

INSPECTION REPORT

BOWER GROVE SCHOOL

Maidstone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 119036

Headteacher: Mr T N Phipps

Lead inspector: Mr T Richardson

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 June 2004

Inspection number: 258873

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: | 4 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 202 |
| School address: | Fant Lane Maidstone Kent |
| Postcode: | ME16 8NL |
| Telephone number: | 01622 726773 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr J Aindow |

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bower Grove is a large community special school for boys and girls aged four to 16. There are 202 pupils on roll (with many more boys than girls) and a further 40 pupils are supported in other schools by staff from the school. All the pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils have moderate learning difficulties; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; speech and communication difficulties; or have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). In addition, there is a small proportion of pupils with severe learning difficulties and physical or sensory needs. The socio-economic background of the pupils is broadly average and their attainment on entry to the school is generally significantly below the expectation for their age. The school runs an outreach service for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, and a number of pupils from the school attend other schools for some of their lessons each week. At the time of the inspection, there were six children in the Foundation Stage and no pupils were at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds and there are only eight pupils in the school from minority ethnic groups. The school received the Heartbeat and Sportsmark awards in 2004.

The Local Education Authority is currently holding consultations about re-designating the school from September 2005 to take pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs; medical needs; and to manage pupils with ASD in mainstream provisions.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 16500 | Mr T Richardson | Lead inspector | Foundation Stage; science; art and design; music |
| 19639 | Ms G Anderson | Lay inspector | |
| 17260 | Ms J Taylor | Team inspector | English; French; religious education |
| 16747 | Mr A Jones | Team inspector | Mathematics; information and communication technology; physical education |
| 7465 | Mr R Brent | Team inspector | Special educational needs; citizenship; geography; history |
| 17182 | Dr M Farrell | Team inspector | The outreach service; design and technology |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very effective** school where there is high morale and happiness. Excellent leadership results in every individual being valued and wanting to give of their best. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils achieve very well as a result. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is an excellent ethos and atmosphere that applies to all individuals and helps them to feel confident and valued: this also promotes high morale, happiness and joy in learning.
- Pupils show very good achievement in their academic, personal and social development, and benefit from a very good curriculum.
- The excellent leadership, management and governance leads to very good teaching and learning, and a high quality of teamwork between staff.
- There is excellent provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils that leads them to have very good attitudes and behaviour.
- The partnership with parents and links with the community are excellent.
- The outreach provision is very good.

Since the last inspection in 1997, very good improvement has taken place. All the key issues have been met in full and much more has been achieved. The school has successfully set out to raise the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements have improved as a result. The quality of leadership has improved significantly and there is now a high quality of teamwork and commitment for continued and sustained improvement. The school evaluates its performance very well and is now fully in control of its own development.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Pupils' achievement at the end of: | in relation to individual targets in: | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Subjects of the curriculum | personal and social education |
| Year 2 | Good | Very good |
| Year 6 | Good | Very good |
| Year 9 | Very good | Very good |
| Year 11 | Very good | Very good |

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

Achievement is **very good** for all pupils in their personal and social development. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with ASD; speech, language and communication difficulties; severe, complex and medical difficulties; and physical and sensory needs all achieve very well in their lessons and also learn how to be sociable, improve their communication skills, and behave very well. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties show very good academic achievement overall, and good achievement in learning to manage and improve their behaviour. All pupils demonstrate high levels of independence due to the emphasis teachers

place in lessons on pupils doing things for themselves and through the high quality of mobility training and therapist support they receive. Pupils want to achieve well because the school is happy and learning is fun. Children in the Foundation Stage show dramatic achievements and improvements, particularly in their personal and social development, communication and mathematical skills. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve very well in mathematics, physical education and French, and show good achievement in other subjects. By the end of Years 9 and 11, pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art and design, design and technology, and physical education. Good achievement takes place in religious education, history, geography and music.

Pupils develop **very good** personal qualities. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**. Attendance and punctuality are good because pupils really enjoy being at school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 11. Adults have a specialised and detailed knowledge of pupils' individual needs. This knowledge is used very well in lessons to provide a range of activities so that pupils with different special needs learn equally as well as each other. Assistants and teachers work very well together as coherent teams. This, along with the excellent partnership with parents, demonstrates to pupils that all adults have their best interests at heart. The school's exceptional ethos is very apparent. All pupils feel special and are helped to feel pride in what they achieve. As a result, pupils are more than willing to take part in activities and give of their best in trying to meet the targets set for them. Pupils are also helped in their learning by having regular access to advanced skills teachers and subject specialists. Teachers have high expectations. As a result, pupils rise to the challenges set and concentrate very well. Pupils learn with enthusiasm and enjoyment, especially when teachers place a strong emphasis on the pupils doing things for themselves. The quality of assessment is accurate and very good. Information is collected regularly and analysed very well so that teachers can see what pupils have learnt and what they should learn next.

The curriculum is very good, and is enriched with additional activities very well. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are catered for extremely well. Pupils have excellent support, advice and guidance and are involved very well in developing the school. Links with parents and the community are excellent. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and other senior managers, the management of the school, and its governance, are all **excellent**. Governors fulfil their responsibilities impeccably and statutory requirements are met. Subject leaders develop their subjects very well, the outreach service is led and managed very well, and everyone in the school shows a commitment to wanting to do the best for the pupils. The school's ethos for the full inclusion of every individual is an excellent product of the outstanding leadership and is the reason for the high morale and happiness in staff and pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents very strongly support the work of the school and, rightly, view it as 'a community where children succeed in every respect'.

Pupils value their school and the happiness, friendship and success it brings them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to address its priorities for improving assessment, raising standards and determining the future of the school as already identified in the school improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Throughout the school pupils achieve very well and make very good progress against the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs).

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's caring ethos generates happiness in learning that, combined with very good teaching, leads to very good achievement.
- Pupils achieve very well in their personal development.
- Pupils achieve very well in the subjects they study.
- The preparation for pupils' life after school is excellent.

Commentary

1. It is inappropriate to compare the attainment of the pupils against those in mainstream schools. However, some pupils do take national tests and most of the pupils in Year 11 are entered for the 'entry level' GCSE examinations in a range of subjects. The results of these tests and examinations show that pupils continually build their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school, and that most successfully gain certificates at the end of Year 11.
2. Pupils achieve very well over their time in school. This level of achievement is evident in both their academic, and personal development, and pupils have many successes of which they can be rightly proud. Before the inspection, those parents who attended the meeting with inspectors stated that 'this school is a community where children succeed in every respect'. Inspectors are delighted to endorse this view. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with ASD achieve very well in the subjects they study and also learn how to be sociable, improve their communication skills, and behave very well. Those pupils who have speech, language and communication difficulties do as well as everybody else in their academic development and also achieve very well in using their communication for everyday purposes. The school has a number of pupils with severe, complex and medical learning difficulties. These pupils achieve very well and become increasingly independent as they grow older. Pupils with physical and sensory needs achieve very well in learning how to make best use of their skills. The school also has a number of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils achieve very well in their lessons and in gaining emotional stability. They show good achievement in learning to manage and improve their own behaviour. The school has already recognised that this achievement could be improved by placing the pupils in smaller class groups and assessing their daily behaviour in finer detail.
3. Pupils are prepared extremely well for life after school. All pupils demonstrate higher levels of independence than expected for their degree of special needs. This is due to the emphasis teachers place in lessons on pupils doing things for themselves. Another factor is the high

quality of mobility training that takes place. Here, pupils learn to carry out life skills for themselves and, for example, how to use public transport in safety and with confidence. In addition, a large number of pupils attend other mainstream and specialist provisions for some lessons. This also aids their confidence and achievement. Therapists provide high quality programmes for pupils, for example with speech or physical difficulties, and these are carried out very well by specialist assistants. These programmes are highly effective, and pupils achieve very well against the targets set. The older pupils receive excellent careers advice and guidance and benefit considerably from the work experiences they have. As a result, all pupils are fully prepared for their next placement and confident to face their adult life.

