

INSPECTION REPORT

GREENFIELDS SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122163

Headteacher: Mrs. J Moralee

Lead inspector: Sue Aldridge

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd December, 2003

Inspection number: 258908

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	11-19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	67
School address:	Harborough Road Northampton
Postcode:	NN2 8LR
Telephone number:	01604 843657
Fax number:	01604 843657
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Major Robin Dickson
Date of previous inspection:	10 th September, 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Greenfields is a mixed, community special school for students from 11 to 19 with severe learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection there were 67 students on roll, all with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most students have severe learning difficulties; there are eleven with autism and seven with multi-sensory impairment (MSI). One student has a medical condition that results in part-time attendance at school with some home tuition. All but five students are white. There are no students from families where English is an additional language, and no travellers, refugees or asylum seekers. There are four students in public care and twenty-nine who regularly have respite care. Overall, socio-economic circumstances are below average. The school has links with two middle schools and one secondary school. It is involved in several initiatives; these are Young Enterprise, Small Schools Fund, an Augmentative and Alternative Communication Project, and a Children's Services Project. Its work has been recognised by Investors in People, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Bronze Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8810	Sue Aldridge	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, modern foreign languages (French and German), Post-16, special educational needs.
8937	Howard Allen	Lay inspector	
17530	Mary Cureton	Team inspector	Religious education, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
32055	Glan Davies	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology.
21713	Chris Lewis	Team inspector	English, music, physical education.

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International
Upperton House
The Avenue
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 3YB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 & 4	
POST 16	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. Students all achieve equally well; they have very positive attitudes to the school and learning, and behave very well. Teaching and learning are good. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve well; there are no differences in achievement between boys and girls, those of different ethnic origins, different abilities and special educational needs.
- Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- There is excellent promotion of good relationships, which contribute to the school's good climate for learning.
- Staff, who work well as a team, provide well for the different groups of students they teach.
- The curriculum at Post-16 is very good.
- Assessment is much improved, and data used well to evaluate the school's success.
- There is very good support, advice and guidance for students, and good arrangements to secure their health, safety and well-being.
- There is very good partnership with parents.
- Arrangements for staff development are good.
- Staff turnover is a barrier to further improvement, so is the school's unsatisfactory accommodation.
- Students who have respite care do not have the same access to the curriculum as others because they arrive late and leave school early.
- Students are not involved as well as they might be in assessing their own learning and decision making in school.

There has been satisfactory improvement in the school's effectiveness since the last inspection. At the last inspection two years ago, there were serious weaknesses in leadership and management. Since then, good improvement has been secured in the curriculum and the assessment of students' progress, and these have successfully raised achievement. The key issue relating to leadership and management was not acted upon until a year had passed, so improvement is relatively recent, although satisfactory. There has been good support from the Local Education Authority (LEA) to secure improvements in leadership and management.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Across the school, achievement is good. The standards that students reach compare favourably with those in similar schools nationally. Because staff provide well for all groups of students, whatever their gender, ethnic origin, learning difficulty or personal circumstances, all students achieve equally well.

Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They love coming to school, and consider lessons to be amongst their favourite school activities. Very good attitudes and behaviour help to create a harmonious learning

environment. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is unsatisfactory, but outside the school's control.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Staff cater well for students' different abilities and special educational needs. Non-teaching staff work well in tandem with teachers; several have provided valuable continuity when there have been changes in teaching staff. A good curriculum and assessment procedures promote achievement well. Staffing is satisfactory, at present, but high turnover is a barrier to further improvement. The accommodation is unsatisfactory as it is not suitable for secondary students and limits the experiences that can be safely provided in science, design and technology, art and physical education. The school works very successfully in partnership with parents, whose views it seeks, values and acts upon.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is satisfactory; a clear vision and more appropriate aims have been identified in the past year, and these are beginning to influence the school's work. The school is now more outward looking; it has not yet developed a role in supporting pupils in mainstream schools (outreach), but has links with a few mainstream schools which benefit both parties. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are more proactive in ensuring that statutory requirements are met, and this has increased the school's capacity to sustain improvement. Management is satisfactory. Good use is made of assessment information to measure the school's success. Induction and staff development support improvement well. Governors have adopted a suitable set of policies to address the high staff turnover, which continues to present a barrier to improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children are treated fairly, encouraged to become mature and independent, that they are kept well informed and that the teaching is good. All find that their children like school, and students confirmed this. A very small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying, but inspectors found no evidence of this.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- stabilise staffing*;
- increase students' involvement in assessing their own learning and decision making in the school;

Liaise with the LEA to

- ensure that students who receive respite care have the same access to the curriculum as other students;
- improve the school's accommodation in order to rectify the weaknesses identified in the report.

** This forms part of the school's improvement plan*

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Students achieve well, although the standards they reach are well below national expectations because of the nature and extent of student's learning difficulties.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in English, mathematics, science, religious education, German, physical education (PE) and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
- Improvements in achievement have been secured by development of the curriculum and its assessment.
- Achievement in ICT, which is satisfactory, is limited by the lack opportunities for students to work independently on computers.
- The school uses assessment information well to raise standards and promote achievement.
- Arrangements for individuals help to promote achievement well.

Commentary

1. Improvement since the last inspection is good. At the time of the last inspection, achievement in English and mathematics was unsatisfactory, because of weaknesses in the curriculum and assessment, and despite good teaching in lessons. These weaknesses have now been rectified and this has helped to raise standards and achievement. Previously, achievement in PSHE was satisfactory; since then, planning for the subject has been completed and enhanced by the addition of citizenship; achievement in PSHCE is now good. The school has maintained good achievement in science and religious education. No judgement was made on German last time, as too little evidence was available. The subject is now well established, and well taught; students achieve well as a result. In ICT, although most of the teaching is good, independent learning is restricted by the lack of a whole-class set of computers, as might be provided in an ICT suite. As a result, students need to share computers and take turns in a few lessons. Nonetheless, achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

2. The school has developed well its ability to evaluate its success by making effective use of accurate assessment data that it now collects. It now teaches students in Years 7 to 11 in groups of similar ability, and this promotes progress well. Previously, it was criticised for setting targets that were not challenging enough. Now, it has good value-added information that enables it to set both realistic and challenging targets. Targets set for raising achievement in English, mathematics and science in Years 9 and 11 were achieved in 2003. At Post-16, targets set for students of different abilities to achieve a set number of modules in ALL (Accreditation for Life and Living) were achieved in 2002 and 2003.

