

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HIGHVIEW SCHOOL

Folkestone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 119044

Headteacher: Mr Chris Hurling

Lead inspector: Mrs Sue Aldridge

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 258916

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 special
Age range of pupils:	4 to 17 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	96
School address:	Moat Farm Road Folkestone Kent
Postcode:	CT19 5DJ
Telephone number:	01303 258755
Fax number:	01323 251185
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Yvonne Parry
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Highview is a community day special school for boys and girls from five to sixteen. It is situated on the outskirts of Folkestone. At present there are 96 pupils on roll. All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Over two thirds of pupils have moderate learning difficulties; about a tenth have severe learning difficulties, and a smaller number have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties or autism. Because of the level of pupils' learning difficulties, attainment on entry to the school is low. Boys outnumber girls by three to two. Most pupils are white, and three are of mixed race. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are unfavourable overall; over a third are eligible for free school meals, and several come from deprived communities within the school's wide catchment area. The school is involved in several local initiatives, including the Folkestone Learning Group, and in outreach work with mainstream schools. Its work has been recognised through the Healthy Schools Award and the Kent Work Experience Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8810	Sue Aldridge	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Information and communication technology; Music; English as an additional language.
14032	Marion Saunders	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
17530	Mary Cureton	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Personal, social and health education; Citizenship; Religious education.
31348	Phil Ellender	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Special educational needs.
32723	Mark Emly	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Art; Physical education.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Highview is an effective school.** Pupils achieve well. They leave school as mature and caring young adults who are well prepared for the next step. Teaching and learning are good. The school is well led and managed, and it provides **good** value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening.
- Very good relationships between all members of the school community create a most harmonious climate for learning.
- There are excellent arrangements to ensure that pupils have a trusted adult to support and guide them.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of sporting activities.
- Inclusion is well supported by good links with an exceptionally large number of schools.
- The headteacher has a very clear sense of purpose and high aspirations; teamwork is well developed in the school.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory; it limits pupils' learning in information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Teachers do not make enough use of ICT or homework to support pupils' learning.
- A few members of staff are unsure about child protection procedures because there has not been sufficient recent training.

Improvement since the last inspection is good; the school has increased its effectiveness, particularly in raising pupils' achievements and improving leadership and management. Significant improvements have been made to teaching, assessment, curriculum planning, and monitoring of pupils' progress. The conclusions of the school's self-evaluation match closely those of the inspection team. A particular success is the establishment of a well regarded service to support mainstream schools. Despite the school's best efforts, and some significant improvements, accommodation is still unsatisfactory. Because the school faces amalgamation in a year's time, the local educational authority (LEA) will not allow the school to spend funds that it has earmarked for capital projects. Temporary accommodation has deteriorated, and one classroom has had to be closed. As a result, there are too few classrooms, and one small examination group has to be taught in a corridor.

### 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	Good
Year 6	Good	Good
Year 9	Satisfactory	Good
Year 11	Good	Good

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

Achievement for most pupils is **good**; for those in Years 7 to 9 achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress towards the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. All pupils achieve well in English, art and design, physical education, religious education, and personal and social and health education (PSHE), including citizenship where this is taught. Primary pupils achieve well in science and music. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory across the school. In mathematics, achievement is good overall and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness, are developed well.** They have very good attitudes to their work and to the school; their behaviour is very good. Attendance is good, and punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils.** Teaching and learning are good for most pupils, and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Pupils are guided and supported well, and arrangements for their care and welfare are generally good. A good range of relevant learning experiences is provided. Parents and pupils are involved well in school life and decision making. There are good links with the community, and with other schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school is well led and managed.** The headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership. More effective delegation to deputy headteacher's and subject co-ordinators has been achieved since the school was last inspected. The effectiveness of governors is good. They support and challenge the school well, and through their monitoring they achieve a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Although there are some minor breaches of statutory requirements none of these adversely affect the quality of education or the standards achieved.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents and pupils alike are very pleased with the school's provision. Parents particularly appreciate the approachable staff, the information they receive about pupils' progress, the teaching, and the way the school is led and managed. A small number expressed dissatisfaction with the way the school consults parents, but inspectors found that parents have good opportunities to ask questions and have their say. A similar number feel that behaviour is not good, but inspectors do not agree with this. Inspectors do, however, agree with the minority who are dissatisfied with levels of homework. Pupils are unanimous in their appreciation of having a trusted adult they can turn to. They like the school, feel that they learn new things in lessons, are given help when they are stuck, and find that teachers show them how to make their work better.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Liaise with the LEA to remedy those weaknesses in the school's accommodation that are identified in this report.
- Ensure that teachers make more effective use of ICT and homework to support pupils' learning.
- Ensure that all staff are fully briefed on child protection procedures.

**and, to meet statutory requirements:**

- Ensure that registers are correctly marked, showing reasons for pupils' absence.
- Ensure that all the required information on pupils' attainments is included in the prospectus and in the governors' annual report to parents.
- Ensure that pupils' annual progress reports include a section on every National Curriculum subject and statistics on the attendance of individual pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Overall, achievement is **good**. Pupils do not reach standards expected at their age, but this is because of the extent of their learning difficulties.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils across the school achieve very well in speaking and listening.
- Children at the Foundation Stage achieve well, as do pupils in Years 1 to 6 and those in Years 10 and 11. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory.
- Good assessment enables the school to set challenging targets to raise achievement, and these are usually met.
- A few pupils are returned to mainstream schools.
- Achievement in music and ICT is affected by weaknesses in the accommodation.

#### **Commentary**

1. Although there are differences in the achievements of pupils of different age groups, there are no differences in the achievements of boys and girls, or in respect of pupils with different special educational needs (SEN), or from different ethnic groups. This is because the staff know pupils very well, and their planning takes account of differences in ability, special need or personal circumstances.

2. All pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening. This is linked to good assessment, effective intervention where it is needed, suitable target setting, and good teaching. Good teamwork between teaching staff and specially trained learning support staff ensure that pupils with speech and language difficulties are given suitable programmes designed by a speech and language therapist. Conventions such as putting up your hand and waiting your turn are well established at an early stage. Pupils learn specialist vocabulary and use it well. They answer questions in a detailed way, and ask when they are curious or need to know what to do. They put forward ideas, such as in science, and express opinions. As they approach school leaving age, most pupils are confident communicators. The most able conversed easily with inspectors and had the confidence to inject humour into the conversation. They described how they had benefited from the support they had received at school, gave a clear account of their career aspirations, and were able to link these to their personal strengths or weaknesses in a mature and thoughtful way.

3. As there was only one pupil in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection, it is not possible to report on achievement in areas of learning without identifying the individual pupil. Overall, achievement at this stage is good. In Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, art and design, music, physical education, religious education and PSHE. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

4. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. The school is aware of the difference in this respect between the two age groups, and development in Years 7 to 9 is a priority identified in the school improvement plan. Pupils at this stage achieve well in English, art and design, physical education, religious education, PSHE and citizenship. Their achievements in mathematics, science, music and ICT are satisfactory.

5. In Years 10 and 11, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, art and design, physical education, religious education, PSHE and citizenship. Their achievements in ICT and science are satisfactory. When they leave school, pupils take with them a number of externally accredited



certificates, including Entry Level Certificates accredited by Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts (OCR). This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when there were few accredited courses provided. For the first time this year, a few pupils in Year 11 are to be entered for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) mathematics examination. There is a small number of pupils in Year 11 who would be capable of achieving a pass at GCSE in ICT; the school is aware of this, but a lack of continuity in the co-ordination of the subject has meant that this was not a realistic development until it was too late for pupils to start the coursework.

**Examination results for Year 11 pupils in OCR Entry Level June 2003 (13 pupils' eligible)**

	Pass	Merit	Distinction
English	3	4	6
Mathematics	1	2	9
IT	4	0	9
Science	8	1	4

6. In the summer of 2003, all Year 11 pupils achieved a pass in the Youth Award Scheme Bronze Award, accredited by Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Teams from Highview also won the Kent Special Schools 5 a side Football tournament, and the mixed badminton and athletics competitions.

7. Target setting for individual pupils is a well established practice in the school. Targets are reviewed well; when not fully achieved they are carried forward to the next half-term. Pupils make generally good progress against targets in English, mathematics, and personal and social development, including behaviour. Progress against individual targets in mathematics in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. In addition, the school sets challenging predictions for future attainment, based on good analysis of assessment information. It monitors carefully its progress towards these targets, which are most often met or exceeded.

8. The school monitors well all pupils' levels of attainment and their progress. Through its productive links with a large number of mainstream schools, and with good preparation, it is able to successfully return a small number of pupils to mainstream education each year.

