

INSPECTION REPORT

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103606

Headteacher: Mrs R. Adams

Lead inspector: Mrs F. Gander

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 258866

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:	11-19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	68
School address:	Fellows Lane Harborne Birmingham
Postcode:	B17 9TS
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P. Hogan
Date of previous inspection:	13 th March 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Baskerville School is a day and residential school, for 70 boys and girls aged 11 to 19 years with autistic spectrum disorders. The school serves the whole of Birmingham. The number of pupils and students admitted has risen sharply in the last two years, and many are the result of parental appeals at tribunals. The attainment levels of pupils and students are very wide, with some attaining levels expected for pupils of similar ages. However, the majority have multiple or severe learning difficulties, communication difficulties, and/or challenging behaviour. Some pupils who have come to the school recently have been out of school for a while, and have been school refusers with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has developed provision to cater with this wide range of ability or difficulties. It provides a 'Transition' group for a small number of pupils who are in danger of being excluded because of their unsafe behaviour. There are also 'satellite' bases in a local secondary school and in the local college. These are for those who make sufficient progress to be re-integrated with support. There is a Post 16 provision in a separate building within the grounds.

Thirty three per cent of pupils are from ethnic-minority home backgrounds, with ten per cent of the total number of pupils and students having English as an additional language. Twenty five pupils or students are weekly boarders. The school is involved in a wide range of initiatives: Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Education Action Zone, Excellence in Cities, and Young Enterprise. It has a Schools' Achievement Award for 2003.

The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) November 2001, following a period of the school being in special measures.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21265	Mrs F. Gander	Lead inspector	Science, design and technology, physical education, PSHE and citizenship.
9511	Mrs A. Longfield	Lay inspector	
16198	Mrs C. Etherington	Team inspector	English, music, French, special educational needs.
27429	Mrs M Smith	Team inspector	Information and Communication Technology, art and design, religious education.
21061	Mr M. Whitehead	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography, Post 16.
27718	Ms S. Abrol	Team inspector	English as an additional language.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school. The excellent vision by the headteacher has ensured that the school provides all pupils and students with access to a very relevant mainstream curriculum. It enables pupils to achieve a range of accreditation and prepares them for their future life within the community. Specialist subject teachers have been recruited who also have developed the ability to teach to pupils and students with a wide range of attainment levels and difficulties. This has been particularly difficult, especially as the number of pupils has increased significantly over the last two years. The school very successfully promotes and supports the inclusion and re-integration of pupils and students into mainstream establishments. There is a high level of care, support, and management of challenging behaviour, which ensures all pupils have the maximum opportunities to make progress. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- It ensures that pupils achieve very well, both academically, and in personal development and communication.
- It provides a very relevant curriculum that prepares pupils and students of different levels of attainment for their next stage of education or training.
- It ensures that the pupils and students are taught well, and in some subjects very well taught by specialist subject teachers.
- It has excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and as a result there is a very clear vision for the school.
- That the senior management team manages the school very effectively which has resulted in a very much improved school.
- Pupils have very good access to advice and support – based on very good monitoring of behaviour, changing circumstances, and detailed knowledge of their difficulties.
- The school's grounds are not secure.
- The roles and responsibilities of some support staff, especially for those with dual roles, are not sufficiently understood by some combined post holders.

All key issues identified at the time of the last inspection in 2001 have been addressed. In addition, with the growth of the school many more improvements have been carried out, and overall improvement is very good. The greatest improvement has been in ensuring that teachers have the skills and expertise to teach pupils with significant communication difficulties and challenging behaviour. Very good improvements have been made to the accommodation with the provision of specialist teaching rooms, which provides a well-organised learning environment, especially for students at Post 16. The establishment of 'Satellite' bases in other establishments is promoting inclusion very well. The curriculum has continued to develop to meet the needs of all pupils and students and, as a result, an increased number of them received externally accredited awards this year. The outstanding issue from the inspection in the year 2000 concerning the safety of the school grounds still remains unresolved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, in relation to their different attainment levels and their prior learning, pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Post 16 achieve very well. They make very good progress against the targets set in their Individual Education Plans (IEPS). Pupils and students who have English as an additional language also achieve well. There are no differences between the achievements of pupils of different gender, or between the day and residential pupils.

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 9	Good	Very good
Year 11	Good	Very good
Year 13	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Teaching is good overall, and there are examples of very good teaching in most subjects. Teaching is very good at Post 16. There is a little unsatisfactory teaching and learning because the communication and the activities are too complicated for pupils. The curriculum is very good and meets all statutory requirements. It has been excellently designed to meet the very wide range of needs of the pupils and students, and their additional needs related to autism. It is enriched with a very good range of opportunities. The amount of accommodation is satisfactory. The school provides very good care, support, advice, and guidance, but the safety of the site remains a concern.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides an excellent vision for the improvement and development of the educational provision. The management by the senior management team is very good. The governors carry out their commitments and statutory responsibilities well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has established good links with parents and very good links with the wider community. There are very good links with the other schools and colleges in the area. The majority of parents stated that their children liked coming to school, that they felt supported and helped by staff to overcome their difficulties.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are to address:

- The safety issues surrounding the entrance to the school.
- The effects of long-term absence on the development of physical education.
- The unsatisfactory teaching in parts of design and technology.
- The understanding by support staff, especially those who work in both education and the care settings, of the roles and responsibilities of all staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, in relation to their different attainment levels and their prior learning, pupils and students by the time they leave school at the end of Post 16 achieve very well. They make very good progress against the targets set in their Individual Education Plans (IEPS). Pupils and students who have English as an additional language also achieve well. There are no differences between the achievements of pupils or students of different gender, ethnic background, or between the day and residential pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' make considerable gains in their communication, personal development, and in overcoming their difficulties caused by autism, and there are no differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils.
- By the time students leave the school at the end of Post 16 they have made very good progress
- Pupils and students who attend mainstream schools and colleges achieve very well and become fully included members of those establishments.
- Pupils achieve very well in information, communication and technology (ICT), Religious education (RE), art and design, and in food technology.
- Pupils' achievements in design and technology are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection, many improvements have been made to the overall quality of educational provision and this has had a significant impact on the achievements of pupils and students, and the progress they make over time. Improvements have been firmly based on the management's monitoring and evaluation of how well the school is doing, and the tracking of pupils' and students' progress. A very good curriculum has been put in place, which is supported by a wide range of accreditation that caters for all abilities. Due to this, and the fact that it is taught by subject specialists, pupils achieve very well, and make very good progress by the time they leave school. This is evident in the increased number of external awards present over the last two years to pupils and students. By the time they leave the school, all students have been on college link courses or are studying at college full time and all have taken part in either sheltered or independent work experience. For some of these students, who came to the school having to be coaxed out of their homes, this represents tremendous progress. There are no differences in the achievements of pupils and students for whom English is an additional language (EAL). This is because the provision within the school ensures that the confidence, self-esteem and achievement of these pupils and students equals that of the other students within the school community.

Example of outstanding practice

Pupils and students who make significant progress in overcoming their difficulties associated with autism are re-integrated into mainstream school and colleges.

The vision of the management has been for pupils and students to be educated with and alongside their peers at mainstream establishments. In order to achieve this the school has established Satellite bases at a local secondary school and at the local college of further education. The bases are staffed, and managed, by staff from Baskerville School, and in the secondary school, there is a very positive ethos about inclusion, with the base manager being included in senior management meetings. A room has been provided as a 'keeping-in-touch base' for the pupils where they can come for support, guidance and are encouraged to bring a friend at lunch time. Parents of the pupils involved have helped considerably in the resourcing of this room. Pupils have made considerable progress in a short time, and all are fully included in all aspects of the school and the lessons provided. Some pupils have been identified as high attaining pupils and placed in the higher sets. Pupils felt that their difficulties and anxieties were understood and that they now had a 'safety net' provided by the base and the staff in it. All pupils and students were extremely positive about their new inclusive situation.