3. Use of P scales¹ to assess levels that students reach has enabled the school to collect data over a two year period for all subjects, and this is analysed to show trends. For example, the most recent information shows that the best value in a non-core subject is added in modern foreign languages. In addition, the school submits its assessment information for English, mathematics, science and PSHE to two national bodies; in one case this gives an indication of how Greenfields students' achievements compare with those of similar schools nationally. Indicators are that students from Greenfields achieve at least as well as those in similar schools nationally. In science in Years 7 to 11, and PSHE at Post-16, students do particularly well.

4. Analysis of value added information is used by the school to compare the achievements of boys and girls, and those of different ethnic groups. The school could usefully extend this analysis to

¹ A national system of assessing attainments below Level 1 of the National Curriculum

groups of pupils with different special educational needs or circumstances. For example, it should analyse the progress made by those who miss schooling because of respite care.

5. Inspectors found that there were no differences in the achievements of different groups. This is because the school has good strategies to provide for differences, whether they arise from students' special needs or personal circumstances. For example, permanent staff are skilled and knowledgeable in teaching the range special needs found in the school. Staff are used flexibly, so that individual needs can be met. For example, one student whose behaviour was a danger to peers has been taught individually for much of the time; this has made a noticeable difference to that student's progress and achievement. One student, recently arrived at Greenfields, has not been in any school for some time. He is being supported by a family member until he has settled. A third student is taught partly at Greenfields and partly at home; effective liaison helps to secure progress and promotes achievement well. Inspectors found the evidence about achievement of students with respite care to be inconclusive; several do rather better than many of their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

6. Students have very positive attitudes to school and their work; their behaviour is very good. Taken together, provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students love coming to school.
- Students show very positive attitudes in lessons even when they do not find activities interesting.
- Behaviour in lessons, around the school, and in the community, is very good.
- Relationships between students and adults are excellent.
- Students who have respite care often arrive late and leave early, so punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

7. The attendance at the school compares favourably with similar schools. The attendance of most students is good, although a few students miss schooling because of medical conditions. Parents are generally supportive of the school's efforts to ensure all students attend when they are well. There are satisfactory procedures in place to follow up unexpected absence or any particularly poor attendance.

8. The school has worked hard to resolve transport problems that result in unsatisfactory punctuality. They have had much success in several individual cases where students have particular problems; where they are in poor health and unable to cope with lengthy journeys, for example. However, the school has still to achieve a satisfactory solution to the problem of the students who, when they are in respite care, miss a significant amount of schooling because transport is only available early in the afternoon.

9. Students' attitude to lessons is very good. Even when lessons are less well planned, lack interest or pace, students usually remain eager to answer questions to the best of their ability and take part in any activities.

10. Nearly all students confirm they like school. They enjoy being with their friends, and like their teachers and all the other adults at the school very much. When asked what they most liked about school most students said that lessons are the best thing.

11. Students generally behave very well both in class and around the school. Most students are proud to wear the school uniform and point to the badges on their jumpers to indicate how pleased they are to attend Greenfields. When on visits, students are a credit to their school. Other schools

speak highly of the attitudes of those Greenfields students who attend mainstream school as part of their integration programme.

12. The school's behaviour policy is very effective in helping students improve their behaviour. Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with well by teachers and teaching assistants. All staff know the children in their care well and demand high standards of behaviour from them at all times. At the same time, teachers and their assistants are sensitive to any particular difficulties a student may have, and they acknowledge positive improvements, however small.

13. The promotion of good relationships is excellent and is a strength of the school. Inspectors saw no bullying, and any serious incidents that put others at risk are handled appropriately and well.

14. The school works hard to ensure students make progress in their personal development so that they are able to cope as well as possible when they move on from school. During snack times and lunch times students are encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible, including getting their own meals and clearing away if they can. At other times, students can be seen arranging and clearing away chairs in the hall for assemblies or returning registers to the office. The many trips to the local area provide students with valuable opportunities to develop their social skills.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

15. The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are both good, and so is the curriculum. The school provides good quality care and welfare; it maintains good, constructive relationships with parents.

Teaching and learning

16. Teaching and learning are both good, and so is assessment, which has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have very good relationships with students, who are managed well; students are well motivated, and keen to do well.
- Teachers and classroom assistants work together most effectively to promote learning.
- Different methods, approaches and resources ensure that all students have the same opportunities to learn.
- Teachers identify different learning outcomes for students of different abilities, but do not review these in such a way that students know what they need to do to improve further.
- Unsatisfactory teaching is associated with the planning of unsuitable activities or weaknesses in the use of time.

Commentary

17. There is a high degree of harmony between staff and students in lessons at Greenfields, and this creates a good climate for learning. Students know that they are valued, and there is strong mutual respect. As a result, students are keen to please; they work hard, tackle tasks with enthusiasm, and try to do as much as they can themselves.

18. A particularly strong feature of many lessons is the quality of support provided by classroom assistants. Their skills and their thorough knowledge of students enable them to compensate for the lack of continuity in some classes, caused by unavoidable changes of teacher. Their support is finely judged; they know when to hang back, and when to offer help. As a result, students are not over-reliant on their support, and do as much as they can themselves.

19. Since the last inspection, good quality plans (schemes of work) have been finalised in all subjects, and teachers plan their lessons using these as a guide. Students generally make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding because teachers plan a broad range of learning activities. In the majority of lessons, learning activities are well matched to students' abilities.

20. So that all students have the same opportunities to learn, staff use a good variety of strategies. For example, where students have communication difficulties, there is good use of signs, symbols and real objects to support their understanding. Several students use electronic communication aids, which enable them to produce simulated speech. For a more able student with visual impairment, an embossed system based on letter shapes (Moon) is used. Students with autism have communication books that accompany them wherever they go; when they wish to make a request, they peel off a symbol from its Velcro fastener and hand this to a member of staff. They also benefit from a different organisation in classes: individual booths, with desk-trays in which work tasks are kept, provide a secure and familiar space in which students will work independently, with little supervision, for increasing periods as they mature. By the time students with autism reach Post-16, they work in an adult environment which simulates the workplace very well. Students with autism also make use of pictorial timetables, which help them to adjust to changes during the school day. Staff make good use of a sensory approaches for students with complex difficulties. For example, in a science lesson on friction, students were able to rub surfaces with different textures with their hands, and experience friction through their skin. Teachers provide first-hand experiences to enable students to learn. For example, in citizenship, students participated in a mock election. Since the last inspection, the school has ensured that all classes have opportunities to use the local community as a learning zone, and this is particularly well utilised in Post-16, where students develop their literacy and numeracy skills in a social context.

