

INSPECTION REPORT

MOWBRAY SCHOOL

Bedale

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121779

Headteacher: Jonathan Tearle

Lead inspector: Katharine Halifax

Dates of inspection: 12th - 15th January 2004

Inspection number: 258953

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:	3 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	137
School address:	Masham Road Bedale
Postcode:	DL8 2SD
Telephone number:	01677 422466
Fax number:	01677 426056
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andrew Holdsworth
Date of previous inspection:	1/06/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school caters for pupils between the ages of 3 and 16 years. Pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. A number of children are from service families, so a high percentage move in and out of the school other than at the usual time because of regimental changes. With 138 on roll, the school is of average size for a school of this type. All pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most have moderate learning needs, though an increasing number have been diagnosed as autistic spectrum disorder. In addition, some have social and emotional needs, others exhibit extreme behaviour. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected of pupils of this age. Almost all pupils are of white European origin, and all speak English as their main language. There are far more boys than girls in some classes. Three pupils are in the care of the local authority. The school has three specialist language resource classes for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Pupils in these classes are on the register of the school as well as on the register of a mainstream school. They spend at least one day each week in their home school. The school has received Investors in People, School Achievement, Positive about Disabled People awards as well as Quality Standards for Careers Education and Guidance.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25439	Katharine Halifax	Lead inspector	Science Geography History Physical education
19567	Mary Malin	Lay inspector	
16198	Carol Etherington	Team inspector	English French
2480	Christine Gilder	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education
27429	Margaret Smith	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Citizenship Personal and social education
22821	Linda Wolstencroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Foundation stage Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International
Upperton House
The Avenue
Eastbourne
BN21 3YB

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Good teaching and effective learning opportunities have resulted in good achievement. Links with parents, carers and the community contribute significantly to pupils' learning. The school is well led by the head teacher. Management is satisfactory. Though the cost of educating each pupil is marginally higher than average for a school of this type, the school continues to provide good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Imaginative teaching engages pupils' interest and has resulted in good achievement for pupils of all ages and capabilities.
- Very good provision for pupils in the specialist language resource classes enables them to make very good progress with a significant number successfully returning to mainstream education.
- Outstanding teaching in art and design in the secondary department allows pupils to make exceptional progress and achieve high standards.
- Managers' roles are not shared equally and some lack clarity. This affects some aspects of school life such as checking on the curriculum.
- The community is used very effectively to enrich learning opportunities, making an important contribution to pupils' achievements.
- Systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and individual education plans are not consistent between classes and subjects.

Improvement since the last inspection is good. The issues identified in the previous report have mostly been addressed. The percentage of very good and excellent teaching has increased. This is reflected in pupils' learning. The introduction of a wide range of nationally recognised awards for pupils in Years 10 and 11, and opportunities for pupils of all ages to work alongside their peers in mainstream schools make an important contribution to pupils' achievements. Despite a changing population with far more pupils with emotional needs and complex or challenging behaviours, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved. Whilst a lot of work has been done on individual education plans, there is still a way to go.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Reception	Good	Good
Year 6	Good	Good
Year 9	Good	Good
Year 11	Good	Good

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

Achievement is good overall. Children in the foundation stage make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning other than in their physical development. Though satisfactory, the lack of imaginative outside equipment limits their progress. Achievement is good for pupils of all ages in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, physical education, design and technology, history and geography. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory. Achievement in art and design is very good in Years 1 to 6, the primary department and excellent in Years 7 to 11, the secondary department. There is no difference in achievement by gender, need or ethnicity. Pupils in the specialist language resource classes make very good gains in the knowledge and skills they acquire because of the programmes and very good teaching. Pupils' **personal development is very good** because of **very good** provision for their **spiritual, moral, social and**

cultural development. Attendance is good. Overall, pupils have a very good attitude to school and behave very well, though the behaviour of a very small number occasionally causes others distress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Staff are hard working and dedicated. Pupils learn new skills at a good rate because adults have a good knowledge of their individual needs and plan work that challenges all capabilities. Teachers and classroom assistants work together very effectively allowing pupils to receive good support and grow in confidence. The way teachers record pupils' achievements and the use of individual education plans are areas for improvement. Teaching and learning are very good in the specialist language resource classes. The curriculum is good and has particular strengths in opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to learn more about the world of work, for pupils of all ages to experience mainstream education and in the very wide range of visits and visitors. However, there is no overview of the curriculum so the timetable for some age groups is not balanced. Links with parents are good. Support for pupils' health and welfare is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership and management of the head teacher are good. All managers work extremely hard, however, some roles are not clear and the work load is uneven. The large number of senior teachers and the occasional breakdown in communication means systems are not as effective as they could be. Most subject managers are clear about the strengths of their subject and what needs to be done to improve, but few have had the chance to observe what is happening in classrooms to check on pupils' learning. Governance is satisfactory. All legal requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils like the school. They particularly enjoy their lessons, visits out of school and wearing the recently introduced uniform. Many pupils are not happy with school meals. A significant number feel threatened by the behaviour of a very small number of older boys. Managers have already taken action to remedy this. Parents think well of the school, especially the commitment of staff, the friendly atmosphere and the range of learning opportunities available to their child.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Redefine the roles of senior managers to ensure balance and effective communication.
- Ensure targets in individual education plans are focused and easily measurable and that the plans are made available to all staff and used in lessons.
- Further improve systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and ensure these are used consistently in all classes and subjects.

The above have been identified in the school improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

The majority of pupils have moderate learning needs. In addition, an increasing number have complex needs, such that their attainment is low when compared to national averages. Nevertheless, taking account of previous learning and special educational needs the achievement for all ages and capabilities is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in all age groups because of good teaching. There is no difference in achievement by gender, race or capability.
- The achievement of pupils in the specialist language resource classes is very good.
- Achievement in art and design is outstanding in the secondary department
- Achievement in science for secondary age pupils is limited by the amount of time allocated to the subject.

Commentary

1. Children of reception class age achieve well because staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. The programme is sufficiently flexible to meet individual needs. Children's progress is closely monitored and used when planning further work. While achievement is satisfactory in physical development, staff recognise more imaginative use could be made of the outdoor play area.

2. In the primary department, by Year 2 and Year 6, achievement is good in all subjects other than in art and design and in religious education. Where teachers have pupils of different ages in the same class, work is carefully planned to be of interest and challenge to all so all make good gains in the knowledge and skill they acquire. Achievement is equally good in the same subjects other than design and technology by Years 9 and 11, the secondary department. Achievement in design and technology in these classes is very good in both aspects of the subject. The introduction of the national strategy and setting pupils by ability for English and mathematics are contributing to improved progress and achievement. Only a few lessons were observed in religious education and only a small sample of work seen because much of the teaching and learning is through discussion. Nevertheless, from checking teachers' plans and through talking to pupils, achievement is at least satisfactory in both age groups.

3. Though there are some classes with, for example, only one girl there is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls because staff plan tasks that match the capabilities of each pupil and ensure all questions and activities are directed equally to boys and girls. There is no difference in the performance of pupils from different groups. For example, those who are looked after by the local authority and those of mixed race. Since the last inspection, achievement has improved in mathematics and art and design in all age groups, and in science and writing in the secondary department.

