

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GOSDEN HOUSE SCHOOL**

Bramley, Guildford

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125452

Headteacher: Mr J David

Lead inspector: Mrs Tina Clark

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 November 2003

Inspection number: 262906

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	115
School address:	Horsham Road Bramley Guildford Surrey
Postcode:	GU5 0AH
Telephone number:	01483 892008
Fax number:	01483 894057
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Rivers
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gosden House provides day and residential education for up to 120 pupils aged between 5 and 16 years. There are only girls in the 11-16 range. There is one pupil under 5 on roll at present. At the time of the inspection, there were 115 pupils on roll, 32 of them boarders. The school is designated as a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties but, in common with most similar schools, it has increasingly been admitting pupils with more complex special educational needs. Most of the pupils on roll have additional needs, including social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and language difficulties, hearing difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, specific learning difficulties and medical or physical difficulties. Pupils enter the school with attainments significantly below those of average pupils of their age. Almost all pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Eight percent are from minority ethnic groups. The school's population reflects the broad socio-economic circumstances of the community it serves. Only 13 percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is very low in comparison with similar schools. The school achieved "Investors in People" status in 2003. It achieved "Charter Mark" status in 2000 and "Kitemark" accreditation in 2000 for its work in Careers and Work Experience. The school is part of the Barclays "New Futures" Initiative. It is involved in a European "Comenius" Project, where links have been made with a number of schools in other countries. A joint project with The Globe Theatre in London has provided a major focus for the school's work.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17848	Tina Clark	Lead inspector	Art and design, Religious education, Foundation Stage of Learning, Special educational needs, English as an additional language
19692	R Folks	Lay inspector	
32374	P Edmondson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, Citizenship, Music, Personal, social and health education
3055	C Tombs	Team inspector	Science, History, Physical education
20024	P Wright	Team inspector	Mathematics, Design and technology
29452	C Emerson	Team inspector	English, Geography
20836	S Mascall	Team inspector	Modern Foreign Language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Gosden House is a **good** school with a number of **very good and some outstanding features**. Pupils and staff form a very happy and supportive community with good and often very good teaching, very high quality care and excellent relationships producing very confident pupils who are very well prepared for life in the wider community. The school provides **very good value for money**.

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

- The vision and leadership of an inspirational headteacher, supported by a very effective leadership team.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in all settings are outstanding.
- The creative curriculum is a major strength of the school, in particular the links with The Globe Theatre.
- Pupils are very well looked after.
- The school is not yet fully using information obtained from assessments to inform planning for teaching and learning.
- The school is not yet fully evaluating pupils' achievements so that staff have an accurate view of progress and can use this information to effectively promote achievement.

The school has made good progress overall since its last inspection in 1998. It has been particularly effective in raising the achievement of older pupils in reading and writing at Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved. The leadership and management of the school are better. The governing body is now an extremely effective part of the school organisation. The creative arts have improved even from the high level seen at the time of the last inspection. The school has not yet fully addressed the weaknesses identified in the assessment and recording of pupils' achievements, but has already identified this as a priority for development.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 2	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 6	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 9	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 11	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>

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

**Achievement is good overall.** All pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, make good progress. The school is very successful in promoting the inclusion of all pupils. Pupils do very well in speaking and listening across the school. They make very good progress in physical education, drama-related activities, English and in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' social and moral development is excellent, and spiritual and cultural development is very good. Attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**Good overall.** All pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, learn successfully and **achievement is good**. Teaching is good and often very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, as is their understanding of individual special educational needs. As a result,

pupils learn well and make good progress. Good use is made of the literacy and numeracy strategies and this is reflected in the improved achievement of pupils in reading and writing in Years 7 to 11. The quality of teamwork, led by teaching staff, is usually good and there are very good relationships between staff and pupils, which helps to build pupils' self-esteem and helps them to persevere with tasks. **The curriculum is good** and is greatly enhanced by a very wide range of enrichment activities, which are very good. **Care and welfare of pupils is very good** and support and guidance are good. **The quality of assessment is satisfactory.** The school is not yet making full use of the information obtained from assessments. Marking is inconsistent, which means that pupils sometimes receive insufficient guidance as to how they can improve their work. Close relationships between all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, ensure that pupils get the maximum benefit out of school life. **Partnership with parents is very good. The school has very good links** with the community and with other schools and colleges and maximises the benefits of these links for the benefit of all pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership is very good** overall. An inspirational and very effective headteacher provides very good leadership which ensures high quality educational opportunity for all. He is ably supported by a very good leadership team. As a result of the headteacher's very good leadership, teaching and achievement are good and often very good. He is totally committed to ensuring that standards continue to rise. **Governance is very good.** Governors provide very strong leadership and bring very valuable expertise and professional competencies to the school. **Management is good** overall. Day-to-day management of the school by the headteacher and leadership team provides good links between classes and residential provision and is effective in ensuring that all pupils achieve well and make very good progress with their personal, social and emotional development. The leadership and management of outreach provision are very good. Already numerous links with mainstream playgroups, nurseries, primary schools, secondary schools and colleges are being further developed.

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

Parents rate the school very highly. They particularly value the commitment of all staff towards their children. There is very strong support for the school from parents. A very small number of parents raised concerns about communications with the school and about homework. Inspectors looked into these issues but found that the level of homework given was satisfactory and that communications between school and home were generally of a high standard. Inspectors recognised that there might be some slight variations between staff. Pupils are very happy at the school and feel that staff are always supportive to them. They feel safe and secure at school and, as a result, they flourish.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Implement the systems to organise the information obtained from assessments and to use it effectively to inform teachers' planning.
- Put in place arrangements for the new systems for analysing pupils' results when they become available in February 2004.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

The overall achievements of pupils including those with additional special needs are **good**. They are very good in creative arts, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), physical education and English.

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

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all age groups.
- Pupils' achievements in creative and expressive arts are a strength of the school.
- Pupils who have additional special educational needs do as well as others.
- Pupils' progress throughout the school is good and improving.
- Opportunities are limited for older higher attaining pupils to take a wider range of externally accredited exams.