21. A few students find it difficult to maintain good behaviour throughout the school day. For them, clear behaviour management plans are constructed and these are implemented faithfully, and with success. It is rare for poor behaviour to disrupt learning. When students arrive late in classes, or leave early, staff do their best to compensate for this. In a Post-16 literacy session, one student arrived late from an appointment at hospital; he was warmly welcomed, quickly settled, and soon engaged in his set tasks.

22. In the lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory, there were three instances when time was not used well enough. In an ICT lesson and a science lesson, students took turns to participate in activities, and were not engaged for long enough. In a geography lesson, too much time was taken up in setting the scene, so there was little time left for the main activity; as a result, the lesson objective was not achieved. In an unsatisfactory music lesson, a student with autism was unsettled by the music played at the start, and this disrupted learning. In all instances, weaknesses meant that students were not engaged well enough, which limited learning. In two of the four lessons, the circumstances were unusual, and teaching was judged to be atypical.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	14 (31%)	18 (40%)	9 (20%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

23. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in assessment practice. The school has introduced a system of small steps assessment in all subjects; this allows for the recording of small but significant achievements. Records are well designed to enable staff to record progress in students' responses to a single task, as well as across a range of tasks. Each term, teachers use their records to place students on P scales or National Curriculum levels. To support their assessments, staff complete evidence sheets, made up of a photograph and annotations. These clarify the context of the achievement, and make meaningful records for students and parents

alike. All recording of levels is completed electronically, and this makes analysis of data a relatively simple task. The whole system of recording is much more streamlined than it was previously.

24. Assessment information is now used well, particularly in Years 8 to 13. In Year 7, information from students' previous schools is used satisfactorily; at the time of the inspection IEP targets had not been finalised for all students because of a change in staffing. However, the small steps system is working well; staff maintain records well, and the next steps in learning are crystal clear. Students' levels are used well to construct teaching groups in literacy and numeracy, and also to identify learning outcomes for students of different abilities in lessons. Following a school review by representatives of the LEA, the school has adopted a format for planning lessons that shows outcomes to be achieved by *all* students, those to be achieved by *most*, and those to be achieved by a *few*. Lessons are in three parts, with an introduction, main activity and a review towards the end. Whilst teachers do introduce students to the topic well, question students to check on their knowledge and understanding, and review general learning at the end, they do not tease out differences in learning or point out what students need to do to improve. A few more able students are beginning to identify some of their own learning. Towards the end of a science lesson, one spontaneously announced that he had learned 'about Newtons today'. In general, though, students do not have a clear grasp of exactly what they have learned or what they need to do to improve

The curriculum

25. Provision is **good**. It is enhanced by the very good opportunities for students to improve their personal and social development throughout the school day. Extra-curricular opportunities are satisfactory. Resources for learning are satisfactory. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, as it is not suitable for secondary aged students.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Post-16 curriculum is very good. It prepares students very well for further study and life after school, and enables students to achieve nationally recognised awards.
- Staff teamwork is a particular strength of provision.
- There are very good, well planned opportunities for students to improve their personal and social skills.
- Not all students have the same opportunities to learn; those who have respite care regularly miss parts of lessons.
- Inadequate accommodation restricts the curriculum in science, design and technology, food technology and ICT.

Commentary

26. The school provides a good curriculum from years 7 to 11. The programme for students over 16 is very good and is highly appropriate in its provision of vocational skills, preparation for adult life and the development of students' capacity for personal responsibility. The school provides a very good programme of personal, social and health education. Education about sex and relationships is a strength. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

27. Students who have respite care do not have the same educational opportunities as the others because they arrive late and leave early because of transport difficulties; whilst this is not the school's fault, and much has been done to lobby for a change in practice, this is unsatisfactory. Otherwise, the curriculum is carefully tailored to individual need, and when they are in lessons, all students have the same good opportunities as the rest. The school prepares students well for later stages of education and employment by its emphasis on the world of work, and provides good opportunities for fully supported workplace experience or work within the school community. At Post-16, students set up small enterprises making and selling items of food and decorative objects and this helps them understand simple business procedures. Home skills lessons and experience of

leisure activities and outings into the community further improve their knowledge and understanding of what life after school may hold.

28. Curriculum development is consistently good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, and innovations continue. Numeracy and literacy are now taught in ability groups so that lessons can be better focused. Effective techniques have been developed to help the learning of those with multi-sensory impairment and autism. New behavioural strategies have been introduced. The national Key Stage 3 strategy has been well used to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

29. The school provides satisfactory support for learning outside the school day. Students have opportunities to visit exhibitions and participate in sport, and there are a few lunchtime activities, such as a folk club. Members of a professional rugby team will help students in their games provision next term.

30. There are sufficient teachers, many of whom have good experience and expertise in teaching students with the range of special educational needs found in the school. However, recruitment and retention of teaching staff is a problem that presents a barrier to further improvement. For a variety of reasons, unrelated to issues within the school, five teachers have left during the last two years and the school has not been able to replace all of them with staff who have experience of teaching students with severe learning difficulties. At present, there is no PE co-ordinator, and no permanent art and design co-ordinator. There has also been long-term illness. In response to these difficulties, governors have adopted the personnel procedures of the LEA, which are proving effective, in dealing with long-term absence, for example. The number of well experienced teaching assistants is good. Many of them work most effectively with teachers who do not have experience of teaching students with complex needs, and this ensures that learning is not interrupted.

31. The accommodation is clean, tidy and well maintained, despite the long-term absence of the caretaker and site supervisor at the time of the inspection. The number and size of rooms, however, limits students' breadth of study, and their achievement, in science, design technology and food technology; it also makes teachers' jobs more difficult, because they have to carry resources from one class to another. There is no class set of computers, which restricts provision for independent learning, as students need to share computers. The governors' audit of accommodation emphasises the difficulty of promoting safety in the school where corridors are obstructed and entrances and external doors not always suitable for escape. Resources are satisfactory. The library is good and contains well above the number of volumes recommended by the School Library Association for schools of similar size and type. However, books written in symbols and Moon are less accessible, as they are held as part of the English stock.

32. Since the last inspection, the curriculum is very much improved. There is now a clear rationale for the balance within and between subjects, as well as the different curricula provided for students with different special educational needs. The space devoted to the library has been improved. External maintenance is now good. The school has recently achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Investors in People endorsement.

Care, guidance and support

33. The provision for students' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Students have very good access to the support, advice and guidance they need as they progress through the school. There is satisfactory involvement of students in school decision making.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are very well supported by school staff as well as professionals from other agencies.
- Induction arrangements for new students are very good.
- There is no school council and this restricts the opportunity for students to express their views.

