

INSPECTION REPORT

MAPLEWELL HALL SCHOOL

Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120348

Headteacher: Miss S Yarnall

Lead inspector: Mr D Smith

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th November 2003

Inspection number: 258940

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community Special
Age range of pupils: 11-19
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 115

School address: Maplewell Road
Woodhouse Eaves
Loughborough
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE12 8QY

Telephone number: 01509 890237

Fax number: 01509 891197

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Osborne

Date of previous inspection: February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Maplewell Hall School is a large Community Special School for up to 120 students. The school was awarded the Sports Mark Gold Award in 2003. There are currently 115 students on roll; 44 girls and 71 boys and all bar one of the students lives in Leicestershire. The majority of the students have moderate learning difficulties, a significant number of the students have autism and a few have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Five of the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, ten students are in public care and 27 students are eligible for free school meals. A distinctive feature of the school is that it offers a range of provision including; residence, extended day and day placements. Currently, eight of the older students access the residential provision for a maximum of two nights a week. The remaining students have access to the extended-day activities on a rota basis. There are six post-16 students with autism on the school roll and they attend a local college for two to three days each week. The school has experienced ongoing problems with regard to the recruitment and retention of teaching staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17323	Mr D Smith	Lead inspector	Science
			English as an additional language
13462	Mrs R Mothersdale	Lay inspector	
22466	Mrs D Pearson	Team inspector	English
			Modern foreign language
			Music
15600	Mr C Richardson	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Design and technology
			Physical education
			Post-16
			Special educational needs
18932	Mrs H Jones	Team inspector	Art and design
			Citizenship
			Geography
			History

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited
 14 Enterprise House
 Kingsway
 Team Valley
 Gateshead
 NE11 0SR

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	15
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides an acceptable standard of education but has serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching, the students' achievements, the provision and leadership of the curriculum. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money. The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory, overall. The school's poor accommodation remains a significant barrier to the students' achievements.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The unsatisfactory quality of teaching and learning and as a result the students' achievements are unsatisfactory overall.
- The consistent and effective use of the school's good behaviour management systems.
- The use of the school's assessment systems and procedures is unsatisfactory.
- The school's provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the students is good and their attendance is good.
- The curriculum provision for students in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- The leadership and management of the curriculum by middle managers and subject co-ordinators are unsatisfactory.
- The learning support assistants are a strength of the school.
- The poor accommodation and unsatisfactory resources have a negative impact on quality and standards in the school.
- The physical education provision is excellent.
- The residential and extended day provision is good.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection led by the relatively new headteacher, the new deputy headteacher and chair of governors. They are determined to drive forward continual improvement and now have a staff team that is increasingly receptive to change. The school has received substantial and valued support from Leicestershire Local Education Authority. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have effectively prioritised improvements and as a result the school continues to improve. For example, the students' behaviour and attendance is now good with a low rate of student exclusions. Assessment systems are now in place and the quality of teaching and learning is improving and as a result this is beginning to have a positive impact on the students' achievements. The challenge of recruiting quality staff means that the middle management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The poor accommodation remains a significant barrier to learning, for example, in the teaching of science.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The students' achievements are unsatisfactory, overall. They are generally satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9 but unsatisfactory for the students in Years 10 and 11. The students, other than those in the specialist provision for autism, are currently making effective progress in their learning in many aspects of the curriculum but this is a recent development and has not been consolidated over time. The students' achievements are unsatisfactory over time and whole-school targets lack rigour. They achieve well in their speaking and listening and reading but their achievements in writing are unsatisfactory. The students in Years 7 to 9 achieve well in mathematics. Achievements in science are unsatisfactory, particularly for the students in Years 10 and 11. The students' achievements in physical education are very good indeed and this includes impressive passes by the more able students in their GCSE examinations. Some of the students

are capable of following more challenging external accreditation courses in other subjects. The students' personal development is good. **The students' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory.** Well-managed assemblies make a good contribution to the students' spiritual development. Students have good attitudes, they behave well and their attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, overall, although it is satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent in physical education for the students in Years 10 and 11 and very good in Years 7 to 9. It is very good in music. Good teaching takes place in a range of other subjects including English and mathematics. Unsatisfactory teaching does lead to the unsatisfactory achievements of some of the students, for example, in science, religious education and art. Curriculum provision is unsatisfactory, overall, particularly in the specialist provision for students with autism. The curriculum is satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good and is significantly enriched by the opportunities provided in the extended education and residential provision. The students are well cared for and have satisfactory support and guidance. The school has satisfactory systems for consulting the students and taking their views into account. Satisfactory links have been developed with parents and good links with the community. Good links have been established with other schools and colleges in order to enhance the students' personal development and prepare them for life after school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The management of the school is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, is good but the leadership of the curriculum by some other key staff is unsatisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are determined to provide an effective and inclusive curriculum for the students currently in the specialist provision for students with autism. The headteacher has a clear vision and high aspirations to help focus her drive for continual improvement in the school. Good strategic planning is based on a thorough audit of needs. The school is beginning to gather data as the basis for monitoring performance but currently this process is under developed. The recruitment of high quality middle managers is a problem and, as a result, the leadership of teaching and the curriculum in some subjects is unsatisfactory. The governing body challenges and supports the senior managers and is committed to improving the quality and standards provided by the school. The school does not currently manage an outreach service.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents' view of the school is that it makes satisfactory provision. Overall, parents are supportive of the school and most ensure that their children attend regularly. Parents are confident about approaching the school and residential staff if they have any issues and that the school seeks their views. The isolated location of the school makes it difficult for the parents to visit regularly but they are appreciative of the good range of parents' meetings organised by the school. Some of the parents feel that their child has insufficient homework. Many of the students do not complete their homework and this contributes to their unsatisfactory achievements. The students particularly enjoy their time in residence and they are positive about the range of activities provided during the extended day. Many of the students talk enthusiastically about the sporting opportunities provided by the school. They appreciate the opportunity to express their views in the after school meetings.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

The students' progress in their learning and the standards of their achievements,

- The use of the school's assessment systems for target setting and teachers' planning.
- The quality of teaching and levels of expectation.

The curriculum provided by the school;

- The inclusive curriculum and personal development opportunities in the specialist provision for the students with autism.
- The leadership and management of the curriculum by the middle managers.
- The suitability of the school's accommodation and quality and range of resources.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The students' achievements are unsatisfactory, overall. They are generally satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9 but unsatisfactory for the students in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievements are unsatisfactory over time and whole-school targets lack rigour.
- The students achieve well in their speaking and listening and reading but their achievements in writing are unsatisfactory.
- The students in Years 7 to 9 achieve well in mathematics.
- The students' achievements in physical education and music are very good.
- There is insufficient challenge in the external accreditation available to some of the students.