#### **Commentary**

1. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all age groups. Boys in the primary department do as well as girls. Some pupils achieve standards close to national expectations in physical education and the creative arts.
2. Progress is very good in English and PSHCE, and good in mathematics, science, ICT, religious education and humanities. Achievement in English has greatly improved since the previous inspection. Speaking and listening skills are very good throughout the school. This is because of the very focused work on developing early literacy skills, which is very well supported by the speech and language specialist.
3. The school very successfully ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to achieve well in a variety of well-chosen activities. Work in PSHCE lessons is complemented by the support of residential staff given to pupils who stay in school overnight or for extended day activities.
4. The progress of the pupils identified by the school as having additional special educational needs is similar to all other pupils. They are well supported by staff and fully integrated into all lessons. The school sets appropriate targets in individual education plans and at statutory reviews and these are usually achieved. Other targets are also appropriately set in literacy and numeracy.
5. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 study for vocational award units in understanding health and well-being and in preparation for employment. The number of pupils achieving a distinction in these awards has steadily increased over the last three years. Opportunities for pupils to take courses in topics that interest them at college in Years 10 and 11 also help them to make good progress. However, a few higher attaining older pupils do not achieve as well as they might, because opportunities are limited for them to take a wider range of externally accredited examinations.

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

##### **Example of Outstanding Practice**

**Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent.** The provision for pupils' social and moral development is also excellent, while the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. Together these aspects combine to make pupils' personal development excellent. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Attendance

is well above the national average. Overall, this represents a good improvement since the previous inspection on what was already very effective provision.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' excellent behaviour and most positive attitudes contribute to their good progress and achievement.
- The school provides a very wide range of opportunities during the day, in after school clubs, in evening activities and in the community, that develop pupils' confidence and raise their self-esteem.
- The school ethos is outstanding. There is a strong sense of community and ownership. All pupils are valued for their unique qualities. Achievements, however small, are celebrated.
- The school very successfully promotes pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

### **Commentary**

6. Pupils enter the school happily and with an eager sense of anticipation. They feel secure and content in an attractive school environment that is free from bullying or harassment. They are well motivated to learn because of the broad, exciting and relevant range of curriculum activities. They listen carefully, respond readily to questions, sustain their efforts, take a pride in their work, and show respect for property. This is because teachers have high expectations and ensure that everyone is included and everyone's contribution is valued. Relationships are excellent throughout. Pupils' behaviour in and around school and on trips into the community is exemplary. It is characterised by politeness, mutual respect, thought for others and a growing sense of community responsibility. Older pupils provide very good role models and can be trusted to take responsibility for a wide range of activities, for example, looking after younger pupils at lunchtimes or helping them with their reading. Both parents and pupils, in meetings with inspectors, expressed total satisfaction with the behaviour and attitudes that the school promotes.
7. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and how they are expected to behave. They quickly become sensitive to the people around them and understand and accept that people can be different. They take responsibility for their own actions, work, and appearance, and have opportunities to exercise leadership qualities from a very young age. For example, through the school council they have the chance to influence the way the school is run and can suggest improvements. They develop their personal and social skills well because the school provides numerous opportunities for pupils to work, play, or perform together, in lessons, after-school clubs, in residence, on visits and projects. Importantly, the school publicly acknowledges their achievements, however small, and this raises pupils' self-esteem and encourages them to try harder, or behave more appropriately.
8. Whole-school assemblies are well planned and reinforce key values. These are occasions when the school community comes together - 'our school' - to share good and bad news and celebrate achievement and acts of kindness. It does wonders for the confidence and self-esteem of small pupils to receive swimming awards from the headteacher while being clapped by a packed hall. The school ethos is one that values all pupils for their uniqueness and individual achievements. Pupils' spiritual development is further promoted through the Creative Arts curriculum, which develops their expressive, imaginative and creative talent, and through moments of awe and wonder that occur across a rich and varied 24-hour curriculum.
9. The curriculum is planned carefully so that pupils have a very good understanding of their own and other cultures. This is done through the study of history, art, music, literature, drama, dance, different faiths, places of worship, customs, food technology and the cooking of different foods, and through the study of the French language and culture. In addition, pupils' cultural awareness is raised through a programme of well-planned visits, visitors and artists in

residence, and reinforced by attractive pupils' displays and posters throughout the school, that celebrate achievement and reflect every area of the curriculum

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	92	School data :	1.9

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

10. Attendance is very good and is monitored very well. Punctuality is very good.

**Exclusions**

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	106	1	0
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – African	1		
Any other ethnic group	4		

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** and often very good. The curriculum is **good** with a **very good** range of enrichment activities. Resources for learning are **good**. Care and welfare are **very good**. Support and guidance are **good**. Partnership with parents and the community are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **very good**.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of **teaching** is **good** overall. The quality of **assessment** is **satisfactory**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they plan their lessons effectively.
- Good use of literacy and numeracy strategies.
- The high quality teaching results from the good understanding that teachers and support staff have of the pupils' needs.
- Planning is good and supports a good range of challenging activities.
- Relationships with pupils are very good.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and not always sufficiently informative.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	22 (43%)	26 ( 49%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. Pupils are learning well and making good progress. Teachers have successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and adapted them appropriately. This is reflected in the good achievement seen in mathematics and the very good progress pupils make in English.
12. The school works hard to ensure that every subject has a subject specialist and this has been effective in ensuring pupils' learning is appropriately supported. Teachers plan their lessons well and give clear introductions to lessons. Good organisation ensures that sufficient time is left at the end of lessons to check that pupils have understood what has been taught. The quality of teaching could be even more successful if assessment data were used more effectively by all teachers to ensure that work is planned for all levels of ability.
13. Staff use praise and encouragement very effectively and this builds pupils' self-esteem and helps them to persevere with tasks. Pupils take notice of this very positive encouragement from staff and try very hard to improve their work. Skilful questioning makes pupils think and helps them to learn effectively. Homework is used effectively to support learning in lessons.
14. The quality of teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is good. As a result, the pace of lessons is good and teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants give constant individual attention and support to pupils without doing the work for them. Expectations for pupils to behave well and work hard are very high.
15. Although satisfactory assessment was identified as an area for improvement by the previous inspection, not enough has been done to improve it and it remains a weakness. The current system of marking is not consistent across the school and does not provide teachers with enough information about the level of support a pupil has received. The inconsistencies in marking lead to pupils being given insufficient guidance as to how they can improve their work. In Years 1 to 6, well-established records of pupils' prior attainment are maintained and kept in school. From Years 7 to 11, these portfolios are presented to pupils at the end of each school year and sent home. The school has already recognised that this area needs further improvement and suitable development plans are already in place. By February 2004 a new comprehensive database of school assessment information will be available for use by the school. This new database will allow the school to set specific targets by effectively tracking pupils' achievement and progress across all main subjects.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. A very good range of additional activities enriches it. The accommodation and resources that support the curriculum are also very good. Staffing levels are very good. All staff contribute well in all aspects of school life. Staff are very well trained for the needs of individual pupils.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well matched to pupils' special educational needs.