4. Achievement in the specialist language resource classes is very good because of consistently very good teaching. Pupils achieve very well. When considered against their attainment on entry or transfer, they make particularly strong progress in English, in reading and in speaking and listening. The very high percentage of pupils returning successfully to mainstream education confirms the benefit of the intensive intervention

5. Standards in art and design in the secondary department are high because of the talented and enthusiastic teacher whose imagination and flair motivates and inspires pupils to have

confidence in themselves. This enables all capabilities to make outstanding progress with resultant high achievement. Achievement in science is good in both departments. Pupils continue to achieve especially well in investigative science because of the very good emphasis on practical work. While teaching and learning are very good in the secondary department, pupils' achievements are limited by the short time allocation. Pupils spend less than seven percent of their week studying the subject. In response to the criticism of the previous report, pupils in Years 10 and 11 have the opportunity to work towards a wide range of nationally recognised awards including general certificate of education. This has contributed significantly to their achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

6. As at the time of the last inspection, **provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good** and is reflected in their **personal development**. The focus on pupils' behaviour has resulted in, overall, **very good behaviour and very positive attitudes** to school. Taking account of the changing population, this is good improvement. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes and are very well behaved in and around school, and out in the community.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development is demonstrated in increased maturity.
- While exclusions are high, the figures represent a very small number of pupils.
- Though parents and pupils expressed concern about bullying, the school is dealing with this very well.

Commentary

7. Staff have been successful in creating a positive atmosphere where pupils want to learn. Very good relationships exist between pupils and with staff. All pupils are valued so they in turn respect and care for each other. They are polite and very sociable especially when moving around the school or greeting visitors. Pupils of all ages and capabilities try hard with their work and take pride in their achievements. Most complete homework activities to a good standard with a number requesting additional work. Pupils understand and appreciate the reward system striving to earn 'gold bars' or being named as 'pupil of the week'.

8. Almost all pupils behave very well. Though many enter the school with complex and challenging behaviour, this improves noticeably because staff manage behaviour consistently. Outside school, for example when attending college or work placements, pupils act responsibly, eager to get on with their work. They are keen to talk about their successes. This was evident when two pupils missed their break to explain what they had achieved at college. Staff communicate their high expectations of pupil behaviour with parents and carers at review meetings. In turn, parents report noticeable improvements in their child's behaviour and maturity.

9. The number of exclusions has risen significantly since the last inspection. The figure reflects the rapid increase in the number of pupils with extreme behaviours. The figures relate to less than a handful of pupils. Managers use exclusion as the very last resort, only when personal safety is at risk. Strategies to help the very few pupils who have bullied in the past, including counselling and the setting up of work experience and college placements, have largely been successful in helping these pupils regain an interest in education and in managing behaviour. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection. Lunch times are very well organised and are now pleasant social occasions. Separate break times for each department have resulted in junior age pupils playing happily with their friends and those in the secondary department being able to play boisterous games without fear of injuring younger pupils. The policy for racial equality is working well. When the monitoring of racial incidents was first introduced eight incidents were recorded in the first year and a half. Since the introduction of the policy and through work in personal, social and health education, no incidents have occurred for over six months.

10. Staff work hard to improve pupils' personal qualities through daily form time, routines at break times and through lessons in personal, social and health education, and citizenship. From a very early age, pupils are encouraged to make choices and are given responsibilities. Numerous speakers are welcomed and visits out of school, including residential trips, are very successful in making pupils aware of their role in the community and in promoting independence. Weekly acts of worship and religious education lessons are significant in helping pupils develop a sense of identity and an awareness of the needs of others.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.2	School data	1.4
National data	9.1*	National data	0.6

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

*figures for pupils from similar schools.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black African
Black or Black British Caribbean
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
134	48	0
1	0	0
1	3	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

11. **The quality of education provided is good.** Good teaching and a good curriculum result in good learning.

Teaching and learning

12. **Teaching and learning are good.** The way **teachers assess** and record pupils' achievements is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The percentage of very good and excellent teaching has increased since the last inspection. This is reflected in pupils' learning.
- Teachers make learning relevant and fun so pupils enjoy learning.
- Very close teamwork between teachers, classroom assistants and speech and language therapists contributes significantly to pupils' achievements.
- Adults have a very good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs.
- Some staff do not make sufficient use of individual education plans when planning and teaching lessons.
- The way teachers record pupils' achievements is inconsistent.

Commentary

13. Very good teaching was seen in over one third of lessons. Teaching and learning in the specialist language resource classes and in secondary science are very good. Excellent teaching in art and design inspires pupils to learn and results in outstanding achievement. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and about the individual needs of their pupils. Adults have a very good understanding of the difficulties encountered, for example, by pupils diagnosed as autistic spectrum disorder. Through training and excellent support by one of the speech and language therapists, the achievements of these pupils are equal to those of their peers, not just in the specialist class, but in all age groups. Suitable training and a helpful policy have helped staff overcome the issue identified by the previous inspection and most now manage pupils' behaviour very well. Where appropriate an individual behaviour plan has been drawn up. Plans are used consistently so pupils learn with minimum disruption. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen was by different teachers who also taught good or better lessons during course of inspection.

14. Overall, teachers provide well for pupils to improve their basic skills. Numerous occasions were observed where pupils increased their understanding of numeracy, improved reading and acquired skills in new technology because teachers included these activities in their lessons. Similarly, pupils made very good gains in speaking and listening because teachers expected them to discuss their work and reason their answers. Some staff use signs and symbols very well to support pupils who have communication needs, however, the lack of such aids did occasionally limit the understanding and opportunity to respond for some pupils. While teachers plan activities for pupils to write, overall, too few opportunities are available for pupils to write at length and imaginatively in subjects other than English.

15. Effective staff teams have been established in all classes. Well-qualified classroom assistants contribute very well to pupils' learning. Most teachers, classroom assistants and speech and language therapists plan together which leads to unified provision allowing all capabilities to make good progress in the knowledge and skills they acquire. Pupils enjoy learning because of the relevant and imaginative activities provided. Tasks are fun and challenge all capabilities. Staff are aware of the small number of girls in some groups, and of pupils of different ages so they ensure all are involved through targeted questions and different tasks. Pupils are excited by the activities provided, often requesting to stay in during break to complete their work, or finding additional information as part of their homework.

16. Since the last inspection staff have invested a great deal of time in improving individual education plans and the way they record pupils' achievements. Some useful systems are now in place but these are not used consistently in all classes or subjects. Individual education plans vary in quality. Some have focused targets that are easily measurable thus tracking progress clearly. While some staff use the plans very well as a basis for their lessons, this is not so in all classes. Specialist subject teachers in the secondary department have not been provided with copies of the plans, so opportunities are missed to provide and check on pupils' progress towards, for example, specific literacy targets such as 'to write using full stops and capital letters correctly', or 'to recognise 20 high frequency words'.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 68 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (6%)	21 (31%)	28 (42%)	12 (17%)	3 (4%)	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.

This example illustrates how excellent teaching in one lesson enabled pupils with complex communication needs and challenging behaviour to make outstanding progress.

In this excellent, well structured literacy lesson, a group of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, made outstanding progress in responding to others, following instructions, and improving reading and pre-reading skills. The teacher, also a qualified speech therapist, made excellent use of her voice, and of a puppet, to hold pupils enthralled during the reading of the story. Well-briefed and experienced support staff applied consistent strategies, throughout the lesson, continually refocusing the pupils' attention. Very high expectations, combined with an enthusiastic challenging approach, and very good use of praise on success, resulted in pupils achieving well above expectations. Each question or task was accurately targeted, showing excellent knowledge and understanding of each pupil. The pace of the lesson was breathtaking, creating a controlled excitement and anticipation in the group. Individual work was very well planned and implemented with sensitivity, a balance between allowing pupils to show initiative and an insistence on the completion of tasks.