9. Overall, there has been good improvement in raising pupils' achievements since the last inspection. Achievement in the primary classes is now good; it was previously satisfactory. Achievement in English, maths and science has improved in Years 10 and 11, and achievement in religious education is now good. In ICT, achievement has improved markedly; previously it was poor across the school, and it is now satisfactory. However, the establishment of an ICT room has not proved as effective as it might have been. Both this room and the room for music are not suitable teaching or learning areas, and they limit pupils' learning and achievements.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attendance is **good** and punctuality is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The school provides stimulating lessons in which pupils want to learn.
- The school has very clear and high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and this results in very good behaviour overall.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good. They have very good relationships with one another and with staff.
- Whilst the level of school attendance is good, registers are not accurately marked to reflect the reasons for absence.

## Commentary

10. The school works hard to provide pupils with stimulating and interesting lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and are enthusiastic. They work well together at group activities and many of the older pupils show high levels of concentration when working independently. Pupils in Year 11 showed an impressive grasp of the complicated plot in 'A Midsummer's Night Dream' and were able spontaneously to make links with modern day equivalents. In a Year 9 music lesson, pupils worked well in pairs to produce sound effects on the electronic keyboard to match a scene from 'Snow White'.

11. The school has a long-standing behaviour policy based upon assertive discipline. Generally, all adults consistently apply this throughout the school. On the few occasions where behaviour was unsatisfactory, it was because low-level misbehaviour was not dealt with quickly enough. Pupils respond very positively to the use of 'good letters'. These are given for good work or effort. On several occasions the award of these resulted in spontaneous applause for the recipient from the rest of the class. Behaviour around the school and at break-times is very good, due in part to a high level of adult supervision. Whilst pupils report some low level bullying and name calling, they are confident that this is dealt with effectively once reported to staff. Exclusions are low and are appropriately dealt with.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
92	3	1
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

12. The strength of relationships within the school is a significant feature. Pupils are concerned for one another and are tolerant. They show a high level of respect for all the adults in the school. The school ensures that pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and there are numerous opportunities for pupils to consider the responsibilities of living as part of a community. In a Year 10/11 physical education lesson, pupils willingly took responsibility for carrying the sports equipment to the sports centre. In the combined Year 7 and Year 8 class there were very good opportunities for pupils to work without adult intervention, and to become self-reliant and responsible for their own learning. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. There are good opportunities in assemblies, and in art, music, religious education and English, to consider other cultures, and this is also helping pupils to increase their self-knowledge. However, preparation for life in a multicultural society remains underdeveloped across the school.

## Attendance

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.3	School data	1.3

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

13. Pupils' attendance at the school is good; there is a low level of unauthorised absence. Attendance has improved since the previous year. The school is effective in promoting good attendance by giving attendance certificates and devising specific patterns of education for some pupils. The school is an active partner in the East Folkestone Learning Group, which has set targets for each school to improve attendance. The school is not fulfilling its statutory obligation to accurately complete the attendance registers by including the reasons for absence. However, this information is recorded elsewhere and absentees are appropriately followed up.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. It achieves excellence in the way it ensures that each pupil has an adult whom he or she trusts to give support. Teaching, learning and assessment are good. There is a good range of learning experiences, but the accommodation is unsatisfactory. Parents and pupils are involved well in school life and decision making. There are good links with the community and a very good partnership with a large number of schools, to the benefit of all.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Staff have very good relationships with pupils, whom they manage very well; pupils are well motivated in lessons.
- Teachers know their pupils very well; they generally plan well for pupils of different abilities so that all are given a suitable challenge.
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 to 6, and in Years 10 and 11; it is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9.
- Teachers make too little use of homework and ICT to reinforce pupils' learning.

### Commentary

14. Teaching in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 to 6, and in Years 10 and 11 is good. During the inspection, it was always at least satisfactory, and most often good or better in these classes. In Years 7 to 9, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent. It was best in the class for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils with similar needs. Here, teaching ranged from good to excellent. There is a very effective learning partnership between staff and pupils. This is the result of excellent relationships between the teachers and their pupils, skilled support by classroom assistants, and high expectations that pupils will be self-reliant.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1.8%)	7 (12.7%)	28 (50.9%)	17 (30.9%)	2 (3.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0 %)

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

15. Teachers know their pupils really well, and they use this knowledge most effectively to ensure that all pupils are well included and are given tasks that challenge and interest them. A very good example of this was seen in a Monday morning English lesson in Year 4. The teacher had carefully read pupils' home/school books to discover what they had done at the weekend. She used this well, ensuring that all pupils were involved in the discussion. Open questions to the more skilled speakers among them elicited detailed information about their activities, and suitable prompts,

reminders or closed questions drew in more reticent pupils. Those in public care were equal participants, and all pupils listened with interest to what others had to say. The discussion prepared pupils well for the task of writing their news, as it enthused them all, giving them ideas about what to write.

16. Because staff have such good relationships with pupils there is strong mutual respect, and pupils are keen to do well. They are encouraged and praised well, so their motivation is sustained throughout lessons. Most lessons proceed at a good pace, so pupils achieve a good deal in the time available. In ICT and secondary music lessons, however, time is lost because of the need to move from one room to another or to get resources out.

17. Teachers use a good variety of strategies to cater for pupils' individual needs. For example, they plan different tasks within the same lesson, use different methods for pupils to record, and vary resources according to need. Pupils with literacy difficulties use symbols accompanied by text to read and write. Signing is used to support pupils with communication difficulties. Several support staff have strong signing skills, but teachers do not always use signs as often as they might. Sensory methods are used well to stimulate pupils with more complex needs. However, teachers rarely set different learning outcomes for pupils of different abilities.

18. Pupils are well supported in most lessons. Learning support assistants are usually well briefed. They not only follow the teacher's lead well but also ensure that pupils do as much as they can themselves. Occasionally, they anticipate well and intervene at an early stage, responding to a subtle change in a pupil's mood. In a Year 5 lesson, one assistant gave good support by offering a choice of words to a pupil. As a result, the pupil was able amend her previous answer, saying that the girl in her picture was 'ashamed' rather than 'sad', the former being a much more accurate description. However, not all support assistants have sufficient ICT skills to give pupils the guidance or help they need in lessons.

19. Teachers use a good range of learning resources to stimulate pupils' interest and help their understanding. An example was seen in a PSHE lesson in Year 5. Pupils had previously seen a video about right and wrong; they were able to recall a good deal of detail, and in a subsequent task could identify pictures depicting instances. The most able could say that one experiences a feeling of guilt when doing something wrong. However, except in mathematics, ICT is not used well enough as a tool to support pupils' learning. This is the result of a lack of confidence on the part of some teachers. A few use it regularly in all the subjects they teach.

20. The school's policy on the setting of homework is that it should be set 'when appropriate'. Pupils' individual targets are sent home so that parents can help their children to achieve them, and older pupils are given revision tasks to prepare them for some examinations. However, staff do not set homework tasks often enough, and this means that pupils miss opportunities to consolidate or extend their learning. For instance, staff routinely identify in their lesson plans the specialist vocabulary associated with topics that pupils are studying, and they explain and use the words during lessons. They do not, on the other hand, get pupils to learn how to read or spell these for homework. A small number of parents expressed their dissatisfaction with homework through the parental questionnaire.

21. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. In a Year 9 lesson, insecure management of pupils meant that too much time was taken up in correcting pupils' behaviour. In a Year 8 mathematics lesson, pupils were set tasks that were either too easy or too difficult and they became frustrated; pupils did not learn well enough in the time available.

## Assessment

Assessment of pupils' work and progress is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The needs of new pupils are thoroughly assessed on entry to school.
- Pupils' individual targets are set and reviewed each half-term.
- Marking is up to date, and feedback to pupils is given frequently and positively.
- The school has improved the consistency of teachers' assessments.
- Teachers are alert to the small improvements which pupils make in their work and behaviour, and they praise these in various ways.
- Paper-based records do not allow for immediate analysis of assessment information.
- The setting of targets in all subjects at annual reviews serves no useful purpose.

## Commentary

22. The assessment of each pupil's performance and needs on entry to the school is carried out by a deputy headteacher, who reviews all the pupil's records and devises an individual education plan in consultation with the class teacher. Individual targets are set and reviewed each half-term, and individual education plans are reviewed termly.