4. A key factor in the very good achievement of the pupils is the ethos of the school. This is a school that functions as a caring family, and adults convey to pupils that they really want them to succeed, even though that may mean giving them difficult challenges at times. As a result, all the pupils are swept along with a desire to give of their best and work their hardest at all times. Staff delight in the success of pupils and celebrate this widely. This leads to pupils feeling very good about themselves and their school, and wanting others to do as well as they do. In addition, adults want to give of their best. As a result, the quality of teaching is very good and this, in turn, helps the pupils to achieve as well as they do. In addition, pupils want to achieve well because the school is happy and learning is fun. This remarkable ethos and atmosphere in school stems from the vision and philosophy of school leaders, who show outstanding leadership in promoting such a rich and challenging environment. Another strength in leadership is the rigour with which pupils' assessment data is analysed and used to identify where improvements can be made and to set targets for whole school performance. These targets are suitably challenging and are usually met.
5. Children enter the Foundation Stage having come from a variety of placements and assessment centres. They very quickly show dramatic achievements and improvements, particularly in their personal and social development, communication and mathematical skills. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve well in most subjects and continue to show very good achievement in their personal development, and against the targets set in their IEPs. The exceptions to this good academic achievement are seen in mathematics, physical education and French, where pupils achieve very well; and in music where achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Years 9 and 11, pupils build on what they have learnt in Years 1 to 6 and achieve very well in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art and design, design and technology, and physical education. Good achievement takes place in religious education, history, geography and music. During the inspection, insufficient evidence was gathered to judge achievement in French in Years 7 to 11.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour, including the low level of exclusions, are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, making these aspects of personal development very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The support the school gives for bereavement is excellent.
- Excellent provision is made to enable pupils to have empathy with others.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour because they are happy and enjoy learning.

- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good because of the excellent ethos of the school.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.7 | School data | 0.8 |
| National data | 8.4 | National data | 2.4 |

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

6. Pupils are very happy to be in school, because they enjoy it. As a result they have good attendance records and arrive punctually at the start of the school day and for lessons. Their attitudes are very positive because they are involved very well in their learning and, as a result, they are interested and co-operative. Pupils feel very secure and confident in school and are helpful and considerate. This is because of the positive atmosphere and the way that adults focus on what pupils can do, rather than on what they find difficult. Adults also provide very high calibre role models and pupils learn from their example to be kind and considerate. Consideration is so well embedded that it can override inappropriate behaviour. The pupils’ self-esteem and independence are developing very well, according to their ability, because of the high quality of school initiatives. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for themselves and benefit from the high quality of mobility and outreach programmes. They have very good relationships with each other and adults, showing a good understanding of others’ needs. Behaviour is generally very good or shows good improvement. There were no exclusions in the previous academic year.
7. Pupils are very sensitive to people around them and understand that people can be different because they meet others from diverse backgrounds. For example, pupils were encouraged to empathise with young asylum seekers. Older pupils welcomed an ‘unaccompanied minor’ asylum seeker to speak about the traumatic experiences of family loss and re-location, which made a profound impact. The school prepares pupils extremely well for life in a diverse society because it creates a climate that is fully inclusive, celebrates difference and embodies a ‘respect for all’ philosophy.
8. The excellent ethos of the school has a fundamental impact on the very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The exemplary support for bereavement is an example of the high quality of provision and this has contributed to the development of the local education authority’s policy. The dedication of staff with their total commitment to the whole family of a pupil underpins such initiatives, giving excellent support in times of need. This is why parents often have a long term commitment to the school after their children have left. Pupils take responsibility for their actions because the thrust of the behaviour policy is to reflect on and take ownership of their own behaviour. Their values are open and considerate because the school leads by example and promotes this in all its work nurturing pupils’ personal development very well.
9. Pupils develop their spirituality very well in planned opportunities such as religious education, and PSHE lessons, as well as more informally when adults pause for a while to let pupils reflect, for example, on the wonder of a spider’s web. Moral development is very

good, and very evident in all the school's activities. Pupils with behaviour difficulties are encouraged to consider their actions and decide what is right and wrong. Social development is very good. In particular, pupils with autism learn how to make eye contact, greet one another, and cooperate together in activities. In addition to learning about other cultures, pupils also show very good development in their appreciation of British culture, art and music and a very good range of opportunities is provided for this. For example, the week before the inspection was a celebration of music, art, dance and drama that was both enjoyable and challenging for the pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Pupils achieve very well because of the very good teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum provided. The school provides exceptional levels of care for its pupils, and has an outstanding partnership with parents and the community, and very good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from being taught by advanced skills teachers and subject specialists.
- There is very good teamwork between all staff and they have a detailed knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs.
- The school's ethos helps pupils to feel happy as they learn.
- Therapists, external specialists and coaches also provide very good teaching.
- There are very good procedures for the assessment of academic and social development.

Commentary

10. Inspection data shows that teaching and learning were judged to be very good in more than half of all the lessons seen. No lessons were unsatisfactory. This high quality of teaching and learning was evident in all year groups throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, and supports the parents' views, made before the inspection, that their children are very well taught. Pupils, in their questionnaires, also expressed satisfaction with their teachers and feel that they help them to learn new things.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 80 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 3 (4%) | 40 (50%) | 27 (34%) | 10 (13%) | 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.

11. A key feature in this consistently high quality of teaching is the specialised and detailed knowledge that adults have of pupils' individual needs. In the classes for pupils with autism, teachers and assistants work as a team to provide the pupils with structured experiences and routines, at the same time as challenging them to communicate more openly with others and extend their social skills. For example, in a 'good morning' routine for ASD pupils in Year 2, the pupils were secure in the pattern of the routine but were willing to be motivated by staff to give eye contact to one another and say 'Good morning' in a clear and audible voice. Where pupils have the most severe and complex needs, each adult understands these very well and activities are designed to help pupils to build on what they already know. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 7 to 9, the teacher helped some pupils to walk along a number line so that they could 'count on' from a number, whereas others added together the numerical value of the skittles they bowled over. Pupils with behavioural difficulties benefit from the clear guidance given by teachers and assistants on how to behave and generally become 'caught up' in the brisk pace of lessons so that they have no time to feel sad or aggressive. Teachers also think of interesting ways to introduce ideas so that pupils with moderate learning difficulties become interested and want to find out more.
12. Assistants and teachers work very well together as coherent teams. This, along with the excellent partnership with parents, demonstrates to pupils that all adults have their best interests at heart. All adults contribute ideas to lessons and take the initiative for addressing the targets in IEPs whenever the opportunity arises. An example of this cooperation was seen in the Foundation Stage. Here, groups of Year 1 and Reception children intermingled and moved between activities directed by any one of the adults in the room. The teacher had reminders on the wall to show the aims for each activity, and the children's IEPs were readily available. As a result, wherever children went, they were soon engrossed in purposeful tasks that were specifically adapted by adults to address their own learning needs. The outcome was that every child was very busy, concentrating and productive for very long periods of time.
13. A major contribution to pupils' learning is the school's exceptional ethos. It is very apparent to the pupils that all adults in school really care about them. Every pupil is made to feel special and helped to feel pride in what they achieve. Adults too feel part of a very special school where their efforts are similarly valued. The result is a very happy atmosphere where adults and pupils are genuinely delighted to be with one another. As a result, pupils are more than willing to take part in activities and give of their best in trying to meet the targets set for them. Staff routinely 'go the extra mile' to help a pupil overcome a barrier to learning, and pupils respond in kind by doing their utmost to achieve.
14. Pupils are also helped in their learning by having regular access to advanced skills teachers and subject specialists. The school's policies for performance management and the sharing of good practice mean that teachers and assistants learn very effectively from one another and the level of expertise among staff is steadily rising. In addition, very good use is made of external specialists such as speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and swimming coaches, so that pupils receive the best possible quality of support they can.
15. In the best lessons seen, the following key points were identified as promoting very good learning:
 - Teachers have high expectations and lessons have a good pace. As a result, pupils rise to the challenges set and concentrate very well. For example, in a design and

technology lesson for Year 11, the teacher gave clear indications of the quality expected and that pupils should use their own initiative to improve their work. As a result, the pupils became engrossed in their tasks and were highly productive.

- Pupils respond well to the rigorous challenges set and learn with enthusiasm and enjoyment. For example, in an ICT lesson for pupils in Year 7, the pupils were given research to do, on their own, about the Olympics. They applied themselves very well to this and displayed commitment and enthusiasm as they found out a very wide range of relevant information.
- Pupils learn best when they are encouraged to develop ideas for themselves. For example, in a science lesson for Year 2 pupils with ASD, the teacher asked very clear questions so that pupils gained confidence in giving single word responses. This led to one pupil commenting aloud about the fly he saw stuck on a web. The teacher then let the pupil think some more, so that he realised for himself that spiders eat flies.