Commentary

34. There are good arrangements to ensure the well being of the students. The school has sound child protection procedures in place, with the headteacher as the named responsible person. All staff are aware of the arrangements and acknowledge their responsibility for child protection issues. Relevant staff attend suitable training courses and update others on their return.

35. Staff take care to provide for the safety of the students in their classes. There is a clear policy and procedures in operation for the health and safety of the students. In the school, a high priority is given to health and safety. For example, special consideration is given to those visually impaired students regarding obstacles that they may find around the school. As staff escort such students around the corridors, they call out the locations, so that students can correctly orientate themselves.

36. Detailed records are kept of the students' progress and these are discussed in the Annual Review. Students are involved as far as they can be in reviewing their progress during annual reviews. For example, those who are able to, complete a simple form to say what successes they have had during the year, and what they would like to do to prepare for leaving school. Those who require support to communicate are provided with this. At the annual review, targets are set in each subject. These are derived from the small steps system of assessment now in use; this is an unnecessary duplication of effort, as the records themselves show clearly what the next step should be, and parents are given detailed information on the small steps system. A few students with quite distinct needs have IEPs; these are well constructed, and specific targets are reviewed each term. This helps to ensure that students' individual needs are met well.

37. The very good relationships between staff and students mean that students feel that they have a number of adults who they can trust and turn to for advice and support. The school has established a good relationship with the Northampton Health Care Trust and has the services of speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, school nurse and an occupational therapist. All the above provide valuable advice and therapy, and students benefit from the effective use of these outside agencies. The Integrated Children Services (ICS) project seeks to provide joined-up services for all students, and has been recently established as a pilot project in the school. The presence of social workers in the school strengthens the support that is immediately available to students. The school is well maintained and clean. There are regular checks on the safety of the buildings, the grounds and the hydrotherapy pool. Fire precautions and alarm tests are regularly carried out and documented. Fire drill is carried out to ensure that all personnel are aware of the procedures.

38. There are very good arrangements for the induction of new students. Students are invited to the school in the term prior to admission to acquaint themselves with the different facilities that are available. The headteacher and the head of lower school are invited to the final review at the main feeder school so that those students' documents are used in planning their future programme of studies. The good relationships between parents and the school helps to ease transition from primary and secondary school, and one parent spoke appreciatively of how her fears had been allayed by the school's comprehensive arrangements for induction of students. Close liaison with parents strengthens the general support for students.

39. There are some cases of breakdown of behaviour. However, procedures are in operation to deal with these incidents. For example, students with behaviour difficulties have behaviour management plans, and these are faithfully implemented, with success. The school has experienced, skilled staff to deal with these problems as and when they occur, and all incidents are properly recorded.

40. There are limited opportunities for students to express their views. The meeting that inspectors held with students was positive; it showed clearly how much students like the school, and that their views could be taken more into account when formulating plans for further development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

41. The school has very good relationships with the parents of its students. Parents are regularly consulted, and the school takes account of their views. Links with the community, and with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents support the school very well.
- The school listens to what parents have to say, and acts to improve areas that parents criticise.
- Good day-to-day contact with parents is maintained through the home/school books.
- The quality of information that parents receive about the school and their children is good.
- Students have a wealth of opportunities to visit the local area.
- For a few students, there are good inclusion opportunities resulting from constructive links with mainstream schools.

Commentary

42. Parents speak very highly of staff at the school and consider that the school serves their children well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They have no problems with contacting the school if they have any concerns. Many parents are actively involved in supporting the school through the Parents and Friends Group that organises social and fund raising events. Funds raised are used to buy extra resources.

43. Most students live some way from the school and this makes direct personal contact with their parents very difficult. However, good use is made of home/school books as means of keeping in contact. These books are usually well used both by teaching staff and by parents and carers.

44. The school sends out a regular newsletter letter for parents; this ensures that they are aware of events that their children have been involved in, and know what is planned for the future. There are booklets for parents that inform them of assessment information, school policies and routines.

45. The reports parents receive as part of the Annual Review process provide parents with good information to gauge the progress their children are making. The school tries hard to ensure all parents are able to attend reviews by offering as much flexibility as possible in terms of appointment times. Social workers who are part of the recently formed Integrated Children's Services (ICS) team also attend reviews where they are able and this helps to provide broader support for parents and their children.

46. The level of consultation with parents is impressive. The school consults with parents on an annual basis about the provision the children and parents receive. The school takes such consultation very seriously and feeds back to parents on any actions that are proposed as a result of comments that are received. For example, during the most recent consultation, parents raised the issue of the inadequate amount of information they receive about the curriculum. The school is now trialling a curriculum information document and is awaiting parental feedback before extending the number of curriculum areas covered.

47. The school has good links with the community. All students have many opportunities to visit the local area to develop their life skills. Post-16 students regularly visit a care home for the elderly and held a market stall in Northampton to sell their business products as part of a Young Enterprise Team project.

48. Links with other schools are good, with a number of students able to attend lessons in mainstream schools and all students enjoying meeting their peers from other schools who visit Greenfields. The opportunities for Post-16 students to visit other colleges is at present limited, but the Post-16 co-ordinator has recently become involved in a project to increase these opportunities

so that students have a wider range of experiences. The school has become more outward looking since the last inspection, increasing its local and national links.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

49. The school is satisfactorily led and managed. Leadership is satisfactory, governance is satisfactory, and management is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good leadership of the curriculum.
- There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and the needs of individuals.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- Training is used well to secure improvement.
- The Post-16 provision is well led and managed.
- The school makes good use of assessment information to measure its effectiveness, but whole-school self evaluation is at an early stage of development.
- Relationships are good within the school but there has been a high turnover of staff in the past two years which has slowed school development.
- Best value principles are applied well.

Commentary

50. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide satisfactory leadership. Since the last inspection, when the school was deemed to have serious weaknesses, a senior management team has been established, and members have clearly defined areas of responsibility. For example, the school has worked hard to improve signing and symbol communication throughout all departments. This development has been led by one of the new senior teachers, and it has a high profile in the school.

51. Communication throughout the school has been strengthened; regular, well documented meetings ensure that information flows well, and that staff are able to influence decision making. This has resulted in an improvement in staff morale. In conjunction with the LEA adviser, governors and senior managers have consulted and agreed upon a suitable set of aims and a vision for future development. A clear, shared vision is emerging in the school, but changes in staffing have prevented the wide sharing of the long-term vision.