- The residential aspects of the school, with the extra-curricular activities help to create a very good 24-hour curriculum.
- Accreditation at Key Stage 4 is currently limited to the ASDAN Award Scheme.
- A very good use of visitors to the school and of educational visits.
- Very good staffing, of very high quality, contributes positively to pupils' achievement in school and to their self-esteem.
- ICT is not yet widely used across the curriculum.

## Commentary

16. All pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, have access to a wide range of learning opportunities, both in and out of school. The school provides an extensive programme of visits to places of interest, visitors into school, links with other schools and colleges and after school activities, which greatly enrich the curriculum for all pupils. The wide range of visitors to the school and educational and social trips for pupils are well illustrated through displays, video and photographic evidence. There is a very extensive range of after school activities, which are available to all pupils. Together with the opportunities on offer in the residential aspect of the school, this contributes to a very good 24-hour curriculum. Residential visits, including recent trips to Calais and the Isle of Wight, further enhance opportunities for both learning and personal and social development.
17. For pupils aged 5 to 11, there is a good curriculum which meets individual needs well. For pupils aged 11 to 16, the curriculum in all subjects provides a very good range of learning opportunities. This is enhanced greatly by the Creative Arts programme. For pupils aged 14 to 16, close links have been developed with both the Connexions Service and Guildford College to help prepare pupils effectively for when they leave school. The school is aware that external accreditation is limited and is considering the options available to them. Further development, however, is needed in the cross-curricular use of ICT which, although satisfactory, is not yet widely used. There is a very good range of learning opportunities in place for all age groups, particularly in creative arts.
18. The majority of both the residential and the teaching accommodation is based within the main building. The classrooms and specialist areas are of an appropriate size for their purpose. They are well maintained and include specialist rooms for Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children (TEACCH), speech and language therapists, dance, music, ICT, food technology and science. The school hall is a multi-purpose hall, and includes a stage with lighting. However, the hall is also used as a corridor and, as a result, physical education lessons taught in the hall are often interrupted, which can be very disruptive.
19. Following a good National Care Standards Report in March 2003, the school has started a review of the residential accommodation, which has included partitioning existing bedrooms to create more appropriate accommodation for those boarding at the school.
20. The school grounds are extensive and include gardens, playing fields, adventure playgrounds, a netball court and outdoor theatre. They provide very good opportunities for both outdoor games and extended learning opportunities in all subjects taught at the school.
21. All subject areas are equipped with good resources for learning, and most subjects, including music and drama, have very good resources, including an impressive collection of costumes and a dance studio. Good use is made of specialist equipment, for example a sloping board provided for a pupil with a visual impairment. Staffing levels are very good and all staff are very well trained to meet individual special educational needs.

## Care, guidance and support

The school provides **very good care, welfare and health and safety** for the pupils. The provision of support, advice and guidance is good. The school is very good at seeking, valuing and acting upon the pupils' views.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well cared for and supported during their time in school.
- The school council works very well.
- Arrangements for pupils entering and leaving the school are very good.
- Very good advice and guidance is given on careers.
- The residential provision is very good.
- Catering staff provide very well for a range of individual needs.

### Commentary

22. It is obvious from being in the school that the pupils are being very well looked after and they are very happy to be there. The school has very good procedures for child protection. Any incidents are efficiently and sensitively handled. Health and safety procedures are also very good and governors are involved. First aid facilities are very good and the newly appointed Medical Unit Leader, who is the first named person for first aid, is also providing very good support for the school by co-ordinating all medical issues for the school. School meals are rated highly by staff and pupils.
23. There is a very good range of support from outside specialist agencies. These include the educational psychologist, physiotherapist and occupational therapists, the school doctor and nurse, the Hearing Impaired Service and a music therapist. Worthy of special mention is the excellent support provided by the speech and language therapists, which is invaluable for the pupils, many of whom have speech difficulties. This is reflected in pupils' very good speaking and listening skills in all areas of the curriculum.
24. Pupils' views are sought through the school council system. Regular meetings are held to discuss a range of issues which the pupils have raised, or to consider matters suggested by the school. This works very well. Pupils are invited to fill in evaluation sheets, which catering staff then consider in their future planning.
25. The school provides older pupils with very good guidance about career opportunities. There are close links with Connexions and Year 11 pupils during the inspection were working very well in their work experience placements.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good links** with parents, the community and with other schools and colleges.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good links with parents.
- Parents are provided with very good information about the school and their children's progress.
- There are very good links with the community.
- Links with other schools and colleges are very good.
- Facilities for pupils to participate in activities arranged in other schools are very good.