Commentary

1 The students have recently made good progress in some key areas of their learning and are achieving well in their lessons. This includes the students with autism in the main school but not those in the specialist provision. However, these improvements have not had time to consolidate the students' achievements over time. Most of the parents feel that their child is making progress at school. Overall, the students' achievements are unsatisfactory in English and science although they are satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9 in both of the subjects. The school has insufficient data to set accurate and challenging whole-school targets but the level of challenge has increased in the 2004 targets when compared to the ones set in 2003.

2 The students make good progress in their speaking and listening and this is re-enforced across the curriculum. They speak with increasing confidence in a range of situations. The Year 11 students achieve very well when they prepare a talk about themselves. The students present their talk which is recorded and they are receptive to advice about the pace and clarity of their speech. Many examples are evident where students listen, wait their turn and respect the views of others. A social communication initiative is successfully promoting confidence and skills with groups of students and is particularly effective with students with autism who are taught with their peers in the main school. The opportunity to read to adults on a regular basis, the use of effective assessment and access to library facilities all help to boost the students' achievements in reading. Recent records show students are beginning to make improvements in all areas of literacy, except the extent and range of their writing.

3 The achievements of the students in Years 10 and 11 in mathematics are satisfactory. However, the students in Year 7 to 9 achieve well and, at times, very well in the development of their knowledge and skills in this subject. The majority of Year 9 students are able to give the time in minutes to and past the hour and record these times accurately using the correct notation. Students achieve very well when matching digital and analogue times on a computer. Year 8 students achieve well and are able to match ascending and descending orders for example, 81, 71 and 61 and accurately predict the next number in a sequence. These students make very good progress in their mental calculations and achieve very well.

4 Students have represented their school at national and international events such as; representing the East Midlands in the Special Olympics team in sports gymnastics and also representing Great Britain in the Pre-World and World Games. Students in Years 10 and 11 have opportunities for responsibility and leadership through the Junior Sports Leaders scheme, which they keenly volunteer for. The students' achievements in music are very good and this helps to raise their self-esteem and confidence.

5 The more able students achieve very well in physical education at GCSE Level and their results are significantly above those of students in similar schools nationally. This potential for challenging the students to achieve well has been recognised in mathematics and the Entry Level results from this year are a significant improvement on last year. As a result, some of the current Year 10 students study mathematics at GCSE Foundation Level. Opportunities are lost in other subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, to challenge the more able students by giving them the chance to study relevant courses leading to external accreditation. For many of the students, Entry Level Courses are appropriate but the teachers' level of expectation, in some subjects, are too low.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The students' personal development and attendance is good. Students have good attitudes and they behave well. The students' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory, making these aspects of their personal development good, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The consistent use of good behaviour management systems.
- There are very good systems in place to promote student's good attendance.
- Students arrive late at some of their lessons.
- The students have good attitudes to their learning.
- The provision of personal, social, health education and citizenship makes a good contribution to the students' good personal development.
- The school provides limited opportunities for the students to explore the richness of cultural diversity in present day society.
- The residential and extended day provision makes a good contribution to the students' personal development.
- The students with autism are fully included in the extended day and residential activities.

Commentary

6 Good behaviour management strategies are put into practice consistently across the school and residential provision and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Behaviour is generally good, especially when students are out of school on activities. A group of Year 8 students, working with students with severe learning difficulties in a drama lesson, are very considerate of the needs of these students and display a great kindness to them. In a swimming lesson located in a local community college, students appreciate that behaving well and listening carefully to their teachers is an integral factor to their safety and to learning new swimming skills. In the previous school year, four students shared six fixed period exclusions, for unacceptably challenging behaviour to staff. One of these students has since left the school and the others have not had another exclusion in the current school year. In discussion with students they all recognise the potential for challenging or bullying behaviour in a few of their school friends. However, none feel threatened or harassed in school and approve of the school's strategies for dealing with disruptive behaviour, and rewarding good behaviour. The current level of student exclusion is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
110	6	0
1	-	-
1	-	-
1	-	-
2	-	-

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

7 Attendance is monitored on a daily basis in the school and any unexplained or unjustified absences are swiftly followed up. Travel escorts play a vital role in letting the school know initially if a student is not attending. However, the school is also active in pursuing and promoting attendance both through the Education Welfare Service and through its own enquires. Overall, most of the students enjoy being at school, they attend well and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Punctuality to lessons varies and is affected by the layout of the buildings and teaching time is lost.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (90.9%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.2%
National data	8.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.9%
National data	2.4%

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

8 When absorbed in their work, students work well together. For example, in a Year 7 citizenship lesson, students, working in small groups, consider the wild life to be found in the school grounds. They then select a particular creature, for example a squirrel, to research its feeding habits. The students respond well to their task, happily sharing out the work. They use books to research, write up their findings, report back to their classmates and answer any questions that are asked.

9 Opportunities for students' personal development through spiritual, moral and social development are good and satisfactory for their cultural development. Assemblies and lessons offer students opportunities to develop and think about differing sets of values and to consider ways that they can help others. For example, students have thought up their own range of sponsored events for Children in Need, and also make a regular point of contributing to Water Aid. Despite the recent Rivers of Life week, which offered students the chance to taste different foods and celebrate different faiths and cultures, and the annual French week in school, there are limited opportunities for students to experience the diversity and different ethnic mixes of British culture, and the school is very aware of this challenge. Good opportunities for personal and social development are offered through the "Kidz Kaffe", where students have to work as a team with staff and each other, and deal with the realistic pace and atmosphere of café life.

10 Students enjoy the wide range of activities provided in the extended school day and residence. A group of them, including post-16 students, working on road safety skills and motorbike maintenance, are delighted at the arrival of two motorbike policemen, which effectively promotes good relationships with the police and also extends the students' road safety awareness. All

students have the confidence to ask the police a range of questions about their motorbikes and the job of being a policeman; some students inevitably ask more questions than others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, overall, although it is satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9. Curriculum provision is unsatisfactory, overall, particularly in the specialist provision for students with autism. The curriculum provision is satisfactory for the students in Years 7 to 9. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good and is significantly enriched by the extended education and residential provision. The students are well cared for and have satisfactory support and guidance. The school has satisfactory systems for consulting the students and taking their views into account. Satisfactory links have been developed with the parents and good links with the community. Good links have been established with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, overall. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for students in Years 7 to 9 and unsatisfactory in Years 10 to 11. The use of assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The unsatisfactory teaching is a serious weakness.
- The use of assessment to set targets and inform teachers' planning is unsatisfactory
- The learning support assistants make a very good contribution to the students' learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning in physical education are excellent for the students in Years 10 and 11.
- The quality of teaching and students' learning is, at times, very good.

