

INSPECTION REPORT

BELVUE SCHOOL

Northolt, Middlesex

LEA area: Ealing

Unique reference number: 101965

Headteacher: Shelagh O'Shea

Lead inspector: Hilary Gannaway

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd January 2004

Inspection number: 263878

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:	11 – 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	123
School address:	Rowdell Road Northolt Middlesex
Postcode:	UB5 6AG
Telephone number:	020 8841 3616
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Derek Hayward
Date of previous inspection:	6 th October 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school caters for 120 pupils and students. At present, there are 123 on roll, of whom the majority are in Years 7 to 11 and twelve are students in Year 12. The number on roll is higher than at the same time last year, reflecting the fact that the school has recently begun to take pupils from Year 7 following a local educational authority review. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, the majority being for moderate learning difficulties. There are increasing numbers of pupils entering the school with severe learning difficulties and pupils now have more complex needs than at the last inspection. The largest group of pupils are from white backgrounds with other significant groups being of Indian, Pakistani and Caribbean heritage. Although twenty seven pupils are supported by the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher, none are at the early stages of learning English. The school has achieved a number of awards such as Sports Mark, Investors in People and an attendance award. Most pupils come from the local area with a considerable number from disadvantaged backgrounds. Pupil mobility is low but a significant number of teachers, seven in all, have been appointed in the last two years. The school has recently been subject to disruption due to major building works which have included a new building and refurbishment of the old one. Although the school had just moved in to the new building before the inspection, some areas such as the library, upgrading of information and communication technology and the grounds were not completed. Pupils increasingly enter the school with attainment well below that of their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21527	Hilary Gannaway	Lead inspector	Citizenship French Music Personal, social and health education English as an additional language
8941	John Fletcher	Lay inspector	
22178	Kate Robertson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology
2244	Andrew Eastwood	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
33148	Linda Bristow	Team Inspector	Science Art and design Design technology Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. The very good leadership of the headteacher supported by a committed staff ensures that the school is continually improving. Pupils and students achieve well because of good teaching and a very good emphasis on personal development that effectively equips them for life after school. Very good links with parents successfully support their children's education. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning are good, and very good for pupils in Years 10 and 11, due to very good relationships and high expectations of behaviour and work.
- Very positive attitudes, good behaviour and the increasing self esteem shown by pupils and students are strongly supported by staff who regularly listen to their views and involve them in their own target setting.
- The wide range and variety of sports and arts activities, along with after school clubs, very successfully supplement learning and enhance the curriculum.
- The overview and clear vision of the headteacher has ensured that school priorities have led to very good improvements in the pupils' and students' education.
- The school has a very good range of strategies to ensure parents feel welcome and involved in their children's learning.
- In some lessons opportunities are missed to meet all the wide range of learning needs.
- Assessment is not always used to plan small steps of work for younger pupils with additional needs.

Improvement since the last inspection, when aspects of teaching and achievement were unsatisfactory, has been very good. For example, behaviour and attitudes have improved greatly due to a structured approach to managing behaviour in the classroom and a range of out of lesson activities which pupils and students enjoy. More effective and skilled teaching means that pupils achieve better, particularly in mathematics and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Attendance is now satisfactory, cultural development is strong and appropriate schemes of work contribute to well planned lessons. Assessment is good but not always used effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 9	Good	Very good
Year 11	Good	Very good
Year 12	Good	Very good

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

Pupils' and students' achievement is good overall. It is good for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and often very good for those in Year 10 and 11 in subjects where there are external awards. Students in Year 12 achieve well in a range of awards which are tailored to meet their individual needs. Those with English as an additional language make similarly good progress. Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) is good due to an improvement in the subject knowledge of teachers. While achievement in physical education and art is good, the varied range of experiences available through links means that pupils often achieve very well. A wide range of activities that motivate and raise the independence skills of pupils and students support their very good achievement in PSHE. As a result, they successfully develop the personal skills they need for life outside school.