2. All pupils have equal opportunities to achieve and this is enabled by the amount of support and guidance provided by staff, and counselling to pupils and students to help them overcome their reluctance to work in groups, engage in lessons and, more significantly, to overcome their communication difficulties. The management has focussed on ensuring that staff have a good level of expertise and are able to help pupils understand what is required of them, through the use of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to reinforce key vocabulary and to support their reading and writing. Pupils and students make good progress in developing their communication skills because the signing and symbols are used systematically to ensure that pupils know what is required of them. Speech and language therapists and communications consultants are used well to devise language programmes for pupils and students so that they are able to improve their access to all subjects of the curriculum.

3. The quality of the IEPs, and the targets set within them, has been the focus of whole school improvement, and these are now consistent across the school. The targets are specific to individual pupils' and students' needs, and are set at levels that are based on assessment. The frequent reviewing of these targets, and the tracking of the level they are attaining in terms of National Curriculum levels or nationally recognised performance (p) levels, provides the school with good information on the progress each pupil is making. This enables the school to ensure that students are entered for the most appropriate external accreditation, or establish how ready they are for re-integration into mainstream.

4. The overall achievement of pupils and students in lessons is good, and closely linked to the quality of teaching and learning. In those lessons, where teachers are more experienced in teaching and managing pupils with communication difficulties and challenging behaviour the quality of teaching and learning is very good or excellent. In these lessons pupils and students were making identifiable gains and progress. Pupils in years 7 to 11 consistently make very good progress in ICT, RE, art and design, and in food technology, and make good progress in English, science, mathematics, geography, PSHE, and French. However, for some pupils achievements in design and technology are not as high as they should be for because the explanations used are too complicated. In physical education, the disruption caused to learning and development of the subject because of staff absence has had an impact on the overall achievements and progress in some areas of the subject.

5. Overall, there has been very good improvement since the last inspection. With the introduction of an appropriate accredited course, students now have opportunities to make good progress and further build on this when they transfer to their further education placements.

Pupils' attitudes, values, and other personal qualities

6. Pupils have very good attitudes to work, behave very well in lessons, and become progressively more mature as during Post 16. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils and students' attitudes to school are very good.
- The expectations of pupils are high and as a result behaviour is very good.
- There are excellent opportunities and support given to pupils to enable them to take their place in the community as best they can.
- The promotion of self-knowledge and spiritual awareness is very good.
- The school promotes moral development very well.

Commentary

7. The emphasis in this school is to enable pupils to access the curriculum in spite of the difficulties associated with their particular disorder. This is achieved through a constant re-focusing of attention on the task in hand, in every lesson, and for those who are boarders, through the support and experiences they receive in the residential provision. As a result, pupils succeed, develop a desire to learn, and a belief in their own abilities. The school makes very effective, special provision, for those pupils who, for a variety of reasons, cannot function within the main school. These pupils may have been out of education for some time, have caused injuries to themselves or others, or damage to property. In the 'Transition' group, the methods used enable pupils to learn to deal with their difficulties, modify their behaviour, and gradually re-integrate with the rest of the school. This provision is a very valuable resource in which skilled and knowledgeable staff enable pupils to achieve beyond all expectations.

8. Staff have high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and attitude to work. Pupils are aware of their targets, which are reviewed at the beginning and end of every lesson. Self-evaluation is promoted, and pupils are motivated not only by praise, but by a sense of achievement. By the time pupils move into Post 16 education, many are self-motivated. Pupils enjoy taking part in after school activities such as trampolining, cooking, and computer games. Behaviour in lessons, and around school, is very good because of the very consistent and effective behaviour management. Staff deals with ritualistic behaviour, or sudden outbursts, in lessons, patiently and efficiently, so that learning continues with minimum loss of time. Teamwork is very good. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions, with good communication, aided by the use of signing and symbols when required, and pupils behave very well. The students enjoy coming to school and attendance is well above the national average for similar schools. The school has an effective system to monitor absences and promotes the importance of regular attendance well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.44	School data	0

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

9. Incidents, which arise mainly from behaviour associated with the pupil's disorder, are properly recorded, and analysed according to age, ability, and the nature of the offence. Patterns are noted, and individual pupils monitored when incidents are becoming more frequent. The number of pupils on roll has increased substantially during the past few years, but the number of recorded incidents has not increased in proportion to the pupil numbers, indicating a good improvement in behaviour management. There have been four fixed term exclusions during the past year, all for violent behaviour, and all followed by appropriate action and parental involvement. The school's anti-discrimination policy and practice ensure that no student is discriminated against on the grounds of age, gender, ability social background, and faith or ethnic group.

*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	43	1	1
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	3	3
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	11	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

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

10. Some parents expressed concern about bullying. However, although pupils do sometimes cause injury to each other, this is usually due to their autistic spectrum disorder, rather than systematic oppression. The school policy, which is to provide support for the victim, while ensuring that the perpetrator understands that such behaviour is not acceptable, is both practical and effective. During the inspection there was no evidence of pupils being afraid of their peers. In fact, several instances of caring and understanding were observed, together with an impressive level of acceptance of odd behaviours. Working in pairs and small groups is promoted very well, and effectively in most lessons.

11. Religious education lessons play a significant role in the development of spiritual awareness as pupils learn about the beliefs and traditions of a range of faiths. Through a sensory approach to the subject, and participation in role-play, pupils learn to respect what is special to others. The daily assembly provides opportunities for further learning, for sharing of prayer and reflection, for understanding of their role in the creation of peace and harmony. The rich diversity in the staff provides a good source of role models for pupils, and displays around school promote awareness of the contribution made by leaders from many ethnic groups. Religious festivals, and customs are celebrated, and the making of Divali lamps in art, was accompanied by discussion on the way these are used in the Hindu tradition. The very good relationships, and mutual respect observed during the inspection, makes an important contribution to the building of pupils' self-esteem.

12. Pupils have a strong awareness of right from wrong, even if their particular difficulties sometimes prevent them from acting on this knowledge. They are presented with consistent role models by all staff, who make every effort to improve the understanding that their actions affect others, and can hurt, or please them. In the special unit, pupils are encouraged to express their reactions to given situations. Adults in the group express their reactions, providing, in a non-confrontational situation, alternative ways to respond. This leading by example is very effective throughout the school.

13. Pupils are encouraged to understand their own difficulties, and the needs of others. This has resulted in a high level of acceptance and tolerance between pupils, of the unusual behaviour patterns symptomatic of their particular syndromes. The school has been exceptionally successful in promoting collaborative working, at a level unusual in schools of this type. Pupils work together well, in pairs, small groups, and whole class groups. They make such good progress that some pupils are able to integrate successfully in a mainstream school, and are so prepared for college and work experience later. Pupils who have been unsuccessful, both in mainstream and special education, learn, in the special unit, to deal with their problems, and begin to re-integrate into the main school.

14. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their work and equipment, and undertake simple tasks in the classroom and in the school. They learn to be independent, collecting their meals at lunch-time and clearing away after themselves. Residential trips take place each year for pupils in each stage of education, as well as other out of school activities such as bowling, going to the cinema, learning circus skills, and taking part in water sports, and help pupils build confidence and relationships. There is an elected school council, which gives pupils the opportunity to express their views.

15. Pupils learn about their own culture and the customs and traditions of other cultures, through art, music, English, and religious education. The teachers of art and religious education work closely together to give pupils a better understanding of festivals and celebrations. Library books and displays provide information on places of worship, and on customs and traditions. Opportunities are taken, in lessons, and in assemblies, to allow pupils and staff to share, with the rest of the group, their own ways of praying and reflecting. Though pupils are well-informed about a wide variety of cultures, they are less aware of the implications of living in a multi-cultural society.

16. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, and personal development show very good improvement since the previous inspection because of schools' emphasis on developing relationships, consistent behaviour management, and the improved links with the residential provision.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

17. The overall educational provision of the school is very good. The school provides a very broad and relevant curriculum, which prepares them very well for the future or re-integration into mainstream education. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and there are examples of very good or excellent teaching in all subjects. It is very good at Post 16 and in the 'transition group'. The level of care, welfare, and support provided is very good. There are good links with the majority of parents, and very good links with other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

18. Teaching and learning is good overall, and there are examples of very good or excellent teaching that results in pupils achieving very well. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of teachers are subject specialists and have a high level of subject expertise and expectations.
- All teachers have received very good training so that they have a high level of expertise in teaching pupils and students with autism, a wide range of learning needs, and /or challenging behaviour.
- There is significant variation in the quality of teaching and learning between the different aspects of design and technology.
- The teaching and learning over time in history and physical education has been affected by long staff absence, and in music by the difficulty in finding teachers with expertise. With the appointment of new staff it is now satisfactory.

Commentary

19. Overall, there was good or better teaching in over three quarters of the lessons seen during the week of the inspection, and this enables pupils and students to achieve well. It was very good or better in about almost a half of lessons seen. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in the quality of the teaching and learning in the classes for years 7 to 9, where there was a weaknesses previously. There are examples of very good teaching in all subjects, and consistently at Post 16 and in the 'transition' group. The governors and the headteacher have recruited teachers who are specialist teachers and therefore they have a high level of subject expertise. The philosophy of the school has been very much about subject knowledge as a priority,

and then providing specific training for teaching pupils with a range of needs associated with autism. This enables them to teach the subject well by planning different methods and strategies so that pupils learn and achieve well. This has developed over the last two years and obviously teachers who have been in the school the longest are more experienced and have a higher level of expertise. A few teachers are new to the school are still acquiring the skills of communication and behaviour management but are well supported and monitored by senior staff. The expansion of the school population and the continual recruitment of staff to cope with this increase has posed considerable strains on the school in terms of ensuring consistency and high quality. This it has achieved very well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (6%)	21 (43 %)	15 (32 %)	6 (13 %)	3 (6 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

20. During the week of the inspection there was a variation in the quality of teaching and learning within design and technology. In food technology, the teaching is consistently of a very high standard with work meticulously planned for individual pupils. Activities, interaction of pupils in tasks, communication, and ways of recording their learning are all planned and carried out at an individual level. This enables all pupils to achieve very well in relation to their difficulties and their prior learning. Support staff are part of the integral team and are extremely well briefed as to their role and what they need to ensure that pupils learn in the lesson. In the aspect of design and technology in which pupils work with resistant materials, the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. This is because the level of language used in the lessons is too complicated for the majority of pupils to understand, and therefore they do not realise what is expected of them. As a result, some pupils, because of their autistic difficulties, react badly to these situations and their behaviour deteriorates. In addition, the planning of the lessons does not indicate what will be expected of pupils of different attainment levels, and therefore some pupils are presented with tasks which are far too difficult and some are not challenged enough.

21. Where teaching is very good, there are very high expectations of both achievement and behaviour, and teachers have developed a consistent approach to managing the challenging behaviour of some pupils. Teachers work closely with learning support assistants, and organisation of each lesson is very clearly thought through well in advance. Where two teachers work together, sharing a subject, such as in science, there is shared planning and good team work. Learning support assistants work well with teachers in managing the challenging behaviour of pupils, and are fully conversant with the agreed methods of diverting the behaviour. However, there are too few small areas where pupils can withdraw to in order to calm down, and in some lessons the sensory room was used for this purpose which is inappropriate as it gives the wrong messages about the room to pupils.

22. The school has two subject areas where long-term absence has affected the overall quality of learning. The school last year had to use supply teachers for teaching history and physical education. In addition the school has had a difficulty in recruiting a suitable qualified and experienced teacher for music. Not all the teachers were experienced in teaching pupils with autism and there is evidence in some of the pupils' work of it being at too difficult a level. In some subjects, such as physical education the school has had to rely on the use of qualified coaches from outside education to teach the pupils. This is presently continuing and although they have had very little experience of working with pupils with communication difficulties, they are being supported by the senior staff and showing improvement. Learning in music and history is improving as well, due to the appointment of history and music specialist teachers. Teaching and learning in these subjects, and in physical education, during the week of the inspection was overall satisfactory.

23. This aspect of the school's provision has improved since the last inspection as there are greater examples of very good and excellent teaching.

The curriculum

24. The curriculum is very good overall and meets all statutory requirements. It has been excellently designed to meet the very wide range of needs of the pupils and students, to address any additional needs related to their autism, and to equip them for the future or for re-integration to mainstream education. It is enriched with a very good range of opportunities. The accommodation for the curriculum is satisfactory overall, and the amount of resources is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The structure and rationale for the school curriculum is excellent and provides a comparable mainstream curriculum.
- Curriculum developments in history, music, and physical education lag behind the other subjects because of staff absence.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with additional needs.
- The curriculum for students at Post 16 is very good and prepares them well for the future.
- Wider curriculum opportunities offered to pupils and students are very good.
- Some classrooms are cramped and lack storage space.

25. The headteacher and the heads of each Key Stage have worked exceptionally hard to improve the structure and quality of the curriculum since the last inspection, so that it provides an age appropriate curriculum and one that is comparable to mainstream. This allows pupils and students to, and prepares, them very well for transfer into the 'Satellite' bases in the mainstream school and college. The curriculum is very well modified so that it can be taught at the appropriate level to pupils with different attainment levels, and provides them with a wide range of externally accredited awards when they leave school.

26. Subject co-ordinators have been responsible for the development and improvement of each subject over the last three years, and they have achieved a great deal in this short time. Medium term planning is consistent across the school, and is sufficiently detailed to show overall learning objectives, and different outcomes for pupils of different attainment levels. However, a few subjects, such as history, music, and physical education have suffered from a lack of leadership because of the long term absence of the co-ordinators. The management has put into place an interim or alternative curriculum for these subjects. This has now been resolved in history and music by the appointment of qualified and experienced teachers who can develop the subject in the coming year. Physical education is proving a little more difficult. While aspects of the subject, such as swimming or dance, can be taught by instructors or other teachers, the subject content remains underdeveloped.

27. All staff share the ethos of the school and there is a common commitment to pupils gaining a high quality education in the full range of national curriculum subjects. Staff have high expectations for what pupils will achieve, including the development of interpersonal skills, which pupils with autism often find very difficult. All pupils have very effective individual education plans (IEPs) that help them to break down barriers to learning caused by their autism, for example, the inability to concentrate for very long in group situations. Priority needs form the basis for a highly effective and very relevant IEP system. The targets set in IEPs are very relevant to pupils' differing learning needs, and are based on previously achieved targets. Pupils with related challenging behaviours have consistently applied behaviour management plans, and there is a range of appropriate therapies available to pupils. Speech and language therapists and communications consultants work well with teaching and support staff to ensure that pupils improve their ability to communicate with adults, with their peers and at home with family and friends.

28. The wide range of educational experiences, including links with other schools and colleges, has been established to provide enrichment to the school's curriculum. Pupils and students are selected on an individual or group basis for these opportunities and they provide very good opportunities for pupils and students to interact with young people outside the school community. This for many pupils or students has

been difficult in the past, and many who are now being educated full time, with the support of staff from Baskerville School, have previously refused to take part in any education. These links have been developed in the last year through the vision and determination of the headteacher and governors. Staff interviewed in the mainstream school and college showed strong commitment for further developing these links. Through links with the Schools Business Partnership, the pupils and students have taken part in work related workshops, mini-enterprise initiatives, and linked with the neighbouring College for Visually Impaired Students. Pupils and students who are residential at the school have a wide range of after school activities that support the school curriculum and provide very good opportunities, such as attending a Youth Club at the local high school, to support personal development and communication. Day pupils have not been neglected in this area as the school has introduced after school clubs for day pupils to attend.