The curriculum

17. **The curriculum is good**, with very **good** provision for extra-curricular activities. Good improvement has been made in the provision for older higher attaining pupils. The accommodation and learning resources are good.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very good, and prepares them very well for the next stage of education or employment.
- Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good.
- Very good use of community resources enriches the curriculum for pupils of all ages and capabilities.
- Pupils' special needs are well addressed
- There is no overview of the curriculum.
- The accommodation is not always used well. Furthermore, wheelchair users and the disabled experience difficulties with some aspects of the building.

Commentary

18. While the curriculum, overall, is good, and meets legal requirements, provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very good. The Bridge Project, with its combination of work-related learning in college, work experience placements, and a balanced and relevant curriculum in school, results in pupils who are confident, mature and well prepared for full-time college or work. Pupils achieve a wide range of nationally recognised awards which appropriately reflect the wide range of ability of pupils and stand them in good stead for life after school. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and is reflected in pupils' personal development. A well thought out programme for citizenship has been successfully introduced for all age groups. In addition to the taught programme, daily routines, residential activities and social targets in individual education plans contribute significantly to progress in this area.

19. Pupils are enthusiastic about the range of activities out of the classroom. They talk excitedly about visits by an Indian dancer and a Viking and visits to, for example, the National Railway Museum and places of worship. The weekly visit from a professional teacher of dance contributes well to achievement in physical education as well as aiding pupils' confidence, poise, and communication skills. Numerous sporting activities with other special and mainstream schools equally contribute to achievement in this subject. The very successful annual activity week allows pupils to make choices, and gives them the opportunity to work with others of different ages and capabilities.

20. All staff are aware of pupils' special educational needs. The provision identified in statements of need is met through teachers' planning and very good support, particularly from speech and

language therapists. To improve the provision for the increasing number of pupils on the autistic spectrum, professional development has been provided for all staff. As a result, the provision for these pupils is good both in the specialist communication resource class and, through very good planning for individual pupils in lessons, in all age groups. The planning enables the majority of pupils with autism to be fully included in the main body of the school. While provision is good, the use of signing and symbols is not systematic. The dual registration of pupils in the specialist language resource classes is very well organised. Very good communication and collaboration with a large number of mainstream primary schools allows a high percentage of pupils in these classes to make a successful return to mainstream education.

21. The expertise and commitment of individual staff ensures that the curriculum is taught well, so pupils achieve well. However, a lack of communication and limited whole-school overview of the curriculum create problems and hinder further development. Timetables and groupings are complex and lesson changes are not always communicated. The frequent changes endanger the balance of the curriculum in all age groups. A few pupils are withdrawn regularly from the same lessons and the resulting imbalance for individual pupils is not monitored. No accurate audit of time assigned to each subject has been made with the result that insufficient time has been allocated to science for pupils in the secondary department. This affects their achievement.

22. The accommodation is good, but not always fully used. For example, primary teachers make little use of the science room which lies empty half the week. Similarly other specialist rooms are not used much of the week. On occasions the accommodation presents difficulties for wheelchair users and the disabled. For example, the main door is not easily accessible for wheelchair users and the security release to exit the building is out of reach. In addition, the door to the disabled toilet is extremely heavy and difficult to slide closed while the lock is almost impossible to engage. Furthermore, the room is currently used as a store cupboard. Other resources, especially support staff, are used very effectively and make a significant contribution to learning.

Care, guidance and support

23. **The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good.** Pupils are provided with **sound support, advice and guidance**. They are **well consulted** and involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults take great care to ensure the well being of the pupils in their care.
- Pupils with communication and language difficulties receive very good support from the speech and language therapists.
- Pupils feel they are consulted, but they do not feel sufficiently prepared for the transfer from the primary to secondary department.
- Wheelchair users and the disabled experience difficulties with some aspects of the accommodation.

Commentary

24. Staff have created a very caring school where pupils are happy and look forward to each day. Daily routines and very good staff knowledge of individual needs allow all ages and capabilities to grow in confidence. Adults present good models of how to behave appropriately enabling pupils to build trusting relationships and to understand they must behave well and respect each other. Staff make great efforts to involve pupils of all capabilities in making choices and decisions that will lead to greater independence. The school is fortunate in having a high quality speech and language therapist on the staff. Her close liaison with teaching staff and her work with the most severe cases of pupils with communication difficulties contributes significantly to pupils' progress especially those who have been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. Likewise, pupils in the specialist language resource classes make very good gains in improving communication because of the support they

receive from a second therapist. Managers are knowledgeable about health and safety requirements and very good child protection procedures are understood by all who work at the school. Assessments of potential risks in and out of school are carried out regularly and regular checks are made of the state of the buildings and grounds.

25. Overall, pupils feel consulted and supported well by staff. Suggestions for improving school life, complaints and ideas for improvements are brought to the attention of the elected school council. Following concerns about bullying, senior managers further consulted pupils and set up systems to deal with the offenders. Older pupils report that they receive very good guidance about opportunities after school. Parents, carers and pupils appreciate the care and support they receive. However, they feel the need for more information about transfer from the primary to the secondary department. While managers have ensured clear differences between the departments, for example, different uniforms and how pupils are taught, parents and pupils feel that not enough is done to ease the transition between the two departments.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

26. **Links with parents are good. Very good links** have been established with the **community, other schools and colleges.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work effectively with parents.
- Very good links with other schools, colleges and the community contribute significantly to pupils' learning and achievements.

Commentary

27. Many parents and carers live some distance from the school and experience difficulties visiting. Nevertheless, staff have worked hard to establish positive links and to involve them in their child's education. Parents appreciate the good quality written information about what is happening in school, and how well their child is progressing. Informative home to school diaries, annual reviews of statements of special education need, annual reports and targets in individual education plans enable parents to know how their child is being taught and managed, so they can continue the support at home, thus contributing to learning.

28. Very good links have been established with local schools and colleges. Headteachers and staff of the mainstream schools which are the home schools for pupils in the specialist language resource classes speak highly of the partnership which has enabled these pupils to make very good improvement in all aspects of their education, allowing a successful return to mainstream education. Furthermore, staff have provided very good professional development for teachers in mainstream schools enabling them to address a range of special educational needs and behaviour thus allowing pupils who until very recently would have needed a place in a special school to stay in their own school. Very good links with high schools and other primary schools challenge pupils, contributing significantly to their achievement. For example, a number of higher attaining pupils visit the local high school to work towards General Certificate of Secondary Education in mathematics and science.

29. The recent focus on preparing pupils in Years 10 and 11 for life after school is already reaping benefit. High quality work experience placements with local businesses and those in the local area of pupils from further afield are especially successful. A variety of college placements enable pupils to work towards nationally recognised awards in areas such as motor vehicle maintenance, welding and hair and beauty. In addition to providing pupils with the skills for the world of work, the flexibility of the placements has been successful in regaining the interest of a number of pupils who had become disillusioned with school. Parents and pupils speak highly of all these initiatives, confidently reporting they make a significant contribution to academic and personal

progress. Numerous visitors and visits out of school for pupils of all ages and capabilities are equally noteworthy.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

30. Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The leadership and management of the headteacher are **good**, that of other key staff **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, governors and staff are very well thought of by pupils, parents, and colleagues in other schools.
- In his short time in post, the headteacher has brought about significant improvements.
- There is a shared commitment to include all pupils both within the school and beyond.
- There is an imbalance in workload between senior managers and a lack of clarity in some of their roles.
- Subject managers have not had the opportunity to monitor classroom practice.