23. Marking is up to date and is positive and encouraging in its tone. Feedback to pupils is frequent and supportive. It is used to suggest how they might improve, and is well matched to their level of understanding. Sometimes a smile or a kind expression is used as a powerful form of praise, and a glance can show disapproval. Staff communicate in this way very effectively, and this ensures that pupils understand how well they are doing. Staff know their pupils very well, and observe the many small gains which pupils make in their work and behaviour. This continuous close monitoring and feedback are strengths of the school.

24. Pupils' progress through National Curriculum Levels is recorded electronically and collated by subject. This allows individual and group performance to be tracked by subject, and so informs planning more easily.

25. Assessment of pupils is thorough and continuous. It is very good in English, satisfactory in PSHE, and good in all other areas. Assessment of literacy skills has improved since the last inspection. Reading is assessed each term, for all pupils, and all secondary age pupils will take the Neale Reading Analysis annually, so that their progress is formally monitored. In addition, all pupils are assessed for language development levels, so that intervention can be planned.

26. Inconsistencies in teacher assessments were highlighted in the last inspection. These have been addressed through staff training, and through liaison between colleagues, both within the school and with those in similar schools. Inspectors found no inaccuracies in teachers' assessments.

27. There is an increase in the number of pupils admitted to the school with autism, or with emotional, social or behavioural needs. Although staff expertise has been developed through experience and through joint working with visiting specialists, the headteacher is aware of the need for enhanced training in assessing and providing for pupils with such needs.

## The curriculum

The breadth of curriculum opportunities is **good**; there are **good** opportunities for enrichment. Taken together, the accommodation and resources are **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum is broad and balanced.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment.
- Participation in sport is very good.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.

28. The curriculum is good. Provision meets statutory requirements, and individual needs are met well. Organisation and monitoring ensure that pupils build securely on previous work. The school provides a strong rationale for its emphasis on English and communication skills. All pupils who have been formally disapplied from design and technology, as specified in the National Curriculum, are following specially adapted lessons in the subject as part of an externally accredited course. The curriculum is fully supported by very good programmes of sporting visits and some cultural activities to extend pupils' experience. The school welcomes visitors such as theatre groups, poets and authors for the enrichment they bring to the curriculum.

29. The curriculum provides well for pupils with SEN and disabilities. The good provision for the teaching of communication skills gives pupils solid support. It includes signing, specialist teaching programmes, and the use of cards on which both symbols and text appear. A specialised sensory curriculum is taught to pupils in Years 7 and 8 who have serious and complex learning difficulties. These pupils join the rest of the school for some lessons and are well included in all the activities the school has to offer. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are grouped according to ability, which successfully prepares them for a wide range of courses that lead to qualifications. The school has organised clear vocational pathways for two pupils in Year 11 who are training in cookery and childcare. The curriculum contains a good programme of PSHE, including sex and relationships education and attention to drug misuse. These subjects, and citizenship, are woven into the life of the school, as well as being provided for in the form of separate lessons. The school is also part of the healthy schools programme.

30. The curriculum fully includes all pupils, ensuring equality of access and opportunity. Equality and fairness are integral to provision.

31. The curriculum prepares pupils well for the subsequent stages of education and employment. The school provides pupils with the impartial advice of specialised careers officers from Year 9, who also attend transition meetings. Parents are fully involved. All pupils have action plans detailing next steps. There are good links with the Youth Award Scheme, which creates opportunities for learning through role play and mock interviews in preparation for future employment. Pupils learn to write CVs and letters of application. There are good opportunities for work experience on and off site. Transfer to college is well planned. Pupils have good opportunities to explore the college site and enjoy 'taster courses' on offer to them. Pupils visit job centres and make links with specialist agencies to help them seek employment.

32. The school has developed the curriculum well and takes good account of innovative practice. National strategies for literacy, numeracy and the teaching of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have been well assimilated and are mostly used to good effect to improve learning. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are well established and effective. There are productive links with a number of other schools through a local learning group. These schools help to generate ideas which improve the curriculum. There are also links with a consortium of schools for those with moderate learning difficulties. These schools are used for additional specialist staff training and extra-curricular

activities for pupils. There are further links with mainstream schools, through the outreach project. This particular arrangement offers some pupils opportunities for mainstream experience and allows the school to welcome pupils from mainstream schools in its turn. The school routinely shares its expertise in special needs.

33. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular provision. Transport arrangements make it difficult to provide much regular support for learning outside the school day, but athletics, football and touch rugby are on offer and there are clubs for art and music. The school organises fishing expeditions for some pupils. There is a programme of trips to enhance social education for pupils in Years 10 and 11. All pupils have opportunities for residential experience.

34. Staffing is good, and a strength of the school is the good match between teachers' qualifications and the subject they teach. Teachers have good knowledge and experience of teaching pupils with SEN. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are well trained in most aspects. The LSAs who are additionally trained in supporting the development of pupils' language skills are a significant strength.

35. Despite the fact that governors have budgeted carefully for improvements in the accommodation, and have added specialist rooms since the last inspection, the accommodation is unsatisfactory; it fails to meet the requirements of DfES Building Bulletin 77. Further improvements have been halted by the LEA, despite there being sufficient funds to carry these out, because of the impending re-organisation. There are three decrepit mobile classrooms, two of which are currently in use. All are unfit for purpose, and one is structurally unsafe. There is, as yet, no replacement for this building. The library has been displaced to provide additional teaching space, and is now housed in one of the senior classrooms. There are too few classrooms, and a GCSE maths course is taught in a corridor. The stairs in the building are too narrow. As a result, the top two floors are inaccessible to wheelchair users, and the independence of a few pupils with mobility difficulties is compromised because there is not room for an assistant to help them to go upstairs. There are enough specialist rooms, properly equipped. Some windows leak. The current ICT room is unfit for purpose and urgently in need of effective ventilation. Access to the ICT and art rooms is through the science laboratory, which causes disruption. The school is now beginning to address the problem of noise pollution in these rooms. One temporary room used for secondary music lessons is poor. Although the school has showers, the medical room is inadequate as there is no space for a bed. Several toilets are in urgent need of refurbishment. The grounds and play space are attractive, well maintained, and enjoyed by the pupils, but the Foundation Stage play area fails to meet recommendations, as there is no adjacent grassed area for children to use. A boundary fence, erected since the last inspection, has reduced the instances of vandalism by outsiders.

36. Resources are good. The school has all necessary communication aids. There is no shortage of books or computers, or major shortfalls in learning resources for subjects.

37. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is now broad and balanced. Time allocations for ICT and religious education are now sufficient. Statutory requirements are now fully met in religious education. The school has successfully introduced a programme of drugs awareness. Opportunities for accreditation have been improved and are now good for all pupils. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are fully challenged and there are plenty of opportunities for them to excel. There are subject policies and schemes of work in all subjects. Long-term planning is now very good.

## Care, guidance and support

There are **satisfactory** arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Provision of support, advice and guidance is **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school has excellent arrangements to ensure that pupils have a trusted adult to whom they can turn for support.
- Medical and first aid arrangements are good, and overseen by a member of staff who is a qualified nurse.
- Staff are highly committed to the care and welfare of pupils, and pupils feel secure and confident at school.
- There has been no recent, whole-school training on child protection procedures.
- The medical room is too small, and has no room for a bed.

## Commentary

38. All pupils who were questioned or who completed a questionnaire said there was an adult they could turn to if they were worried at school, and this is excellent. It emphasises the evident commitment of all staff to the care and welfare of pupils. Many members of staff are exceptionally well informed about individual pupils, and about their needs, family circumstances, interests and aspirations. They show that they value the individual strengths and needs of pupils. This concern is reflected in the pupils' comments about their feelings of confidence and security at school, and in parents' satisfaction with their children's placement and progress. Pupils are helped to understand that others in the school have different needs, and so require various types of support. Matters of personal care are dealt with sensitively and unselfconsciously by staff, and the response of other pupils is mature and supportive.

39. The school provides a clean and generally safe environment for pupils and staff. Arrangements for the arrival and departure of pupils are well supervised, as are registration, playtimes and lunchtimes. There is a happy and friendly atmosphere about the school, both inside the building and on the playground, maintained by the warmth and positive manner of support staff.

40. Medical arrangements are good, and are overseen by a LSA who is a qualified nurse. There are four LSAs on the staff who are qualified first aiders, and arrangements for first aid are good. Arrangements for the storage and administration of medicines are good, but the medical room is too small, so there is no room for a bed. Accident records are in order, and procedures are altered following accidents. For instance, the school used to have one playtime for all pupils but has revised this to create two playtimes, one for secondary pupils and one for primary children.