29. The leadership's vision for the education of students at Post 16 has been achieved, and the school now offers a separate and very effective overall provision. The curriculum that has been put in place, now meets the needs of all of the students who are in the Post 16 phase. It continues to build on the key skills of communication, numeracy, literacy, and ICT, as well as a range of other accredited courses that help students to become more independent, or continue with at college after leaving school, such as catering or horticulture. Some students, after negotiation with staff and putting forward sensible well thought out reasons, have opportunities to shape their own timetables, and follow a mixture of GCSE courses and Certificates of Achievement courses.

30. With excellent leadership by the headteacher the school has made very good improvements to the accommodation since the last inspection. All classrooms have been enlarged, redecorated, reorganised, and some have been refurbished to provide specialist teaching areas, such as for art and design, design and technology, science and food technology. These all have a very 'secondary phase' feeling to them. However, some of the classrooms that are used for tutor groups and for teaching subjects, such as English and mathematics are too small, and many of the specialist rooms lack storage space, such as in the science room. This has been exacerbated recently; by the number of pupils who have been placed in the school, and has resulted in the school population has expanded more quickly than the accommodation.

31. The improvement in curriculum provision since the last inspection has been excellent, especially in preparing the pupils for inclusive educational links, and gaining a range of accreditation.

Care, guidance and support

32. The school provides good care for the pupils and students. They are provided with very good support, advice, and guidance support but the issue raised at the last inspection about the danger of school entrance remains, and therefore safety is only satisfactory. The provision the school makes to seek, value and act on pupils' views is good. Planning for transition to Post-16 education, and beyond, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good procedures in place for child protection and for promoting the pupils' well-being, and health.
- The staff knowledge of the pupils ensures that every pupil and student is encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability.
- The provision of a 'Transition' group is proving successful.
- Pupils' and students' views are sought in both the residential and educational settings, and acted on.
- The fencing around the school grounds is not sufficiently substantial to prevent pupils leaving the grounds or intruders from entry.
- The entrance to the school grounds is not poorly sited and is not secure.
- The arrangements for the induction of new pupils are good but the initial assessment needs to happen earlier.

Commentary

33. The school has a suitable policy for child protection and all the staff are aware of their responsibilities. The school is diligent in its monitoring and there are very good health and risk assessment procedures in place, both in the main building and the residential unit. Fire drills are carried out regularly. The staff are conscientious in their supervision of the pupils and students in their care, and have put in place very good arrangements for administering medication, first aid and dealing with accidents or sickness.

34. The class tutors, learning support assistants, and residential care workers monitor students' personal development very carefully, and there are good systems in place to ensure all the staff have a detailed knowledge of the students and understand the best way to help them achieve their potential. Pupils and students are confident that any member of staff will listen to them and, as they become more confident, a sense of trust develops. The school pays particular attention to pupils' or students' complaints, which it takes seriously and records them as outcomes in the Complaint's Log. Before the admission of a pupil or a student to the school, visits are arranged which helps to make a smooth transition into the school. However, as the school receives assessment information of variable quality from the feeder schools, it conducts its own assessments so that it can set targets for learning and personal development. These take place after the pupil has been in the school for six weeks, and for some pupils and students this is too long, as they need to have targets set earlier so progress can be tracked and evaluated.

35. There is a good ethos of care, order, and structure, which is emphasised in the school's expectations. The school, both formally and informally seeks the views of pupils' and students'. This is done very well through school council meetings, 'Circle Time', tutorial time, and through personal and social education and citizenship lessons. The school uses the family meetings for residential pupils and students as good opportunities to discuss out-of-school activities. The recent introduction of a 'Transition' group, where pupils who are at risk of being excluded due to extreme behaviour and emotional instability, is very good. This is a short term provision for pupils, which is staffed by a high number of staff in relation to the number of pupils, and helps them to manage their extreme behaviour which at times puts themselves and others in danger. This has been the management's response to the increasing number of pupils being admitted into the school who have been excluded from other schools or been school refusers and cannot be managed within the main school. This provision is proving to be very successful, as a number of pupils have already shown good progress and have been re-integrated into the class groups, and take part in activities within the school.

36. The school ensures that pupils and students are safe, secure, and protected but are finding it increasingly more difficult to ensure that pupils and students are unable to abscond from the school grounds. This is because the school entrance is not secure and, during the week of the inspection, visitors to the school left the gate open. This entrance opens onto a busy road into which pupils have access. In addition, this entrance is also used as an exit to the school, and despite there being extensive grounds, there is a very small vehicle car park and access area. This causes difficulties and congestion when mini-buses are bringing and collecting the pupils. This was highlighted as an issue in the previous inspections and has become more urgent as the numbers of pupils have increased and with it the amount of transport bringing them to school.

The recent Care Commission report also highlighted the school's concern about the dangerous entry for traffic into school grounds; as well as the poor repair of the paths and the lack of secure fencing which limits the amount of use that can be made of the school grounds.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

37. The school has established good links with parents and very good links with the wider community. There are very good links with the other schools and colleges in the area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are encouraged to play a full part in their child's life at the school.
- The local community is actively involved with the school
- There are very good links with the other schools and colleges in the area

Commentary

38. Parents are kept well informed of all school affairs through the half term newsletters and subsequent correspondence. In some cases videos are taken to show parents how their child is progressing at school; the head teacher and other staff will telephone parents at any time to allay any worries they make have about their child whilst at the school, either as a day student or in the residential unit. The pupils' annual progress reports provide parents with detailed information regarding what their children know, understand and can do in both academic and social skills. The Home Liaison staff aim to work in partnership with the parents with a home visit at the end of the year to discuss their child's progress and to give them a comprehensive version of school life.

39. Parents support the school through their involvement with the Parents Partnership Group and appreciate the opportunities to meet other parents at the workshops for family literacy and communication skills like Makaton. The school works closely with the local community and has established good sympathetic links with the local police and fire brigade. The students are introduced to the police dogs and see the fire brigade wearing breathing apparatus, so that they are not subject to more distress in an emergency. Students visit the local church for religious festivals

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

40. The headteacher provides an **excellent** vision for the improvement and development of the educational provision. The management by the senior management team is very good. The governors carry out their commitments and statutory responsibilities very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher has provided a clear vision for the school.
- The senior management team is very effective and has ensured that the school has improved.
- The governors work very well with the headteacher in shaping the direction of the school.
- The school's arrangements for self review are very good.

Commentary

41. The school has gone through a period of rapid change since the last inspection, when it was removed from special measures. It has continued to develop and grow in strength and purpose. Governors work very closely with the headteacher and together they make sure that everyone has a very clear understanding of the strengths within the school, and also of weaknesses or other areas for development. The governing body plays a very active part in shaping the direction of the school and works closely with the headteacher. Governors work effectively in ensuring that the work of the school and the policies that it produces fully promote educational inclusion. This is borne out by the very close links that there are between the school and Bournville College, and the very effective work that is being done in the Four Dwellings Secondary School.

Every effort is being made to ensure that pupils and students from Baskerville school are able to take a full part in college life or mainstream secondary schooling, when it is appropriate to their needs.

42. Governors have responded well to the last inspection. There is a very wide range of expertise amongst the members of the governing body, including business management, education, and personnel management. They take a keen interest in the school and are particularly well informed about the curriculum and the developments that have taken place. The governing body invites members of the teaching staff and senior management within the school to attend governors' meetings and talk about their work and responsibilities. Governors give their unreserved support for the decisions being made by the headteacher, work effectively with the headteacher in setting whole school targets, and formulating the school improvement plans. Although there is no governor who has professional expertise and knowledge of financial matters, this is more than adequately compensated by the work and acumen of the school's business manager. Systems within the school for administering finance are very secure.