Commentary

31. Questionnaires and discussions with parents, carers, pupils and staff in mainstream schools demonstrate the effectiveness of the school. All report that staff are committed to the school and give willingly of their time. Headteachers and senior teachers of primary schools linked to the specialist language resource classes could not praise the school highly enough. All aspects of its work are seen to be highly effective, from initial contact and work with families to the carefully staged process of reintegration to mainstream education. In addition, staff in the mainstream schools report that they benefit greatly from the advice and support from Mowbray staff. Governors are proud of the school, providing a listening ear and an objective viewpoint for the headteacher. Their financial management is good. They are committed to providing the best for pupils. To this end, the school is maintained to a high standard with high quality resources. Pupils appreciate this and in turn show respect for people and property. While governors are aware of what is happening in school, and have on occasions questioned decisions, they have not been sufficiently challenging when discussing the effectiveness of the school.

32. Staff report that the new headteacher is approachable and communicates well. He has a clear vision for the future of the school and has introduced several innovative changes that are already improving the quality of education. Staff welcome and appreciate the improvements made in managing pupils' behaviour, to the curriculum and the systems he has introduced to monitor progress and achievement. More effective target setting based on better assessment is already contributing to improved teaching and learning. The headteacher has raised the profile of the school in the community, for example by the introduction of school uniform for pupils in the secondary department. Pupils are now proud to attend Mowbray. Though there are several specialist classes within the school, there is a shared commitment to high achievement and equality of opportunity for all pupils. Staff equally share the headteacher's commitment to giving as many pupils as possible the opportunity to work alongside peers in mainstream schools.

33. Senior managers are conscientious, giving willingly of their time. However, their roles have not changed sufficiently since the last inspection and there are imbalances in their workload. Though the needs of pupils have changed and the curriculum developed to take account of this, and though national strategies have been implemented, the roles of key staff have not been reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate for the current priorities. For example, no one manager has an overview of the whole curriculum. As a result primary and secondary departments have developed different systems that are inconsistent, including timetabling arrangements, the use of individual education plans and assessment procedures. The different timings between the two departments make communication difficult. A further area where there is no whole-school overview is the promotion of

pupils' literacy, numeracy and skills in information and communication technology in other subjects. This results in opportunities being lost to develop these skills systematically.

34. Subject management is, overall, satisfactory. Most managers are clear about the strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects. Some ensure consistency in teachers' planning, but few have been given time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons. Though senior managers are aware of the quality of teaching, subject leaders are not clear where the areas of good practice are so these may be shared. Neither are they aware of less effective teaching so that support and training may be given. While some subjects are managed well, the practice of having a different leader in each department for the same subject has on, occasions, led to a break down in communications.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1258284	Balance from previous year	125143
Total expenditure	1270211	Balance carried forward to the next	62073
Expenditure per pupil	8468 *		

* This figure is higher than normal for the school. During his first year, with the agreement of governors, the head teacher has reduced the reserves from 10.9 percent to the recommended 5 percent. The money has been used to purchase high quality resources, particularly for new technology. These are contributing to learning and achievement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The Pathways group is a mixed age class with children in their reception year and others in Year 1. Children achieve well because the curriculum is planned well and flexible, thus meeting the needs of all within the group. Teaching is good. All adults work closely together providing a wide range of activities that are well matched to the children's age and needs. Very good teamwork ensures a consistent approach. Children's progress is closely monitored. Adults know the children well and have a very good understanding of their individual needs. The team is well led by a co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the curriculum. The accommodation has been significantly improved since the last inspection and now provides very good facilities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

36. Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults understand the needs of all children very well and plan activities which support children's developing understanding of social situations.
- Routines are well established and contribute to children feeling secure and confident.
- Adults work well together as a team resulting in good teaching and learning.
- Opportunities for children to socialise when using the outdoor facilities are limited.

Commentary

37. Children join the group with a wide range of significant difficulties, many relating to communicating with others. This often results in children finding new situations very difficult, but the calm and well-planned environment ensures that children settle quickly. Teaching is good because adults have a very good understanding of the variety of needs of the children in the group, activities are planned to interest them and clearly focus on developing personal and social skills. Children grow in confidence from the well-established daily routines. They all know the welcome song and most join in. They know they are expected to sit together as a group at regular times of the day and that they move to other activities when asked to do so. Most remember simple routines such as putting chairs under the table when they get up; others are helped by verbal prompts from staff. While most aspects of this area are strong, staff recognise more could be done to stimulate children's imaginations and interaction in outdoor play. Adults provide consistent role models which help children to develop their understanding of what is expected of them. The particular skills of each member of the team are used very effectively to support individual children. This helps them to become confident and active members of the group. The very good teamwork, where adults treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect, leads to trusting and positive relationships.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

38. Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are knowledgeable using the skills of all members of the team to ensure children achieve well.
- Every opportunity is taken to improve communication.

- Very good support by the speech and language therapist contributes significantly to pupils developing skills.
- The range of strategies used helps children to become confident communicators.

Commentary

39. Communication is central to the work of the group. The teacher and speech and language therapist are well supported by other adults in providing a wide range of opportunities for children to use and develop their skills. Teaching and learning are good. Planned activities focus on the use and understanding of language. These activities are based on detailed assessments and ensure that individual children make good progress. All staff take every opportunity to develop children's vocabulary and understanding. During group work children are encouraged to talk, and all contributions are valued. Adults chat to the children during planned activities and at other informal times of the day helping them to become more confident speakers. Where children are not yet communicating, adults encourage responses through the establishment of daily routines and planned individual activities. These include stories and songs which have familiar and repeated patterns or rhymes. Children enjoy stories and listen attentively, joining in with familiar words. All adults use a range of strategies to support children's communication including signing, verbal prompts and use of voice and gesture. A wide range of activities ensures all children learn at an appropriate level. There are opportunities for children to use different writing tools and to write and colour.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

40. The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities to develop children's mathematical skills and teaching is good.
- It is not always clear what children will learn during some group activities.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning in this area are good. A wide range of planned activities interest the children and help them to develop their understanding. Adults use number rhymes and songs to support this developing skill and children enjoy joining in with the familiar words. In one activity, children sang 'One Man Went to Mow' with each child adding their 'man' to the 'meadow' at the correct point in the song. Targeted questions to individual children ensured all took part in, for example, saying "how many, we want one more". In another activity the teacher pegged several pairs of socks on a line. She asked, 'how many pegs will I need?' One child counted accurately with others beginning to understand that they needed the same number of pegs as socks. Mathematical understanding is further developed as adults reinforce colour and the pattern. Children improve their personal development by taking turns and making choices. Most move from one activity to another, trying but not always completing a task. Adults monitored activities but, on occasion, there was no direction as to what was to be done which limited the learning for some children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

42. Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Adults make good use of questioning to develop understanding.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are good. Activities are well planned to promote children's curiosity and to develop their understanding. For example, children listened to a story focused on the senses. The teacher had chosen a range of objects which children could use to make the sounds in the story. They were encouraged to listen to the sound and remember where it came in the story. The activity was enhanced by the well-focused questions the teacher asked, "Listen to this sound, who is making that noise?" This helped children concentrate on listening and identifying what they could hear. Staff plan an interesting range of activities which help children learn about the world around them and help develop an appropriate vocabulary. Attractive displays and photographs evidence the exciting activities that children are offered. In all activities, children have good adult support to help them develop their vocabulary and knowledge.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

44. Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have access to a suitable safe outside play area.
- Children's play is enhanced and extended by staff who join in the activities.
- The outside play area is limited by the restricted range of facilities and equipment for imaginative or quiet play.