41. Arrangements for the induction of pupils are thorough. All available information is reviewed by a deputy headteacher, who works with appropriate staff to ensure that the pupil's detailed needs are understood and addressed. Pupils' progress towards their personal targets is regularly checked and well recorded. Because of their clear understanding of pupils' needs, staff are attuned to small steps made by pupils in their academic and personal development, and these are highlighted and praised. This is an important element in the school's success in meeting pupils' needs, as is the close liaison with parents.

42. In addition to the week-by-week monitoring, pupils' needs are reviewed half-termly, and statements are reviewed annually, in keeping with statutory requirements. Transition reviews are produced for the review following their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, and careers advice staff from 'Connexions' attend these reviews. Careers action plans reflect pupils' aspirations, and are reviewed each year.

43. Pupils' views are sought, taken into account and acted upon, in relation to their varying ability to express them. For primary pupils, staff note and act upon the preferences which pupils express informally. For older pupils, there is a school council, in which pupils are encouraged to express and discuss their views and suggestions, and they do so with maturity. Their suggestions are taken into account and lead to new initiatives in school, such as playground changes. Members of the



school council reflect the positive attitude to behaviour which is to be found throughout the school. Pupils know what is expected of them and do not approve of poor behaviour. Although the school admits an increasing number of pupils with needs relating to their behaviour, conduct in general is good, which reflects the effectiveness of the supervision, support and guidance the pupils receive.

44. Care, guidance and support were praised in the previous inspection and remain good overall.

45. Child protection procedures follow local guidelines and are updated by a deputy headteacher, who is the designated child protection co-ordinator. However, there has been no recent, whole-school training on child protection, and the matter is not dealt with in sufficient detail as part of the induction process. As a result, a few members of staff are unclear about procedures.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Links with parents and with the community are **good**. The Mainstream Advice and Resource Service (MARS) provides a **good** service. The link with other schools and colleges is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The school has a wide range of strategies to involve as many parents as possible.
- There are very good links with local schools.
- The MARS project makes a good contribution to outreach work and is highly thought of by the primary schools involved.

### **Commentary**

46. The school is very committed to working closely with parents and is highly successful in giving them opportunities to visit the school. An example is the arrangement for parents to visit the class their child is due to move to, before the move in September. A significant number of parents attend the Celebration of Achievement evening each year. The event has been linked to the annual governors' report to the parents' meeting, and this has proved successful in securing a high turnout. There is no association for parents, but the school organises a series of social events that are well attended. Parents are actively involved in pupils' annual reviews and they receive individual pupil targets and evaluations each half-term.

47. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the information they receive about their child's progress. The school has a half-term newsletter, which supplies good information on the topics covered in the previous period. This does not yet provide information about the topics for the coming half-term. Good use is made of home-school books, especially in the primary department. Parents of children new to the school are made welcome, and translated material is offered to those for whom it might be helpful.

48. The school has very good links with local schools through the cluster schools organisation. The headteacher is an active member of the local cluster group. As a result, there is a good flow of information between schools and a consistent approach to issues across the patch. For example, this link gave rise to the setting of attendance targets and a locally written information sheet on attendance for parents. There are positive links with subject leaders in other special needs schools, and the headteachers of special schools meet regularly and are a highly effective group.

49. The Mainstream Advice and Resource Service (MARS) is in its second year. It was initiated by Highview School as a means of outreach, to offer material resources and advice to special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO) and other staff in mainstream schools. The service currently provides resources and support to staff in 39 of the 42 schools in the two Shepway Cluster Groups. The project is appreciated by all the schools using the service and is highly thought of by many of the SENCO. The initiative is successful in helping to maintain pupils in mainstream schools through providing additional expertise and resources to support local staff. There are also examples of successful transition of pupils from Highview School into mainstream education.

50. MARS organises training sessions for staff in mainstream schools. There has been a significant increase in demand this year for the two MARS project staff to provide circle time for SEN pupils in Year 6 mainstream schools as part of the transition to secondary education. The project makes a good contribution to the inclusion agenda through supporting pupils in mainstream schools. Future development will be dependent upon a clearer management structure and longer-term strategy, although this is outside the school's control.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership by the headteacher and by other key staff is **good**. Management and governance are both **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher has a very strong sense of purpose and high aspirations, focused on ensuring the maximum possible achievement for all the pupils at the school.
- The teamwork and mutual support displayed at all levels are a significant strength.
- Leaders provide very good role models, as they reflect the aims of the school, particularly in the way they show compassion and foster mutual respect.
- Continuing professional development is very effective, as it is focused clearly on school improvement and is an entitlement for all staff.
- The governing body does not fulfil all its statutory duties, although this does not have a significant impact on the quality of provision for the pupils.
- The school improvement plan lacks sufficient detail, financial costings, and focused success criteria, and as yet is not based securely on the analysis of standards.

### Commentary

51. The headteacher provides effective leadership. With humility, he displays calm, measured, yet determined commitment to the school and to ensuring that pupils achieve all that they are capable of within a respectful and compassionate environment. Despite the uncertainty and unrest created by the impending amalgamation of the school, he has maintained a very strong drive for school improvement and for raising the standards to the highest possible level. The leadership of other key staff is good. There has been much improved delegation since the last inspection. Taking their lead from the headteacher, virtually all subject leaders show the same good concern for individual pupils and have a vision of how they want their subjects to improve.

52. The atmosphere in the school is one in which the views of pupils, parents and staff are valued, and there is an open and communicative approach. The sense and evidence of teamwork is very strong at all levels; it exists between members of the management team, between co-ordinators, who share responsibility, between teachers and teaching assistants, among the administrative staff, and between the pupils, such as in the school council or in team sports.

53. The very good role models provided by the headteacher and his staff clearly manifest the school's aims. Most specifically there is great harmony, and clear evidence of respect, support, care and compassion. This is communicated to the pupils, and its impact shows in their very good behaviour, their spontaneous celebration of each other's achievements, and the unprompted help they give to each other.

54. The school improvement plan is sound and is produced through an effective consultative process involving governors and co-ordinators, who highlight suitable priorities for their subjects in an annual subject review. Although it gives an indication of the priorities to be addressed over two years, the plan does not include costings, monitoring processes or suitably focused success criteria. Priorities identified in the plan are not routinely expanded into detailed action plans. If this were done it would help with strategic planning and the development of leadership and management

skills at all levels. It would also support monitoring and evaluation, and produce an additional context for liaison between co-ordinators and governors. A main priority over the next year is to bring about a successful amalgamation of the schools. A more detailed action plan could give further reassurance to parents and staff as to how the process is to be led and managed.

55. Management is good. The school's self-evaluation is effective and most co-ordinators use a good range of monitoring strategies. These include lesson observation, review of planning, and reflection on the data on pupils' attainment, which the headteacher collates. This gives them a good understanding of their subject's strengths and weaknesses and informs their priorities for improvement. At present, pupils' attainment is not analysed in such a way as to show how well different groups of pupils are achieving in subjects, or whether there are any differences in pupils' achievements in different subject strands.

56. Continuing professional development is very good; it is made available to all staff as part of the ethos of ongoing improvement for all and includes appraisal for non-teaching staff. The well-established performance management process is clearly linked to whole-school priorities and raising pupils' achievements. Professional development opportunities are wide ranging. They include National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) Level 2 training for all teaching assistants, courses for the administration staff and the caretaker, the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH) for members of the leadership team, and a number of specialised courses for teachers, some with opportunities for accreditation. In addition, staff visit other schools, are part of regional consortia, and have school-based training provided by specialists from inside or outside the school. The opportunity for subject specialists within school to teach model lessons could be expanded as a further strategy for professional development. The school has recognised the changing needs profile of its pupils, as well as the needs of the pupils who are to be in the amalgamated school. This issue has been identified as an area of focus for staff training and has been discussed at governors' meetings. It has been specified as a target for one deputy headteacher as part of her performance management and is discussed at teachers' performance management meetings. Induction is good and includes a mentor being provided for all new staff. As part of their induction, teachers are given training which is managed by a consortium of headteachers of special schools, working in collaboration with Christchurch College, Canterbury.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	975,863.98
Total expenditure	851,762.98
Expenditure per pupil	8,603.06

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	100,192.05
Balance carried forward to the next	224,293.00

57. The school's financial affairs are well managed, with effective budgeting and monitoring systems in place. The recent audit was good and the issues raised have been addressed. There are clear roles and responsibilities for the governors' finance and general purposes committee, and for the finance manager and the administration staff, which they undertake efficiently. The school had a very large carry forward (22.9 per cent in financial year 2002-2003). This has been reduced during the current financial year and has been used to improve aspects of the building. This has included the upgrading of the science and food technology rooms and the building of an art and design room. The large surplus had been appropriately planned to substantially improve the accommodation. It would have provided desperately needed new classrooms to replace the unsatisfactory temporary provision currently being used. However, the LEA has now put a block on this expenditure because of the proposed amalgamation.