16. The quality of assessment is very good. Teachers work together with subject leaders to make sure they are accurate in assessing how well each child can do in each subject. This information is collected regularly and analysed very well so that teachers can see what pupils have learnt and what they should learn next. Lessons are then planned to take full account of what pupils can already do. In addition, the school is provided with a wealth of information about pupils' achievements which are analysed with confidence in the knowledge that teachers' assessments are accurate. The school has yet to add to this assessment with detailed analysis, for example, of how well pupils with ASD are learning to manage their own autism. In the lessons judged to be satisfactory, teachers introduced topics at a slow pace that meant more time had to be spent on managing behaviour as the pupils were not as fully engaged as in other sessions.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. All statutory requirements are fully met, the curriculum is enriched very well and pupils' individual needs are also included to a high level. Accommodation and resources are very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very innovative and caters very well for the increasingly complex needs of the pupils.
- Extra curricular activities, clubs, visits and external experts very significantly enrich the opportunities for learning, and participation in sport.
- The provision for citizenship, personal, social and health education, work related learning, mobility and independence result in excellent preparation for life beyond school.
- Pupils' learning is supported very well by a very effective whole staff team, very good accommodation, and good quality resources.

Commentary

17. The curriculum is imaginative and addresses the requirements of the national curriculum very well. The school has a thoroughly planned and clear overview of what will be taught in every subject at each key stage. There is a very strong academic base that draws upon

national strategies, such as those for literacy and numeracy, and they are adapted expertly so that they meet the special needs of the pupils. Teachers provide a comprehensive range of additional experiences and use procedures, such as assessment, very successfully. This enriches learning and boosts the pupils' personal and social development. The timetable makes the best use of staff, resources, specialist programmes, outside agencies and visits to flexibly create high quality learning opportunities, as well as always ensuring that individual needs are catered for.

18. The pupils' very good achievement is exceptionally well supported by a very extensive out-of-hours programme. Creative learning is enhanced by the 'Kids' Club', choir and guitar club, and literacy is extended in the Library Club. Excellent participation in sport and other physical activities arises from other well organised clubs and fixtures. These are community as well as school based, and are strengthened by input from specialist coaches. High levels of attendance are supported by the independence of the pupils to travel on public transport, as well as the staff's commitment to overcome barriers through their positive partnerships with parents.
19. The school makes every effort to directly use or act upon the skills and advice of outside specialists. Individual pupils have their learning and skills considerably expanded as a result of very good collaboration between staff and visiting professionals, such as therapists, advisory teachers for sensory impairment and visiting artists and musicians.
20. Independence and life skills are taught successfully and these programmes begin early in the school. These are very well built upon as the pupils move through the school, with excellent learning opportunities created through active citizenship, careers lessons, work experience, college taster sessions, and very structured programmes for developing independence. Pupils enjoy and value these experiences, and inspectors agree with the pupils that these are very good stepping stones into adulthood.
21. The very well thought through curriculum is very ably delivered by a whole school team totally dedicated to raising achievement and the welfare of pupils. School and subject leaders are in full control of the curriculum and know what is meant to be happening at all times. They have identified in each key stage the academic courses to be followed, the enrichment activities to be provided and the specialised individual support for pupils. Individual education plans are prepared and reviewed meticulously for those pupils with additional needs and the provision in statements is implemented comprehensively. Pupils benefit from the school's determination to meet their entitlement and there are very good arrangements in place in all subjects to offer appropriate accreditation. Given the range of additional needs, the school's curricular response is very good and makes a substantial contribution to the overall very good achievement. For example, some pupils are grouped into classes where the main need is autism. This enables the curriculum to be delivered so that the needs of the pupils are more closely met. As a result, these pupils show very good achievement in their social and communication skills as well as in their academic subjects. Some class sizes, however, are large and this can make them difficult to manage when they contain large numbers of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
22. The school has a very good number of teachers and support staff with a corresponding breadth of expertise and qualities, which are helping to move the school forward. Teaching assistants contribute significantly to the school's provision, particularly during lessons and at meal times. Assistants and teachers work together very well and all adults

show a sensitive appreciation of the pupils' many needs. Specialists and therapists plan effectively with teaching staff to support individual learning and the curriculum. The accommodation is very good; resources are good. Both benefit pupils' achievement and the opportunities they are given. There are many attractive and informative displays which celebrate the pupils' achievements and show that the school is a very positive learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety extremely well. It provides the pupils with excellent support, advice and guidance and involves them very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care and welfare of pupils is excellent because of the total commitment and devotion of staff and the quality of their extended care.
- Staff assisting therapists support the joy in learning, encouraging pupils to push the boundaries of their achievement.
- The pastoral support, advice and guidance is excellent because it enables pupils to optimize on their progress.
- The monitoring and evaluation procedures for tracking pupils' achievements in their academic work and providing guidance are excellent and fully involve the pupil and their family.

Commentary

23. The excellent provision for care ensures that pupils want to be in school and are very happy to be back in the school after the holiday. This creates an atmosphere that is very conducive to learning. This is a school where pupils feel very happy, secure and extremely valued and are confident to have a try. The work of physiotherapists and speech and language therapists is very valuable to the development of the pupils. This work is often followed up and developed by support assistants. An example of excellent practice was observed during the inspection. The assistant generated joy in learning by creating an atmosphere of total trust. Pupils responded to this and were delighted in seeing how far they could take their physical development. Tasks were set, and pupils wanted to do more by pushing their boundaries way beyond their own expectations. One pupil with physical difficulties made a good natured and humorous commentary. The assistant also responded with humour and continued to challenge the pupil extremely well to push his boundaries to, for him, the unknown. As a result, the pupil broke through previous barriers into new learning and discovered new things about the extent of his own physical skills. In these sessions, pupils delight in what they have achieved through the high expectations and skilled focus on addressing their special needs. They share a sense of celebration and much humour with visitors to the therapy room who, in turn, see something marvellous happening.
24. The school consistently provides an environment that is safe and supportive and gives the highest regard to pupils' well-being. The outstanding quality of the care for pupils shows a common concern from all adults to be close to parents and to work together to meet the needs of their children. The level of cooperation and partnership goes well beyond reasonable expectation and job descriptions. It is deeply embedded in the motivation of all staff who are modest and reticent about the extremely high quality of care they provide.

25. Action is taken to eliminate and minimize hazards through risk assessments and the implementation of very effective policies. Comprehensive arrangements are in place for child protection, which are very well supported by a very proactive approach by the school. The school is persistent in ensuring the fullest support from all external agencies and these, together with parents, work extremely well to ensure the highest levels of care. The school is very well maintained to ensure a very safe environment and there are no significant issues outstanding from the latest audit. Staff are appropriately vigilant in ensuring that pupils are appropriately supervised and safe at all times.
26. Support advice and guidance is excellent because the school is acutely aware of inconsistencies in pupils' progress and performance. This is carefully analysed and addressed with practical advice and guidance, ensuring that a pupil achieves their maximum potential very successfully. This was demonstrated in a design and technology lesson. The teacher identified that one pupil was doing less well in an area of the curriculum, and set out to put this to rights. As a result of focused teaching, this pupil made rapid progress from under achievement to produce work to be proud of. Staff have highly productive relationships with all pupils and their families which contribute to an excellent understanding of pupils' achievement and development.
27. Very good links with other schools and colleges help to ensure smooth transitions to, through and from the school. Mobility and outreach programmes also make a very significant contribution to pupils' confidence and self assurance by the time they leave school.
28. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good. Pupil's opinions are highly valued and this delights them. Pupils know that their views matter because staff listen to what they say and act upon it where appropriate. Through the school council, for example, pupils expressed the need for improved playground apparatus. This has now been installed and provides opportunities for a wide range of activities and social gatherings. As a result, pupils enjoy their play times much more and they observe that this has checked bad behaviour. Pupils are fully involved in the annual review of their Statement and achievement that takes place on their birthdays. The vast majority of pupils say that staff listen to them and their ideas and comments are welcomed. A great strength of the school is that it makes all pupils feel normal members of society.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community are excellent. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are excellent because the staff have a common concern to work closely with them to give maximum support.
- Excellent arrangements for annual reviews, and the very comprehensive sharing of high quality of information about pupils' learning, enables parents to be full partners in the process.

- Highly productive links with the community make an excellent contribution to pupils' developing independence.