Commentary

45. No sessions were observed other than the informal activities in the outside play area so no judgement can be made about teaching. Children were observed at playtimes when achievement was satisfactory. The outside area is safe and furnished with small climbing apparatus. Large wheeled toys are stored nearby. The time observed was unstructured but adults made good use of the opportunity to encourage children to propel vehicles independently and to be aware of others. They initiated activities with some children, encouraging climbing and running. Most children move confidently and steer their cars and bikes using spaces well. Opportunities to develop personal and social skills were maximised with adults expecting children to share the toys and to respect others' play. However, limited resources restrict the use of the area. Children develop manipulative skills through the use of pencils, pens and brushes and have opportunities to draw, colour and use templates. They manipulate small construction materials, for example, making a bridge for the Three Billy Goats Gruff.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

46. It was not possible to make judgement of provision in this area of learning. Work on display indicates that children have suitable opportunities to use a range of media to produce works of art. No role-play was observed during the inspection but this has been identified as an area for development by the co-ordinator.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English, including language and literacy

47. Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning with many strengths result in pupils of all ages and capabilities achieving well.
- Teamwork between all adults is very effective and results in classroom assistants and speech and language therapists making a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- The curriculum has been improved by the implementation of national strategies so pupils now benefit from a good range of literature.
- Pupil's individual targets for reading and writing are not shared with teachers of other subjects so literacy skills are not developed consistently across the curriculum.

Commentary

48. Pupils of all ages and capabilities achieve well because teaching is good and there have been good improvements to the curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in all age groups. In classes where teaching is very good, for example in the specialist language resource classes and in some other primary classes, pupils are starting to make very good progress with the resultant high achievement. Very good teaching has strengths in the management of pupils' behaviour, even where their special needs result in this being particularly challenging, in the choice and use of texts and other resources, and in planning interesting and stimulating activities that are very well matched to pupils' capabilities. Information and communication technology is used effectively both to support pupils' learning and to make activities more exciting and accessible. This means that all pupils enjoy their lessons but at the same time are appropriately challenged to achieve as much as they can. In the small amount of lessons where teaching was either unsatisfactory or just barely satisfactory, this was due to lack of subject expertise in non-specialist teachers and a lack of knowledge of how to teach basic skills to pupils with particular special needs.

49. Support staff are very well qualified and experienced and have built up valuable expertise in supporting pupils' learning of basic literacy skills. Speech and language therapists make a significant contribution to the teaching of speaking and listening through devising and sharing high quality programmes designed to develop pupils' communication skills. Class teams plan effectively together so the quality of teaching and learning is greatly enhanced. This is especially noticeable in the group work done in literacy sessions, where teachers plan focused activities for groups of pupils of different capabilities, all of whom then receive high quality adult support.

50. In the primary department and in Years 7 to 9, pupils benefit from a good range of literature and from a curriculum that has been much improved by the implementation of the National Literacy and Key Stage 3 Strategies. Guidance from the primary subject manager has ensured that there is a good balance of fiction, poetry, multi-cultural and information texts, and that pupils in mixed-age classes do not study the same books when they stay in a class for more than one year. Resources for lessons and library stock have been improved and pupils' access to high quality literature makes a good contribution to their cultural development. The oldest pupils continue to study a good range of literature, including plays by Shakespeare, and enjoy the work they do in preparation for gaining national qualifications, showing very mature attitudes to their learning.

51. Subject management is good overall. It is very good in the primary department and satisfactory in the secondary department where more needs to be done to promote literacy in other subjects. The different timings of primary and secondary lessons and break times makes it very

difficult for the two subject leaders to meet informally. Separate day-to-day management of the primary and secondary curriculum organisation by different senior managers has resulted in no one person having overall responsibility for the English provision. Although there is communication between staff, there are different arrangements for how pupils' targets in their individual education plans are shared. Most teachers know all pupils' communication and personal development targets, and pupils make good progress towards these. In English lessons, they also make good or very good progress towards curriculum targets drawn from the national strategies. However, their specific individual targets for reading and writing are not shared with all subject teachers, resulting in missed opportunities to develop basic literacy skills, and to use pupils' achievements in English to support learning in other subjects.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. As pupils' communication targets are more widely shared, and because of the good opportunities provided for discussion and for the learning of specialist vocabulary in subjects such as science, art and design, personal and social education and history, many pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted. However, in all age groups, the use of signing to support pupils with less verbal ability is inconsistent. Some teachers and support staff sign routinely. Others sign only to selected pupils or not at all. This restricts the amount of social interaction that some pupils can have with their more able peers, who are not then encouraged to sign. Similarly, the use of symbols to support less able readers and those pupils who need symbolic support to help with their writing is also inconsistent from class to class and between subjects. Although the opportunities for pupils to improve their handwriting and to undertake more extended pieces of writing have improved significantly in English, this has not been mirrored in all subjects. The primary English subject leader has identified many of these inconsistencies, but no one teacher has been given the responsibility of developing and implementing a whole-school approach to the promotion of basic skills across all subjects.

French

53. Provision for the teaching of a modern foreign language is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good quality teaching and learning has been maintained so pupils of all capabilities continue to achieve well.
- The curriculum is well planned with a good balance of study units that prepare older pupils well to gain nationally recognised awards.
- While the assessment of pupils' achievement remains satisfactory, more use could be made of the information to plan activities for pupils of different capabilities.
- Recent changes to the timetable for pupils in Years 7 to 9 mean that they no longer study French every week.

Commentary

54. Consistently good teaching results in pupils having good achievement. The quality of education has been maintained therefore improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The experienced subject leader teaches all lessons. This allows for consistency and progression in the knowledge and skills pupils acquire. She knows the pupils well and has established very good relationships with them, which has a positive effect on the quality of learning. Imaginative use of a variety of well chosen resources, including appropriate text books, flashcards and pictures, video tapes, and real items such as foods and clothing, combined with much encouragement and support from the teacher make lessons interesting and enjoyable. As a result, pupils are keen to learn. The dedicated classroom assistant takes an active part in lessons, for example by rehearsing older pupils' oral work with them and helping them to tape-record examination submissions.

55. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is well planned, with study units that ensure pupils are taught all of the required elements. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, the planned units enable them to work towards achieving nationally recognised qualifications. For all pupils, in every lesson there is a good balance of activities that give them opportunities to practise and develop all of the skills necessary when learning a new language, including speaking, listening and responding, reading and writing. This results in most pupils making good gains in all of the skills. However, some pupils lack confidence when speaking French, especially when using newly introduced vocabulary. It is not that they cannot recall the right words, but rather they are unsure of the correct pronunciation. There is not enough planned repetition of new terms or more role-play, for example where pupils have the chance to acquire a secure grasp of the new vocabulary.

56. Subject management is satisfactory. The one teacher is clear about strengths and areas that need improving. Assessment and recording of pupils' achievements is satisfactory but the information is not always used to make sure that work is effectively planned for pupils of different capabilities. The benefits gained from all pupils working together allows them to support and encourage each other but this results in higher attaining pupils not being sufficiently challenged because they are working at the pace of less able pupils. Recent changes to curriculum organisation for pupils in Years 7 – 9 have resulted in some subjects being taught in ten-week blocks of time rather than throughout the school year. It is too early yet to judge whether this will have an adverse effect on pupils' achievement and limit the progress they make. However, the teacher is aware that this could have a knock-on effect for older pupils preparing for examinations, and has suitable plans to monitor the situation closely.