Commentary

11 In Years 10 and 11 a significant amount of teaching is unsatisfactory. The analysis of the student's previous work does confirm that some of the teaching and learning lacks continuity, sufficient challenge and has been disrupted by staff recruitment problems. In the teaching of science for the students in Years 10 and 11, a high percentage of the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in the specialist provision for students with autism, many of whom are in Years 10 and 11. Inadequate planning and a very late start to lessons results in the students making unsatisfactory progress in their learning. Too many students in certain classes for the size and design of the classroom, combined with a disorganised approach, leads to the students making unsatisfactory progress. Older students with autism do not use the specialist facilities for example in art and design, they are not taught by the subject specialist and as a result they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning. In a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics the learning objectives are not clearly given, are not always adhered to, and students are unsure of teachers' expectations. Lessons in Year 10 and Year 11 also start without the opportunity for the students to take part in mental tasks. The quality of teaching and students' learning in religious education is unsatisfactory. Work sheets are not planned to meet the needs of the full range of abilities and the text is too difficult for most students to read which results in restless behaviour. Where the quality of teaching and learning in art and design is unsatisfactory, the management of the available lesson time is unsatisfactory. For instance, too much time is spent standing about waiting to be photographed and, as a result, the students make unsatisfactory progress in their learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 69 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
-----------	-----------	------	--------------	----------------	------	-----------

5 (7%)	12 (17%)	31 (45%)	14 (20%)	7 (10%)	-	-
--------	----------	----------	----------	---------	---	---

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.

12 Assessment systems are in place but they are not used consistently. As a result, the school has insufficient year-on-year data to accurately inform whole school target setting. There are examples of good practice in the school where assessment is used well to track students' progress and this is impacting on the students' achievements in mathematics, physical education and reading. Lesson plans have been redesigned to effectively include assessment information and they are developing improved annotation to more effectively provide feedback to the students. The students have too few opportunities to review their own work and, as a result, do not fully understand the strengths and areas for development in their work.

13 Learning support assistants provide very good support for the students. They have provided good levels of consistency during times of significant changes in the teacher staffing. They remain with the students for the different lessons and this has a positive impact on the management of behaviour, although too much time is lost travelling between lessons. Relationships and teamwork are strong between the staff and this helps the promotion of the high standards of the students' behaviour by all of the staff. The learning support assistants take on additional responsible roles, for instance, the effective teaching of food technology and the good development of the students' communication skills.

14 The quality of teaching and students' learning in physical education is a strength of the school. Teaching and learning is very good and a large percentage of the teaching is excellent across the school. The specialist teaching is driven by the highest ambition for each and every student. Excellent planning is based on the very good assessment and recording of the students' achievements and, as a result, they make at least very good progress in their learning.

15 This very high quality teaching is particularly evident in mathematics lessons for the students in Years 7 to 9. Lessons are well planned and teachers' high expectations are clearly given and, as a result, the students make good and at times very good progress in their learning. In English very well planned lessons and the range of interesting activities motivate the students. For example, the Year 7 students make very good progress in their understanding of the correct use of verbs and adjectives. Year 11 students make some very good progress, for example, when developing the clarity and pace of their speech as they record descriptions about themselves. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in music and some geography and science lessons. Typically in these lessons the teacher has very good subject knowledge and planning is very firmly based on the very effective use of assessment systems.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is unsatisfactory. The enrichment of the curriculum supported by the extended day activities and residential provision is good. The quality and suitability of the accommodation are poor and the range and quality of the resources are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provision for the students in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- There is limited inclusion within the school for the students in the specialist provision for students with autism.
- There is effective provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship.
- The older students are effectively involved in decisions about their next stage of education or employment.
- The provision for the students' participation in sport is excellent.

Commentary

16 The design, condition and suitability of the accommodation for the required curriculum provision are poor. Also the quality and range of resources are unsatisfactory and this contributes to the students' unsatisfactory achievements. Access is difficult to many classrooms that are spread over the large site and this is a particular problem during inclement weather. There is frequent movement between buildings for lesson changes and due to the dispersed site there is a loss of teaching time. A few of the classrooms are situated in the eaves of the house and outbuildings and access is difficult for some of them. Two mobile classrooms are condemned and this contributes to the unsatisfactory achievements, for example, for some of the students in science. The sports hall cannot be used during cold weather due to poor insulation and yet despite this the students' achievements are very good. The quality and range of resources are unsatisfactory. In science and design and technology resources are limited and out-of-date and this restricts the practical activities available for the students. The new instruments in the music room, the new information and communication technology suite and the library provision all support learning well.

17 The leadership and management of the curriculum is inconsistent at middle management level and, as a result, is unsatisfactory, overall. The issue of leadership and management is as a result of recruitment difficulties and the unsatisfactory match of teachers to the curriculum. Where subject leaders are established, for example, in physical education and mathematics, the high quality curriculum promotes the students' very good and good progress in their learning. Many staff have been recently appointed or deployed to curricular areas and some significant progress is evident in the management of subjects such as English. However, recent improvements have not had time to impact on the overall quality of the curriculum and it remains unsatisfactory. The specialist provision for students with autism, the majority of whom are in Years 10 and 11, does not provide sufficient inclusive opportunities in the school and their curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are an effective number of well-established learning support assistants and they make a very good contribution to the curriculum provision. This is demonstrated in their support of the students' communication skills and their good provision for food technology.

18 There is a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme that supports the students' relationships and communication skills effectively. The school provides satisfactory sex and relationship education through science and citizenship lessons. The curriculum is inclusive for the school-based students with autism and the students with emotional and behavioural difficulties where they all have equal access to the curriculum provision. A manager organises work-related learning with appropriate community placements and college links and the students have good opportunities to make choices. The majority of students successfully transfer to college courses at age sixteen.

19 A particularly innovative practice at present is the excellent provision for sports activities. Students gain Junior Sports Leaders awards where Year 11 students lead groups of school children in sporting activities. There is additional sports' coaching support that contributes very well to the physical education provision. Students enjoy outdoor adventure opportunities in the Peak district and evening activities on site such as arts and craft, sports, judo and involvement in the a local youth centre. Good photographic and video evidence illustrates the fun the students, visitors and students from other schools have, during French week. This is a whole school project with shops, cinema and café that provides very good opportunities for socialising whilst speaking and listening in the French language. Students have enjoyed the performances of music and dance with Asian and African visitors and this is a positive area in the students' satisfactory cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

The school and the residence provide a good level of care for students. Arrangements for the support, advice and guidance of students are satisfactory. The school's systems for consulting students and involving them in the work of the school are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are well organised in school.
- The strong contribution of health and safety procedures in most areas of school.
- College links, careers programmes and work experience are well organised.
- Good induction procedures for new Year 7 students.
- Residential provision is well managed.
- There is no school council.
- The meetings at the end of the school day to discuss behaviour and the students' achievements are effective.