43. The headteacher is a visionary. She works with absolute focus, commitment, and drive for the well-being of the school. She is very effective in managing the staff of the school and helping them to work together with a common purpose and common goals. The headteacher has created a very effective senior management team comprising of education and car staff. The role of each manager is carefully defined, and he or she is given the freedom to fulfil such a role. However, there is at present no substantive co-ordinator for history, or in physical education. This has had a negative impact upon the progress and the interest shown by the pupils. Unfortunately, there is anxiety among staff concerning the frequent absence of some support staff, which is starting to have a negative impact on the morale of staff in all parts of the school. In addition there is confusion by some staff about the roles and responsibilities of support staff who have dual roles as learning support assistants/ residential care workers. Although, it is clearly stated in the contracts and job descriptions, the school needs to identify and clarify roles in the classroom. The governors and senior management team are fully aware of this area.

44. Early this term, the headteacher organised a special meeting attended by all staff holding management responsibilities, both in the school and in the residential provision. This was organised to reinforce and develop the vision for the school. The agenda was very clearly planned and gave everyone the opportunity to discuss their own vision, the school's vision, and how these might be achieved. A major strength of this meeting was the reality, which permeated discussions concerning ideals and driving forces, and the obstacles and fears that needed to be overcome. This meeting was extremely effective in cementing the relationships between the management staff and reinforcing their commitment to work together as a team and share the vision for the school. From this meeting came objectives for action, along with designated persons, and time targets. It is clear that this meeting has had a profound impact on the staff of the school. It has reinforced their commitment, strengthened their resolve and empowered them as they work for the benefit of all pupils. All members of the senior management team speak very highly of the headteacher, and the strength and vision of her leadership.

45. A great deal of effort is spent within the school on self-review. Staff are constantly questioning their own motives and discussing with each other, the principles on which they build their planning, their teaching, and their aspirations. The headteacher has bought-in independent assessment and inspection, in order to identify, without bias, the strengths within the school and the areas which still need to be developed. This has proven to be very effective. The staff are very busy being monitored, appraised, inspected and reviewed, but they are, with one voice, very positive about the work that they are doing, and the positions that they hold. This is a very good reflection of the professionalism that pervades throughout the school.

46. Each curriculum area manages its own plans and has to plan its spending carefully; this has had a very positive impact on planning throughout the school. Materials and equipment cannot be purchased unless the need for them can be clearly identified in the subject and development planning. The business manager attends all the finance and personnel committee meetings. She prepares a narrative financial report, as well as a statistical presentation, in order to ensure that all members of all committees have a clear understanding concerning all finances and dealings. This has proven to be very effective and has had a very positive impact on the governors' ability to make critical comments as well as informed judgements concerning the school's finances. Through the secure management strategies and through the vision and drive of the headteacher and

governing body, the school continues to grow and has now reached the stage when it is functioning, not only effectively, but also efficiently. The school is now becoming financially viable.

47. Taking account of the high quality of education, the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the strong management of the governing body and senior management team and the cost per pupil, the school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1507378
Total expenditure	1524610
Expenditure per pupil	22420

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	82455
Balance carried forward to the next	35425

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

48. Provision for English is **good**. Pupils' literacy and communication skills are effectively promoted and used across most other subjects of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good overall.
- There is consistent use of signing and increasing use of other augmentative communication systems support pupils' learning, although some newly appointed and part-time staff need more training.
- The teaching of English is good overall, and the inclusion of relevant elements of the national literacy strategy is having a positive impact on the quality of learning
- The curriculum for English is good, particularly for developing pupils' communication skills and their writing.
- The schemes of work for the teaching of reading require further development.
- Some teachers still do not always review pupils' progress effectively at the ends of lessons or identify the next steps in learning.

Commentary

49. In the focus on this subject, five lessons were observed, including all of the main class groups for pupils aged 11 to 16. Pupils have a wide range of ability when they join the school but evidence shows that pupils of all abilities have good achievement in English. They make good progress in developing their communication skills because signing and symbols are used systematically to ensure that pupils know what is required of them, to reinforce key vocabulary and to support their reading and writing. Where the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is used to structure less able pupils' learning activities, many are starting to make very good progress. Programmes devised in conjunction with speech and language therapists and communications consultants are used to develop pupils' use of language so that they are better able to relate to adults and peers and to improve their access to all subjects of the curriculum.

50. The recent whole-school emphasis on improving writing has raised staff's expectations for what pupils can achieve and pupils now make good progress. The subject leader has correctly identified the need for a similar focus on reading. This should include a broader range of texts for pupils to respond to, the systematic development of pupils' comprehension skills and more consistent assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

51. In the more effective lessons, teachers base learning on a shared text, with activities that are well matched to pupils' prior learning. Support staff are well deployed both to support pupils' learning and to help manage their behaviour where necessary. Elements of the national literacy strategy have improved planning. Although all teachers discuss with pupils their progress towards their IEP targets at the end of each lesson, newer or less experienced teachers do not always review what has been achieved in their subject-specific objectives, or highlight for pupils the next steps in learning. This is also reflected in the marking of pupils' work.

52. The subject leader has made many good improvements to provision for English and literacy. She has ensured that the curriculum is good, resources are improved, and assessment procedures now allow staff to track pupils' progress more effectively. The emphasis placed by the subject leader for English on giving

pupils a range of ways to write and to record their work has resulted in a wide variety of writing in many subjects, including religious education, history, personal and social education and careers. Less attention has been paid to the systematic development of reading skills in other subjects for the higher attaining pupils, but those using symbols and pictures to support their reading and writing are being given increasing opportunities to use these in other subjects as more staff are trained in these systems.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Most teachers and support staff show a high commitment to the development of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. This is especially noticeable in communication skills, with most staff signing and using symbols effectively to ensure that pupils understand what they must do. Many teachers are careful to ensure that specialist subject vocabulary is explained in language pitched at the appropriate level of understanding, for example in art, food technology and music. Where teachers are newly appointed or less experienced in teaching pupils with autism, some lessons for pupils with fewer communication skills are unsuccessful in this respect because signing and symbols are not used or language used is too complex for pupils to understand.

French

54. Provision for a modern foreign language is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching by the native French speaking subject leader is very good and results in good achievement with many older students gaining accreditation.
- The curriculum is good with a balance of opportunities to speak, respond to, read and write the language.
- There is good use of symbols to support pupils' learning, but a more consistent use of signing is needed to support learning, especially for less able pupils.
- There are too few suitable resources for the lower attaining pupils, and there is no teaching base where French displays can be made.

Commentary

55. In the sampling of this subject, one lesson was seen with a small group of higher attaining pupils in Years 8 and 9. The quality of teaching and learning was very good, with effective use of commercially produced and teacher-made materials including high quality digital photographs of pupils. Most of the teaching was in French, and the teacher supported the introduction of new vocabulary with much use of mime, gesture, and symbols. Because she is French, pupils are developing very good pronunciation and inflection. Good support from the teaching assistant who joined in the lesson and modelled responses using signing already known to pupils ensured that they had the confidence to try out the new sentences.

56. Analysis of the teacher's planning files and of work from pupils of all capabilities and discussion with the subject leader show that all pupils make good progress in learning French, with higher attaining pupils often making very good progress. Work is better matched for the more able because there are too few resources suitable for those needing more practical activities. The use of French songs, signing by support assistants, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in making worksheets is starting to improve this situation.