Commentary

29. The partnership with parents is excellent due to the outstanding level of care and extra effort shown by staff who show an exceptional commitment to be close to parents and work together to meet the needs of their children. Staff are dedicated to meeting the needs of parents to give maximum support to their children. Parents feel a strong sense of partnership due to the school's honesty and integrity in all its dealing with them. There is very strong support for the work of the school from the parents who give significant praise for its work and the staff. The commitment to parents has led to inspired initiatives to support their needs, for example, in bereavement which has led the local education authority to incorporate the school's ideas into its own policy.
30. There is very comprehensive information given about achievement and how parents can help at home and promote progress. Excellent arrangements for annual reviews demonstrate a lot of commitment from staff and parents and ensure 100% attendance. These, together with the constant informal exchange of information, mean that parents are consulted extensively. Their views are taken full account of to bring about improvement both for their child and the school. This is powerfully enhanced by the promotion of a partnership of equals. So highly valued are the links that some parents are reluctant to sever ties and remain committed to the school and supporting its work long after their children have left. Clear evidence of these excellent links is shown by the very active and effective Parent Support Group, and the Parent, Teacher, Friends Association who give excellent support.
31. Highly productive links with external organizations and other schools enhance the quality of learning very well through the mobility and outreach initiatives. These are of mutual benefit and provide expertise and resources to enrich the work of the school which leads to unusually high levels of developing independence in, for example, pupils' travel arrangements. A local band enjoys the use of the school premises and gives impressive support to important occasions like the opening of new buildings or at the school fete. Sports coaches enrich the work in physical education considerably to enhance achievement. Many people from the community use the facilities and enrich the work of the school. High quality and regular outside visits, for example residential trips, enrich the curriculum as does inclusion in other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent. The leadership of the headteacher, the management of the school, and its governance, are all excellent. Governors fulfil their responsibilities impeccably and statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership and management help to create an ethos that is second to none.
- All staff and pupils have a sharp focus on raising achievement.

- Very good systems exist for monitoring performance and raising standards.
- Excellent financial planning and management support learning.

Commentary

32. The headteacher and governing body provide an extremely clear educational direction for the school and have suitably high expectations of staff and pupils alike. They plan meticulously to ensure that the school provides a very good quality of education for all pupils in the school and also for those supported in mainstream schools.
33. The school is supported by an excellent governing body, which is led and organised purposefully. It is active and committed to the school's continuing improvement. Its present success is due in large measure to the excellent teamwork between the governors and staff. Committees are very well led and serviced and the school is fortunate in the impressive range and quality of governors' expertise. Governors are justifiably proud of the school's many and considerable strengths. They are particularly pleased with the school's strong and successful emphasis on promoting the all-round and personal development of pupils. Governors work hard and with great determination: as, for example, in supporting the school's views on the future nature of the school and carrying forward building improvements. They discharge their responsibilities impeccably and all statutory requirements are met.
34. Frequent meetings of the chair of governors and the headteacher help to keep governors fully informed about all aspects of the school's work and development. Governors monitor developments rigorously and effectively. They know the school's strengths and are aware of the few areas in which some improvements are needed. Frequent and rigorous reviews of the school's performance lead to effective action to improve. Governors value highly the work of the headteacher and all staff at the school, and provide challenge by setting appropriately demanding targets for the school's performance.
35. The school's financial management and planning are excellent and contribute to pupils' very good achievement. They have resulted in considerable improvements in the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources in recent times. These developments help to sustain a very good environment for learning and support the excellent ethos evident in the school's daily life. The latest available audit of the school's finances indicates that the financial systems operate well. Exemplary checks and comparisons take place to ensure that the school spends its money carefully and gets good value. It uses specific funds coming into the school properly for their designated purposes.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 1,576,660 | Balance from previous year | 60,260 |
| Total expenditure | 1,537,118 | Balance carried forward to the next | 99,802 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 7,883 | | |

36. The excellent leadership and commitment of the headteacher are key elements in the school's continued success and constant drive for higher standards. Under his strong guidance and visible presence around the school and at extra-curricular activities, the school seeks to achieve a high quality of performance in all aspects of its work. The

headteacher knows every detail of the school's daily management and ensures that everything works as it should. His determination that every pupil should have a full chance to fulfil their potential has led to very good opportunities for everybody and a high degree of camaraderie and harmony. The school has sustained and built upon the strengths identified in its previous inspection report and has made very good progress since. It is popular and deserves its excellent reputation. Standards of both teaching and achievement have improved since the previous inspection. Similar improvement in respect of provision for pupils with additional learning difficulties has occurred. A governor oversees these arrangements very effectively. A suitable development plan, under the direction of the special educational needs co-ordinator, provides teachers with guidance about how best to teach pupils who have additional educational needs.

37. One of the greatest obstacles to improvement has been the difficulty of recruiting teachers. The headteacher has successfully sought to overcome this difficulty by developing the expertise of all employed at the school and by creating an able senior team, so giving the school the flexibility which has allowed its programmes to continue and develop. The leadership of the deputy and assistant heads is excellent: it has strengthened considerably the school's initiatives in teaching and learning and its response to the challenges posed by the admission of pupils with a wider range of needs. Leadership and management of subjects are very good overall and the school has emphasised the leadership role of the subject heads. Subject development plans link suitably to the school's improvement plan, which provides a very clear and appropriate set of priorities and targets for improvement. The clearly defined responsibilities of senior and middle managers lead to the very efficient management of the school's policies and priorities. As a result, pupils' academic and personal development is very good. A particularly successful outcome of management is the excellent ethos, which is characterised by the outstanding quality of relationships. Everybody wants to come to school. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect, courtesy, friendliness and a desire to succeed. The daily management of the school's many programmes is excellent. The managers responsible for the site, meals and administration give careful, dedicated service. The school is a clean, bright and attractive place and the administrative staff support staff, pupils, parents and governors selflessly.
38. Procedures for checking how well the school is doing and planning for improvements are very good. The school analyses its data from reviews and examinations carefully and uses suitable systems to assess and predict achievement. The improvements in pupils' achievement are partly a result of the school's review of its procedures for managing aspects of its courses, including accreditation arrangements. The successful implementation of the excellent system of performance management has helped to improve teachers' use of assessment to track pupils' academic progress. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are effective in sharing very good practice and identifying areas for improvement. The professional development of teachers increasingly reflects the priorities of the school and departmental improvement plans and needs reported in the reviews of teachers' performances. Induction arrangements for all staff are excellent and similar progress has been made in bringing about workforce reform.
39. The main aids to pupils' achievement are: very high expectations; very good teaching; pupils' very good behaviour and exemplary attitudes to work; excellent leadership and management; very good use of assessment; excellent pastoral care and guidance; and a wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities. The main barriers to raising

achievement currently are the lack of detail about aspects of the forthcoming major re-organisation, and a few difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified teachers. Taking into account the funding received by the school, the social and economic backgrounds of pupils and the current high quality of education and achievement, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT IS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OUTREACH SERVICE

The provision for the outreach service is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very skilled and specialised work of the highly motivated Bower Grove staff is universally respected and appreciated by all involved.
- Meticulous care is taken to ensure that Bower Grove pupils benefit from their experience in mainstream schools.
- Considerable skill and effort is put into supporting pupils presently in mainstream schools. Further refinements are planned to ensure that pupils likely to benefit are even more carefully selected.

Commentary

40. The outreach service at Bower Grove consists of two main elements, both of them very good. The first involves organising and supporting the placement of Bower Grove pupils in mainstream schools for parts of their timetable (and in some instances eventual full time transfer to mainstream schooling). The second involves supporting mainstream schools in their work with pupils with special educational needs.
41. In organising and supporting the Bower Grove pupils in mainstream schools, the staff involved take enormous care in planning and organising this, to ensure that the placements are successful. For example, timetables are very carefully matched to maintain a balanced curriculum for each pupil, records of progress are maintained, and staff from Bower Grove work in the mainstream schools to support the pupils as necessary. Pupils greatly appreciate these experiences and make progress although some comment that 'sometimes they do not make friends' in the mainstream schools.
42. When supporting mainstream schools in their work with pupils with special educational needs, this is also done with great skill and care. The impressive range of practical support offered includes: training staff in mainstream schools; leading 'model' lessons for selected pupils to encourage communication and social skills, and supporting staff to take such lessons themselves; supporting groups of special educational needs co-ordinators; providing practical advice; and observing and assessing pupils. Further refinements are planned to help ensure that pupils selected for support lessons are the ones that most require such interventions.
43. Both aspects of the outreach service are very well led and managed by dedicated and hard working staff whose efforts and skill are respected and appreciated by pupils, parents, LEA officers and staff of other schools. Since the previous inspection, in which

the provision was judged very good, the school has developed and expanded the services offered both in scope and in relation to the numbers of pupils involved and has successfully maintained the very good quality of provision.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show very good achievement, especially in their personal, social and communication development.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The curriculum is very good.
- There is very good teamwork between adults.
- There are very good links with parents.
- The provision is very well led.