## Commentary

26. The parents who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting were very positive about the school. The responses to questionnaires were similarly very supportive. The only minor areas of concern were to do with homework and the slight variation on a day-to-day basis of the levels of communication between teachers and the parents. The inspectors considered these issues during the inspection and decided that the level of homework given was satisfactory and that information given to parents was of a high standard, although there may be slight variation between staff.
27. Information given to parents is very good. There is a very well presented school prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents is accessible and readable. The school also provides very good information to boarders. Lots of letters are sent out to keep parents informed of events in school. Annual pupil reports are of a high standard, are evaluative, and identify areas for improvement linked to specific targets.
28. The school has a multitude of links with the community. The most notable ones are the students who come to work in the school from universities, colleges and the local health trust. The Comenius link with other schools in Wales, Holland and Germany is invaluable in developing pupils' awareness of other countries. The outstanding connections with the London theatres and in particular with "The Globe" are excellent and provide real inspiration to succeed for the pupils.
29. All groups of pupils, boys and girls and those with additional special educational needs are achieving well together. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well with individual pupils to enable them to access the curriculum. One pupil with language difficulties was given extra time to make his contribution to the lesson. Another pupil chose to sit at a workstation, separately from his peers, and this situation was handled very sensitively.
30. The school recognises the need for pupils to take part in activities alongside their mainstream peers and to develop pupils' skills in this area. Local headteachers feel that Gosden House is an essential part of their bid for Federation status and that the school freely gives useful advice and help to them. Similarly, the links have been continuing on an informal basis with Tillingbourne Junior School for some time now. As a result of both of these links, more pupils will be able to work alongside mainstream pupils. It is becoming a more important and successful part of the school's work.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are **very good**. The school is very well led by an inspirational headteacher and a committed leadership team. The management of the school is good and its governance is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for developing the school. He provides very good leadership and direction to all members of the school community.
- The experienced and professional governing body supports and challenges the school very well.
- Financial management is very good and the governing body is closely involved in ensuring that finances are used effectively.
- Procedures are not yet fully in place to enable the school to collect and evaluate information about pupils' performance.
- A clear management structure and good procedures for liaison between key staff ensure consistency in promoting pupils' progress throughout the school.
- Members of staff receive training that is relevant to the special educational needs of the pupils and of a high quality.

- Very efficient administrative staff support the work of the school very well.

## Commentary

### Example of Outstanding Practice

The headteacher has very high aspirations for the school. His clear vision provides inspiration for staff and pupils and results in the very good ethos that is evident throughout the school. He is highly committed to enabling all pupils to develop as confident and successful members of society through providing very good support and a rich and varied curriculum. He has spearheaded the innovative collaboration with the Globe Theatre that has had a profound impact on raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem and in promoting their skills in literacy. The work of the headteacher is highly valued by governors and parents who describe him as 'exceptional'. The headteacher is totally committed to ensuring that standards continue to rise. The headteacher's contribution to the local schools' Federation is very highly regarded.

31. The governing body maintains a strong interest in the work of the school and the governors, who include several parents, are very involved in all aspects of school life. Governors are very clear that their role is that of a 'critical friend'. Consequently, they support and challenge the leadership team very well. Governors have a very good range of experience and expertise. This is carefully deployed to ensure that governors' committees are very effective. The academic committee oversees the curriculum and receives regular presentations from subject leaders. The school's finances are very well managed by the governing body, headteacher, senior management team and school bursar. Expenditure is efficiently monitored and spending is closely linked to the educational objectives identified in the improvement plan. Very efficient administrative staff support the work of the school very well.
32. The leadership teams work effectively together. There are good links between senior staff in the school and the head of care and between key staff in the primary and secondary departments. This gives a consistent management framework across the school, which supports pupils well and promotes their learning. Management of subject areas is good, although a significant proportion of teachers are relatively new to the school and have only recently taken responsibility for subjects.
33. Opportunities for staff to access high quality training are very good and are well linked to the whole school plan for developing the school to meet the changing needs of pupils. The effective way in which the school supports staff and promotes their development is reflected in the fact that it holds the 'Investor in People' award.
34. The school is very good at seeking the views of parents and pupils and acting on them. For example, there is an annual questionnaire for parents and they are very actively involved in pupils' annual reviews. Senior staff evaluate the school's performance informally through the structured cycle of leadership and curriculum meetings. However, the school is still awaiting training to implement the local education authority's systems for collecting and analysing information about the pupils' performance. This means that their current capacity to monitor the progress of specific groups of pupils within the school, such as those with autistic spectrum disorder, is restricted. Training is scheduled to take place and the system is expected to be operational by February 2004.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,506,743	Balance from previous year	57,699
Total expenditure	1,479,439	Balance carried forward to the next	34,143

Expenditure per pupil	12,978
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## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

Throughout the following commentary, overall judgements about provision relate to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and any other significant aspects.

### THE FOUNDATION STAGE OF LEARNING

Provision for the very small number of children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. It was not possible to gather sufficient evidence about every individual area of learning, due to the small numbers involved.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress.
- The very good whole-team approach greatly enhances opportunities for learning.
- Relationships are very good.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Leadership and management are very good.

#### Commentary

35. **Personal, social and emotional development** is very good. Children are confident and even at this very early stage of schooling, are beginning to concentrate for longer periods of time. They sit and listen to each other well at Circle Time. The clear boundaries of the very structured classrooms, together with consistent role-models set by staff, ensure that the children know what is expected of them and they quickly learn how to behave appropriately. Picture cards are used well to refocus children. Children are encouraged to develop their self-help skills, such as helping themselves to a drink from a tray. They are learning to choose well between activities. Behaviour is very good.
36. **Communication, language and literacy** provision is very good. The very good whole-team approach enables all staff to develop children's communication skills. Careful questioning enables all children to participate. Children can read their own names on their books. Children know the difference between words and pictures on packets of food. Advice from speech and language therapists is helpfully included in teachers' planning.
37. **Mathematical development** is good. Children are able to count up to 10. They can add 6 to 4, to work out how many people are in the room. Children use language well to describe shapes and can recognise shapes.
38. **Knowledge and understanding of the world** and **creative development**. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision, teaching or standards, but analysis of children's work, displays and discussions with staff indicate that children are making good progress.
39. Relationships are very good and the Foundation Stage is very well managed. Accommodation and resources are very good. The school has maintained the high standards seen at the time of the last inspection. A big investment has been made in staff training and this has had a positive impact on provision for the Foundation Stage.

### SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4.

During the inspection, ten lessons were seen in English. No lessons were seen in French. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work in all year groups and held discussions with pupils about their work.

## ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

### English

Overall provision for English is **very good**. There is very good provision for promoting the acquisition of early literacy skills for pupils in the primary department and for developing speaking and listening skills for pupils of all ages. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in reading and have access to a good and varied curriculum. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when reading in the secondary department was reported to be unsatisfactory and the range of reading and writing in Year 11 was limited.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for pupils to develop skills in speaking and listening are very good in all areas of the curriculum.
- The excellent dramatic activities, and in particular the links with the Globe Theatre, are very successful in raising pupils' achievements in English.
- Teaching in English is good.
- Teachers have a very good understanding of their pupils' individual needs.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- There is a limited range of accreditation for pupils in Year 11.
- Pupils would benefit from more opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing in some subject areas.