Commentary

20 The school takes good care of students. Child protection issues are well addressed with three members of staff responsible for child protection procedures. All members of staff have updated their training and the child protection policy has been re-written. Health and Safety procedures are well organised both in the school and in the residence. However, some aspects of risk assessment in curriculum procedures have not been fully addressed, for example, when teaching science in the specialist provision for students with autism. The school is very aware of the necessity for fire safety strategies and is in the process of addressing all the recommendations in a recent fire safety assessment. Fire safety evacuations are followed up in the residence as well as the school. The school helps students with practical health and safety issues. For example, in an extended day activity, students learn how to correctly place an emergency call and ask for a specific service. In food technology, students are taught the importance of day-to-day hygiene routines such as washing up and drying dishes correctly.

21 Support for students during their transfer to college placements is good. An ex-student who regularly returns to support sports activities in the school, one of five from the previous ten school leavers who come to help in the school, is appreciative of the support he received when transferring to the next stage of his education. Induction arrangements for the new Year 7 students are also good and supported by home and school visits whilst students are still in Year 6.

22 Routines and care in the residence are good. The school has included the documentary recommendations of the recent Care Standards Report for the residence in the whole-school development plan, and already implemented most of them into the residence routine. Students enjoy the experience of a residential stay and the close liaison between care and teaching staff supports behavioural and educational reviews and students' care.

23 Personal, social and health education is making a good contribution to students' care. The students' formal views are requested during the annual review meetings and by the completion of questionnaires. The opportunity for the students to write down or voice their concerns and suggestions to the headteacher, does enable students to have a voice in the running of the school. A few students consider that their opinions are not listened to or considered, fully. However, students are well known to both school and residence staff and there are many occasions for staff to engage with students to seek out their views. For example, care staff take lunch and evening meals, and on occasions breakfast with the students, and use this time to establish if anything is worrying students.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and carers are satisfactory. Links with the community are good especially for work experience placements. Links with other schools and colleges are good and sustain excellent sporting opportunities for the students.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good parental support for the students' attendance.

- The school is in an isolated location and few parents are involved on a day-to-day basis in the school.
- Good use is made of home/school books for the Year 7 students.
- The school has good links with the community.
- Excellent sports achievements support school and college links
- The school provides well-arranged work experience opportunities for the students in the community.

Commentary

24 Overall, parents and carers are supportive of the school and most ensure that their children attend regularly and as a result their attendance is good. Parents and carers are confident about approaching school and residential staff if they have any issues. They are full of praise for the role that bus escorts take in supporting the home/school link, providing the administration office, for example, with information on why a student cannot attend school. Parents who collect their children in the evening, after the extended days activities, provide one of the few occasions in the day when parents actually come to the school, as otherwise there are very few parents' involved in day-to-day activities. However, there is good parental attendance for annual reviews. The school has explored a range of venues that may be more accessible to parents for parents evenings, but has not so far identified any place as being more acceptable than the school itself. Home/school links are initiated early on in a student's school life as home visits are made by the Year 7 co-ordinator and head of care. Year 7 students all have a home/school book, but as students progress through the school this is not commonly used unless by parental request. Written information to parents and carers is satisfactory, overall, although annual written reports give only basic information and report what students have been taught, rather than what they have in fact learnt. All subjects are reported on and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

25 The school's extensive sporting achievements provide students with an entry into many inter-school matches and competitions, some at national level. Links with the extended community are good and provide a wide range of resources in the form of visits and visitors to the school. The school has identified links with schools outside of the immediate area to provide students with a broader range of experiences. Transition procedures are in place for students to integrate into a range of college provision in the area.

26 Work experience for students is well matched to their needs and organised to benefit individual students in a wide range of placements in the local community. The school works closely with parents to ensure the success of placements and, where possible, is delighted if the parents themselves can identify a suitable placement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher supported by the deputy headteacher is good but the leadership of the curriculum by some other key staff is unsatisfactory. The management and governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher has a clear vision and determination to lead continual improvement in the school.
- The school is beginning to gather data as the basis for monitoring performance but currently this process is under developed.
- The recruitment of high quality middle managers is a problem and, as a result, the leadership of teaching and the curriculum in some subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The governing body challenges and supports the senior managers.

Commentary

27 The headteacher has a clear ambition to use her energy and skills in the drive for effective provision at the school. Since her appointment in January 2002 she has worked hard to make significant improvements in the face of challenging circumstances. This progress has been boosted by the recent appointment of an equally determined deputy headteacher with good curriculum and behaviour management skills. The role of the deputy headteacher is clearly focussed on leadership and management responsibilities and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The head teacher and deputy headteacher provide inspiring role models for the rest of the staff and are providing a firm foundation for the future. They are determined to provide an effective and inclusive

curriculum for the students currently in the specialist provision for students with autism. They fully understand the link between good teaching, progress and student's achievements over time and their top priority currently is to improve the students' achievements. Policies and procedures are well written, provide structured guidelines and clear expectations. Good strategic planning is based on a thorough audit of needs. It sets out priorities that provide effective success criteria as the basis for monitoring the progress of the school's provision. An example of success is the significant progress made by the school in the management of the students' behaviour and the good levels of student attendance. The current focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning is beginning to have a positive impact, although this is not consistent across the school or over-time. A culture of accountability, monitoring and evaluation is starting to be established. The analysis of the student's previous work does confirm that some of the teaching and learning lacks continuity, sufficient challenge and has been disrupted by staff recruitment problems.

28 The headteacher and deputy headteacher have introduced systems to collect information as the basis for self-evaluation and review. This approach is effectively used in relation to the management of the students' good behaviour. Assessment systems are in place to collect data as a basis for individual and whole-school target setting but as yet they are not consistently applied. This means that the school is not in the position to review patterns of students' performance and this contributes to the overall unsatisfactory achievements of the students.

29 The school faces ongoing problems in the recruitment of quality teachers and, in particular for staff to lead the curriculum at middle management level. Recruitment difficulties have resulted in, for example, the lack of a subject leader for religious education and consequently the students' achievements are unsatisfactory. The headteacher recognises the need to increase the effectiveness of leadership across the school to provide more substantial support for the continual improvement of the school. The monitoring of quality and standards is satisfactory by the headteacher and deputy headteacher but is unsatisfactory at other levels. Equally the leadership of subjects is variable across the school, as many of the staff are new to their particular responsibilities. Performance management systems are satisfactory and have made a positive impact on staff, for example, in the development of their leadership skills in mathematics and English. Certainly, leadership in mathematics and physical education have developed to the point where they provide examples of very good and excellent practice for the school to build on. Management on a day-to-day basis is generally satisfactory although a weakness is that teaching time is lost at the beginning of some lessons and this does lead to some the students making unsatisfactory progress in their learning.