Commentary

44. At the time of the inspection, there were six children in their reception year. These children were mixed with Year 1 pupils in two class groups. Insufficient evidence was gathered to report on all the areas of learning in detail.
45. Teachers assess very well what children can do when they enter their reception year. They regularly update these assessments and teachers' records show that most children demonstrate a significant improvement in their personal and social development, reading and number skills over the year. This represents very good achievement, given the nature and severity of the children's special educational needs. The reception children are taught together with pupils in Year 1 and both year groups follow a very well planned and constructed curriculum. This is fully based on the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and has a two year cycle of interesting and stimulating topics. Teachers also use assessment very well to identify what each child should learn next and to make sure that activities are challenging and sufficiently rigorous to promote continued progress.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, and all adults work very well together as a consistent and coherent team. This quality of teamwork, and the very good relationships between children and adults, ensure that every child feels valued and is happy to learn. There are very strong links with parents and they are helped to feel partners in the development of their children. Home-school books show a very good relationship and dialogue takes place, that is of major benefit to the achievement of the children. The Foundation Stage is very well led. The provision was not evaluated at the last inspection. However, the leader of the department promotes a very clear ethos for valuing every individual, adults as well as children, and the team is continually striving to do the very best they can for the children. The effectiveness of the provision is analysed meticulously and decisive actions are implemented very well to rectify any shortcomings identified. As a result, the provision shows very good improvement in its quality over time.
47. Children achieve very well in their **personal and social development**. Adults understand the nature of each child's special need and provide activities that help to overcome their barriers to learning. For example, children with ASD like the daily routines in the class

and, through these, come to give eye contact to each other and greet everyone by name. Children are praised warmly and try very hard to repeat their actions, for example, in response to 'good sitting' and 'good talking' so that they learn to concentrate and sit still as well as make contributions to discussions. As a result, the children show very good attitudes to learning and generally behave very well. In all the lessons observed, children were very keen to take part and concentrated for long periods of time on their tasks and play activities.

48. In **communication, language and literacy**, children show very good achievement in their communication skills. Adults make sure that their own communication is clear so that the children are not confused by unnecessary or ambiguous words. For example, in a lesson for children and pupils with ASD, the teacher said, 'I will hear your counting' and the child overcame initial reluctance to count out loud so everyone could hear. In another lesson, the activity was identified to the class as 'special talking'. The children knew they had to use their talking skills and tried very hard to accurately use sentences including words such as, in, on and under. Children enjoy looking at books and also recognise a wide vocabulary of symbols and words. They know to read symbols from left to right and follow a story page by page. Displays in class show that children regularly practise their handwriting skills, but only a few write spontaneously.
49. Children achieve very well in their **mathematical development**. They are eager to count the spots on a ladybird and enjoy acting out number songs so that they, for example, come to recognise 'How many buns in a baker's shop', and how many are left. Adults use very good resources, such as large and colourful felt ladybirds that catch the children's attention and make them want to find out more. Also, in activities such as adding spots to a play-dough ladybird, adults help children to count and recognise numbers at all times, even when clearing up the items spilled on the floor! Adults value what children say and help them to feel good for having a try. For example, one child counted eight, the teacher revealed the numeral for nine and said warmly, "It's nine, good try" so that the child was eager to count again.
50. Insufficient evidence was gathered to judge children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. The curriculum plans show that this aspect of their development is fully addressed. **Creative development** is very well included in the curriculum and children paint, sing and have opportunities to extend their imagination and communication through play. The classroom has a very good outdoor play area and this contributes very well to the children's **physical development**, as do the many opportunities provided to extend fine skills such as cutting, threading and gluing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND FRENCH

*English was inspected in depth and is reported in full below. Three lessons of **French** were seen; teachers' plans, records and documentation were scrutinized. However most of the work that the pupils do is practical and oral and, it was, therefore, not possible to make secure judgements about the provision and the achievements of the pupils. In the lessons seen, pupils were enjoying their work and speaking confidently with a good accent because they hear very good French spoken by their teachers. There is an appropriate scheme of work that includes European awareness for the older pupils. This programme is effectively supported by a suitable range of resources, regular French visitors and, in most school years, day and residential trips to France.*

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress in Years 7 to 11.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good for older pupils.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Assessment is very effective and used well to develop the subject.
- Extra-curricular activities make a very good contribution to the programme of work.
- There is not yet any formal planning for teaching language and literacy skills in other subjects.
- The use of ICT in English is at an early stage for the majority of the pupils.

Commentary

51. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in all aspects of English through a well-taught, secure and broad curriculum. They become increasingly confident to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and to answer questions in class. They learn to listen to their friends and to respond to what they say. In Years 7 to 11, pupils are motivated by very good teaching and the desire to leave school with qualifications. Consequently, they show very good achievement. Higher attaining pupils work independently in groups, take turns appropriately, adopt complimentary roles and come to joint decisions. They talk about sensitive issues confidently and sensibly, expressing and exploring their own values. There are special group lessons for pupils with difficulties understanding the social aspects of communication. Through a well planned programme of games and stories they make very good progress in learning to make appropriate eye contact, interpret expressions and learn the rules of ordinary interactions.
52. Pupils experience a very good range of literature and non-fiction, and enthusiastically re-tell details of their favourite stories. By the end of Year 6, about one third of the pupils have reading skills that would enable them to read a basic newspaper article. Lower attaining pupils can find rhyming pairs of words and say what each words starts with. They are all building a sight vocabulary of frequently occurring words. By the end of Year 11, most pupils can turn to a particular page in, for example, the book 'Holes' that they are studying.

They scan the text independently to find the passages and information that they need for their written work.

53. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' achievement in writing since the last inspection. In Years 1 to 6, pupils follow the national literacy programme, learning to hold pencils correctly and are encouraged to write independently with increasing confidence. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils can write a few three letter words unaided. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils write their own paragraphs with recognisable spellings. By the end of Year 11, pupils write at some length, using interesting language and good punctuation. They recognise the need to use spelling checkers on the computer and use a range of resources to check and improve their work. The highest attaining pupil is on course to achieve a good grade in GCSE English this year. A great deal of work in foundation subjects relies on worksheets. Teachers are aware of pupils' individual targets in reading and writing and help to develop their skills at an appropriate level. There are also good resources, such as word banks and sheets of symbols to help pupils work independently. However, the worksheets tend to constrain opportunities for pupils to write at length and do not allow pupils to make their own decisions about the most appropriate forms of writing for a particular purpose.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All teaching is well planned and purposeful, with a clear focus on what should be taught and high expectations of behaviour. This ensures that everyone in the class knows what they are aiming for and when it has been achieved. This is motivating for members of staff as well as for the pupils themselves. Significant work has been done on assessment, so that teachers are now skilled at moving pupils on in their learning. Older pupils of all abilities are very aware of how to improve their skills and the quality of their presentation. Independence is promoted successfully with a very good range of helpful frameworks and resources using words and symbols. Attractive displays also provide very useful vocabulary and ideas to support pupils' work.
55. English is very well led and managed by an advanced skills teacher. There is an enthusiastic and creative approach to developing the subject and very good teaching is effectively modelled. Effective whole-school practice has been encouraged through in-service training, so that all members of staff support literacy activities in consistent ways. Support assistants have also taken advantage of good training opportunities and some have specialised, for example, in supporting dyslexic pupils. Parents are very well involved through regular homework, and materials are being developed to help families with reading at home. Good links to other schools are well used, and the school makes a significant contribution to the training programme within the Local Education Authority. Assessment data is very well used to evaluate new initiatives and the programme of work is adapted and extended to reflect the needs of different groups of pupils.
56. The programme of work is varied and exciting, reflecting National Strategies, a useful formal programme to build spelling skills and includes a very broad range of literature. Teachers use ICT, such as symbol software, to create resources, but there is not yet sufficient use of computers to support pupils in developing skills and recording their work. Pupils' experience and skills are very well extended by the well-attended weekly Library Club and visits, for example to the Globe Theatre. This very good provision makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development, both through well planned formal activities and the development of independence, confidence, self-esteem and an enjoyment of learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Language and literacy skills are taught well in other subjects. Pupils are asked to discuss their work and write answers in most other lessons. Speaking and listening skills are often well developed when, for example, older pupils explain their ideas for designs for a CD rack in technology and others pay good attention and build what has been said. There are many opportunities in small groups where adults help all pupils express their views and elaborate their answers. Younger pupils, and those with communication difficulties are encouraged to communicate by adults that are skilled and sensitive to their needs. The subject leader has already identified the need to formally plan for opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school.
- Excellent leadership and management are provided.
- There has been very significant improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

58. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They are very effectively engaged in their lessons and show very good achievement because teachers provide a wide variety of mental, practical, and purposeful activities, designed to match pupils' different levels of ability. Teaching assistants are very skilled, and sensitively intervene to challenge and support groups and individuals. As a result, teachers ensure that all pupils are inspired to improve. Lessons are thoroughly planned, with very good use of ICT, and are based on the nationally recommended three-part lesson. A key feature is that teachers make very good use of assessment when planning lessons. This means that pupils' successes are recognised and they are able to build on their previous knowledge at all times.
59. The subject leaders demonstrate a very strong determination to improve learning. They successfully create a climate for learning where positive, celebratory relationships motivate pupils to move their mathematical thinking forwards. As a result, pupils and staff show a mutual respect for one another and an immense sense of pride in the numeracy work that is displayed. Teachers make sure that lessons have a clarity of purpose and set highly interactive tasks that lead pupils to an increased understanding of mathematical vocabulary, and the ability to solve problems by themselves.
60. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are highly motivated, especially when tasks are presented on an interactive whiteboard. They respond quickly to addition and subtraction questions. Pupils show enthusiasm when they feel involved, such as working out how many of them should get on or off a 'pretend' bus, when given the number of the passengers at each stop.
61. In Years 3 to 6, pupils respond well to their teachers when they use an array of attractive resources. Those pupils with behavioural difficulties work well, especially when teachers organise them into small groups. Pupils often learn through playing games. These are well produced by teachers, using ICT, and promote social development as well as deepening

pupils' knowledge of topics such as length and time. The careful planning and teamwork of teachers and assistants ensures that pupils fully explore a variety of learning approaches. This leads to a sense of success for all pupils, including those who need high levels of support as well as those who are working independently.

62. In Years 7 to 11 the subject leader teaches all the classes. The quality of this specialist teaching is very good. The curriculum (based on the National Strategy for Key Stage 3) and lessons are expertly adapted to meet the pupils' range of needs. ICT is used very well and motivates Year 7 pupils to link money to their understanding of times tables, while lower attaining pupils contribute through the accurate use of calculators. In Year 9, pupils develop their understanding of co-ordinates through computer games and maps of Maidstone. This helps them to appreciate the practical purpose of mathematics.
63. Very positive outcomes continue into Year 11, where, through high expectations, superb relationships and teamwork, pupils apply considerable effort so that lessons are highly productive. The very good levels of achievement have given 7 pupils the confidence to sit GCSE mathematics this year. This demonstrates a significant advance since the previous inspection, when unsatisfactory progress was judged during Key Stage 4. Standards have been successfully raised by the high quality of leadership provided for the subject. The key issue from the last inspection has been successfully addressed, and a previous weakness has been turned into a strength of the school. There is now a shared understanding that mathematics can be fun and a desire to strive for further improvement is embedded in the school. In addition, the subject leader has very successfully managed the development of a very good framework of assessment, schemes of work, planning and resources linked to the diverse needs of the pupils. New initiatives are evaluated very well, the quality of teaching and learning is routinely monitored and improved and the evident very good practice is now being shared and delivered across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Pupils are regularly encouraged to use their numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding in other subjects. In science, technology and art, attention is paid to accurate measurement, graphical recording of results, and the use of shape. Time features in geography work on the seasons, and in history through Victorian diaries. Much emphasis is placed on numeracy in physical education, such as ensuring pupils know how they are improving in regard to time or distance in athletics by recording their performance.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well over their time in Years 7 to 11.
- Assessment procedures are very good.
- The curriculum is well planned.
- Teaching methods are insufficiently varied in Years 7 to 11.

Commentary

65. Sixteen pupils were entered for the 2003 GCSE entry level single science award. All were successful in gaining a pass grade. A few of the younger pupils are entered for National Curriculum tests and their 2003 results show that, at the end of Year 2, most pupils are working towards Level 1. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain Level 1. At the end of Year 9, most pupils have reached Level 3. When these results are combined with school assessment data, they show that good achievement takes place in Years 1 to 6, and that pupils achieve very well between Years 7 and 9, and also in Years 10 and 11. Some individual pupils achieve very well and currently attend some lessons in a mainstream school.
66. There is a clear progression in scientific knowledge and understanding as pupils move through the school. This is because the curriculum is planned well and teachers help pupils to continue to build on their knowledge and not repeat topics unnecessarily. Pupils in Year 1 watch intently as fleece is spun into wool and come to realise how wool is used. In Year 2, pupils know basic facts about spiders and work out for themselves what spiders may eat. Older pupils carry out experiments and make careful observations. For example, in a lesson on sound in Year 5, pupils decided that sound must be linked to vibrations to air as the amplified guitar sounds made the snare drum active at the other side of the room. Also, pupils in Year 6 worked out that yeast will grow best if it is fed sugar and warm water. By the time they are in Year 9, pupils understand circuit diagrams and remember most of the types of energy. During the inspection, the Year 11 pupils had recently completed their GCSE examinations and were using and applying their scientific knowledge to make electrical question and answer boards for younger pupils to use.
67. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. The subject is taught by class teachers in Years 1 to 6 and by a subject specialist in Years 7 to 11. The subject leaders work well with their colleagues to help them plan and deliver their lessons and make sure that good resources are available. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 use a range of interesting activities, with an effective emphasis on practical investigation. These motivate the pupils to want to find out more. For example, in the Year 5 lesson on sound, some pupils modelled the auditory pathway and were able to see how sounds were carried to the brain. In Years 7 to 9, pupils are motivated to learn and work hard to find out things for themselves. The pupils in Years 10 and 11 are eager to gain exam passes and try very hard to recall and use their knowledge. The specialist teacher is thorough and methodical and makes sure that pupils have a secure understanding of concepts before moving on to new learning. However, lessons often follow the same format and, while pupils like the security this brings, there could be more variety of methods and approaches to meet the wide range of learning needs of the pupils.
68. Good leadership is provided for the subject and this, in particular, ensures that there is continuity of provision between Years 1 to 6 and Years 7 to 11. This also accounts for the good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. A recent innovation is a very good computer based assessment system that has the potential to reduce teachers' work load in assessment whilst also improving the quality of information gained. Both subject leaders are very knowledgeable and have appropriate plans to continue to develop the provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall.
- Pupils achieve very well in Years 7 to 11.
- There is very good leadership and management for the subject.
- There has been a very substantial improvement since the last inspection.
- The good quality and quantity of resources has significantly increased the use of ICT and enthuses the pupils.

Commentary

69. In Years 1 to 6, pupils show good achievement in their ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. Very good achievement takes place in Years 7 to 11 in response to the high quality of specialist teaching and support provided. This is in marked contrast to the last inspection, when progress was judged to be largely unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has also made a similar leap forwards, and is now very good. All pupils are keen and eager to use computers, and teachers provide a very effective learning environment. There is expert demonstration and a highly supportive team approach, from teachers, assistants and technician. Adults ask searching questions that help pupils to build on their previous learning, and provide clear, step by step guidance. As a result, pupils are very attentive in lessons and work productively to develop ideas and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to use ICT.
70. The curriculum and lessons are planned very thoroughly, making very good use of assessment, that ensures that individual needs are catered for at all times. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make continuous good progress. Their rate of progress, whilst good, is slower than in Years 7 to 11, because more can still be done to help them to understand the full range of functions on a computer. ICT lessons, for these pupils, are often used to also promote literacy and numeracy skills, and pupils use software that develops mouse and keyboard skills whilst discriminating, matching and blending letters. Pupils can produce and amend designs and patterns using art programs, and higher attaining pupils develop basic word processing skills.
71. In Years 7 to 11, the subject leader teaches or supports in all lessons. Computers are used to help pupils with their learning in a wide range of subjects. The interactive whiteboard, with pupils controlling the input, is very well used to motivate learning. Pupils explore the use of the Internet, including how to copy and paste selected information in order to use it for further work. They display a sense of commitment and enjoyment as they refine information or design posters. Digital cameras and scanners are well used when developing very good PowerPoint presentations. Word processing skills become more accurate and this is a result of the Year 11 pupils being motivated to gain 'CLAIT' accreditation in desktop publishing.
72. There is a strong clarity of vision presented by the subject leader, and this leads to the management of ICT being very successful. There is a step by step focus on developing the subject and this leads to improvements in resources, whole school training and standards. Clear targets are set for improvement, and are usually met. The current focus is on further increasing the use of ICT in other subjects, and continuing to monitor teaching and learning. Resources have improved enormously with the creation of an ICT suite and

