy headteacher in the interim. Students say how much they enjoy lessons. The Post-16 curriculum is good. It is well matched to students' learning needs and prepares them successfully for leaving school. There is a good balance of academic study and the development of students' personal and social skills and independence. Accreditation through the Accreditation for Life and Living Skills (ALL) and National Skills Profile (NSP) has recently been introduced and further opportunities for students to undertake nationally recognised courses are being explored. Financial constraints on the school have limited the number of courses they are able to pay colleges to provide. This is limiting the range of opportunities such as link-courses that are available to students. Resources are satisfactory but accommodation is unsatisfactory for the number of students and for those with profound and multiple learning needs. There are no leisure or recreational facilities.