52. Leadership of the curriculum is now much better. There is now a clear rationale for subject time allocations, and the deputy head and senior management team monitor implementation of the curriculum policy well. The school has built well on the work, already started at the last inspection, to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. It now measures students' progress, and identifies areas for further improvement as well as individual students in need of further support. The school applies principle of best value well. It compares its performance with other similar schools nationally, and an LEA initiative involving P scales will enable it to compare itself with similar schools locally as well. It consults parents well, and acts on what they say needs to be done to improve. When purchases are made, the best value for money is sought. The school challenges itself, by setting targets to raise pupil achievement, for example.

53. The Post-16 provision is well led and managed. Despite a positive report at the last inspection, and the long-term absence of a key member of staff, staff have undertaken a review of provision, and modified the curriculum to ensure that it is related strongly to students' needs after leaving school. One teacher's enthusiasm and energy have been recognised outside the school; a management group made up of LEA and college representatives, set up to enhance links between schools and local colleges, has invited her to join their ranks.

54. The governors now monitor all areas of the school's work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In order to check on the curriculum, subject co-ordinators are invited to make presentations on their subject area, and at these meetings, areas for development and support are highlighted. For example, Governors have discussed with the science co-ordinator the need for specialist accommodation. Governors visit the school regularly to talk to staff and they now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors focus on improving standards and challenge the work of the senior management team in an appropriate manner. They have adopted a number of policies relating to personnel management, and addressed issues of staff absence and illness in a robust but fair manner. Improvements in governance have increased the school's capacity to sustain improvement.

55. The governors and senior management team are aware of the detrimental effects that recent staff changes have had on the education of students and the development of the curriculum. They are seeking to establish greater stability in that area. The school has recently held a team building day and senior management are monitoring staff welfare. This work is well supported by a good induction programme and support for new staff is provided by the senior management team.

56. Leadership and management have been strengthened well since the last inspection by training and support. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior managers and governors have all attended pertinent courses, and there has been good support from the LEA link adviser. Further training is planned.

57. The school is a welcoming, well kept place where good and supportive professional relationships exist between staff and other professionals. Concern for individuals, their welfare, and educational progress, is strong, and the school strives to ensure that all students thrive. Productive relationships with professionals such as therapists and social workers help to secure suitable provision for each student. The school collaborates well with the home tuition service to enable a student with particular medical difficulties to receive education at home and at school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	948,940.65	Balance from previous year	-25,860
Total expenditure	910,044.33	Balance carried forward to the next	13,036.32
Expenditure per pupil	14,000		

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

58. Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Developments to assist and augment students' communication skills have been most beneficial.
- A new library has contributed well to literacy across the curriculum, and resources are good.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- Despite changes of co-ordinator, leadership is satisfactory and there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

59. Students of all abilities achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Those who have considerable difficulties in speaking have been greatly helped by the school's recent introduction of augmented communication systems. The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) project is being run over three years in conjunction with the feeder school. Methods include the use of signs by staff and students, the exchanging of pictures and symbols, and the use of electronic communication aids. All have resulted in improved communication and understanding for many students. Teachers and support staff have improved their own specialist communication skills through relevant training. This has had a positive impact on achievement and standards. Enhanced communication is used well for students with autism as well as the MSI class where electronic aids have greatly contributed towards students' participation in lessons.

60. In Years 7 to 9, the most skilful students read a few familiar words. They write a few words with well formed letters, and verbally express their simple views on characters in stories and plays. Students with complex multi-sensory difficulties use symbol communication in books to choose activities. They are able to communicate electronically their views on stories. By Year 9, a few students are steadily increasing their vocabulary and are reading books, including those from the Oxford Reading Tree. Most have symbols to assist their understanding from this reading scheme.

61. In Year 10, a few students are using encyclopaedias to retrieve simple information. They write using correct capital letters. Those with multi-sensory difficulties are able to express preferences by choosing from a number of objects. At the end of their secondary education the most skilful can give factual information about Romeo and Juliet, and write simple sentences about the effect of Romeo and Juliet's death on both their families.

62. At Post-16, able students are able to write postcards freely with correct punctuation. They use ICT to write accounts of a story. One pupil had played the part of Tybalt in a specially adapted version of Romeo and Juliet. Students with autism look at books on their own that they have selected with help from the library. The most skilful students with autism can read simple sentences and hold short conversations with staff about their views and preferences.

63. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Lessons are well planned, with specific language targets for individual students. The lessons are appropriately adapted from the National Curriculum; learning experiences now have good breadth and offer suitable challenge. Students

recognise the routines of the classroom. Relationships, even with difficult and challenging students, are very good throughout the school, and this promotes learning well. Lessons are well supported by staff signing and using symbol charts.

64. The assessment of students' progress is good. Clear records of achievements are maintained and specific targets are set for individuals that need them. The school now uses small steps, the P scales, reading assessments, and common word recognition tests, to quantify achievements and measure progress.

65. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A new co-ordinator is reviewing the present schemes of work that are now in place. The co-ordinator is ably assisted in this work by a literacy and numeracy teaching assistant who works with groups of students to improve their reading ability. Assistance is also provided by a senior member of staff who is mentoring the new co-ordinator and introducing and overseeing the new systems of signed and symbol communication in the school. Self-evaluation of the subject has begun. Monitoring of lessons has occurred, but the new co-ordinator is not scheduled to start monitoring, as part of the school's cycle, until January 2004.

66. Resources are good. The recent creation of a library has enhanced considerably the number of reference books and fiction books for students. Books have been specially selected with other cultures in mind. This contributes well to students' personal development. These books are supplemented by a good number of electronic communication aids and tactile books for the reading of Moon, a tactile code for visually impaired learners. Opportunities for students to work independently using ICT as a learning tool are limited by the lack of a room in which more than one or two computers can be used.

67. Improvements in the teaching of English since the last inspection have been good. There is now a detailed scheme of work in place based upon National Curriculum requirements and this has been suitably modified to meet students' diverse special needs. A library has been created within the school. The new systems of communication and electronic aids have improved speaking and listening as well as written skills across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

68. The work in English has influenced well the use of literacy across the curriculum. All lesson plans now identify individuals' speech and language objectives and use of AAC. In most lessons, there is good use of signing by staff, and the system of picture exchange is used well by students with autism and those with multi-sensory impairment. Language that is specific to subjects is carefully introduced and reinforced well by its frequent use and questioning to assess students' understanding. There are suitable opportunities for students to read and write in subjects other than English.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

69. The school teaches both **French** and **German**. During the inspection period only German lessons were timetabled, and so French was not inspected. Provision for German is **good**, and students achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher is a skilled and enthusiastic subject specialist.
- Teaching and learning are good, and students are well motivated; as a result, students achieve well.
- The subject is well led, and contributes very well to students' personal development.