### Commentary

40. Teachers are very skilled in providing plenty of opportunities for pupils to answer questions and take part in discussions. The speech and language therapists work very closely with teachers and teaching assistants to develop and implement strategies to support pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. This means that these pupils make very good progress and are fully included in lessons. Through their involvement in dramatic productions, such as the excellent collaborative exercise with The Globe Theatre to produce *Romeo and Juliet*, pupils become very confident in expressing their views and speaking in public. In and around the school pupils are extremely polite to adults and will initiate and maintain conversations with staff and each other.
41. Because of the very good focussed teaching of early literacy skills, pupils in the primary department make very good progress in reading. This is evident through the outcomes of annual reading tests, which are used to track progress. Pupils are taught how to tackle unfamiliar words and to be able to recognise and name letters and sound them out quickly and accurately. Pupils in the secondary department make good progress in improving their reading skills. They have opportunities to read a variety of texts with others in lessons. These include a good range of genres such as plays, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. In a Year 9 lesson, very good support ensured that all pupils were able to read the witches' speech from *Macbeth*. They showed maturity in the comments they made about the script and had a good understanding of the plot.
42. Very well structured activities and very good support for individual pupils enables pupils in the primary department to make very good progress in developing their skills in handwriting and spelling. Younger pupils begin to construct their own sentences and learn to use punctuation. By the end of Year 6, many pupils can produce short pieces of creative writing with correct spelling and punctuation. Pupils in the secondary department learn to write for different

purposes. For example, Year 11 pupils keep diaries of their work experience and compare a synopsis of the story of *Les Miserables* with the musical and the film.

43. Teachers are skilled at breaking tasks down into small steps so that all pupils can achieve success in lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise skills that they have learned so that they have a secure base for new learning. All staff have very good relationships with pupils and lessons are lively and interesting. This means that pupils are highly motivated and try very hard. Teaching assistants generally provide very good support for pupils with additional needs and those who find work difficult. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively in both the primary and the secondary departments. Its impact is clear in the improvements in pupils' achievements since the last inspection. The marking of pupils' work does not always give them clear feedback on how well they have done and how they can improve.
44. The subject is well managed by the English co-ordinator, the drama co-ordinator and the language co-ordinator. Subject leaders are beginning to moderate pupils' work.

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

45. The school provides very good opportunities to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills through other subjects of the curriculum, assemblies, extra-curricular activities and in the residence. Pupils have access to a wide range of books, including multi-cultural books, and are encouraged to develop their reading skills wherever possible. However, lessons do not always develop pupils' writing skills well as, sometimes, writing is limited to one-word answers or single sentences on a work sheet. The use of ICT to record pupils' work is currently underdeveloped.

### **French**

In Years 7 to 9, pupils' work shows that they make good progress in their skills. They cover a wide range of topics and show a good knowledge of the language. For example, they complete work on days of the week, numbers up to twenty and can label parts of the body such as nose and eyes in French. Pupils answer questions in French and show good understanding by replying in French. Tape recordings show they are developing a French accent and higher attaining pupils can respond well without prompts whilst others listen and repeat after the teacher. French is well promoted in other subjects. For example, in design and technology pupils made a "Buche de Noel" and were able explain what it was. Pupils are encouraged to practise what they learn and can be heard saying "Bonjour" to staff when they greet them. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post and has appropriate plans to develop the subject further. Staff ensure that pupils in Years 10 and 11 retain what they have learnt and, through the ASDAN courses, they further develop their knowledge of the geography and customs of France and other European countries.

### **MATHEMATICS**

*During the inspection, nine lessons were seen in mathematics in nearly all year groups. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and talked to pupils about their work.*

The provision in mathematics is **good overall**. The standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and learning.
- The beginnings of lessons are used very effectively to develop pupils' mathematical confidence.
- Pupils display excellent attitudes to their work.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped.

- Marking is not consistent and does not give pupils sufficient help to improve their work.
- The opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum are good.

## Commentary

46. The quality of teaching and learning has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are very effective in encouraging pupils to participate in lessons. Pupils are very well supported and the quality and amount of support they receive enables them to stay on task and achieve well. They are able to talk about their work and show understanding of what they are expected to achieve in lessons. Teachers use questioning during starter activities very effectively and this helps pupils in all years to develop their thinking, as well as their speaking and listening skills. All pupils benefit from their teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour and, in return, pupils' attitudes are excellent.
47. There is a high degree of challenge in mathematics lessons. For example, in a very good Year 9 lesson, planning identified detailed objectives and activities to meet pupils' individual learning needs, and this ensured that they had very good learning opportunities with work they understood and could do. Resources were well prepared, relevant and appropriate and ensured that no time was wasted during the lesson and pupils gained from the teacher's full attention. There was also a good emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary. Although pupils often make use of computers to practise numeracy skills in their classroom, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support extension work.
48. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified. For example, the need to improve marking which is currently inconsistent and does not often indicate to pupils what they have learned and how they can improve.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

49. The opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum are good, although it is not planned to be systematically taught. Teachers encourage pupils to use their numeracy skills in all subjects. For example, in science lessons, pupils weigh chemicals, time experiments and produce bar graphs.

## SCIENCE

*During the inspection, four lessons of science were seen, one each in Years 5, 7, 9 and 11. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and talked with them about their experiences.*

Provision for science **is good**. Achievement has improved since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good.
- There is appropriate emphasis on focused exploration and investigation to help pupils acquire scientific knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. Their behaviour is excellent.
- Important aspects of ongoing assessment procedures are under developed.
- Some pupils' learning in science is interrupted by their withdrawal for a variety of therapies that occur the same time each week.

## Commentary

50. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Lessons are clearly introduced and pupils know what is expected of them. Planning and preparation are thorough, as a result of which, learning is continuous. Teachers start lessons with a recap of previous work and as a result, pupils build on prior learning. Planning, support and resources take account of the range of learning needs. Everyone is included and there are opportunities for all pupils, including a pupil from a neighbouring special school, to show meaningful achievement. Group work is well

organised, with an adult with each group to ensure full participation and decision-making. Questioning is used well, not only to confirm understanding but also to encourage pupils to think about different lines of enquiry. "I've got a really good idea", said one pupil in a Year 6 lesson, when the class were asked how a test, to decide whether the size or shape of a parachute affects how long it takes to fall, could be improved. Consequently, adjustments are made to the weight of the plasticene attached to the bottom of the parachute. In this way, the concept of a fair test is discussed and reinforced. There are good natural links with other subjects. For example, pupils become familiar with the appropriate scientific vocabulary, use stopwatches and scales to measure time and weight, and ICT to record and analyse data collected during the investigation.