30 The governing body is becoming increasingly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chair of governors is resolved to help promote the very best opportunities for the students in the school. He has a very good working relationship with the headteacher and this promotes a shared ambition for improvement. The governors are supportive but also expect an explanation and justification for changes and developments. They are appreciative of the support by Leicestershire Local Education Authority Advisers and have a very good link with the governor support department. The governors have effectively placed a high priority on bringing the school budget out of an overspend situation. However, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money due to the unsatisfactory achievements of the students, the unsatisfactory teaching and learning and the excessive amount of money carried forward from the last year. There have been factors outside the control of the school that contributed to the under spend and there are plans in place to increase the spending on essential resources in the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£1,193,969	Balance from previous year	£66,255
Total expenditure	£1,016,779	Balance carried forward to the next	£177,190

Expenditure per pupil	£8,473
-----------------------	--------

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

The provision for English is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievements of the students over time are unsatisfactory.
- The provision for speaking and listening and reading is good but for writing it is unsatisfactory.
- The use of assessment for Year 7 students is good but is unsatisfactory, overall.
- The quality of teaching in lessons is good, overall, resulting in satisfactory to good learning.
- There is still too heavy a reliance on worksheets for older students.

Commentary

31 The students are now making at least satisfactory and at times good progress in their learning but the analysis of their previous work shows that overall their achievements are unsatisfactory. Recent records show students are beginning to make improvements in all areas, except writing skills. The co-ordinator, new to post, is beginning to work closely with colleagues to share and consolidate good practise. The literacy strategy and special educational needs consultants have supported the subject well. A social communication initiative is successfully promoting confidence and skills with groups of students and is particularly effective for the students with autism within the main body of the school. The speech and language therapist and learning support assistants who focus on the development of the students' communication skills, are monitoring progress. The opportunity to use the school library to change reading books and seek information is an invaluable resource for the students and has helped to promote their good progress in their reading skills. The co-ordination of English has recently been allocated and the teacher is quickly establishing the way forward for the subject. A new reading scheme is to be introduced in the near future and more appropriate and new resources are to be purchased. Power point presentations, CDs and programmes for information and communication technology are in place and more age appropriate software is to be purchased. Writing frames recently introduced are beginning to give more structure to written work. A more formal approach to homework, literacy across other subjects, annotation and marking will support the subject further. Good opportunities are provided for students to experience poetry, play scripts and the work of Shakespeare.

32 The well planned lessons and range of interesting activities for Year 7 students introduces them well to verbs and adjectives. Students make good progress when they re-draft their work to make the text more interesting. The learning support assistants effectively help the students to learn their spellings. Regular reading to an adult is giving students more confidence. Young students have good opportunities to work with students in other schools and they are totally absorbed by the opportunities to share drama activities. Year 8 students are beginning to understand the sequence of events and recognise whether it is the characters or the narrator speaking in their study of Phantom of the Opera. Most students in Year 9 find reading the questions difficult but are beginning to relate to empathy and expression as they take on the role of the characters in Treasure Island.

33 Good teamwork with Years 10 and 11 prepares students for accredited courses such as the Entry Level Certificate. As the work is suitable for each ability group, they are beginning to work more independently, to understand speech marks and how to re-draft text work although at times there is too much reliance on worksheets. Students can recount their favourite stories in the 'Goal Keepers Revenge' a book of childhood memories. They are beginning to use dictionaries but have

difficulty in spelling and writing their ideas. In the specialist provision for students with autism they write short sentences for their diaries and are capable of more extended writing. Students are given support to send an e-mail to friends and they respond well to these opportunities. Good use is made of the time at the end of lessons to ensure students know what they have achieved and how well they have behaved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

34 Speaking and listening is promoted well in many subjects and all of the students are encouraged to express their views clearly in the review and evaluation sessions at the end of the day. Some of the text selected for the students is too difficult for them to read, for example in the teaching of religious education, and consequently they lose interest in their work. Opportunities for the students to consolidate and extend their writing skills are limited and, as a result, the students' achievements in writing are unsatisfactory.

French

The provision for French is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The students make good progress in their learning and achieve well.
- There is a very good range of speaking, listening, writing and reading opportunities in French.

Commentary

35 The quality of teaching is interesting with imaginative role-play, good use of resources and a range of presentations throughout the lesson to maintain student interest. All lessons are fun where students and staff take the role of shopkeeper and customer. They ask and answer questions in French in order to purchase items. Friendly greetings start every lesson where students show how confident they have become. The good provision of French in the school makes a good contribution to the positive ethos of the school.

36 An interesting range of activities introduces students to spoken French by listening to tapes, writing sentences and using computer programmes. The good use of flash cards provides useful prompts and students are willing to help each other throughout lessons. Year 7 students thoroughly enjoy singing to a guitar and they make good progress in learning their numbers in French. Year 9 students respond well to the good working atmosphere, they work independently and complete their tasks to a good standard. The students' achievements are effectively recorded and assessed in detail during the annual French week. This stimulating French week involves the whole school, friends and students from other schools in the local community, in using spoken French as they purchase and sample items from shops and the café.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and, at times very good, for the students in Years 7 to 9.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject.
- Assessment and recording systems are good and are used consistently.
- The development of the students' numeracy skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

37 Lessons are well planned and teachers' high expectations are clearly given and, as a result, the students in Years 7 to 9 make good, and at times very good, progress in their learning. A noted feature of the teaching is the differentiation of learning by tasks. This enables students to succeed and has a positive impact on their motivation and self-esteem. Some Year 9 students are effectively challenged to recognise given times and they accurately record the times using correct notation. Other students consolidate their learning of half and quarter to and from the hour and the remaining students complete tasks using a computer programme to recognise half and hour settings. Students are very proud of their achievement and they evidently enjoy the tasks and their success at them. All of the students are well supported by the learning support assistants and, as a result, they develop the confidence and skills to make at least good progress in their learning. Where the quality of teaching is satisfactory, the learning objectives are not clearly given and the students are unsure of the teachers' expectations and, as a result, they only make satisfactory progress in their learning. Lessons in Year 10 and 11 sometimes lack the brisk start of mental tasks and, as a result, the teaching does not interest the students.

38 The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced in the school and has a positive impact on the students' good achievements. The very good relationship between teachers and students, and the teachers' knowledge of the ability level of each student, enables their learning. This is evident in the way that teachers use appropriate questions to guide the students' learning, effectively challenge their thinking and to deepen their understanding. Some of the current Year 10 students are following a foundation level GCSE course in mathematics and this establishes appropriate levels of challenge for them.

39 The subject leader provides very good leadership and management and has a good vision as to the future development of the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the year since the leader has taken up post, a system of tracking of all students has been introduced to ensure the continuity and progression of their learning. Good assessment systems are in place. The students' achievements in lessons are assessed and recorded against the current half-termly topics and this is then entered onto a yearly assessment record to obtain assessment information. Very good use is made of the half-termly assessment data to produce individual learning. This has a positive impact on students' progress and learning. Additionally, an initial test is given to each student at the start of the year and repeated at the end of the year. This provides additional information on students' individual progress and learning and is used effectively to inform planning. Although individual students use information and communication technology during lessons this resource for whole-class teaching, particularly for data handling, is underdeveloped.