MATHEMATICS

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Links with other schools extend the range of opportunities for pupils to gain national awards.
- The national strategies have been implemented effectively.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently well developed

Commentary

58. Pupils' understanding of mathematics varies widely according to the age and special educational needs of the pupils. Nevertheless, achievement is good in all aspects of the subject for all ages and capabilities. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the Key Stage 3 Strategy have resulted in improved achievement in all age groups since the last inspection. By Year 2, pupils have a suitable understanding of number. Lower attaining pupils count the number of coloured counters when playing a game and higher attaining pupils are able to say which is the bigger of two numbers such as 74 and 26. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 estimate, for example, the number of items in a jar with some accuracy and some are able to describe the strategy they used. Older pupils are grouped for mathematics according to ability which contributes to their improved achievement. Pupils in Year 11 are following courses leading to nationally recognised awards. Good links with the local high school enable higher attaining pupils to now be challenged and study towards the General Certificate of Secondary Education.

59. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and structured with good regard to the appropriate elements of the national strategies. Activities are well matched to the needs of both individual and groups of pupils. Classroom assistants contribute significantly to pupils' learning through the provision of effective support. They are well deployed by teachers and a valuable part of the teaching team. Resources are generally used well. Pupils benefit from the use of a wide range of materials which support mathematical activities. However, where these are not clearly planned as an integral part of the activity, pupils do not use them effectively and this hinders learning. The use of

interactive white boards in the classroom is variable. Where these are used well they make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in enabling teachers to illustrate and further explain new concepts, and for pupils to demonstrate their new learning.

60. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the curriculum and provides helpful advice and support to colleagues. However, no regular pattern of monitoring classroom practice has been established thus only informal opportunities to identify and share good practice exist. Assessment systems are in place and being used to provide information about pupils' achievements. However, these are not firmly established nor consistently used to effectively guide planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of the many practical uses for their skills. For example, in food studies, art and design and technology, pupils estimate, measure and make comparisons between amounts, shapes and sizes. Similarly in science, pupils measure accurately, record their findings as graphs and higher attaining pupils help their friends by working out averages.

SCIENCE

62. Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in the primary department and very good in the secondary department.
- Good opportunities for pupils to experiment and predict the outcome of their investigations contribute significantly to learning.
- Pupils' imaginations are fired by fun activities.
- Subject leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor what is happening in classrooms.

Commentary

63. Pupils in the primary department achieve well overall because they are encouraged to investigate and ask questions, and activities capture their imagination. For example, pupils in one class were spellbound when their teacher read out a letter from a king requesting them to investigate materials for his new throne. By the Year 6, pupils have a good awareness of living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. The good progress continues in the secondary department. By Year 11, pupils achieve nationally recognised awards. Following the criticism of the last inspection, higher attaining pupils are now suitably challenged with the most able studying towards General Certificate of Secondary Education at the local high school. However, while secondary age pupils make very good progress in lessons, their overall achievement is limited by the short amount of time allocated to the subject. Pupils in both departments predict the outcome of their investigations because teachers plan for them to do so. Higher attaining pupils in the primary department and pupils in the secondary department understand the need for their test to be fair.

64. Teaching and learning ranged from unsatisfactory to very good, being good in the primary department and very good in the secondary. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, though pupils made very good improvement in their social skills, the lesson had too little scientific content so very little learning took place. Where teaching and learning were very good, tasks were very challenging for all capabilities. The teacher for secondary age pupils is a science specialist and has very high expectations. Learning in both departments is made interesting by the use of imaginative resources and a balance of activities which hold pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy science, especially the practical element. Teachers are skilled at building on previous learning so pupils link earlier work to the current topic. Staff make sure all pupils are included in discussions and activities. Pupils are helped

to improve their communication and reading through numerous planned activities. Computer programs are used well in both departments to reinforce learning and for research.

65. Subject management is good. Though the subject is managed by two teachers, joint planning and a shared vision for how the subject will develop have resulted in improved resources and a good programme that is suitable for all capabilities. While leaders have looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning, they have not had the opportunity to observe how what is taught in classrooms is influencing pupils' learning. Good improvements have been made in the way staff record pupils' achievements and in using the information to plan further work. However, systems are inconsistent so it is not always easy to track progress. The creation of a science laboratory has made a difference to what can be taught and how it is taught but this facility lies empty half the week because teachers of primary age pupils use their own classrooms. Planned opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively make a useful contribution to pupils' personal development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

66. Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in information technology is good in both departments because pupils are motivated by good teaching.
- Resources are good and used well.
- Teaching in a range of subjects is enhanced by the use of information technology
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to improve and use their skills in other lessons.

Commentary

67. Pupils are achieving well, developing both skills in, and understanding of, information and communication technology, because of the very good subject knowledge and skill of the teachers. Pupils in the primary department learn to operate both switches and the mouse. They transfer their skills well when, for example, using the interactive whiteboard to enlarge pictures and start video clips. By Year 6, they recognise and find letters on the keyboard, copy type, and set size and type of font. The development of these skills as pupils move through the school is good and by Year 9, the majority show confidence and independence as they access programmes, use word processing skills, and research on the internet. Though it was not possible to observe lessons in Years 10 and 11, an analysis of work shows clearly that good progress is maintained, including very good use of digital cameras and new technology for presentations.

68. Resources are very good with a specialist room and a good provision of classroom computers. As a result, pupils use the skills acquired in discrete information and communication technology lessons, to enhance their learning in other subjects, such as English, mathematics, science, design and technology, and outstandingly, in art and design. Teachers and classroom assistants confidently use their skills to enhance both teaching and learning, making good use of presentations on the interactive whiteboards. Pupils were very well motivated in discrete lessons by enthusiastic teachers who made learning fun.

69. It is not possible to make a judgement on subject management as the co-ordinator had only been in school for one week prior to the inspection, and so was at a disadvantage in terms of her knowledge of the pupils and of the school. However, she demonstrated a clear vision for the development of the subject, together with the knowledge and ability to implement her plans.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Good use is made of new technology to support teaching and learning in a range of subjects. In addition, digital cameras are used well to record individual achievement and in producing displays

to support learning and celebrate achievement. Though some use is made of new technology to support pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, the provision of symbols for pupils who have communication difficulties is an area for improvement.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

71. Provision for both subjects is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching has resulted in good learning and good achievement for all ages and capabilities.
- Real objects and relevant experiences are used well to gain pupils' interest.
- Though pupils record their work on occasions, overall, they have too few opportunities to write.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not have the choice to study either subject.

Commentary

72. In **history**, pupils' achievement is good because of well-chosen topics that capture their interest. By Year 6, pupils develop an understanding of 'old' and 'new' through examining objects such as toys or household equipment from the past and comparing them to those of modern times. Higher attaining pupils understand that they can find out about the past from different sources such as books, photographs and video. Pupils in the secondary department continue to achieve well. Well-chosen topics give pupils a good understanding of range of historical events especially of World War Two. By Year 9, they have a good understanding of primary and secondary sources and of language useful in history, for example, 'era', 'decade' and 'period'. Pupils talk about what they have learned in the current topic about the Holocaust and show a growing understanding of prejudice and how we view others.