Commentary

70. Students greatly enjoy their lessons, as the teacher provides a range of interesting and enjoyable activities. Her enthusiasm for the subject is communicated well to the students, with whom she has good relationships. She uses German well, and gives students many opportunities to listen and speak in German. As a result, students quite quickly pick up vocabulary and phrases. The most skilled students in Year 11 give and return greetings with confidence; they know numbers to eight, as well as common colours, and recognise and read key vocabulary. A few write, by copying simple sentences under photographs, such as '*das is meine Schwester*'. In each lesson, individual targets are set for students; these are more challenging for those who are more skilled. Students who need support are given this, but encouraged to do what they can themselves. Lessons proceed at a good pace, with the teacher urging students to get on ('*Schnell!*'), and students are keen to complete their work well. Games such as Bingo provide effective consolidation and reinforcement, as do homework tasks. There is suitable use of ICT; students download pictures from the Internet, as well as information about German cars and football teams; they have also e-mailed a contact in Germany.

71. The co-ordinator has high expectations. Despite a good report at the last inspection, she has continued to develop the subject, and has secured good improvement. Further development is planned, particularly training, so that the co-ordinator can meet with colleagues from similar schools, and continue her search for suitable resources.

72. Assessment is good. A small steps system of recording has been fully implemented, and evidence of achievements is built up using annotated photographic records. German resources, which are satisfactory, have been improved, and the co-ordinator continues to add to these, by contacting the German embassy, and obtaining artefacts via friends and colleagues.

73. The curriculum, which is good, has been broadened by adding a number of whole-school activity days that reflect life in European countries. In summer 2002, for instance, there was a French market day, on Bastille Day. Students went through a 'Euro-warp', had to produce passports, and used Euros at a variety of stalls. There was a 'Stinky stall', with garlic and smelly cheeses, Boules, a perfume stall, and an opportunity to 'Forge your own Monet'. Students dressed in French style, and a French artiste demonstrated juggling and puppetry. A German pre-Lent carnival day was provided in 2003, and the co-ordinator is planning a Spanish day for the coming summer. These events are for all students, including those who are disappalled from modern foreign languages.

MATHEMATICS

74. Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features.
- Students' achievements have improved as a result of the new policy, schemes of work and small steps assessment developed under the guidance of the present co-ordinator.
- Very good use of ICT in two lessons enhanced the teaching and learning.

Commentary

75. Achievement in mathematics is good. This is linked to good teaching and learning, improved curriculum planning and assessment. The organisation of students into groups of similar abilities in Years 7 to 11 has helped to raise achievement, as it has simplified the planning task for teachers. More focused planning has ensured that students of all abilities make equally good progress. The most skilful students in Year 9 made good progress in a lesson where they added and subtracted tens and units. Most students in Year 9 showed an understanding of number value and identify different simple shapes competently. The most able students in Year 11 identify the basic properties

of two-dimensional shapes, and recognise and name three-dimensional shapes. Students in the Post-16 groups are taught mathematics in more practical situations and this develops their ability to handle money. The shopping expeditions organised also improve their communication skills, giving them increasing confidence to meet people outside their own circle.

76. The best lessons featured good knowledge of the subject and very effective planning for individual students. The use of ICT in these lessons made a significant contribution to teaching and learning; it was instrumental in capturing students' interest and reinforcing their mathematical skills. In a very good lesson with the Post-16 group, students were learning the value of money prior to visiting a café later in the day. In all the lessons, teachers and support staff very effectively guided and encouraged students. The teachers assessed the students' knowledge and understanding during the lesson and provided effective feedback to help them make progress.

77. One significant feature that strengthens the teaching is the very good relationship between the staff and the students. As a result, students are well managed and this ensures that they are kept busy; thus they make gains in learning. Students have the confidence to contribute in the plenary sessions of the lesson, or to ask for help. The staff are skilled in asking individuals questions that differ in their challenge; this helps to involve all students and is effective in assessing their knowledge and understanding.

78. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and works closely with the LEA advisory service. As a leading mathematics teacher, he has made a contribution to the courses that the LEA organises in mathematics. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been rectified, and in the intervening time the subject has had a high profile in the school as part of the Key Stage 3 strategy development. Resources are good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. Students' mathematical skills are used satisfactorily in subjects other than mathematics. All lesson plans have a section in which teachers can identify opportunities to reinforce mathematical skills. However, this format for planning is relatively new, and not all teachers complete this section. Nonetheless, mathematical skills are used well in some subjects, particularly science, art and design and design and technology.

SCIENCE

80. Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good; of all subjects in Years 7 to 11, students make the best progress in science.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Although the curriculum is satisfactory, the lack of a science room restricts the range of scientific investigations that can be safely provided and is a barrier to further improvement .
- The subject is well led.

Commentary

81. The school's own analysis of students' progress shows that this is best in science, where nine out of ten of students moved up at least one 'P' scale level. This is linked to good teaching of a balanced range of learning experiences. Staff work hard, and with ingenuity, to overcome the limitations of the accommodation; resources need to be carried from class to class, and at the moment, there is no means of heating substances safely. Nonetheless, students are given a suitable

range of practical activities, so they learn to carry out investigations, predict results, record findings and develop an awareness of aware of fair testing.

82. Lessons are well planned and prepared, with resources to hand. Lesson plans show clearly what students' individual objectives are; in a class for students with communication difficulties, there were communication targets for each student, and the teacher ensured that activities and approaches took good account of these objectives. There were also three different learning outcomes for the science activity, taking account of differences on students' abilities. In most lessons, learning outcomes were reviewed well in terms of successes, but students were not always given an indication of what they needed to do to improve. A very good range of activities was provided, so that students were able to explore the effects of friction through their senses. For example, students experienced rubbing emery paper over painted wood, and saw that the paint was removed; they also compared rubbing a smooth soled shoe over ice with rubbing a ridge-soled trainer over ice. There was very effective teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants in this lesson. Teaching assistants reinforced vocabulary well, by repeating the teachers' words; they also pointed out that the sole of a Piedro boot is ridged, and so is the footplate of a wheelchair – this gave added relevance to the lesson. Plans identify key words, and these are carefully explained, then used with emphasis; as a result, students become familiar with these, and the most able use scientific vocabulary well. Relationships with students are very good; this means that staff and students enjoy science lessons, and students are very well managed. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and students move quickly from one activity to another. However, in one lesson, time was not used well enough, because students took turns to use Newton meters; teaching assistants were deployed to support individuals rather than groups, which could have increased the time that students were engaged in activities.