Mathematics across the curriculum

40 The planned development of the students' numeracy skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory. However, there are examples, such as the learning of grid references in geography and measuring in science, where the students' mathematical skills are promoted well. However, in general, opportunities are lost for the teachers to consolidate and extend the students' mathematical knowledge and skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The science accommodation is poor and limits the achievements of the students.
- The science curriculum in the specialist provision for students with autism is unsatisfactory.
- The quality of teaching and learning for students in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- The quality and range of resources are unsatisfactory and there is unsatisfactory technical support.

- The students respond well to opportunities to learn through practical work.
- The use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

41 The science room is condemned as unfit for purpose and consequently provides a poor learning environment. The room is too small and movement around the room is also limited by a structure that supports the roof. The combination of these factors limits the opportunities for some of the larger groups to be fully involved in practical work and, as a result, their learning is at times unsatisfactory. The students in the specialist provision for students with autism are taught science in a non-specialist room that severely restricts their curriculum provision and, as a result, they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning. Despite the unsuitable accommodation used for the teaching of science to some of the younger students the expertise and organisation of the teacher ensures that the students make at least good progress in their learning.

42 The majority of the students in the specialist provision for students with autism are in Years 10 and 11 and the provision of science for them is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for the students to learn through meaningful investigations. Inadequate planning and a late start to lessons results in the students making unsatisfactory progress in their learning. For example, a demonstration of the effect in the burning of different metals does not interest the students and some of them state their disappointment that time has been wasted. This particular experiment is far too hazardous for the conditions that it is carried out in, for instance, the floor is carpeted and could easily be set alight. There are too many students in some of the classes for the size and design of the specialist science classroom. Also poor use is made of the available time and, as a result, the students make unsatisfactory progress, for example, when investigating the cleaning power of different detergents. By the time the students have set up their basic apparatus it is the end of the lesson and no investigation takes place.

43 There are insufficient resources, many of them are out-of-date and fail to provide the necessary level of interest and stimulation for the students. Textbooks and duplicated work sheets are unattractive and do not motivate the students and, as a result, they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning. The use of information and communication technology in the teaching of science is under-developed and therefore opportunities are lost to extend the students' understanding by the use of modern technology. The resources are stored centrally and they have to be transported considerable distances between the different classes that science is taught in. The technical support for science is unsatisfactory; this makes the appropriate preparation of resources very difficult and this situation contributes to the unsatisfactory provision for science in the specialist provision for students with autism.

44 The appropriate resources are used very well to challenge the students in Year 7 to make very good progress in their learning. For example, the students are very effectively taught to understand that a force is required to move an object against friction. Very good ongoing assessment is an integral part of the lessons and ensures that all of the students are fully included in the activities. The use of scientific language such as "friction" and "force" are introduced, re-enforced and constantly checked to ensure that the students understand the correct use of the terms. Very good relationships and very skilled support from the learning support assistants gives the students the confidence to make predictions and then to test them out. The behaviour management of the students is very consistent, linked well to their targets and, as a result, their behaviour is very good. The effective use of interesting computer assisted resources captures the interest of the Year 8 students and consequently they make good progress in their understanding of the different characteristics of sound waves.

45 The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the science curriculum. He has clarified the advice on what teachers should teach and effectively linked this to other areas of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has been receptive to the advice and training provided by the school and has introduced developments linked to the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Assessment systems are in place but they are not used consistently and in general the procedures do not yet provide sufficient

information to inform target setting or teachers' planning. The management of the subject across the school is unsatisfactory, although this task is made more difficult by the fact that a considerable distance separates the different locations used for the teaching of science. This is a weakness in the school's accommodation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good for the students in Years 7 to 9.
- The subject is well led.
- The quality and range of resources are unsatisfactory.
- Use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is under developed.

Commentary

46 In lessons, and in the analysis of students' work, the teaching and learning of discrete information and communication technology skills are mainly good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Lessons are well prepared, learning objectives are introduced clearly and the very good use of teachers' subject expertise in resolving students' difficulties, normally by the use of good direct questioning, enables students to make good progress in their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory the lack of revision of previous learning results in the students being very strongly directed by the teacher and learning support assistants, and little independent learning taking place. Additionally, not all students are involved in the learning process through questioning. Generally, students enjoy their learning. They listen to instructions well, are keen to undertake the given tasks and persevere with them, even, for example, when the inserting of clipart images takes a long time due to a technical problem. The members of staff relate well with the students and, generally, teachers' knowledge of individual students helps to ensure that tasks are appropriately matched to ability. The learning support assistants also provide good support and encouragement, particularly for the low achieving students. This ensures that low achieving students also experience success. Students' achievements, including those observed in lessons and over time, are satisfactory. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when students' progress was judged to be poor.

47 Leadership of the subject is good. Good advice on what the teachers should teach has been developed and Year 11 students now undertake accreditation through the Entry Level course. Although procedures for assessment are in place, these are too complex and time consuming and there is little evidence to show how the assessment information is used to inform future planning. Although the depth and breadth of the curriculum is now being covered, the use of information and communication technology for data handling and sensing are both under-developed, as is the use of floor devices as an introduction to control technology. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has produced and issued guidelines on the planning of information and communication technology into other subject teaching but these are not used consistently.

48 Hardware resources are good with a suite of computers linked to a network server. There is a smaller number of computers in another area which are mainly used by learning support assistants with single or small groups of students. Due to the difficulties posed by the layout of the buildings it has not yet been possible to network the whole site. However there is at least one modern computer available for the students in each teaching area. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and the computer suite is small and too warm.

The use of information communication technology across the curriculum

49 The planning and use of information and communication technology in the teaching of subjects across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are, however, examples of good practice for instance the Internet is used very well to find information about different musical instruments and the

students make very good progress in this activity. Computer technology is used well to demonstrate the pitch and amplitude of sound waves on an oscilloscope but is under-used in some aspects of science teaching. Digital pictures are used effectively in the teaching of food technology and art and design as a means of recording the students' achievements.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education

The provision for religious education is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

50 The teacher's planning is satisfactory but the use of available time in lessons is poorly managed and at times the activities finish too early. The teacher management of the students' behaviour is unsatisfactory. Religious artefacts are used well but pictures are inadequate as they are small and unclear and as a result the students show little interest in them. The Students in Year 7 enjoy discussing the Three Kings, Mary and Joseph, Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus. Students enjoy listening to the teacher reading the story of Ruth and Naomi. The story is linked well to the ideas of friendship and the students respond well to this as part of their good social development. There are examples of some satisfactory progress by the students in Years 10 and 11 as they build on their knowledge of the subject. They can recognise artefacts from the Islamic religion. With the aid of pictures they recognise Guru Nanak and describe the clothes of a Sikh. Students are beginning to identify differences between religions but most find this confusing, as the information is not taught at the appropriate level. Work sheets are all the same and the text is too difficult for most students to read which results in restless behaviour and they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning.