51. Pupils' positive attitudes and excellent behaviour contribute to their good progress and achievement. This is because teachers have high expectations and present practical and investigative work that arouses pupils' curiosity and imagination. Pupils engage willingly in their learning, listen carefully, follow instructions and take a pride in the presentation of their work. They work well in groups, using simple resources safely and sensibly and with an awareness of others. A good example of pupils' mature behaviour is when the Year 6 investigation moves to a stairwell in the school so that they can drop their parachutes from a higher point. They do this with the minimum of fuss and without any interruption to their learning.
52. The school's use of ongoing assessment is underdeveloped. In particular, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, is not always dated, lacks evaluative comment, and does not set targets for pupils to improve. In addition, targets in pupils' individual education plans do not effectively inform teaching, learning and planning in science. While pupils' primary needs for speech therapy, physiotherapy, art therapy or Riding for the Disabled should rightly take priority over the planned curriculum, adjustments should be made to the timetable, to ensure that pupils' entitlement to science is not regularly interrupted.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

*Three lessons were seen during the inspection, one in Year 3 and one each in Years 10 and 11. Judgements are based on lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and teachers' records and planning.*

Provision for ICT is **good**. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. ICT is a rapidly developing subject in the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good range of resources throughout the school.
- A good action plan has been developed by the co-ordinators.
- The use of ICT in the teaching of other subjects is inconsistent.

### **Commentary**

53. By the age of 11, pupils are using ICT well to draw up different kinds of graphs, for example, block graphs and pie charts. One group were making graphs showing different ways of travelling to school. Younger pupils, by the age of 7, use computers to produce and colour in shapes for a mathematics display. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils are confident in the use of computers. Pupils are motivated well by both the subject and the quality of teaching. Their independence grows as their skills increase. A group of 5 and 6 year olds are able to use the Clicker 4 programme independently in a literacy lesson. Other examples of the independent use of ICT include the use of word processing, including using spell checkers and grammar checkers. By the age of 14, pupils are using electronic whiteboards and playing and recording their own musical compositions, using computers connected to keyboards. By the age of 16, pupils are using digital photography and word processing very well to both record

and evaluate their own work experience. ICT for pupils ages 15 and 16 is appropriately incorporated into the ASDAN Award Scheme.

54. Pupils aged 7 to 11 are involved in assessing their own progress within ICT. The comprehensive ICT action plan that has been produced indicates that this will be developed throughout the school.
55. The school has improved the ICT resources considerably since the last inspection, including electronic whiteboards and a computer room. Involvement in the Barclays New Futures Initiative has greatly enhanced opportunities in ICT. A positive effect of this is that pupils are motivated and work well, showing high levels of concentration, as well as very good behaviour and attitudes. Digital photography is used particularly well by pupils to record and evaluate their experiences.
56. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is an appropriate policy, scheme of work and action plan, which supports planning and includes staff development opportunities in, for example, using Clicker 4.

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

57. ICT is effectively used in a few subjects, such as in Year 6 literacy, music, technology and English in Year 9, however, not all teachers throughout the school plan sufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to use ICT.

## **HUMANITIES**

*Seven lessons were seen during the inspection, three in history, three in religious education and one in geography. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and talked to both staff and pupils about their work.*

Provision is **good** overall.

### **Geography**

It is not possible to make a judgement on provision in Geography as only one lesson was observed. Pupils know some facts about countries in Europe and are able to name a number of countries. A lively display demonstrates the work which primary aged pupils have done to learn which buildings are found in a typical village.

### **History**

Provision for history is **good**. This maintains the judgement of the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is consistently good.
- History promotes pupils' moral development by encouraging them to think about controversial issues such as warfare, industrialisation and sources of evidence.
- Pupils respond with understanding and enthusiasm to historical material.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

58. No history lessons were observed for younger pupils aged 5 to 11. Judgements about their progress and achievement are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and a meeting with the history co-ordinator. Their achievement is judged to be at least good.

59. Older pupils, aged 11 to 14, continue to make good progress and achieve well, as a result of teaching that is consistently good. Teachers are skilled at using questions to confirm pupils' understanding and to encourage their participation. They also 'tell a good story' about historical characters or events, which fascinates pupils. They use video extracts well to focus attention and set the scene, and to give pupils a chronological framework or 'map of the past'. Pupils in Year 7 are examining the Bayeux Tapestry as a source of evidence for recording the events of the Battle of Hastings. The teacher initiates a lively discussion about the accuracy of this account – 'pictures speak louder than words' – and pupils begin to understand the notion of bias and that there can be a number of interpretations. With older pupils, and in other lessons, teachers encourage pupils to think and reflect on moral issues, such as life in the trenches in World War One, or the impact of industrialisation in Victorian times. In this way pupils learn to relate one period of history to another, and begin to understand and empathise with people and families at that time. In addition, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to see and use first-hand evidence through visits to the local Victorian museum, Weald and Downland historical houses, the castle at Hastings and the Imperial War Museum.
60. Assessment procedures are under-developed. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not inform the pupils of how well they are doing, or what they need to do in order to improve. Examples of pupils' work should be dated, annotated, levelled in terms of National Curriculum or P-Scale levels, and stored in the pupils' profiles as evidence of progress and achievement. Targets in pupils' individual education plans should better inform teachers' planning in history.

## Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**. The school has maintained the standards seen at the time of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use questioning well to engage pupils in their learning.
- Good use is made of a wide range of resources.
- Assessment and recording systems need to be further developed.