73. In **geography**, teachers provide activities that fascinate pupils. For example, pupils in the primary department made very good gains in their knowledge as they traced a route to India and accompanied Barnaby Bear on his 'flight'. All could distinguish land from sea on a globe, and most know they live in England. Dressing in saris and eating popadoms and chapitis, they noted similarities and differences between India and England. Practical tasks contributed significantly to the learning of two groups of Year 8 pupils. The creation of a model landscape allowed lower attaining pupils to locate and recall features such as volcanoes, rivers and mountains. Higher attaining pupils of the same age were equally challenged and made good progress in their understanding of erosion as they used sandpaper to wear away everyday objects such as erasers, soap and chalk. Useful links were made to learning in science as the teacher questioned pupils about the properties of the items and expected them to make predictions as to which would erode most easily.

74. Teaching is good by class teachers in the primary department and the specialist teacher for secondary age pupils. In the few lessons seen, classroom assistants were used well so pupils of all capabilities were included. Staff expect pupils to listen carefully and to give reasons for their answers so they make good progress in speaking and listening. Furthermore, useful opportunities are provided for pupils to read from a variety of sources. Though pupils were presented with some opportunities to write, an analysis of work shows they do not have sufficient opportunities to write for different purposes or to write imaginatively.

75. The subject is managed by a temporary member of staff during the absence of the co-ordinator. From the evidence, subject management is at least satisfactory. The emphasis on major subjects such as English and mathematics has reduced the amount of time available to history and geography. Nevertheless, a suitable programme is in place that reflects pupils' needs and capabilities. However, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not have the opportunity to study the subjects. While plans are in hand to make this so in the future, pupils who

are capable of achieving nationally recognised awards in these subjects are prevented from doing so. Both subjects make a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral and cultural development through a greater awareness of their own heritage and that of other cultures.

Religious education

76. Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in their knowledge and understanding and in their willingness to express and share their views.
- The range of writing activities needs to be extended.
- Teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in the specialist language resource classes.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding.

Commentary

77. Committed teaching ensures that pupils take the subject seriously and develop both understanding and insight into the importance of religion and belief in the lives of people from many faiths. This builds over time as primary age pupils learn about traditional ways of celebrating Christmas in different cultures in Europe and beyond. Higher attaining secondary pupils recall information about the major world religions and identify similarities and differences between these faith traditions' central beliefs, values, important celebrations and places.

78. Achievement and progress are limited by low expectations about pupils' capacity to undertake sustained writing. Many pupils show themselves to be thoughtful in their responses in class and sensitive to the views of others. However, in all age groups, too much written work relies on worksheets, short answers and pictures. These check recall of information and but do not offer pupils enough opportunities to consider and reflect about what they are learning. Teachers recognise they need to develop a wider range of approaches to identifying what pupils know and understand, including strategies for capturing the achievements of those who find writing difficult.

79. The best teaching so engages younger pupils in the specialist language resource that during lessons they show respect and appreciation for artefacts and others' ideas. They think carefully about why a range of items may be 'special' to people. They sit round-eyed and rapt as a lit model of a church is revealed and show they understand why places of worship are special. Imaginative approaches are used to help pupils consider complex concepts, such as faith and trust. For example, when a pupil and classroom assistant were sent on a task the others were asked how they knew that they would do it properly and return. A fruitful discussion ensued about what trust means, and why they had faith in their friend and the assistant. In a weak lesson, the introduction and guidance given to pupils was not clear enough to focus their efforts and work.

80. Pupils steadily develop their appreciation of the beliefs and traditions of others around the world, such as the story of Bilal and the importance of the call to prayer for Muslims. Interesting objects are well used and pupils' work indicates that their understanding about other faiths develops over time, appropriate to their age and understanding. Good links with local ministers provide stimulating presentations in lessons and worship. In a particularly lively one during the inspection, pupils were encouraged to consider the wonders of the world and be amazed by the diversity of its creatures.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

82. This subject was sampled. There was not enough evidence to evaluate teaching and achievement in the primary classes.

Commentary

82. Teaching by experienced staff in dedicated subject areas motivates pupils and their achievement in both subjects is very good as a result. Their subject knowledge and skills are complemented by their partnership with subject-based specialist teaching assistants. Several higher attaining pupils are achieving very well in their practical work. Their subject knowledge and understanding are in line with the national expectation for their age group. This represents very good achievement and pupils who transfer from mainstream are able to develop their skills further. Less able pupils also achieve well, receiving good support and encouragement from both staff and friends in class.

83. Both teachers are well qualified and show very good command of course content and first-rate demonstration skills. The rapport between teachers and assistants in planning and during lessons helps them increase the amount of practical work. Their leadership and development of the curriculum is very good and benefits pupils directly. Planning is very good because of the creative planning partnership between teachers. Themes link wherever possible. This ensures pupils see, make and can immediately explain the connections they see between the underlying design and make principles and the skills and processes they use in both subjects.

84. Expectations of pupils are high, both in terms of responsible and safe use of equipment and the standards and pace of work expected. Both provide very good opportunities for pupils to improve numeracy, literacy and the use of new technology well. They emphasise appropriate vocabulary, exploit opportunities to use calculation and the computer to research and present their work. Good links are built with science, for example, explaining the nature and impact of friction on moving parts and considering the chemistry behind everyday foods and the change in properties created by heating and cooling.

85. Secondary pupils are very enthusiastic. They confidently explain how to use equipment and often support and encourage each other in their work. More able or experienced pupils help others, and show patience, demonstrating how to combine ingredients, join components – or just spell a word causing problems. This collaboration is evident even for the youngest pupils in the specialist language resource classes, who are improving the fine finger and hand-eye co-ordination needed for practical work. They admire one pupil's perfect lacing work and a second pupil helps another experiencing difficulties manipulate her shapes. Waiting to use equipment in resistant materials is good-natured – "I'm always very patient until it's my turn" – but a wider range of alternative tasks to be doing would be useful here. The 'blocking' of the subject means that there is some loss of momentum and recall of content during the periods when the subject is not being taught. The specialist teachers' have very secure subject knowledge, demonstration skills and enthusiasm is infectious with pupils comment "We just wish we could do *more* practical work!" the only complaint in food technology.

86. The shared leadership of the subject for Years 7-11 is very good. The re-modelling of the food technology teaching space since the last inspection has contributed to pupils' achievements. However, it has created unintended limitations on teaching. The food preparation area has poor sight lines for supervision so the local education authority has advised the teacher not to use it for this purpose. In practice, only two small groups of pupils can prepare food at any one time which limits the amount of practical work.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

87. The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Secondary pupils' achievement is outstanding because of the excellent provision for this age group. External examiners consistently judge their work as excellent, noting the rich range of visits and workshops with artists and craftspeople.
- Teaching in years 7-11 is consistently first-rate and the support provided by skilled teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress and achievement.
- Leadership of the subject by both co-ordinators is very good.

Commentary

88. Art and design is a very special part of the school's provision, because imaginative teaching and a very rich curriculum offer opportunities for pupils to have memorable first-hand experiences. From an early age, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding about artists, including contemporary painters, sculptors and photographers. Evidence of primary pupils' work in sketchbooks, portfolios and on display shows a secure foundation for the specialist teaching in Years 7 to 11. Higher attaining pupils in Years 4 to 6 in the specialist language resource, compare, for example, Magritte with other painters. They explain their developing work with enthusiasm and revel in imagining and portraying the seemingly impossible. In Years 7 to 11, pupils' practical skills and knowledge and understanding of the potential of a wide range of media develops rapidly.