51 As a result of staff changes and recruitment difficulties, the subject is without a subject leader. This situation has contributed to the current situation where the students' achievements are unsatisfactory.

Geography.

Provision for Geography is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and students' learning is good.
- The curriculum content is well planned and stimulates students' interest and attention.
- Geography is now well led and managed.
- Students' achievements, over time, are unsatisfactory
- The accommodation and resources for geography are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

52 The teacher and learning support assistants have positive relationships with the students and this helps to support the good teaching in geography. Teaching is well planned, with high expectations for the speed and challenge of the students' work. The good use of the available resources ensures that the students have the opportunity to learn through a variety of media. The

teacher also includes opportunities for students to work in small groups, for example in map work, and they respond well to this.

53 The recently planned geography curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements and is planned in such a way as to stimulate the students' interest. Year 7 students study the weather and, for example, they make good progress in the use of geographical terms such as "anemometer" and "weather vane". Students know that a thermometer measures the temperature of the air. Year 8 students work in pairs using Ordnance Survey maps to find local linear, dispersed and nucleated settlements. The emphasis on practical skills and the local area ensures that they enjoy their work whilst improving their achievements. Year 9 students make good progress by the use of a simple practical experiment to understand the climate of the rain forest.

54 The recently appointed geography co-ordinator has been successful in developing the curriculum in a short time. This includes putting in place an appropriate curriculum plan and good systems for assessment. A good subject development plan has been produced and this provides an effective foundation to consolidate and improve the provision of geography in the school.

55 Despite good progress made by the students the standards they attain overall in geography are unsatisfactory. There is no assessment evidence before this term and the planned improvements in the curriculum reported in the last report did not happen.

56 The teachers make the very best of the poor accommodation and work hard to ensure that, despite the limitation, the students make good progress. The classroom is at the top of outside stairs, has a potentially dangerous sloping roof, poor storage and limited opportunities to display the students' work. The quality and range of resources are unsatisfactory, with old textbooks and atlases and a limited range of information and communication technology software. The subject co-ordinator has managed a full analysis of the resources available to the subject as an effective basis for planned improvements in resources.

History.

57 Not enough lessons were seen in history to allow overall judgements on quality or standards during the inspection. The quality and standards of their previous work was analysed. Teacher's planning and curriculum documents were also looked at.

58 Lessons are well planned and resources are well prepared so no time is lost and the students' attention is maintained. The students respond well to opportunities to consider the lives of others. For example, in Year 7 the students know that houses in Tudor times would be dark, because of the use of candles and cold, because of the lack of heating. Their positive attitudes to one another are also demonstrated by their spontaneous applause for a student who answered a question correctly. In Year 9, students are able to empathise with a soldier in the trenches of the First World War recognising that they might tell lies in their letters home as they would not want to worry their families. The local area features prominently in the curriculum planning. Most students, for example, know that Lady Jane Grey is from the local Bradgate Park and are pleased with this link. There is now a system for curriculum assessment but this is a recent development and some students' reports on history focus on the topics covered, rather than what progress they have made.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is now good in Years 7 to 9.
- The school has not had a design and technology teacher for the past two years.

- The students have made good progress in food technology.
- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Resources are inadequate and out-of-date.

Commentary

59 Good lesson planning and the effective use of questions to guide their learning helps the students in Years 7 to 9 to make good progress in their learning. Students are rewarded when answering questions with a full and accurate response. No time is wasted, for instance, when the students are busy making a calendar based on their designs from the previous lesson. The classroom routines and behaviour of the students are well managed and in particular the students are effectively encouraged to tidy the room at the end of the lessons. The discussion sessions at the end of the lessons are positive and the students evaluate their progress in a mature and reflective manner. The teacher is new to the school and has maintained good records of the students' work that has been completed with him.

60 There has been no specialist subject leader or teaching of design and technology in the school for the last two years. Consequently the students' achievements are unsatisfactory. Students are exhibiting only basic skills and knowledge in this subject. However, the teaching of food technology has been well led by experienced learning support assistants and the students have made good progress. The students follow appropriate hygiene and health and safety requirements when they are in food technology lessons. There is a good emphasis on developing the students' independent learning. The end of the lessons are used very effectively to identify key points, for example, the students discuss ways of making better cakes in the future. A digital camera is used very well to record the quality of items that the students have made. This is a useful aspect of the assessment process. Also, the students are clearly used to completing regular self-assessments of their progress and this contributes to the good progress that they make.

61 The subject leader has only recently taken up post and although an action plan has been produced both leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is no portfolio of students' past work and the assessment systems are ineffective. The quality and range of resources are poor and many are out-of-date. This limits the students' opportunities to work with a range of materials including metals and plastics. There are currently no textbooks available for teaching any of the subject's areas and, as a result, the students have no opportunity for extended work or independent research.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good subject knowledge and clear expectations promote effective learning for Year 7 students.
- Some of the students have the potential to study art and design at GCSE level.
- The specialist art and design room provides a good learning environment.
- Lack of specialist teaching and challenge in the specialist class for students with autism

Commentary

62 In Year 7, students make good progress when learning about using contrasting colours based on the work of Andy Warhol. Clear expectations of behaviour and an appropriate interesting activities ensure that the students are motivated and concentrate well on their work. Teaching effectively provides opportunities for the students to explore their own ideas on the use of contrasting colours. The students make good progress in their confidence to suggest ideas for improving the contrast created by using different colours. Throughout the lessons the students are encouraged effectively to take pride in their work and this is reinforced by reference to a stimulating display of other students' work. As a result the students complete their tasks and are proud of their finished work.

63 Work on display shows that some of the students are capable of producing artwork that is similar to the average level for their peers in mainstream schools. Some students produce accurate and detailed sketches and are able to modify and improve their sketches to create the desired effect. The students produce good examples of work that have been completed without help and make good progress in the development of their confidence when discussing their work. The specialist art room used by most students provides a positive and motivating subject-specific learning environment. Displays are well used to celebrate achievement and demonstrate a range of artistic techniques.

64 Older students with autism in the specialist class do not use the specialist facilities, are not taught by the subject specialist and as a result they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning. When learning about stained glass windows the very slow pace and low expectations in art and design results in the students taking little pride in their work. They have a negative approach to the subject and, as a result, most of the students do not complete the work required. The teaching lacks clarity about the task and this leads to uncertainty about expectations and consequently the students show little interest in the work and their learning is unsatisfactory.

Music

The provision for music is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject knowledge that informs very good planning.
- Very good resources, although the music room is too small.
- A good range of performing, singing and playing opportunities are provided.

Commentary

65 The lessons are planned very well using the specialist knowledge of the music teacher and as a result the students make very good progress in their learning. The students' involvement in music makes a very effective contribution to the students' personal development and the positive ethos of the school. Students sing with enthusiasm during assemblies as they practise Christmas carols. Technical details are shared with students with a strong emphasis on listening, performing and learning words.