83. Despite receiving a good report at the last inspection, further improvements have been made to policies, teaching, the curriculum and its assessment. The time allocation for science has increased for all except one class, where communication needs are paramount. The co-ordinator monitors students' progress carefully. As a result of the audit carried out as part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, opportunities for investigative work have been formalised. Symbols have been developed to support key words and scientific ideas included in each topic, and ICT resources have been increased. The school recently used the services of a certain 'Professor Bonkers', who held an afternoon for all students, exploring magnetism; this was followed by two workshops. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

84. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory; the lack of a whole-class set of computers occasionally restricts independent learning.
- Leadership of the subject is good, and management is satisfactory

Commentary

85. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory. Students reach levels that are appropriate given the extent of their learning difficulties, and records show clear, continuous progress. Students in Year 7 are familiar with computers, and the most skilled can control the mouse and operate a touch screen. By Year 9, most follow simple instructions to download a picture from the Internet, and can use a digital camera. By Year 11, the most able use ICT to work with text, images and sound, as well as to present ideas; for example, to use a picture downloaded from the Internet to make a poster. Students over sixteen are confident users of ICT; the most skilled log on independently, and can select appropriate software for an activity on word processing.

86. Most of the teaching is good. Its greatest strength lies in the use of relevant projects that appeal to students, and give them a reason to use ICT. In Year 7, for instance, students were busy making a page of information about members of their class; this included photographs and text. Students in Year 9 have made a book about the school, and students in Year 12 used information from the Internet to compile a holiday brochure. Students are well motivated, so they remain interested in their work even when they need to wait their turn. As the school does not have a room with enough computers for each student to work on one alone, it is necessary for students to work in pairs or groups. Inevitably, they are not fully engaged throughout a session, and this reduces learning, especially for those who have the capacity to work independently. Teaching assistants are skilful; they support students well, and do not do too much for them. As a result, all students grow in confidence and competence. Learning is reviewed at the end of each lesson, but differences in attainment are not identified, or pupils given pointers about how to improve. In one lesson where the teaching was unsatisfactory, a temporary teacher had to take the lesson, because of staff absence. The teacher had not taught the group before; difficulties in managing a mobile interactive whiteboard in an unfamiliar setting meant that students waited too long for their turn and too little learning occurred. This teaching was not typical, however.

87. Leadership of the subject is good. Involvement in the Key Stage 3 Strategy has brought with it a more outward looking approach and collaboration with other schools and networks. An Internet policy has recently been written and it is about to go to governors for ratification. Resources and the curriculum have improved, so has the level of staff skills, as a result of training. A good system of assessing small gains in knowledge, skills and understanding has been implemented well, but there is room for improvement in monitoring to ensure that all student profiles are correctly completed; several were seen with photographs but no annotation. There is a suitable action plan for further development of the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. This aspect has improved since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory; it is now satisfactory. Improvement has been secured through staff training and increased resourcing. Students make good use of the Internet, and the digital camera is used to make records that are meaningful to students in all subjects. Computers are used well in mathematics and art, for students with MSI, and those needing assistance with communication. It is also used frequently at Post-16. However, computers are not used as frequently as they might be to encourage independent learning.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

89. The subjects were not a focus for this inspection, and judgements on achievement, teaching and overall provision cannot be made. Only two lessons of geography were seen. Teaching and learning about Australia in a Year 8 lesson was good. The teacher made good use of vivid photographs to which the students responded well. In the second lesson, in Year 10, too little time was spent on the main activity, so students did not make enough progress against the lesson objective; this lesson was unsatisfactory. Assessment since the last inspection has improved. The school has added to the shared teaching resources available to the subject. The curriculum, which continues to be developed, includes "Topic Days" which are devoted entirely to a historical or geographical topic and these improve curriculum coverage, and add depth to the subjects covered.

Religious education (RE)

90. Provision is **good**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- The subject is well led and managed.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is very good.
- There has been good level of improvement since the last inspection.
- The school is aware that the curriculum requires further development to more fully support the learning of students with complex needs.

Commentary:

91. Students achieve well in all years. Students generally respond well to the careful adaptation of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Students have learned basic facts of Christianity and Islam by Year 9, and have shown a positive response to beauty in nature. By Year 11, they have some idea how the Christian year reflects the seasons. They have made an Easter garden and conducted an Easter assembly. Students have some knowledge of festivals in all the main religions, and the most knowledgeable can explain why Christians celebrate saints' days.

92. Lessons were seen for students with complex needs in Years 10 and 11. Teaching was good. Lessons in the sensory room successfully promoted the spiritual dimension as students responded positively to the sights, sounds and textures of this highly stimulating environment. In these lessons, care, support and guidance provided by the teachers was of a high order. The school aims to build spiritual awareness of students with complex needs slowly and gradually, and more planning still remains to be done.

93. Leadership of the subject is good. Monitoring of teaching and learning is very good and it is a significant strength. There has been good measure of improvement since the last inspection. Progress is now well documented. The use of information and communication technology has been increased, and is satisfactory. Teachers have undertaken useful training to support multicultural development within the subject. The good standards described in the last report have been well maintained, despite the changing needs of students in the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

94. It is not possible to judge overall provision as the subject was sampled, not inspected fully. In two of the three lessons observed teaching and learning were good, and students achieved well. Students use a good range of materials in their paintings and collage work. The range of high quality displays around the school shows sound breadth of work in the subject. Some of these involved a collaborative effort by students, as well as developing designing skills to explore how shape, form, space, colour and texture can be used to create different designs. Students respect each other's work and effort and are ready to help and support each other.

95. The lack of an art room makes teachers' jobs more difficult as there is no central resource area for the subject, and no room where ongoing projects can be left out until they are completed.

96. The previous co-ordinator responded positively to the comments in the last inspection report, when the overall judgement was that the provision was satisfactory. Improvement since then is satisfactory. Resources have been improved, good schemes of work have been developed, and small steps of assessment enable staff to identify small gains in knowledge, skills and

understanding. However, the lack of a permanent co-ordinator represents a barrier to further improvement.

Design and technology

97. It is not possible to make a judgement on overall provision as the subject was sampled, not inspected fully.

98. The previous report highlighted many issues in the subject. Most of these have been acted upon, but the accommodation remains unsatisfactory, as there is a small cookery room but no design and technology room. The latter makes it difficult for teachers to provide the required range of learning experiences, particularly using resistant materials. Nonetheless, they do so. Resources have been improved, the policy and the schemes of work have been revised and aim to develop students' cognitive and manipulative skills in an enjoyable way.

99. In both lessons seen, good teaching was lively and interesting and students were encouraged to develop independence skills. Language, mathematics, hygiene and health and safety were reinforced well. Students used their initiative and shared the responsibility for cleaning up at the end of the lesson. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Music

100. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on provision and students' achievements, as the subject was sampled, not inspected fully.