58. The principles of best value are well understood and applied. The school uses all available information to compare itself with other similar schools, and parents, pupils and partner schools are consulted widely. The school challenges itself by setting improvement targets, and takes steps to ensure that it achieves value for money in the purchases it makes.

59. Governance is good. The governors have an appropriate committee structure. They have a range of pertinent skills which they are increasingly using to challenge the school. The governors are very supportive and have a good working relationship with the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. They are well informed and seek information for themselves through observation of lessons and meetings with co-ordinators; as a consequence they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. The governors are proactive and have led a number of developments. For example, they have investigated the possibility of twinning with a school in France, of establishing a link with a specialist physical education school, and of instigating a school website. Indeed, they are keen to develop their role further. The governors do not, however, fulfil their statutory duties. Their report to parents does not include a complete picture of pupils' attainment. The pupils' annual progress reports do not consistently cover all subjects of the National Curriculum, nor do they report upon attendance. Finally, registers are not marked correctly. It must be said, nevertheless, that these lapses do not adversely affect the educational provision for the pupils.

60. There has been good improvement in leadership, management and governance since the school was last inspected. However, there are barriers to further improvement. The uncertainty in relation to the amalgamation is likely to create turbulence. Two key members of staff are already leaving and this will have an impact on the roles, responsibilities and work commitment of the headteacher and deputy headteachers. Unless the LEA is prepared to adopt a more flexible approach to expenditure of the school's surplus, pupils will continue to be taught in accommodation which is unsatisfactory and which limits their achievement.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

61. At the time of the inspection there was only one pupil in the Foundation Stage, and this pupil was not present for all of the inspection period. There is insufficient evidence to report on individual areas of learning. However, it is possible to say that achievement is good overall. This is linked to a good and well-planned range of learning experiences, which are well taught and assessed. The early years class is small, and children are taught alongside those in Years 1 and 2. The quality of planning ensures that individual needs are met well. The classroom is suitable for the small group, and resources are adequate. However, the adjacent play area does not conform to recommendations; there is no secure grassed area for children to play on.

### **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 TO 4**

#### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

One French was lesson was seen during the inspection. In this lesson, teaching was good. There was a lively pace, and opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, read and write in French. The teacher intervened most effectively to include all pupils, in particular to encourage them to speak. Learning was satisfactory, although pupils were very self-conscious about speaking in French.

#### **English**

Provision is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Provision for the development of speaking and listening is very good, and pupils achieve very well in these skills.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils' work is very well assessed.
- The department has made a very good level of improvement since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

62. During their time in the school, pupils achieve well in reading and writing and very well in speaking and listening. There are no consistent differences in achievement between boys and girls. Children in public care achieve as well as their peers, as do pupils from ethnic minority groups. All obtain at least their expected level in the externally accredited examinations in Years 9 and 11, and some do better than expected.

63. By Year 2, pupils have learned to speak clearly. Although their knowledge of letter sounds is patchy, they associate print with words and know they have meaning. Some pupils make marks on paper. By Year 6, pupils tell their news. They browse through information books and some read aloud with good expression. Writing is not extensive, but higher attainers write legible, cursive script, which frequently takes account of full stops and capital letters. By Year 9, pupils have tackled a range of classic texts, including Shakespeare, Chaucer, and children's classics such as 'Charlotte's Web' and 'Treasure Island'. All have achieved some measure of success. The most skilled are capable of giving and receiving complicated oral instructions. Their writing has improved

in range and accuracy, although less able pupils can have difficulty in spelling the days of the week. In Year 11, all pupils are capable of making presentations to the class, as was seen in the impressive leavers' assembly during the inspection. Almost all can read a very simple narrative and find information from a simple book.

64. An exceptional standard of teaching and learning was seen in the lesson for Years 7 and 8 for pupils with more complex learning needs. Learning was individually planned, with a very high level of well briefed support from teaching assistants. The simple tale read to the pupils was very well chosen, and the striking illustrations compelled their attention. The teacher used symbols and words to enable pupils to connect print with meaning. Skilful questioning showed that pupils were successfully learning the skills of inference, as they were able to explain, in very simple terms, the characteristics and motivation of one of the characters. Signing was well used, particularly in the well supported collaborative work, where pupils successfully grouped words, identifying attributes, round the figure of one of the characters. Higher attainers had good opportunities in this lesson to employ and develop the skills of contrast and comparison. When apparently unsupervised, a pupil took charge of circle time for this group, spelling out their names and asking them to respond. She then spelled out the day of the week and the weather. There was good use of picture exchange cards and communication boards, so that individual needs were catered for well. Pupils learned exceptionally well and were clearly taking responsibility for their own learning. They were all self-reliant. Relationships were excellent. Pupils were happy and confident when learning both in groups and independently.

65. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned, with pupils' targets systematically addressed. Good teamwork between teachers and support assistants allows lessons to proceed at a good pace. Detailed planning supports the learning of all pupils, so all make the same good level of achievement. Learning is most effective where there is a good variety of activities within the lessons and pupils have opportunities for practical tasks.

66. Pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening, because pupils in all classes respond well to lessons which are fully informed by teachers' expert knowledge of early language development. Five learning support assistants who have specialist knowledge give support in literacy lessons and other specialist sessions, using successful strategies to help pupils learn letter sounds and Makaton signing to guide their understanding. A tried and tested scheme is used well to further improve the expressive language of pupils with particular difficulties. The speech and language therapists attached to the school draw up treatment plans for those whose statements require this. These pupils are also given additional time for the development of their speaking and listening.

67. The school has followed the new guidelines for the teaching of speaking and listening, with good results. The learning environment has been improved to supply some 'listening spaces' in classrooms, although the number and quality of tape recorders still needs to be improved.

68. Pupils make good progress in reading, because letter sounds are well taught by means of explanation and symbols. There is frequent, diagnostic testing of all pupils, so that their difficulties can be properly addressed. The introduction of the literacy hour has helped pupils' reading, and much time is devoted to it. Additional grouped reading has been recently introduced and this further supports achievement. Good opportunities for reading are given to pupils after lunch each day. Resources are good and books attractive. Each class has a good stock of books, and pupils often dip into these when they have a moment to spare. The school celebrates book week, and writers have visited the school to enthuse the pupils.

69. Pupils do well in writing because they are well supported by ICT resources. There are prompts, word lists and writing frames to support pupils at all levels of attainment. Opportunities for shared writing among the younger pupils are good. Spelling is systematically taught, and pupils are encouraged to present their work in striking ways by using a word processor.

70. There has been a very good level of improvement since the last inspection. Progress is now consistently good in reading and writing and very good in speaking and listening. Provision for high attaining pupils is now good and has been helped by the grouping of pupils of similar abilities in Years 10 and 11. All are doing well. In Years 10 and 11, the quality and quantity of writing produced by pupils has improved and is now good. Pupils are now well challenged. As a result of greatly improved assessment, teachers know where to pitch their lessons. There are now no unmet training needs, and in the lessons seen the teachers' knowledge had fully supported their planning. A strong curriculum policy has been written and planning is now of good quality; this helps to ensure that pupils continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding. Literacy is now planned across the school. Assessment is now very good. A system has been introduced which enables teachers to note very small improvements in learning, and this is proving highly effective for assessing the achievement of the lowest attainers. The assessment process has been further strengthened by good, systematic procedures, frequent reviews of targets, and information gained from the results of national attainment tests. Each teacher now has a portfolio of samples of pupils' best work, but assessment portfolios, which will allow comparisons of marking to be made, are still not complete nor yet properly annotated. All pupils now follow fully accredited courses. Co-ordination of the subject is now very good. The curriculum is well monitored and teachers properly supported. Books are distributed between classrooms and a tiny space in a corridor, because of severe accommodation difficulties. The school intends to improve its stock of non-fiction when this can be properly housed. In the meantime, pupils have good access to books and this limitation has not affected their enjoyment of them or the progress of their reading.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

The teaching of literacy is good in all classes. It is well supported across subjects by very good opportunities for speaking and listening, including speaking in public. Aids such as picture exchange cards are used well to reinforce communication across the curriculum. Reading is supported by the use of symbols. Vocabulary is well promoted across a range of subjects. All staff know the literacy targets for all pupils individually, and they incorporate suitable opportunities within lessons for pupils to work on these.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Practical mathematics activities are used well to engage pupils and develop their enthusiasm for mathematical learning.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and the opportunity for accreditation for the older pupils is good.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving skills.