57. Although she is employed for only two days per week, the subject leader has worked hard to develop a good curriculum with a balance of activities that ensures pupils do well in all aspects of the language, and that there has been good improvement since the last inspection. She has correctly identified the need to further develop assessment procedures and in particular to source a suitable new accreditation scheme to replace the one used by the school, which has now been discontinued. She rightly feels that establishing a permanent teaching base would allow her to create French displays that would reinforce pupils' learning of key vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

58. Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very strong leadership by the coordinator.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Pupils achieve well, make good progress.
- Pupils benefit greatly from real life experiences but there is room for further development of numeracy across the curriculum

Commentary

59. Mathematics is well established and successful in the school, and is a subject that pupils enjoy. Pupils make gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts, and pupils of all ages and abilities make progress that is at least satisfactory, and is usually good. As they succeed with their mathematical tasks, their self-esteem rises, and the inclusion of real life experiences, such as in shopping or by buying break-time snacks, enables them to apply their understanding outside the classroom.

60. The coordinator works very effectively to ensure that all teachers have the necessary skills and equipment to teach mathematics successfully throughout the school. The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils are managed well, and lessons are planned effectively to make sure that all pupils can take a full part in every lesson. Lessons proceeded at a brisk pace and pupils were always busy. This was the result of the good support they receive from the learning support assistants, who ensure that pupils complete work and understand what is expected of them. Teachers take great care to make sure that they have the necessary equipment available. The teachers are very skilled at making the activities meaningful for the pupils. For example, when teaching pupils to count, they use objects that are familiar to the pupils, such as real coins in work on money.

61. Improvement from the last inspection is **good** as teaching and learning is now consistent across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There are times when numeracy skills are reinforced in other subject areas. For example during an English lesson pupils' numeracy skills are reinforced through the attention given to the order of page numbers in a book. However, there are inconsistencies in the attention paid to the reinforcement of numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, very good attention is paid to it in food technology by emphasising weight and time, but not enough attention is paid when working with resistant materials. Here many opportunities were missed when pupils could have counted, measured and reinforced their existing knowledge of number.

SCIENCE

63. Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers have a high level of subject expertise and therefore have high expectations.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The curriculum, assessment of attainment and the tracking of progress are very good.
- There is good specialist science accommodation but there is a lack of storage space and a room to prepare investigation work.

Commentary

64. The school has appointed two teachers who are science specialists to teach the subject across the school. This has resulted in high expectations for the curriculum development, along with a very good emphasis on investigation work and practical activities, and accreditation. The teaching is good overall, and in the lessons where there has been clear thought given to the different ways to communicate the knowledge content of the lesson teaching is very good and therefore so is learning. Both teachers manage the challenging behaviour of pupils well, and in all lessons seen the learning support assistants played a very supportive role in facilitating learning and ensuring that the agreed behaviour management strategies were being used. As a result, lessons continued at a good pace, pupils sustained their interest and achieved well. In the last two years pupils have gained an increased amount and variety of external accreditation.

65. Under the very good leadership of the subject co-coordinator and with support from the additional teacher, the school has worked very hard to further develop the curriculum and assessment procedures and to address all of the weaknesses it identified in its provision. The curriculum is very good. It is broad and balanced, meets all of the statutory requirements, and based on a mainstream curriculum, which allows easy transfer into mainstream education for some pupils, as well as providing age appropriate areas of study for all pupils. Lessons are characterised by very good planning with clear expected learning outcomes for pupils of different attainment levels. Pupils' levels of attainment and the progress they are making are continually assessed against National Curriculum levels or 'p' levels and the information is recorded and evaluated to demonstrate the progress pupils are making. Each piece of work is evaluated in terms of how much of it was achieved unaided or independently, and work samples are kept as evidence. This rigorous system allows the school to be secure about the levels at which pupils are working and, therefore, also secure in the accreditation that they are entered for. It has also enabled the staff to provide opportunities for higher attaining pupils who are working at almost nationally expected levels to benefit from working in the science room at a local high school, and thus supporting their personal development in interacting with the community without anxiety.

66. Until Easter 2002, the school has not had any specialist accommodation for the teaching of science. Pupils now have a science room that has been well thought out – with two separate learning areas – one for group work and one for investigation work. These two areas are well recognised in terms of their function by all pupils as the layout of the workspace is easily interpreted by them. However, the room has no preparation area and very little storage. This means that the safe preparation of investigation work prior to the lesson is impossible, as equipment cannot be safely left out in the science room. This particularly affects the use of chemicals for investigation work. In addition, the room has no fume cupboard to support this.

67. There has been a **very good** improvement in provision for science since the last inspection, through improved resources, accommodation, and curriculum co-ordination.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

68. A total of three lessons in years 8, 9, and 10, was observed, work was sampled from files and displays, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

69. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good because the individual objectives are targeted to meet pupil needs and abilities
- The teaching and learning is very good because teachers have very good subject knowledge and understand the special educational needs of the pupils.
- The curriculum is broad balanced and very relevant, and is very well managed.
- The use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum is good.

Commentary

70. Pupils achieve very well in information technology, through individual objectives, accurately targeted to meet pupil needs and abilities. Attainment varies according to ability, but all pupils make very good progress, in lessons and over time. Pupils observed, in years 8 and 9, showed familiarity with the functions of word processing, and had transferred these skills to Power Point. One higher attaining pupil could access his previous presentation, and edit it, following corrections made on paper, for homework, then save and print his work. Pupils learn to work independently, following a checklist, and receive only the amount of support they need. Pupils in Year 9 are learning about style and effectiveness of presentations, in addition to the technical skills of scanning and using graphics.

71. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, work towards accreditation in ASDAN transition challenge, National Skills Profile, or OCR Entry Level GCSE. They achieve very well, developing skills that will prepare them for the next stage of education, or for life after school. They learn to understand and use the technology found in everyday life. Having developed skills in the discrete information technology lessons, pupils use them across the curriculum. For example, word processing is used in English, frequency tables, data handling, graphs, in maths, a digital food probe in food technology, the digital microscope in science, and digital cameras in most subjects, for recording. Teaching in many subjects is enhanced by use of ICT and a bank of Power Point presentations is available.

72. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and understand the special educational needs of the pupils. Behaviour management is very good, ensuring that the focus of the lesson is on the task to be completed. Time and resources are very well used, expectations are high, and pupils are inspired to want to learn, becoming excited with new learning and achievement. Assessment is good and includes an element of self-assessment.

73. The subject is very well, and enthusiastically, managed. Curriculum planning and monitoring ensures coverage of all aspects of technology, while planning for individual needs and abilities has led to the improvement in achievement. Since the previous inspection, there has been very good improvement in this subject when it was only judged to be satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Having developed skills in the discrete information technology lessons, pupils use them across the curriculum. For example, word processing is used in English, frequency tables, data handling, graphs, in mathematics, a digital food probe in food technology, the digital microscope in science, and digital cameras in most subjects, for recording.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

75. Three religious education lessons were observed, in Years 7, 9 and 10, work was sampled from all year groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

76. Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because of the sensory, experiential approach to learning.
- Teaching is very good due to the teacher having a very good subject knowledge and very good understanding of pupils' special educational needs
- The curriculum is very good and is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils.

Commentary

77. Pupils make very good progress in lessons that are interesting and informative. Analysis of work shows that pupils achieve very well, producing written work of a high standard in response to imaginative tasks, for example a "Wanted" poster for Judas, a job description for a scribe, roles and backgrounds of the apostles. Pupils have visited both traditional and progressive Synagogues, and understand the differences. In a visit to a church, they shared bread and wine, and dipped hands into the water in the font. They decorated Hindu Divali lamps, and participated in role-play to emphasise how special the sacred book, the "Guru Granth Sahib" is to Sikhs. This sensory, experiential approach to learning is very effective, and results in the very good achievement in knowledge and understanding.

78. The visual and tactile approach, used in teaching this subject, is very effective, and pupils not only learn facts, but also absorb atmosphere and learn, through experience, the dignity, and respect we give to the beliefs and traditions of others. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and very good understanding of pupils' special educational needs. Work is very well differentiated. Targets are reviewed at the beginning and end of every lesson. Units of work begin with an action plan, and end with a review. Use of time, resources and deployment of staff are very good, resulting in very good attitudes and behaviour from pupils. Communication is very good and supported well by symbol use where appropriate. Ongoing assessment is good, and informs planning. Achievement is assessed for P Levels at the end of the year. Work is constructively marked and annotated.