66 Very good opportunities are provided for all students to read music, perform and experience different instruments such as an electric guitar and a drum set. These opportunities include individual tuition for the students provided by visiting specialists. All of the students take great care of the very good range of instruments and respond very well to the very high expectations for their behaviour. The music room is too small, especially for some of the larger groups. However, the staff and students make the very best use of the available space and, as a result, the students achieve very well.

67 Year 7 students explore African rhythms and enjoy listening to music on an interactive CD-ROM. Students can say the African words and recognise the instruments. Students think that the Mbira sounds like a rain forest. The good use of musical terms develops students' confidence in Year 9 where they are making good progress in the appreciation and playing of an instrument. Students listen well to examples of Indian music, they are encouraged very well by the teacher to create and play their own compositions of Indian music using a very good range of instruments. The final piece of music played as a group is very creative and the students thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to perform.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision for physical education is **excellent**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of teaching and learning is excellent throughout the school, leading to students' very good achievements
- Students in Year 10 and Year 11 are provided with excellent opportunities for development and leadership.
- Excellent management and leadership of the subject.
- The students have very good attitudes to their learning and achieve very well in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

68 Physical education is a strength of the school and the progress in the provision of the subject since the last inspection is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and often excellent in Year 7 to Year 9 and excellent in Years 10 and 11.

EXAMPLE OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

The subject leader, a specialist teacher, provides consistently excellent teaching. The teacher's enthusiasm, meticulous lesson planning, subject expertise, and excellent relationships with students enables their learning to reach very high standards. However, it is not just the teaching that makes the subject outstanding but also the teacher's commitment and inspirational strategies for boosting the students' concentration and self-esteem, across the curriculum, through sport. Outstanding teaching motivates the students to enable them to achieve very well in their GCSEs in physical education. The teacher's excellent coaching skills and belief in the abilities of the students has resulted in them representing their school at national and international events such as; representing the East Midlands in the Special Olympics team in sports gymnastics and representing Great Britain in the Pre World and World Games and at tennis and have been awarded the Runner Up School Team of the Year. Students in Year 10 and Year 11 are provided with excellent opportunities for developing responsibility and leadership through the Junior Sports Leaders scheme, which they keenly volunteer for. As part of this scheme they are provided with very good skills and confidence to enable them to coach students from local primary schools. An example of this was the Festival of Sport that was organised by the students for 100 students with special educational needs from 10 local primary schools.

69 Management and leadership of the subject are inspirational. The subject leader has an excellent vision in boosting the students' learning and motivation through their involvement in physical education. She has taken part in a national project to investigate the impact of extra curricular activities on students' learning. Additionally, the Department for Education and Skills has cited the school as an exemplar of good practice. Extra curricular clubs are provided and are well attended. The teacher has developed a good plan to inform curriculum planning that meets the needs of all of the students. There are very good opportunities for the students to achieve external accreditation through the ASDAN Sport and Fitness Awards. Also the more able students complete their GCSE physical education course as part of their inclusion opportunities with a local college. Accommodation is satisfactory although the gymnasium is not sufficiently insulated to use during cold winter days. The quality and range of resources are good. Additional expertise is very effectively used to extend the range of activities available for the students.

70 Students in Year 7 to Year 9 are achieving very well. In swimming some Year 8 students develop the confidence to abandon their armbands and others overcome the fear of taking their feet off the bottom of the pool. Students show very good progress and real determination when successfully retrieving an object from the pool floor. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good. During trampoline lessons, the focus for this half term, the students respond very positively to the teacher's skilful coaching and make very good progress in the development of their confidence and skills. They listen very carefully and try hard to improve the quality and complexity of their

movements and sequences. They encourage, support and, at times, coach each other, all of which contributes to a very good and supportive learning atmosphere.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is **good** overall

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching leads to good progress in the students' learning.
- The management of the students' behaviour is good.
- Very good contribution by the "Kidz Kafe".
- Low expectations and challenge in the specialist provision for students with autism.
- Good management of the subject by the headteacher.

Commentary

71 Teaching across the main school is good as a result of clear planning, high expectations of students and very good deployment of the learning support assistants. In Year 7, following a well-chosen video about Operation Christmas Child, students discuss how much more fortunate they are than the children in the video. They can also relate their own experiences to those children and understand why sending a box of presents is a positive thing to do. This is encouraged by the teacher who sets the conditions in which such a discussion can take place and yet lets the students' ideas develop spontaneously. By Year 9 the students are able to write a response to a child who has been the subject of racial bullying and make positive, practical and well-considered suggestions about what the child should do. For the students in Year 10, skilled work by a learning support assistant allows them to practise skills for voting and reaching an agreement about the price of toys for a Children in Need Sale.

72 The students generally respond well to the staff's high expectations of their behaviour. These expectations are well established and are applied consistently during lessons. The students know their targets for behaviour and are encouraged by the ongoing verbal specific rewards for behaving well. There are also a set of specific rules for the effective development of citizenship skills that focus on specific areas such as listening to and respecting each other's views.

73 Provision for the Year 10 and 11 students with autism in the specialist provision is unsatisfactory. Teaching has low expectations, there is a slow pace to the lessons and an over-emphasis on drawing and colouring in rather than appropriate learning tasks. Unsatisfactory use of the lesson time also means that planned work is finished early and the students' progress in their learning is therefore unsatisfactory. Although there is a high staffing ratio for the students they all complete the same work sheets and these are not well marked or annotated.

74 Provision for personal, social and health education is enhanced by activities in the residential setting and also by their involvement in assemblies. The Kidz Kafé is very effectively managed by a learning support assistant and the students thoroughly enjoy their involvement with this initiative. It allows the students to develop a range of independent skills, decision making and practical skills in a real life setting. The teaching of personal, social, health education and citizenship is clearly linked to the requirements of the national curriculum. A clear long-term plan ensures that a challenging and appropriate curriculum is provided to the students in the main school.

Post-16 Provision

75 Insufficient lessons were observed to reach a judgement on quality and standards.

76 The majority of the six autistic students in the post-16 provision respond appropriately to questions and co-operate with the teaching and learning support staff. Incidences of challenging

behaviour are managed well by the staff who have been well trained in the use of appropriate intervention strategies. Although the self-contained flat provides good opportunities for the learning of life skills, it is isolated and does not support inclusion. Students attend local colleges, for 2 to 3 days a week, following appropriate individualised courses. These include essential skills and a music centred programme. Also New Pathways provides courses in food technology, swimming and gardening. Good work placement opportunities include working in the grounds of a conference centre and helping in a local café. The students receive a very good service from the learning support assistants who teach them subjects such as life skills and food technology. The links with the partner colleges are good and in particular the learning support staff in the college provide very good support for the students. They either attend the student's annual review meetings or send a detailed progress report.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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