### **Commentary**

71. Achievement by pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good across all areas of mathematics; this is linked to the fact that the National Numeracy Strategy has been put into practice well. It is consistently used to give a good framework for teaching, with the three-part lesson well established. By Year 2, pupils count to three, pick out big and little objects, and name a circle and square. By Year 6, less skilful pupils count and sequence objects up to 10; more able pupils are able to sequence numbers to 100. In Years 7, 8 and 9 achievement is satisfactory. The Numeracy Strategy for pupils in Years 7 to 9 has yet to have a full impact, and pupils find difficulty with the concepts associated with shape, space and measure. By Year 9, most mentally add and subtract 2-digit numbers and a few use understanding of place value to multiply numbers by 10 or 100. Achievement is good in Years 10 and 11, where accreditation, GCSE, and OCR Entry Level mathematics have been effectively

introduced. The result has been a good structure and relevant programmes. In addition, the teaching of pupils in ability groups has enabled more focused teaching. Less able pupils, however, continue to find relatively difficult the learning associated with shape, space and measure. By Year 11 most classify 3-dimensional and 2-dimensional shapes, using their properties, and a few understand and use the formula to calculate a rectangle's area.

72. The teaching and learning of mathematics is good overall, although it is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Teaching is most effective where a range of learning styles is catered for, particularly when there are opportunities for practical activities which gain pupils' attention and sustain their motivation. In one Year 4 lesson, pupils were enthusiastic in their learning as the teacher successfully used a clapping rhythm to support them in counting on in multiples of 5. This was then followed by a frog game in which pupils rolled a dice and then jumped a frog across lily pads labelled in multiples of five, and this sustained their motivation. In the best lessons, teachers combine good planning with detailed knowledge of the pupils and are confident in teaching the subject. They are thus able to provide learning opportunities that are well matched to the needs of the pupils. In the less successful lessons, activities are not well matched to the abilities of the pupils. Where this happens, the pupils either find the work too difficult or are not adequately challenged, The result is that their learning is limited and they experience frustration. Although there are some opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving skills, the teacher often plays too active a role and the pupils are not given time to suggest and attempt strategies for themselves.

73. There is comprehensive and detailed assessment in place, and all pupils have relevant and suitably challenging numeracy targets on their Individual Education Plans. Resources are good and are used well in lessons. The use of ICT is often clearly in evidence through the use of a commercial software package that sets mathematical tasks based on the level of a pupil's attainment and supports independent working. In addition, pupil's motivation is stimulated by the use of interactive whiteboards and overhead transparencies where the classroom is equipped with these. Although pupils are provided with homework books, the setting of homework is inconsistent and is not monitored by the co-ordinator. The provision for relatively gifted and able pupils is good. There is access to GCSE accreditation for the older pupils, and the co-ordinator has written a one-year accelerated learning course for a Year 6 pupil.

74. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a background in mathematics and liaises well with colleagues in similar schools and with the LEA adviser to learn from other good practice and to remain up to date. He provides effective support to colleagues in terms both of materials and of guidance on activities they can use in lessons. The co-ordinator engages in a range of monitoring processes, including lesson observations and the review of planning, the outcomes of which he shares regularly with the governor linked to the subject. The co-ordinator also compares pupils' attainment with that in similar schools within the LEA and against the PANDA. He carries out an analysis of this but has not yet shared the outcome with the governor in question.

75. The improvement since the last inspection has been good because the relevant strategies have been put into practice, resources have been increased, and the role of the co-ordinator has been made more specific and focused.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

76. Overall, pupils' mathematical skills are used satisfactorily in other subjects. In music in Year 1 and Year 2, pupils enjoy joining in with counting songs, and in food technology pupils weigh ingredients prior to making chocolate eggs. In the archive display, time is the focus. There are further opportunities that could be explored to enhance mathematical learning in other subjects. At present, teachers do not identify in their lesson plans where there are opportunities for numeracy skills to be revised or consolidated.



## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6, and pupils achieve well.
- A relatively new co-ordinator, who is a science specialist, is making the subject more interesting for secondary pupils, and accreditation has been introduced.
- Teaching methods are well chosen, and teaching across the school is effective in generating pupils' interest and excitement.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and learning support assistants help to promote learning.
- Science teaching is not yet monitored across the school, although this intention is stated in the science policy.
- Time allocated for science in Years 7 to 9 is low, and one class has missed a high proportion of its science lessons this year.
- The lack of technician support means that the co-ordinator has to spend much time on preparation, which is not the best use of his time.

### Commentary

77. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 7 to 11. This difference is linked to the quality of teaching and learning, which is better in primary classes. Lessons are well planned, have clear aims and objectives, and are well matched to the needs of each class. Teaching is lively, enthusiastic and stimulating. Teachers across the school have a good command of the subject, and almost all secondary classes are taught by a science specialist.

78. Pupils respond well in all classes and enjoy science. They work purposefully in lessons, co-operate well, and understand how to work safely in a science laboratory.

79. Primary pupils are introduced to concepts in ways which closely match their current skills and needs. For example, when studying life processes and living things, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 develop knowledge and understanding. They do this through close observation, for example of the parts of a plant, and through explanation and lively discussion and the use of aids (such as an insect's life cycle). Older primary age pupils are introduced to habitats, and understand that different animals inhabit different environments. Non-teaching assistants are well used to support learning.

80. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 develop their investigative skills, such as by testing what conditions are needed for germination. In Year 9, these investigative skills are developed further, by testing reaction times for instance. The most skilful pupils were very keen to put forward their own hypotheses, but these were not used consistently to emphasise teaching points for the group.

81. In Year 11, investigative skills were developed further with a creative introduction to forensic science. Pupils attempted to identify a criminal from a group of suspects, by testing for the presence of a chemical in samples taken from the 'suspects'. The lesson was well planned and the teaching was knowledgeable and lively. Pupils were engaged and enthusiastic, and the more able were very vocal. Again, perceptive comments from pupils were not used to reinforce key points with the class. Marking and other forms of evaluation are immediate, and include positive comment and suggestions for improvement. Pupils in Year 11 have their achievements externally recognised through an accredited course.

82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The teaching observed varied from very good to unsatisfactory. Where unsatisfactory, it was because behaviour was not managed well, which got in the way of learning. Science teaching in Years 1 to 6 was good, and in Years 7 to 11 it was satisfactory. Teachers and learning support assistants give pupils sufficient support while encouraging them to work independently. Pupils generally support each other well and offer encouragement to classmates for making an effort.

83. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and good overall, but pupils in Years 7 to 9 have a low allocation of time. Because of timetable changes, one class has received only two thirds of its allocation so far this year. Homework is not set, except for Year 11 revision for Certificate of Achievement assessments, so not enough use is made of homework to support learning. The lack of technician support means that the co-ordinator has to spend much time on preparation, which is not the best use of his time.

84. Leadership and management are now satisfactory. Following liaison with colleagues in school, the science co-ordinator has produced a new science policy, which is good. It includes details of a new modular programme for Years 3 to 6, to be introduced in September. The science policy also sets out the duties of the co-ordinator, which include observing and monitoring science teaching across the school. The science co-ordinator gives advice to colleagues on request, but direct observation and monitoring are not yet in place. The science co-ordinator is aware of the need to give priority to this activity.

85. Since the last inspection, a science laboratory has been developed and equipped to a satisfactory standard. Progress in Years 10 and 11 is now satisfactory, and pupils follow an accredited course. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is undertaken by specialist staff and has been monitored by a deputy headteacher, which was another recommendation of the previous inspection report. Overall, improvement is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The subject is well led and managed; assessment is good.
- Pupils are well motivated when using computers, and often work well independently.
- Those who co-ordinate the subject have sufficient expertise, but amongst other staff there is patchy confidence and skill. As a result, pupils have too few opportunities to use computers in subjects other than ICT.
- The school has created an ICT room since the last inspection, but this is not adequate for teaching or learning. Technical support is available to teachers via a mainstream link.

### **Commentary**

86. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory across the school. In the early years class, the use of computers is well integrated into all areas of learning. In one lesson, for instance, pupils used a drawing package to draw their own faces, choosing shapes and colours with guidance from the teacher. As they did so, they learned how to use the mouse to click on a particular colour; this had the effect of colouring the eyes on their face. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to recognise letters on the keyboard, and are able to type their names if an adult calls out the letters. By Year 6, pupils are more adept at using computers to write. Those with marked literacy difficulties use a package that enables them to use symbols and text; more skilful pupils copy type a short piece and then print it. They also use CD ROMs to find information. By Year 9, pupils collect information, enter it into a

spreadsheet, and then answer questions by using the sheet. They produce work by combining text and images. Pupils in Year 11 are confident users of computers, and find information from sources on the Internet. All are entered for the OCR Entry level examination in IT; most are expected to obtain a distinction this year, and all are set to pass.