79. The co-ordinator teaches all religious education lessons, and has developed a three year rolling programme for pupils up to the age of fourteen, units based on the nationally recognised schemes of work, adapted to meet the needs of pupils. For pupils up to the age of sixteen there is a two year rolling programme to meet the requirements of ASDAN accreditation. The subject makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.

80. There has been very good improvement in religious education since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory.

Geography

81. Two geography lessons were observed, work was sampled from all year groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

82. Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is carefully matched to the individual needs of the pupils.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- There is room for further professional development.

Commentary

83. Geography is well coordinated throughout the school. It is taught by one teacher, who works across all age groups. There is a clear policy for the teaching of geography and the coordinator has developed two different schemes of work. One scheme of work is focused on the needs of the lower ability pupils, whilst the other scheme of work is geared towards the higher ability pupils. In this way, the teacher ensures that all pupils in the school are able to take part in lessons, and that the subject is meaningful to them and enriches their understanding of their own environment.

84. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively and make sure that all pupils, no matter what their ability, are busy working during the lesson. There are times when teachers divide the class into small groups so that they can carry out individual different tasks. For example, a group looked at a 'Power Point' presentation about the rainforests, whilst another group considered the different fruits that grow in the rainforests as they handled and smell them.

85. When a subject is taught by one member of staff within a school, it is very important that he or she is able to keep in touch with other teachers and access subject information in order to develop their skills in line with the most recent educational initiatives. As far as geography is concerned, this is an area for further development.

86. Improvement is **satisfactory**.

History

87. There is insufficient evidence on which to base a firm judgement concerning the quality of the overall provision. Only one history lesson was observed, but work was sampled from all year groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills in writing are being reinforced through the teaching in history, and the use of ICT is evident
- The overall provision for the subject is insecure, as it has been affected by staff absence.
- The situation is improving with the very recent appointment of new staff.

Commentary

88. At present, the subject is being 'co-ordinated' on a temporary basis by the one teacher, who teaches history to pupils in years 7 to 11. Since starting this term, has produced an overview for this term, entitled 'What is History?' and has carried out a general audit of resources. This shows that there are insufficient for the lower attaining pupils.

89. In the one lesson seen, the teacher reinforced the vocabulary associated with history, and pupils learned about looking at historical evidence. Both teachers and classroom assistants have a very good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs and they use this knowledge effectively during lessons. During the lesson pupils receive individual support, especially concerning their literacy skills. For example, one learning support assistant reminds a pupil that he must remember to put spaces between his words in order to make it easier for the teacher to read his work. Learning support assistants also play a vital role in making sure that pupils are fully engaged in learning during lessons. They make very good use of digital cameras, in order to record images of historical artefacts that are useful and help bring the lessons to life.

90. Although **satisfactory** improvements have been made to the subject this term, there is a great deal of potential for improvement and development.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Four lessons of design and technology were observed; two in each aspect. Work was sampled from all year groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinators.
- The provision for design and technology is satisfactory overall but there is great variation within different aspects of the subjects.
- The overall provision for food technology, including teaching and learning, and the curriculum, is very good.
- The teaching and learning in lessons that focus on resistant materials are unsatisfactory.
- The accommodation for teaching both aspects of the subject is very much improved.

Commentary

91. The quality of the provision within the subject varies greatly. In food technology, it is very good as there is very good and sometimes outstanding teaching by the co-ordinator who has a high level of subject expertise. The lessons are extremely well planned with detailed learning outcomes and approaches for each pupil in the group. There is extensive and well-integrated use of the PECS communication system, with use of subject specific word banks and symbols. This helps pupils understand what they are expected to do, and how to express their ideas and communicate their learning. As a result, all pupils achieve very well, gain external accreditation based on their own achievements, are enthusiastic, concentrate well and have positive attitudes and behaviour in the lessons. Some increase their awareness of safety, understand health related issues, and are using their numeracy and literacy skills in the lessons very well. There is outstanding lesson preparation, and teamwork, which meant that pupils used equipment safely and correctly, and achieved very well. The teacher has specialist training in food technology, and therefore has high expectations, but she is also skilled in teaching pupils with special educational needs. This has developed over time and is the result of the very good emphasis on in-service training.

92. In the aspect of design and technology that deals with resistant materials the provision is unsatisfactory overall. This is because the teaching, and the resulting learning, is at too high a level for the majority of pupils in the classes. Lessons are concerned with producing the product and not teaching the skills and understanding needed to pupils at different levels. Lessons are planned with the same activity for all pupils regardless of their ability or understanding. This is also the situation with the level of communication used - it is far too difficult and complicated in its content for autistic pupils to make sense of, and there is no use of symbols or signs. Many pupils complete their tasks by copying what the teacher does or by adults carrying out the majority of the tasks. Pupils with challenging behaviour react badly in most lessons and their behaviour disrupts learning for themselves and others, as well as being challenging for those adults working with them. The learning support assistants work extremely hard to ensure that pupils remain on task but are not fully aware before the lesson of what each pupils should be achieving.

93. The part time teacher for this aspect of the subject has a high level of subject knowledge, but does not have experience in teaching pupils with special educational needs and communication difficulties. The school has addressed this issue over a period through monitoring by senior managers and the Local Education Authority (LEA). However, the situation remains unimproved. The accommodation for both aspects of the subject has been very much improved. The school has spent a considerable amount to money and time on ensuring that there are two specific rooms, which are well equipped and resourced. These both provide age appropriate teaching bases, and at the same time cater for the social interact difficulties, which the pupils have.

94. Improvement from the last inspection has varied between the two aspects. It is satisfactory overall.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

95. Three art lessons were observed, in Years 8, 9, and 10, work was sampled in all age groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

96. Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, and relevant.

Commentary

97. Pupils achieve very well in lessons, and over time, learn to work in a variety of styles, using a range of materials, and producing two and three-dimensional pieces. They learn to create and follow design plans, for example when making three-dimensional masks. They work independently and in pairs, and produce large creations in class groups. There is a three-year rolling programme through which, pupils learn to work in the styles of well-known artists such as Rousseau, Picasso, Van Gogh, Lichtenstein, and O'Keefe. They are introduced to Celtic, Medieval, North American Indian and Aboriginal art, as well as Pop Art, Impressionism, Surrealism and Art Nouveau. Links with religious education lead to the production of Divali lamps and celebration hats and masks. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic and work hard to achieve pieces of which they are very proud. They learn, under supervision, to work safely with equipment such as knives and glue guns.

98. Teaching and learning are very good in a relaxed, happy atmosphere, where pupils grow in confidence knowing that they, and their efforts, are valued. Behaviour management is unobtrusive, and almost unnecessary as excellent relationships and enthusiasm ensure that pupils stay on task and work well together. Ongoing assessment is detailed, and used to plan the next lesson. End of project assessment is more formal as work is graded in 'p' levels or National Curriculum levels. Recording is good, and pupils collect folders of well-annotated work to demonstrate their achievements. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 work towards accreditation in ASDAN Transition Challenge.

99. The co-ordinator teaches all the art lessons in the school and uses the rolling programme to ensure that the curriculum coverage is good, and that there is no repetition for pupils. Each term has a new theme, which is interpreted and implemented, according to the ability level in each class.

100. There has been **very good** improvement in art and design since the previous inspection.

Music

101. Three music lessons were observed, work was sampled in all age groups, files examined, and discussions held with the co-ordinator.

102. The provision for music is now **satisfactory** and it is rapidly improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject has been adversely affected by a series of staffing changes but a recently appointed a music specialist have taken over the subject and teaching is now good overall.
- Achievement seen in lessons is good overall, and some pupils are already making very good progress.