101. Teaching is by a member of staff with considerable expertise in the subject. In most lessons, a good variety of suitable activities is provided, and these appeal to the students. The teacher's management of students is usually very good. However, in one lesson, a piece of introductory music caused one pupil with autism some distress, and the lesson was disrupted as a result.

102. Music is very well resourced, with a music studio and a wide collection of instruments. Some students are now starting to learn instruments like the guitar as well using percussion instruments effectively. A weekly folk club is now run in the school. This attracts support from the students who clearly enjoy participating in these sessions.

Physical education (PE)

103. Provision in physical education (PE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of a suitable range of learning experiences results in good achievement.
- There is no co-ordinator at present, although one has been appointed for next term.

Commentary

104. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned; teachers know students and their abilities well, and plan suitable tasks so that all are included in activities at an appropriately challenging level. For example, students in wheelchairs are correctly hoisted onto mats, and given suitable support to enable them to carry out movements of their upper bodies. Individual objectives are set for each student, and suitable activities ensure that these are achieved. There are suitable warm-up sessions, sometimes to music, and students enter into these enthusiastically. At the end of each lesson, there is a satisfactory involvement of students in identifying what they have been learning. For example, in one session, students had to point to the body parts that had been

exercised. These students had experienced a range of moving and balancing activities, during which they had increased their control, skills and confidence. Communication skills are encouraged well during lessons. For example, during a Year 9 lesson, staff called out a student's name, then threw the ball to that student. Hello and goodbye sessions at the beginning and end of each lesson encourage communication skills well, and students without speech are included by using switches that they activate to reproduce a recorded greeting. Students work hard and co-operatively with their teachers and support staff because relationships are very good, and this helps to promote learning. Support staff reinforce teaching points well, and take their cue from the teacher when they whip up enthusiasm by singing with gusto. Staff also give well deserved and motivating praise. At the end of each lesson there is a suitable cool-down session, and music is used well to create an atmosphere conducive to relaxation.

105. Planning in the subject is provided by a supply teacher covering the subject during the absence of a co-ordinator. The teacher is well informed. Plans and records of progress are now kept more accurately. There is a suitable curriculum. The school has a hydrotherapy pool, but no swimming pool, which restricts the options available to students. Satisfactory improvement has occurred since the last inspection, and the school has appointed a co-ordinator to take over the subject next term. Leadership is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

106. Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- A broad and appropriate curriculum of high quality ensures that students build securely on previous learning.
- There are very good planned opportunities for students to develop their skills in other lessons across the curriculum, so that enrichment of learning is a significant strength.
- Provision for citizenship meets requirements and is satisfactory, but this strand is not as well developed.

Commentary

107. Students achieve well in PSHE and citizenship; although teaching and learning are very good, the citizenship element of the curriculum is not yet as well developed as the PSHE strand. Students with complex needs make as much progress as the rest. This level of progress is in response to the broad and relevant curriculum which is offered to all students, and also to the very good teaching they receive. Where relevance is greatest, in Years 10 to 14, students achieve very well.

108. Teaching is consistently very good. Much of it is based on practical action, meaningful to all students. By Year 9, students make good progress in recognising and naming body parts. They develop increasing awareness of self. Students respond to their names during interaction with staff, and become comfortable with routines. Students in Year 10 achieved very well in a practical lesson in citizenship where the learning was well supported by the use of symbols and artefacts. In this lesson, students learned about the democratic process by participating in a mock election. Ballot papers, written in symbols as necessary, a ballot box and a 'swingometer' were provided to add realism. There were many opportunities for students to be actively involved in this lesson, whether voting, counting or cheering, and much excitement was generated. Opportunities for students to develop literacy and numeracy skills were well planned, and this helped them to learn. Students' targets were systematically addressed. An excellent plenary consolidated learning, where it was clear that students realised that local government candidates stand for certain principles and courses of action, and that the candidates who receive the most votes win. By Year 11, their social competence has improved as they learn to take turns. In their appreciation of a healthy, safer life style they identify a range of healthy foods. All appreciate the necessity for hygiene. The development

of good relationships and respecting the differences between people is a strong feature of the attainment of older students. Students Post-16 make very good progress in learning about the world of work as they make goods and market them as part of a mini enterprise.

109. Since last inspection, there has been a good level of improvement. A new scheme of work has been written in response to the last report. Citizenship has been well integrated into lessons and provision now meets statutory requirements. Students participate as citizens when they undertake recycling. In the temporary absence of a specialist co-ordinator, leadership and management remain good. The school has recently achieved the Bronze Healthy School Award.

Post -16

110. Provision for students over 16 is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is highly relevant and provides external recognition for all students' achievements.
- Students achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- The provision is well led and managed.

Commentary

111. Students over 16 achieve well. They are provided with a very good range of relevant learning experiences that give them an insight into the world of work and life after school, and they have good opportunities for their achievements to be externally recognised.

112. Teaching and learning are good. Students' individual targets are taken into account well when lessons are planned. For example, in a session where students were making labels, logos and packets for selling birdseed, their literacy targets had been taken into account, and opportunities to work on these were provided as a natural part of the lesson. When preparing for a shopping expedition, students used electronic devices as well as PECS symbols to communicate with one another. In most lessons, students' independence skills are encouraged well; personal hygiene was emphasised well when students were preparing food and road safety signs were revised in the context of an ICT lesson. Staff work well as a team, and usually judge the support they give well; this fosters independence, which promotes students' self-esteem. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson was slow in parts, when one toaster was used by seven students, for example. However, during this lull, there was good discussion led by the teacher, which supported communication skills well. There is good use of ICT at Post-16. For example, one student was busy transcribing notes of a business meeting, whilst another mastered the use of a laminator.

113. Substantial improvements have been made to the curriculum at Post-16, largely as a result of teamwork between permanent staff. The curriculum has been thoroughly reviewed and revised so that it builds well on experiences in Year 11, but provides more work and life related experiences. For example, students have experiences of work, with a few attending placements off-site, such as in horticulture, retail or homes for the elderly. College links have been established, and from January, students will attend an agricultural college to study rural skills. Students participate in Young Enterprise, making and selling products as part of small businesses. They also utilise the local community, acquiring literacy and numeracy skills in a social context. There is a strong emphasis on key skills. The framework for ALL (Accreditation for Life and Living) has been retained, and students' work is externally moderated. In 2002, a total of 39 modules were achieved by students, and this year this increased to 48.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Students' achievement	3
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well students learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets students needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	5
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for students	2
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