87. Teaching and learning range from satisfactory to good, and are satisfactory overall. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour in lessons, and pupils rise to the challenge. Lessons are planned by drawing from the national schemes appropriate for each year group. Because teachers know pupils and their abilities well they ensure that all have access to the tasks presented. In the most successful lessons, time is used very well. An example of this was a Year 11 session where pupils were quickly introduced to their task, that of taking digital photographs of the school for a web site. With great enthusiasm, and showing a high degree of personal responsibility and capacity for collaborative working, pupils duly set about their task, helping one another and ensuring that all in each group had a turn. They all returned to the ICT room within the time set, downloaded their pictures and annotated each one. They achieved a good deal in the time. An enthusiasm for ICT and using computers is a feature of all lessons.

88. Teachers generally match tasks to pupils' abilities well, so there is the potential for independent working. In a Year 4 lesson, several pupils independently entered information into a spreadsheet. Pupils also help one another, and this means that adults are able to support others in the class. In this way, all make progress. Further independence in working could be achieved by giving pupils prompts to enable them to overcome their literacy difficulties; in one lesson, a few pupils were unable to read words on drop-down menus. The use of highlighted words on a prompt card would have helped them to make progress without adult support.

89. The greatest barrier to learning is the inadequacy of the ICT room, which has been established since the last inspection. The lack of space has resulted in a room that is too small for whole class teaching. It is suitable for smaller classes to work independently on computers, but the restricted space means that teachers need to start and end their lessons in other classrooms. This reduces the time for learning, and interrupts lessons in the adjacent science laboratory. The ICT room has no ventilation other than a door to the outside that can be kept open in warm or fine weather. As a result it is stuffy and does not provide a suitable learning environment. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

90. Through a link with another school, Highview has access to the part-time services of a technician, and this reinforces teaching well. A learning support assistant with skills in ICT also offers support to teachers. There are two co-ordinators, one for primary classes and one for the secondary phase. They work together well as a team, with enthusiasm and commitment. There is a clear plan to promote future development, and an interested governor is both supportive and well informed.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

91. The use of ICT across the curriculum remains unsatisfactory. Because their skills are not well developed enough, staff do not have the confidence or expertise to use ICT widely. Teachers do not routinely identify in their plans where there are opportunities to use ICT as a learning tool in other subjects. ICT is used frequently and well in mathematics, but there is too little use of computers elsewhere. The school took advantage of nationally available training but they found this to be less beneficial than they had hoped. A lack of continuity in the co-ordination of the subject has also taken its toll of the systematic development of staff skills, although the current co-ordinators are giving support and advice where they can.

## HUMANITIES

92. History and geography were not a particular focus for this inspection. No geography lessons were seen, and only one history lesson was inspected. In this lesson, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Key vocabulary was explained and used well, and planning for individual needs enabled all pupils to participate and learn about the gods worshipped by the Romans.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good.
- Learning is well supported by religious artefacts.

### Commentary

93. Pupils achieve well in response to a good programme of study and good resources which are well adapted to their needs. In a lesson in Year 3, pupils were enabled to understand and retell the tale of the miraculous draught of fishes. They understood the concept of a miracle, which they explained as 'like magic'. Pupils had a good opportunity for a period of reflection in this lesson. As they were given 'smiley faces' in recognition of their achievement, they said a prayer "Thank you, Lord". In a lesson in Year 10 on Sikhism, pupils realised that Guru Nanak had fundamental differences with Hinduism which caused him to break away and found a new religion. In their study on the spread of this religion, pupils learned well as they made good use of a variety of maps of India and the Himalayas.

94. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Lessons are well planned and lively, with good use of authentic religious artefacts. There are some big books of high quality which support the learning of world religions. Pupils work very well independently, in pairs, and in small groups.

95. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum is well monitored. Assessment is good. The school intends to rewrite parts of the curriculum to make best use of the high quality resources.

96. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Time for the subject has been increased, and pupils' progress is now good. The curriculum is being developed to cover all the major world faiths, which are now well understood by pupils. There are now sufficient religious artefacts to support learning. Statutory requirements are now fully met.

## TECHNOLOGY

97. Design and technology was not a particular focus for the inspection, and there is not enough evidence to make secure judgements on the subject. One Year 3 food technology lesson was observed, and in this the teaching and learning were good. The teacher successfully encouraged pupils to work as independently as possible. Numeracy skills were reinforced well when the cutting of apples was used to revise fractions, and health and safety points were appropriately emphasised. Pupils achieved well; they successfully made fruit muffins, using the creaming method, and extended their knowledge and skills in the process.

98. The school has created a design and technology specialist area since the last inspection; this area is shared with science, which makes timetabling rather difficult. Much thought and hard work have gone into ensuring that pupils in Years 7 to 9 receive their entitlement to use a range of resistant materials. However, the school is limited in what it can provide by the size and scope of the specialist area. The accommodation for food technology is good; it is very much like a modern kitchen and is spacious and well appointed.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good, with some very good features.**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils' skills in investigating and making in art and craft are good, and they are enthusiastic in their learning.
- Achievement is very good in Years 10 and 11, as a result of specialist teaching and an accredited course.
- Pupils' achievements are celebrated very well in lessons and through effective displays.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to use ICT within an art and design context.

#### **Commentary**

99. Achievement by pupils in Years 1 to 9 is good. It is very good in Years 10 and 11, where specialist teaching combines with an accredited course to challenge pupils in textiles and 3-dimensional modelling. Across the school, pupils make good progress, particularly in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding associated with investigating and making. By Year 2, pupils are able to colour in within the lines. By Year 6, all have experimented with clay, and a few use a wide range of materials and processes with good control. By Year 9, pupils have compared art and craft from other cultures, the more able pupils with greater perception. By Year 11, a few pupils sketch in detail, showing perspective and form, whereas less able pupils sketch less accurately.

100. In Years 1 to 6, teaching provides a good range of practical activities. In Years 7 to 9, pupils are encouraged to show independence in using visual and tactile elements and to extend their knowledge and experience of materials. This then forms the foundation for their OCR Entry Level work in Years 10 and 11. The breadth of study is appropriate and has improved since the last inspection. There is evidence that pupils are beginning to employ ICT in art and design through the use of digital cameras and simple computer programmes, but the opportunities are not sufficiently wide ranging. Good use is made of the community to support pupils' learning, with opportunities to visit local artists, crafts people and art galleries.

101. The celebration of pupils' artistic achievements is very strong. Praise is always evident in lessons and there is a high profile for very good displays around the school. The work of all years is equally valued. For example, amongst a wide range of work on show there is work from pupils in Year 5 in the style of Picasso. In the art and design room Year 8 pupils display their work on designing and making patchwork shoulder bags from recycled jeans. The recently introduced fashion exhibition was very successful, with an attractive show of the work produced by pupils from Year 8 to 11.

102. The teaching and learning is good overall, and very good in Years 10 and 11. Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching of art, and this gives pupils motivation in using and developing their skills. Demonstrations and explanations are clear, and pupils know what they are expected to do. Resources are well used and there is good pace to the lessons. The very good relationships

combined with consistent use of praise, give pupils confidence. In the better lessons, specialist knowledge is used well to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. On occasions, pupils are not given enough opportunity to evaluate their own work. Assessment has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

103. Leadership and management are good, and the two co-ordinators, one for primary and one for secondary, form an effective partnership. Both show a real enthusiasm for the subject and support their colleagues well. They have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, based on an effective range of monitoring and evaluation strategies. A detailed subject review is produced and there is regular contact with the specified governor. Resources are now good, and much improved since the last inspection, and accommodation is significantly better with the provision of a specialist art and design room.

104. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, with co-ordinators now in place, broader opportunities for learning, better resources, and purpose-built accommodation.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Teachers have good expertise and enthusiasm for the subject, and pupils enjoy performing and composing.
- A good range of musical experiences is provided both in and out of lessons.
- Good leadership and management are achieved through teamwork.
- The accommodation in Years 7 to 9 restricts teaching and limits learning.