- There is a very good policy but as yet no schemes of work or guidelines to show what pupils will learn and how it will be taught
- Although there is a good range of musical instruments, there are few recorded examples of the necessary genres of music.

Commentary

103. In the sampling of this subject, three lessons were seen; one was satisfactory, one good and one very good. The more effective teaching was with smaller groups of more able pupils. The teacher has very good musical knowledge and expertise and a great enthusiasm for the subject, and this ensures that pupils make gains in both performing and composing skills whilst thoroughly enjoying the lessons. He has less experience in dealing with pupils' special educational needs and has not yet had access to full induction training. The less effective teaching is where pupils have lower ability and have fewer communication skills, because activities are less well matched to their prior attainment.

104. The subject curriculum is not secure and remains unsatisfactory. However, despite being in post for less than half a term, the new subject leader has made rapid improvements, including the development of good quality study units for the current term and ordering new software to improve ICT resources to support pupils' learning. Planning also has good links with other curriculum areas, especially literacy.

105. The very recent improvement to the subject now means that it has improved since the last inspection, but there is much more to be achieved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. Two lessons were observed in physical education, along with discussion with the headteacher and the instructor.

107. The provision for physical education is currently **unsatisfactory** as it is not secure.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The long-term absence of the co-ordinator and main teacher of the subject has affected the development of the subject.
- The school has made strenuous efforts to ensure that pupils receive their entitlement for physical education.
- There are some shortcomings in the provision for outside activities.

Commentary

108. The school has found itself in an insecure situation regarding its provision for physical education during the last year. The permanent member of staff and co-ordinator of the subject has been absent from school and therefore there has been very little development, taking place. The recruitment of a teacher to cover all aspects of the curriculum and who has a good level of experience in teaching young people with the difficulties that these pupils have, has been difficult. The school has no indication of when the co-ordinator will return and in the meantime has used the services of an outside coaching and after school provider. This has allowed them to continue providing some aspects of the subjects, such as individual skills needed in games, swimming, and some dance. However, the school is restricted in the amount of activities it can provide in the grounds of the school, because of the insecure site, and the unevenness of the school field. Apart from swimming, physical education lessons take place in the school hall, which is a good resource.

109. The sampling of the teaching and learning on the week of the inspection showed that the present quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. The current instructor had only been in the school for three weeks and has no experience of teaching pupils with special educational needs. He is therefore requiring a high amount of support in or to learn how to communicate with pupils and understand their learning styles and

patterns of behaviour. At present this is dependent on the support he receives from the learning support assistants and class teachers, and hence there is some variations in the quality of teaching and learning.

110. Given the current situation, the improvement from the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

111. The provision made for personal, social and health education, and citizenship is **very good**.

- The PSHE programme contributes to pupils' and students' overall personal development.
- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and has developed the subject very well in a short time.

112. At the time of the last inspection the provision for PSHE had been recently developed and was good. Since then, it has continued to develop along with national initiatives, such as citizenship, and is seen as having high priority in school. It has an emphasis on building self-esteem, confidence, and developing relationships, as well as preparing pupils and students for living independently in an adult community. Standards have remained high, with pupils receiving very good opportunities, through discrete lessons, tutorial times, assemblies, and 'Circle time', to quality guidance. A very relevant curriculum for both PSHE and citizenship has been developed by the co-ordinator and it pays attention to all the recommended and statutory requirements. It contains elements of careers education, and the school uses the 'Connexions' service very well to deliver and support this aspect of curriculum.

113. The co-ordinator for the subject is enthusiastic and as she also co-ordinates the food technology curriculum she is able to establish links between the two subject. This has been taken a step further, by auditing of all subjects so there is an awareness of which aspects of the PSHE curriculum is also covered in other subjects. All discrete lessons are taught by the co-ordinator who has a high level of expertise in the subject and teaching pupils with special educational needs. Overall teaching and learning are very good. There is evidence of good planning, giving clear learning outcomes which enable the learning support staff to be fully involved in the sessions, and also support the learning in their daily contact with pupils, for example, at break times.

114. Improvement since the last inspection is **good**.

POST 16

115. Provision for Post 16 students is **very good**. The very high standards identified during the previous inspection have been maintained and the provision for Post 16 students remains a significant strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very high.
- The curriculum is ideally suited to all students.
- The progress made by all students is very good.
- The provision at Bourneville College is very good.

116. All students make very good progress, which is clearly evidenced by the outcomes. All students achieve very well, including those with additional special needs. The overall effectiveness of the provision is reflected in the success that students achieve in externally accredited vocational and non-vocational courses that they follow both in school and at college. Students are enabled to achieve so well because the department is very skilfully managed and extremely well led. The head of the department has a very clear vision of the aims of Post-16 education and consequently the curriculum provided for students is based on a sound rationale – that is for them to become as independent as possible, with the social skills and knowledge for them to function in the community. For all students there is the overriding aim of them overcoming their difficulties in communication and entitlement to gaining external accreditation at a level most appropriate for

them that can be used in further education or training. This the school achieves very well. Any action is taken in consultation with students, parents, teachers, and support staff. There are many opportunities for students to follow accredited courses and during the inspection there was an 'Awards Evening' during which students were presented with certificates and trophies. These covered a very wide range of courses and included GCSEs, Certificates of Achievement, ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Awards at Transitions and Bronze levels as well as internally awarded Colleges Certificates.

117. Students have very good opportunities to attend link courses or attend the satellite base full time at nearby Bourneville College of Further Education. Here some students are taught by staff of Baskerville school, while others benefit greatly from the opportunity to work alongside students. Students are very successful, and have a range of opportunities to use the college facilities for information and communication technology (ICT), catering, and horticulture. An ICT lesson was observed during the inspection and this was excellent. The teacher showed a very high standard of subject knowledge and an excellent understanding of students' special educational needs. Because of the excellent teaching, students were very highly motivated and very successful in producing small flyers of their own design. They learn to use a digital camera and transfer the image from the camera to the computer and then import that image into a Word document.

118. All students in the Post 16 classes benefit greatly from the very high quality of teaching that they receive. The teachers are very highly skilled in communicating with students; those who are relatively high ability and those who struggle to communicate and have significant learning difficulties. Lessons are very well planned to include a variety of different activities, which are interesting, enjoyable, and productive. Students are given many opportunities to work together and to share their learning experiences. This is very effective and students willingly help each other and enjoy the support that each one gives to the other. Teachers' expertise enables them to cope particularly well no matter what circumstances may demand. When things go wrong, as they did in one case, the teacher used this to her advantage and quickly changed the lesson objectives to meet the new conditions.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent lesson with Post 16 students in Religious education.

During this vigorous, exhilarating lesson students eagerly recalled the facts that they had learned about Canada and thanksgiving celebrations. The most vocal student was delighted to remind the group that George Washington brought peanuts to Canada to save his people from starvation. Others who had much more severe communication difficulties named Turkey and pumpkin pie as being foods that are eaten traditionally at the time of thanksgiving. Skilful teaching developed the lesson very quickly and effectively; thanksgiving was related to other religious events throughout that celebrate harvest time. He spoke of harvesting and how this could be done by cutting, gathering and picking produce from the land. He then hung a small bunch of grapes from the top of the blackboard and invited one student to 'pick' the grapes. This was done with great care. The teacher then scattered some horse chestnuts and invited another student to 'gather' the fruits. These activities captured the imagination of the students who gained a clear understanding of the two new words associated with harvesting. Whilst maintaining interest and excitement, the teacher quickly restored absolute silence by whispering his next instructions to the class. Students clearly acquired a deeper understanding of harvesting and thanksgiving.

119. The department is now based in good accommodation and learning resources have improved since the previous inspection as there is now a small information and communications technology suite in the building. There has been good improvement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	8
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).