89. Pupils' understanding of composition, atmosphere and sense of impact is clear in outstanding photography projects undertaken locally and on residential visits. Higher attaining pupils' manipulation and enhancement of digital images is of such quality that visitors attending the studio opening asked to buy pupils' work. When composing a photomontage of photographs taken at Easby Abbey, Year 11 pupils evaluate and support each others' work, explaining the reasons for their suggestions and consider Hockney's 'joiner' photography experiments. Extensive records of pupils' work with artists capture their pride and delight in the range of art they experience.

90. Two aspects of the curriculum are unusually strongly represented – collaboration with living artists and the emphasis on the principles of good design, drawing on a range of cultures. The outstanding teaching combine well-planned activities to extend differing learning styles with carefully –designed tasks. These closely match and extend pupils' ability and aptitude, and are clearly absorbing. In one group, where a number of pupils need extra help, the teacher recorded a range of questions about aboriginal art, supported with a colourful workbook carefully compiled to reflect their range of understanding and writing ability. This freed the staff team to provide very close support to others. Lessons are so captivating that long sessions appear to go by in a flash for pupils and staff. Relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent and as a result, several pupils who find it hard to work productively in some subjects are unrecognisable in the art studio.

91. While leadership of the subject is very good, management is limited because there is no regular subject meeting time for the primary teachers. The collaboration between the co-ordinators provides guidance and support that the primary teachers value. Two areas have been identified for development, a computerised system to record regular assessments and termly meetings with all staff teaching the subject to share their expertise and ideas for curriculum planning and to increase their confidence in assessment by moderating pupils' work together. Facilities have greatly improved since the last inspection with the creation of an art studio with gallery and display space.

The following demonstrates how annual residential visits and links with artists contribute significantly to pupils' high achievement and interest in art and design.

All pupils have many chances to eat, sleep, live and make art on residential visits. Working with contemporary craftspeople, they rapidly acquire new skills such as sculpture, using the clay to create fantastical animals during a week-long immersion course in Wales. They quickly learn to appreciate the techniques needed to manage the potter's wheel. Video and digital cameras are used effectively to record visits in order to extend and develop the work back at school.

Lindisfarne provides a second rich environment for making art using many media. The traditional work of close observational drawing, pastel work and painting is now enriched with intensive photography courses. Pupils select their most important shots and choose from a wide range of editing and manipulation software to re-compose and enrich them on return. The results include some stunning images, arresting to look at. These challenge conventional perception and expectations, revealing new ways of capturing intricacy and detail. They are memorable for external examiners, who commend them highly and for visitors to the school's exhibition who are keen to buy copies.

Links with artists such as contemporary symbolist painter Mackenzie Thorpe were further strengthened when the artist opened their new studio. The pupils' experience of art is vibrant - "we just love it!" Art is not just about learning from dead people's pictures – it is about living, working artists and about learning with them on a shared journey that they will probably never forget.

Music

92. Only one lesson was observed in music, though singing was heard in assembly. It is not therefore possible to make a judgement about provision. The co-ordinator has developed appropriate units of work from nationally recognised schemes initially for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and more recently for younger pupils. Records show that suitable attention is given to all elements of the subject. However, the recording of knowledge and skills is an area for improvement. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate music in other subjects. For example, a member of staff played the didgeridoo to create an atmosphere in a lesson looking at Aboriginal art. Furthermore, some staff use well-chosen pieces of music very effectively to create a feeling of calm when pupils arrive in a morning or to settle them after break. The subject is enhanced by monthly visits from a local minister who plays a guitar in assemblies and from visiting musicians. Pupils in Year 9 learn keyboard skills as part of a Certificate of Achievement award.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. The provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy the wide range of physical activities on offer.
- Very good use is made of the community.
- The planning and recording of knowledge and skills is an area for improvement.

Commentary

94. Though teaching and learning are satisfactory, the range of activities, visits to off-site provision, and the contribution of visiting specialists result in, overall, good achievement for pupils of all ages and capabilities. Pupils achieve well through a range of exciting and challenging activities. Pupils in the primary department learn, for instance, to throw and catch balls, and acquire skills such as balance, moving in different directions and at different levels and speed in gymnastics. Pupils in the secondary department improve and use their skills in simple games of hockey and football.

Pupils in both age groups grow in confidence as they learn to swim, and respond to music and instructions in dance. Most pupils in both age groups understand the need to warm up prior to exercise. All capabilities take part in outdoor and adventurous activities during residential sessions. Older pupils have great fun and make very good progress in their personal development, conquering, for example, their fear of heights when using the climbing wall, and increasing their awareness of environmental issues through long distance low level walks.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory when taught by the co-ordinator and good when taught by visiting specialists and at off site provision such as leisure centres. Staff provide activities that are successful in raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence thus contributing to their personal development. All lessons begin with a suitable warm-up, though pupils are not always aware of the impact of exercise on their body. While the teacher is clear about the skills pupils will acquire in each lesson, too little use is made of demonstration and insufficient attention is given to teaching specific skills. For example, the position of the head in relation to the ball, and the need to collect and stop the ball prior to passing in hockey. When taught by visiting specialists and at leisure centres, more attention is given to skill development and lessons are conducted with more urgency so pupils are active for the whole of the lesson. Nevertheless, most pupils enjoy the activities provided and want to succeed. They report they particularly enjoyed mountain biking. Suitable assessments are made of potential risks prior to lessons in and out of school. Records of pupils' achievements are basic and not always used as a basis for further work.

96. Subject management is satisfactory. Though the scheme of work follows a nationally recognised programme, there is no clear plan for or recording of the development of skills. The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist and teaches most of the lessons. In addition, he has organised a wide range of well-thought out activities with sufficient flexibility to allow all pupils to be included. He is sensibly including activities which pupils can continue after they have left school such as mountain biking and the use of leisure facilities. Football tournaments with mainstream schools, and athletics matches and swimming galas with other special schools contribute well to pupils' personal development fostering team spirit, an understanding of the need for rules and how to cope with success or defeat.

PERSONAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social, health and citizenship education

97. Provision is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in personal, social, health and citizenship education because teaching is good, and often very good
- The lack of success in appointing a co-ordinator for the senior department, has slowed development of the subject

Commentary

98. Pupils make achieve well in the primary classes, following a commercial scheme, covering all the required aspects. The school nurse makes a valuable contribution to learning, dealing with health and hygiene, as well as sex education for Years 5 and 6. Teaching staff have received support from the Local Education Authority advisory team, and are due to take part in training for sex education, next term. Citizenship has been incorporated well, and in a good lesson for a Year 5 class, pupils showed they understood the importance of rules or laws in any community. Older pupils tackle issues of conservation, and develop an understanding of bullying and how to deal with it. By Year 11, pupils discuss topics such as relationships, pregnancy, contraception, abortion, and responsibility, with maturity and complete lack of embarrassment. This is due largely to the sensitive and realistic approach to the subject by the teacher and the school nurse.

99. Teaching and learning are good. The consistent promotion, encouragement, and praise for personal development from all staff, in and out of lessons, make a significant contribution to the good achievement in this subject. The high expectations encountered daily, give pupils a very good understanding how to live as part of a community. Teachers in the secondary department teach the subject very well, but are drawing on schemes of work, and planning, from the past. Managers recognise that in order for the subject to develop further, for consistency to be maintained and citizenship embedded in the curriculum, a co-ordinator needs to be appointed as soon as possible.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

* It is not appropriate to judge pupils against national standards.