### Commentary

61. In primary classes, teacher use questioning well and pupils respond to this with appropriate comments. They recall earlier lessons and explain what "Remembrance Day" is for. They recite "The Lord's Prayer" and recall other prayers that they know, for example, their school prayer. Pupils retell stories they have heard in assembly. They participate well in discussions and show respect for the contributions of others. As a result of good teaching and active learning, standards are good.
62. Pupils in the secondary school classes make good progress and achieve well. Teaching is enthusiastic and humour is used well to capture pupils' imaginations. Pupils co-operate well and are keen to discuss the story of "The Prodigal Son". They discuss the pros and cons as to whether the brother should have been welcomed back by his father.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are good, but assessment and monitoring are currently less well developed in the secondary classes. Staff involved are aware of this and are working at further ways of improving these processes. Resources for religious education are good.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and Technology

*During the inspection, one lesson of design and technology was seen in Year 9. Talking to pupils and looking at their work was an important part of the inspection process.*

The provision for design and technology is **good**. This results in good progress and achievement by pupils throughout the school. This maintains the standards seen at the time of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Design and technology is well integrated into the creative arts curriculum.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### Commentary

64. Pupils are gaining experience of a range of materials and use a variety of techniques. They develop subject skills through creative arts topic work designing and making a variety of products, for example, props, costumes and scenery for the school's production of "Romeo and Juliet". In food technology, they use a wide selection of ingredients from all over the world to make a great variety of meals and snacks. Pupils learn to use the equipment safely and hygienically. They are encouraged to complete design and evaluation briefs, select and prepare different ingredients, and know the most effective equipment for preparing food. In the one food technology lesson seen, Year 9 pupils started the lesson with a very appropriate interactive video that highlighted health and safety issues concerning hygiene in the kitchen. During the practical lesson, pupils extended their measuring and mixing skills, used ingredients correctly and learned to bake a successful product. Pupils say they enjoy both the making and the recording of their work. Pupils have the opportunity to evaluate their own work. The subject is well led and managed. Resources are good and the use of ICT to support learning is well supported through good planning.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

*During the inspection, six lessons were seen, two in art and four in music. However, the creative arts are a central part of the life of the school and inspectors looked at every aspect of this, including talking to pupils and staff and looking at videos and photographs.*

### Example of Outstanding Practice

The creative elements of the curriculum are an outstanding feature of this school. The school has formed a unique collaboration with The Globe Theatre in London, which has resulted in a spectacular presentation of Romeo and Juliet at the school, involving every single pupil in the school. This collaboration will continue for another two years. The project provided an opportunity for pupils to work with a most prestigious professional theatre group that proved to be an exceptional opportunity. The whole experience has had a profound impact on pupils' achievements in literacy and in the development of pupils' self-esteem. The project has had a tremendous impact on achievement in art and music. A professionally made video and photographic evidence, both of a very high standard, provide a wonderful record, celebrating pupils' achievements. Many of the school's creative and expressive arts projects involve pupils and staff in all aspects of designing sets and costumes, script writing and Drama, choreography, and the preparation and design of publicity materials. The project was supported by local businesses. All pupils remember the project as a great personal and whole-school community achievement. Staff, pupils and parents rightly praise this magnificent project.

## Art and Design

Provision for art and design is **very good**. This maintains the high standards seen at the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and, as a result, pupils' achievement is very good.
- The involvement of a wide range of outside professionals greatly enhances learning experiences.
- Leadership and management of this important area of the curriculum are excellent.

### Commentary

Art and design is taught as part of the school's creative curriculum and plays a very important part in this exceptional part of the curriculum. Art and appreciation of art permeates the whole life of the school. The contribution of the creative and expressive arts manager is excellent. Displays around the school are of very high quality and also provided evidence of the high standards of work in this subject. Teachers' planning confirms that pupils are offered a varied and interesting curriculum. Examples of painting "in the style of" a range of famous painters is a good example of this. In a lesson seen in Year 4, pupils were creating props for their forthcoming Christmas production. They worked well to decorate stars with paint and glitter. Co-operation between pupils is good. Pupils use brushes and scissors well and are careful to ensure that their decorations are covered right to the edges. The high standards seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

## Music

Provision for music throughout the school is **very good**. The school has maintained the high standards seen at the time of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and achievement for all pupils.
- Very good cross-curricular links within the school's creative arts programme.
- Very good external links with other professionals.

### Commentary

65. At the previous inspection music was judged to be at least good. Music is now very good, with pupils achieving very good standards because of the wide range of musical opportunities being made available to them through links with the Music Service, including peripatetic teachers of percussion and singing, as well as offering music therapy to pupils with speech and communication difficulties.
66. Pupils aged 5 to 7 listen to and sing songs enabling them to learn about musical pitch. By the age of 11, pupils play percussion instruments, demonstrating good rhythm and play along to the beat of the music. They are able to describe instruments they hear. Older pupils explore music through computer technology, playing, arranging and recording their compositions. Teaching throughout the school is very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and encourage pupils. This results in pupils being motivated, increasing their confidence and self-esteem, and leads to very good learning and involvement by the pupils throughout the school.
67. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good. They respond positively to praise and enjoy both listening to and performing music. Pupils are supportive of each other and are good at taking turns. This was highlighted especially in a Year 9 class, where the pupils were teaching 10-year-old pupils to play and record their musical compositions through the computer connected to a keyboard.

68. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is an appropriate policy and scheme of work, which supports planning and links in to the Creative Arts Policy.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

*Seven lessons were seen in PE, covering nearly all year groups. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' records and spoke to pupils about their work.*

Provision for physical education is **very good**. This maintains the high standards noted at the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently very good. Pupils show a real zest and enjoyment of physical activities.
- The subject offers the full range of physical activities across the 24-hour curriculum and very good opportunities for pupils' personal development and accreditation.
- Facilities and resources, apart from the multi-purpose hall, are very good.