computers in every classroom. The school now has reliable, accessible, networked computers for pupils, and laptops are used with increasing confidence by all teachers. Pupils and teachers benefit from the effective technical support, and this has helped to overcome the previously limited use of ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Teachers use ICT lessons to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills, and within English, mathematics and science the use of ICT is a regular feature. For example, an investigation of how sound travels incorporated an ICT presentation on auditory pathways and exploring orchestration and volume using music software. Digital cameras and videos are used in physical education and art to help pupils evaluate and improve their performance. ICT is also used well to support additional needs. For example, time in the ICT suite is dedicated weekly to developing keyboard skills for pupils with visual impairment, drawing upon the expertise of the LEA advisory teacher with support from the ICT staff.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching, and pupils' achievements, have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils work at a good pace, which helps their achievement.
- The curriculum is very good and includes good opportunities for fieldwork.
- ICT and literacy skills could be used more to help pupils with their learning.

Commentary

74. Achievement in Years 1 to 6, and 7 to 11, is good. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are supported by a very good curriculum. This has an effective balance between geographical inquiry, learning about places and environmental change. Pupils also learn a lot from taking part in an imaginative series of visits.
75. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 learn well. They enjoy their visits around the local area, which help them understand the idea of where things are. They then find out about places further afield, such as Scotland. Aspects of physical geography are taught well: good work has been done on rivers and climates. In Years 7 to 11, pupils build well on earlier foundations to sharpen their knowledge and skills, particularly in human and environmental geography. For example, they visit Samphire Hoe to see how the environment has been enhanced by spoil from the Channel Tunnel. Their work is improved by the effective use of mathematics to produce graphs and tables to illustrate, for example, aspects of the environment and human geography. ICT, however, is not used so well. Some opportunities are also missed in lessons to encourage pupils to write more freely and to develop more systematically their speaking and listening skills. This slows down their verbal reasoning and prevents some of them from making better comparisons between different parts of the world.

76. Teaching and learning are good across the school, with some very good features. Pupils' learning is helped by the confidence and expectations of the teachers. For example, in one lesson seen, the clarity of the teacher's explanation and practical examples helped pupils to understand that Egypt depends upon the Nile. Pupils are also expected to produce work which is appropriate in quality and quantity. Assessment is accurate and used well to help teachers with their lesson planning. Fieldwork is well organised and helps geographical understanding. The subject leader is committed, well organised and provides good leadership for improvement. Good attention has been given to all of the points made in the last inspection and improvement has been good.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and most pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- More use could be made of literacy and ICT in lessons.

Commentary

77. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 11. This is good improvement since the last inspection, and is a result of better teaching and an improved curriculum and assessment.
78. In Years 1 to 6, pupils learn well. Their teachers follow a curriculum which incorporates the major components of the National Curriculum, such as strengthening the pupils' knowledge and skills of both interpretation and communication. This is enhanced by the contribution of other subjects such as art and design, where pupils produce models of the Medusa and evacuee tags. Learning is also helped by interesting visits to the museum where the pupils, for example, dress up as Saxons and learn about the past through practical activities.
79. In Years 7 to 11, pupils' learning is supported by some interesting videos, visits to Canterbury Cathedral and the production of some good models and plans. Overall, teaching is good and pupils cover a range of important topics in detail as a result of teachers' high expectations. However, as in geography, more use could be made of ICT and addressing pupils' literacy so they develop communication skills and verbal reasoning. The leadership of the subject is good: staff have worked hard to improve both assessment and lesson planning and the weaknesses apparent in the last report have been addressed successfully.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show good achievement throughout the school.

- The curriculum is good and makes a major contribution to the provision for pupils' spiritual social, moral and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Assessment is very good, and data is used to make RE particularly relevant to Bower Grove pupils.
- The subject is very well led and managed by a skilled and enthusiastic subject leader.
- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

80. Pupils clearly enjoy their religious education lessons and listen well to stories and ideas. In Years 1 to 6, pupils retell their favourite bible stories and develop a good factual knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths such as Sikhism, Islam and Judaism. Higher attaining eight year olds already know that Sikhs have a holy book "a very, very, very, special book.. the Guru G... umm" (Guru Granth Sahib). They are beginning to recognise some religious symbols, such as the cross. In Year 7, pupils learn about Jewish food rules and successfully design a menu for a meal to share with a Jewish friend. In Year 11, pupils work independently in small groups. They identify examples of sources of conflict and how it is resolved in, for example, the story of Joseph, following a trip to see the musical in London.
81. Teaching from Year 3 onward is provided by the subject leader. It is underpinned by very good subject knowledge, so students get the benefit of interesting detail from the teacher's experience. The teacher knows just what she want pupils to get out of each particular lesson and works hard to achieve this. Pupils are engaged by her style. She interprets ideas and facts very effectively, using a skilled balance of technical vocabulary and humorous and colloquial language. In small groups, pupils are encouraged to develop their language and ideas through effective questioning, and this makes a good contribution to their speaking and listening skills.
82. There is a clear vision of how pupils' knowledge and skills should develop as they move through the school. The subject leader has looked carefully at the aspects of the subject that pupils find most difficult and has creatively developed the scheme and resources accordingly. There is a major focus on helping pupils think about their own values and those of other people. They are taught to respect differing views, first of the people that they know and then people from different culture and different faith groups. The emphasis on morality and living peacefully together echoes the very positive, nurturing and happy ethos of the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Art and design, physical education and design and technology are reported in depth below. In **music**, insufficient evidence was gathered to judge the quality of the provision. Three lessons were observed and parts of the choir rehearsal and guitar club were also seen. The school has already recognised that the subject is in need of development. As a result of the recent work of the subject leaders, improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching are already raising pupils' achievements, particularly in Years 1 to 6.*

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and finish work to a high standard.
- Very good teaching motivates pupils to work as artists.
- Pupils value their work and have pride in their learning.
- Pupils' individual record books are of exceptional quality.

Commentary

83. Pupils' art work is attractively displayed throughout the school. Much of this work is finished off very well and is of a higher standard than expected for the pupils' degrees of special educational needs. School assessment data shows that pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6, and very well in Years 7 to 11. This is very good achievement overall and is a direct result of the high expectations of the subject leaders.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and leads to pupils having confidence in their abilities so they are willing to try out ideas and be creative. For example, in a lesson seen for Year 4, the teacher demonstrated how to draw in proportion and use shading to make a figure drawing appear more rounded. The pupils responded very well as the teacher showed delight at their attempts and went on to include many of the new features in their work. These pupils were also further helped to see how they are learning by the teacher using their record books to compare their current drawings with those they did some time ago. This led them to see the improvements they had already made and to realise that further improvements are still possible. Teachers help pupils to value their work, have pride in their learning and work as artists. For example, in a lesson seen for pupils in Year 10, the pupils were researching how other artists had made masks and were experimenting with ideas in their sketch books. They were proud to show their sketch books to their teacher and valued the advice they received. The pupils also showed considerable interest in how other pupils had developed the same theme. The teacher made a point of always respecting the pupils' ideas and offered suggestions rather than telling them what to do. As a result, the pupils felt in charge of their own learning and worked at a fast pace with considerable effort to complete their tasks.
85. The subject is very well led, and has improved very well since the last inspection. The quality of assessment is very good and teachers keep a careful check of the skills pupils have learnt. A high quality initiative has been started. A record book is kept for each pupil with annotated digital images of completed works, with comments from the teacher that show how the work was made, what the pupil did well, and the National Curriculum level for the pupil. This builds into a record book that shows, at a glance, how pupils have improved. These books are very well presented and demonstrate to the pupils how much their teachers value their efforts. This work is exemplary.