## **Commentary**

105. Overall, pupils achieve well in music; achievement is good in Years 1 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Pupils in the early years class enjoy listening to songs, and the most skilful join in with parts of them. By Year 6, pupils perform well for occasions such as an assembly. Most keep to a beat when playing untuned percussion instruments; they are able to play loudly and quietly, and show a good sense of rhythm and timing. By Year 9, pupils have widened the repertoire of music that they listen to for pleasure, and they make simple compositions with different rhythms and 'voices' on electronic keyboards. Their knowledge and understanding of music is increased as they learn about different composers. Younger pupils sing enthusiastically during their weekly singing sessions, and they also join in well during assemblies. Several sign as they sing, following adult models, and this supports well the inclusion of pupils with communication difficulties.

106. Music has a high profile in the life of the school. A good range of visits and visitors enriches the provision made in music lessons. For instance, pupils have sung with a church choir from Kenya and have taken part in a Ghanaian music and dance workshop. Year 5 pupils participate in a special schools music festival each year. There are visits to the theatre to see musical productions, and all pupils take part in assemblies, celebrations of festivals and school productions, such as a variety show. The latter featured a solo singing performance.

107. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6. Lessons take place in classrooms, or in the hall in the case of weekly singing sessions, and a good range of resources is used well to enable pupils to compose and perform. Additional resources have been purchased since the last inspection, some from the use of funds raised by pupils during a sponsored 'sing'. A successful Year 6 lesson found pupils rehearsing for their forthcoming assembly. Pupils used untuned percussion instruments to compose and perform short pieces of music to accompany two walkers making a journey from Africa, to the sea, then on to China. The pupils selected and used the instruments well.

For example, the tambourine, xylophone and triangle were played well to produce a suitable composition for China. One pupil used an ocean drum most skilfully to build to a crescendo then gradually tail off, as a representation of thunder. Pupils worked well together to polish their performance, waiting patiently for their turns, and the help offered by staff was successful in securing improvements in performance.

108. In Years 7 to 9, there are many good features of lessons, particularly high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The planning is of good quality and is drawn from a good scheme which has recently been developed. However, translating good intentions into reality is made very difficult by the nature of the room set aside for music teaching. This is an old temporary classroom, with no facility for setting instruments out beforehand, and a temperamental electrical supply that cannot be relied upon. As a result, lessons are fragmented by the need to hand out keyboards and to arrange for all to be plugged into a socket at the front of the class. Pupils' learning is satisfactory, because pupils and staff make good use of the time spent composing and performing, but it is limited by the need to manage resources. Trailing electrical leads create a potential hazard, although pupils are sensible and aware of the need for care.

109. The subject is well led and managed by two teachers. Good improvement in the resources has been achieved since the last inspection, and development has continued despite the fact that one co-ordinator spends much of her time off the school site, co-ordinating outreach provision. Assessment is good, and information is used well by managers to evaluate the success of the school's provision. However, the accommodation issue has not been satisfactorily resolved, and a solution is out of the school's hands. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical development is **good, with some very good features**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Specialist physical education teaching in Years 7 to 11 is a strength.
- The use of the community to support pupils' learning and provide staff training is very effective.
- The opportunities for pupils to be part of teams and engage in inter-school sports are very good.
- The opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in dance at Key Stage 1 and 2 are limited by a lack of confidence on the part of the staff.

### Commentary

110. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 9. Pupils achieve very well in Years 10 and 11, on the basis of the firm grounding they have received in the preceding years. Pupils make particularly good progress in acquiring and developing skills, which they use most effectively in games and athletics. By Year 2, pupils have learned to hop and are trying to skip. By Year 6, most use a bat with some basic control, while a few pupils show better co-ordination and hit a ball with accuracy. By Year 9, most are able to travel on apparatus, and a few perform a range of gymnastic actions with style and control. By Year 11, all make basic jumps on a trampoline, and the most skilled link actions to form a simple routine with precision, control and fluency.

111. The breadth of study that is made available to pupils is good and meets statutory requirements; there are now appropriate schemes of work in place to support teachers in planning their lessons. In the primary classes the provision for dance is restricted by a lack of confidence on the part of staff, and as a consequence pupils do not make as much progress in this aspect of the subject.

112. Very good use is made of the community to support pupils' learning and to expand their opportunities in physical education. Specialists come into school to lead lessons for pupils. For example, during the inspection a rugby coach from the Sports Development Group led a training session with a group of Year 6 pupils. The pupils took part with delight and enthusiasm, with most of them able to call, catch and pass the ball with accuracy and to transfer these skills to a game of tag rugby. Very effective use is also made of facilities in the community. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 use the hall at the local sports centre as well the facilities for weight training, table tennis and squash. All pupils go to the local swimming pool, and in their outdoor pursuits older pupils use the Dover Watersports Centre for sailing and the Kent Mountain Centre for rock climbing and raft building.

113. Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in Years 10 and 11. All lessons have consistent structure and good pace. Pupils are enthusiastic in their learning and participate well. They are co-operative and hard working and are motivated by their good relationships with staff. Health and safety issues are thoroughly covered. Pupils are proud of their own achievements and those of their peers. In the better lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate and improve their own performance. Pupils' personal development is supported well when older pupils coach and mentor younger ones. Assessment has improved since the last inspection and is now good. In reports to parents, however, physical education is not consistently recorded as a National Curriculum subject but appears in reports as 'gross and fine motor'.

114. Pupils have very good opportunities to be part of school teams and to enter inter-school competitions; the school participates in Kwik cricket, badminton, football, rounders, rugby, athletics and football. The school and its pupils are justifiably proud of their achievements in these competitions, and a wide range of cups and plaques is prominently displayed in the entrance hall.

115. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good, within the limitations of transport difficulties. There is lunchtime practice for various sports, and once a week there is an after-school club in which pupils select which sporting activity they wish to cover. The provision for relatively talented pupils is good. For example, one pupil was supported to join an athletic club and another pupil was helped to join a local football club.

116. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a specialist background and uses this knowledge well to provide support to colleagues. She leads training, shares her planning, and writes teaching programmes. Where necessary, the co-ordinator has organised and supported staff training by specialists from outside the school. The co-ordinator carries out a good range of monitoring activities, which include observation of lessons and the review of colleagues' planning.

117. Resources are good, but the accommodation is limited for older pupils. However, the school takes a proactive approach and uses suitable facilities in the community.

118. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. There are now more lessons taught by specialists, and a comprehensive scheme of work now exists. Assessment is now well established and better resources are available to support pupils' learning.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Citizenship has been introduced well and is now securely embedded in the curriculum and life of the school; it meets requirements.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught in the form of discrete lessons, but is also securely woven into the life of the school.
- Both citizenship and PSHE are well monitored and well co-ordinated throughout the school.

### Commentary

119. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils have made a good level of achievement in social competence, in response to good teaching and a good programme of PSHE. They cheerfully engage in role-play, speak appropriately, and play happily together or independently. Pupils continue to achieve well in Year 6, where they were seen identifying safe and unsafe decisions made by children in a story. They empathised with the adults who worry about them, and realised that they should always say where they are going when they go out to play. Pupils make very good progress throughout their secondary school career and are able to prepare a personal statement and complete a CV and application form by the time they are in Year 11. No lessons in citizenship were seen during the inspection, but pupils were observed debating in the School Council, a good expression of citizenship in action, and pupils were seen learning well the skills of PSHE and citizenship in their ASDAN Youth Award Scheme. This course supports their personal and social education to good effect and also addresses health and hygiene, household budgeting and home management. In the healthy schools programme, pupils are encouraged to make healthy eating choices at the school's breakfast club. In the course of this they improve their sociability and extend the range of foods they eat. Provision for social development also includes organised visits, and invitations to visitors to the school. Moral issues raised both by citizenship and by PSHE are addressed in assemblies. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to make an active contribution to practical citizenship in the corporate life of the school. Pupils join in wholeheartedly, and this helps in the growth of their social skills and their sense of responsibility. Moreover, the many opportunities for working together in class develop their skills of enquiry and their ability to communicate.

120. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum for both subjects is suitable. Planning is good, and a climate of praise in lessons encourages pupils to learn. Pupils respond well to the good resources, which are well adapted to suit their needs. Lessons are brisk, with a necessary emphasis on language development. There is a good emphasis on practical activities. Behaviour is well managed.

121. Leadership of citizenship has been highly effective in establishing the subject securely in the life of the school. Leadership of PSHE is also good. Management is good in both subjects, especially in the monitoring of the curriculum, which is a significant strength.

122. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Citizenship has been introduced well. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is now taught as a discrete subject. There are strong policies for both subjects, and planning and programmes of study are now securely in place. The governors have approved the school's programme of sex education, and pupils are now taught about the dangers of drug abuse. The school nurse now assists in the teaching of sex education. Assessment, although currently satisfactory, is identified by the school as a priority for further development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

*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.*