### Commentary

69. Teachers are enthusiastic and have very good command of their subject. Pupils achieve well and make very good progress because teaching is of a consistently high standard. Specialist teachers bring quality, rigour and an insistence on high standards to all activities. All staff and pupils are changed into physical education kit, and emphasis is placed on posture and breathing. Lessons are well structured, organised and prepared and proceed at a good pace. Appropriate warm-up activities feature at the beginning of every lesson, which conclude with time to cool down and recover. In this way pupils develop their understanding of fitness and health. Short, unambiguous instructions and expert demonstrations ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and build on prior skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils' performance improves as a result of teachers' good observational skills and constructive feedback during lessons. Skills practised individually, for example, dribbling a basketball or shooting into the basket, are reinforced by small-sided games, which gives pupils an understanding of the rules and tactics of major games. Behaviour is well managed. For example, the behaviour of pupils with autism in dance and gymnastics is treated with patience, astuteness and is effective. Routines are well established and these pupils make good gains in confidence, both in moving in space, and controlling the pace and direction of their movement. They are helped by symbol timetables and by the timely and subtle intervention of support staff. In swimming, very good support in the water by teachers and support assistants ensures that less able pupils are able to develop confidence and experience buoyancy. Skilled instruction consolidates the water fitness and improves the techniques of more able pupils. Appropriate attention is paid to aspects of personal, social and health education in terms of changing, and to all health and safety matters.
70. Pupils' attitudes to, and behaviour in, physical education lessons, is exceptional. The subject promotes well the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through the sheer range and diversity of its activities. For example, they learn to observe the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour by taking part in a number of inter-school sports and dance festivals with other special and mainstream schools in Surrey. The overall provision is enhanced by the expertise of the physiotherapist and occupational therapist, opportunities for remedial exercises, and by a dance student on professional placement.
71. The subject is well led by two specialist co-ordinators. Pupils are accredited in physical education through the Certificate of Education Achievement. Last year, all ten pupils gained distinction or merit awards. In addition, pupils are accredited for such sports as swimming, athletics and trampolining by national associations. Resources for physical education are very

good and facilities for dance are exceptional. They include a dance studio and developing ICT resources so that pupils learn more effectively through the use of modern equipment and software. However, gymnastics and indoor games take place in a multi-purpose hall that is used for assemblies, school dinners and is a walkway to other areas of the school. This limits its use, distracts pupils and has a negative effect on their progress and achievement overall.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

*No lessons were seen in personal, social and health education (PSHE) or citizenship. However, this subject is threaded through the work of the school and inspectors looked for evidence, both in the educational aspects of the school and in the residential life of pupils.*

Overall achievement in PSHE and citizenship is **good**. Judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussion with teachers, records and planning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Learning opportunities for all pupils are good.
- There is a comprehensive policy that links clearly to policies in Sex Education, Careers Education and Guidance, Work Experience and Drugs and Alcohol.

### **Commentary**

72. All staff are committed to the importance of promoting pupils' personal development, both in school and in the residential setting. Every opportunity is taken to enable pupils to develop their social and self-help skills. For example, in assemblies, pupils support their peers, clapping and joining in where appropriate. Older pupils guide the younger ones and are confident in what they are doing and how to behave. Pupils are achieving very well in learning how to get on with others of all ages and in how to take responsibility for themselves.
73. Pupils' learning is enriched by both visitors to the school and visits by the pupils to, for example, The Globe Theatre and Calais. The link to The Globe Theatre also includes opportunities for the pupils to work with students from different backgrounds, providing pupils with both cultural and academic experiences. Pupils in Year 10 were observed teaching Year 4 pupils about a garden project they had been involved in. Lunchtimes are also seen as an important part of the personal, social and health education programme and the social life of the school, instilling both personal values and acceptable behaviour, and creating a very caring atmosphere within the school. Mealtimes are very well organised to allow for maximum independence for all pupils, including those with additional special educational needs.
74. The school council is regarded highly by both staff and pupils, and meets on a regular basis. Discussions are based around forthcoming events and any concerns that may arise. This forum provides a useful contribution from the pupils to the running of the school and opportunities for self-development.

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **What is the effectiveness of the residential provision?**

Residential provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good facilities are provided for pupils.
- Support for pupils out of school hours is very good.
- Residential units are well staffed.

- A wide range of activities is provided for pupils.
- Pupils are well cared for.

### **Commentary**

75. Very good facilities are provided for pupils who reside at the school. Residential units are well staffed. There is a very good range of support from outside, specialist agencies. Speech and Language Therapists provide excellent support for residential pupils in an out of school hours project. A wide range of activities is provided for residential pupils, both on and off site. These include football and a photography club. Pupils are very well cared for all the time they are at the school. They enjoy the boarding aspect of the school. The school and the Local Education Authority are currently considering the position whereby only girls board after the age of 11.
76. A recent National Care Standards Report was very positive about the residential facilities and the school is busily acting upon the recommendations and has completed many already. These units are well staffed and a very wide range of activities is available for the pupils. They cover music, drama, dance, sporting and academic activities. The staff look after pupils very well and specialist help is available on a regular basis to cover all their needs. Access to a private telephone is readily available. The school is very well maintained by a committed team of maintenance, estates and caretaking staff.

### **Outreach**

Provision for outreach is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has established very good partnerships with local pre-school settings, schools and colleges.
- The expertise of staff from Gosden House School is greatly appreciated by their wide range of partner organisations.
- Multi-agency links are strong.

### **Commentary**

77. The school has established a very wide range of high quality links with its local partners. These links are greatly valued by partner school and colleges. Local headteachers feel that Gosden House staff's contribution has been invaluable in their joint bid for Federation Funding from the Department for Education and Science, to enable schools to increase collaboration on a more formal basis. The expertise of the school staff is recognised as being of very high quality in local schools. Headteachers feel that the sharing of this expertise is very important. There are close relationships and Gosden House is described as being very generous with their expertise.
78. Multi-agency links are very strong, with a very broad range of visitors to the school, as well as links out of the school. Particularly strong links exist with medical staff, which is very appropriate given the individual medical needs of some pupils. Links with professional theatre staff at "The Globe" are outstanding.

## **COMMUNITY PROVISION**

Community provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has very good community links.

- The school's International Links are impressive.
- The school is very well thought of in the local community.

### **Commentary**

79. The school has a very wide range of very good links with the community, which provide very effective opportunities to enhance pupils' learning and self-esteem. A good proportion of the Governing Body are local people and this strengthens the school's links with many local organisations and businesses.
80. International links are impressive. The school has been involved in the "Comenius" Project, which is run by The British Council, for the past three years and it is planned for this to continue. Both pupils and staff have exchanged visits. Links have been made with European countries, as well as with countries further away.
81. Visitors to the school during the inspection and discussions with parents and governors confirm that the school is held in very high regard in the local community. Local businesses have supported The Globe Project and they provide extensive opportunities for pupils from the school to carry out community projects and work experience.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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