Design and technology

The provision for design and technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well because of the good teaching of their class teachers.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve very well because of very good specialist teaching.
- Assessment is very good but smaller steps of assessment are still needed for some pupils.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

86. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well because of good teaching by their class teachers. For example, in a good lesson for pupils in Year 4, on designing and making a cardboard model ice-cream shop, the large group was well managed by the teacher and learning support assistants so that the pupils concentrated well on their tasks. A rich variety of interesting resources such as circuits, and examples of what other pupils had made, helped motivate the pupils. The teacher gave clear explanations and her skilled questioning enabled the pupils to progress well.
87. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve very well because of very good specialist teaching from an advanced skills teacher. This is characterised by high expectations, the encouragement of independent learning and work that is carefully matched to pupils' levels of understanding and skill. For example, in a very good lesson for Year 10, in which pupils were constructing various models following diagrams, pupils worked at different levels and were enabled to make very good progress because the work was carefully matched to their current level of skill. The teacher dealt briskly with potential distractions and, towards the end of the session, pupils listened with captivated attention as their achievements were celebrated.
88. Assistants work very effectively with teachers and provide invaluable support, for example working patiently with individual pupils and checking their understanding. Pupils work hard and gain in confidence because of the well-structured lessons. They are highly motivated and enjoy their work. The subject leader provides very good leadership and management, and has led good improvement since the last inspection. Together with colleagues, a broad and suitable curriculum has been developed. This includes food technology and opportunities for older pupils to learn how to cook for themselves and be more independent. There are very good systems for assessing pupils and recording and celebrating their achievements. For some pupils who start from a low level of attainment, further refinements in assessment would enable their very small steps of progress to be more sharply identified. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good, and examples of outstanding practice were seen.
- Pupils in all year groups achieve very well.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well enhanced by an extensive range of well attended clubs and visiting specialists, leading to excellent participation in sport.
- Excellent subject leadership and management have enthused pupils to be involved in physical activities.

Commentary

89. Teachers assess, with expertise, what pupils can do. They use this information very well to plan lessons and make sure that all pupils' needs are catered for, and every aspect of achievement during physical education is consistently taught. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults in lessons, and this motivates the pupils to do more. Teachers provide expert demonstration, and assistants give high quality support. This leads to pupils being very active, and confident to be involved. Staff fully include those pupils with physical disabilities and they display very high self-esteem in tackling their specially adapted physical tasks. Very good achievement is made in acquiring and developing skills. However, pupils add to this achievement by evaluating their own and other's performances very well to bring about further improvements. They also gain a good knowledge and understanding of fitness and health.
90. Additionally, in Years 1 and 2, with classes of pupils mainly with a wide range of communication needs, there are examples of excellent teaching, learning and achievement.

Example of outstanding practice

The teachers use the advice from therapists to teach pupils with ASD physical activities at the same time as promoting their social and communication development

The teacher's personal enthusiasm and expertise shines through, and the excellent staff teamwork inspires pupils to apply enormous physical and intellectual effort with great enjoyment. 'Frozen, runner, string, jelly, jumping' are some of the 'bean' words, spoken, with a superbly combined sense of high expectation and calmness, that stimulate pupils to take up shapes and perform actions in rapid succession. A very lively group burn off early morning energy, listen carefully and work as one. Snappy instructions of 'higher', 'faster', and teacher led counting bring numeracy to life. 'Touch your left ear with your right hand' and other challenging commands demand that the pupils think and act. Total enjoyment and participation develops speech and language alongside body awareness, and pushes behaviour problems aside. In another lesson, superb outdoor equipment helps to put pupils through a wealth of challenging balance, climbing and sliding which develops their concentration alongside agility and turn taking. Words, symbols, gestures, the tambourine, triangle and calm music emphasise instructions, changes and the concept of 'through'. Pupils running through cones, patting a ball to a partner, and scoring a goal, combine with interludes of calming with gentle music. A huge sense of physical, highly positive, personal, social and communication success permeates the whole lesson.

91. During Years 3 to 9, very effective teaching continues. This leads directly to all pupils showing very good achievement. Lower attaining pupils are given focussed lessons, such as in swimming. Here the lessons are very ably led by a teaching assistant qualified as a swimming instructor. In other lessons, all pupils strive to improve their personal performances, such as beating their time or distance in a previous athletics lesson. They want to understand rules and techniques, and are highly celebratory of each other's success.
92. No lessons were observed for pupils in Years 10 and 11, but ample assessment information indicates achievement in physical education is as high as in other years. Very good records are kept that include digital photographs and video recordings. These are used very well to support pupils' evaluations to improve their performance.
93. An exceptionally wide range of sports clubs, after school and in the community, is provided. These enhance the provision in physical education to an extremely high degree. Specialist coaches and the enthusiastic whole school staff offer the highest quality opportunities for participation in sport. Several pupils and ex-pupils join local sports clubs, joining their teams and participating in displays. Strong links with mainstream schools allows for visiting specialist teachers. The advice of the physiotherapist and occupational therapist is very well incorporated into lessons. Tournaments are held with mainstream as well as other special schools. The curriculum is enriched by taster sessions ranging from martial arts and cycling to circus skills. The excellent high profile of pupil involvement in such a range of physical activities has led to Sport England awarding the school both the 'Activemark' and the 'Sportsmark'.
94. The innovative use of links with clubs and coaches, and the positive vision regarding the high value of physical education for personal development contribute to excellent leadership. The high accolade awards and pupils' incredible personal enthusiasm are spurring even further developments. These are mainly focussed on developing the indoor facilities, and extending the opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities. Excellent management has ensured all that was judged as good in the previous inspection has become very good with excellent features, and the unsatisfactory storage of outdoor equipment has been adequately overcome. Additional grants have been very well

secured, and the overall budget is used very wisely to develop resources to match the changing needs of the pupils and to broaden the activities offered to them.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well planned, managed and taught.
- Pupils achieve very well in their personal and social development.
- There is an impressive range of outside activities and visits that make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
- Links between citizenship, PSHE and other subjects are very good and this contributes to the very good achievement.

Commentary

95. Pupils achieve very well in their personal and social development because the subject is very well planned and taught. The subject is managed very well and there is now a whole school overview of what is to be taught. This shows that a wide range of topics is used to extend pupils' learning and understanding as they progress through the school. Teachers are aware of the need to make work relevant to pupils and this is particularly successful when it is related to aspects of their own lives, such as the importance of making choices, bereavement and loss. Teachers also promote the importance of all aspects of personal safety and healthy eating. The Active Citizenship Policy and the Mobility Programme are models of their kind and prepare pupils well for leaving school.
96. The school management places a high priority on the importance of a variety of experiences and activities in helping the pupils' personal and citizenship development. This contributes very effectively to pupils' learning. Snack-time and lunch-time are occasions where pupils are encouraged to take turns, choose, wait patiently and socialise in an appropriate way. Additionally, pupils' personal and social development is helped by learning in settings beyond the security of school when they visit different towns, houses and places of special interest. Some attend for different lengths of time in other schools where they do well to make their own way in mainstream school life.
97. In citizenship, pupils' work in both Year 9 and Year 11 shows very good achievement. Skills of participation and responsible action, particularly in community-based activities, are good. Pupils achieve very well across the school with no significant differences between boys and girls and between higher and lower attainers. Evidence from pupils' work shows that knowledge and skills in citizenship are enhanced by the provision offered by PSHE and other subjects. Thus, they learn to become informed citizens when they visit the police station, registry office, law courts and County Hall. They vote for representatives on the Kent Youth Council and elect their own school council, which is active and does good work. The school has a strong pastoral, extra curricular and enrichment dimension and this helps pupils develop skills of participation and responsible action. They run their own tuck shop, help younger pupils with their taxis and at lunchtime and with registers. Year 10 pupils work for one morning a week at local nurseries and play groups.

98. The overall quality of teaching across the school is very good. Subject specialists make a number of positive teaching contributions when they encourage pupils to develop their spiritual, moral and social awareness. Pupils understand that many are worse off than they are and the school has an enviable reputation for its charity work. The subject also benefits from the experience and expertise of a wide range of visiting speakers representing many organisations. The leadership and management of citizenship are very good. The subject leader monitors and supports the subject very effectively and this is important to the implementation of this newly developing subject. There is a comprehensive scheme of work and reliable systems for assessing pupils' progress. As a result, mainly of the well organised and managed curriculum, achievement in citizenship is very good and the outlook for the future is most encouraging.

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 | 1 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 2 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 2 |
| Overall standards achieved | 2 |
| Pupils' achievement | 2 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos) | 1 |
| 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 | 2 |
| How well pupils learn | 2 |
| The quality of assessment | 2 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 2 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 2 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 1 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 1 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 1 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 1 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 1 |
| The governance of the school | 1 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 1 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 1 |
| The effectiveness of management | 1 |

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7). In a special school such as this, standards achieved are judged against

individual targets and not national standards.