Pupils' and students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very well developed. The very good attitudes and good behaviour of pupils and students positively reflect the very good school ethos. They like coming to school and enjoy the activities on offer. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good. Teachers know pupils and students well and as a result they learn effectively. Teaching is often very good for pupils in Year 10 and 11 due to well planned work that ensures they learn a good range of skills for adult life. However, not all teachers, have the skills or experience to consistently plan tasks for the wide range of needs pupils now have, or use the good quality assessments to see which steps younger pupils with additional needs should take next. Consequently, learning for these particular pupils is not always as effective as it could be although recent training is improving staff confidence and practice. There is a strong focus on a very wide range of high quality activities. Staff care for pupils and students very well with time given to provide very effective personal support. Pupils and students have many opportunities to state their views. The very good contacts with parents have helped to raise their children's achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Governors have a good understanding of the school and statutory requirements are met. The headteacher provides very good leadership which has been crucial in overseeing the many improvements. She is well supported by other staff with responsibilities. Management is good and supported by effective review processes.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children like attending the school and find the range of activities interesting and stimulating. The vast majority of parents are very happy with the progress towards maturity and independence that they see their children making.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Use individual assessment information more carefully to plan the next steps for pupils with additional needs such as severe learning difficulties.
- Ensure lesson plans make clear what pupils and students with different types of needs should learn and how this will be accomplished.
- Ensure all staff have a range of opportunities to gain skills and experience in working with pupils with more complex additional needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards particularly, for the younger pupils, are well below average compared to those of the same age. However, all pupils and students, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with English as an additional language, achieve well overall with the exception of a few pupils with additional needs. Boys and girls make similar good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art and physical education due to the expertise of staff.
- Pupils and students achieve very well in PSHE because teachers use a range of highly appropriate tasks, relevant to their age and needs.
- Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils due to very good support from the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher.
- While achievement for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is good overall, it is often very good for pupils when taught subjects that are part of the improved range of external awards.
- Some younger pupils with additional needs, such as severe learning difficulties do not achieve as well as others because their needs are not always sufficiently planned for.

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection when the achievement of pupils and students was judged to be satisfactory there has been a great deal of improvement. Pupils' achievement is good in English and mathematics, and often very good in Years 10 and 11, because the school has spent a great deal of time ensuring the National Strategies are properly used across the curriculum. In English, effective planning ensures good achievement because teachers carefully adapt work to suit pupils' needs. All staff strongly promote listening and speaking and pupils are frequently given opportunities for discussion in lessons. Pupils enjoy and achieve well in reading. This interest is encouraged by the texts used by teachers and pupils are keen to read aloud. Pupils make progress in writing because they benefit from, and see the point of, writing for a range of purposes. In mathematics, pupils and students have gained from the fact that the school has prioritised the raising of achievement in this subject. The good levels of improvement since the previous inspection, where some aspects of achievement were unsatisfactory, is due, in part, to relevant staff training and rigorous monitoring of teaching. As a result, teachers are now confident in this area of the curriculum.

2. In art and physical education, pupils and Post 16 students in Year 12 gain a wide range of skills due to the great variety of opportunities offered both in school with staff, and through such activities as working with an artist in residence. The many instructors used for sporting activities and support from the local Sports College mean that pupils and students often achieve very well in sports. The very good achievement in PSHE is due to the great emphasis on personal development that is evident in all that goes on throughout the day. Apart from PSHE and citizenship lessons, activities such as circle time, breakfast and after school clubs and the Friendship group provide many varied experiences for pupils and students during which they learn relevant skills needed for adult life.

3. In ICT, by the time pupils are in Year 11, knowledgeable teaching means that higher attaining pupils achieve very well. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge. The effective use of the new ICT suite and good opportunities to practice and further develop skills across the curriculum helps all pupils build up a range of good skills over time. In science, the varied, practical nature of much of the work, supported by good opportunities for pupils to predict, investigate and question keeps them interested and supports their progress well.

4. Performance targets are set for groups of pupils in English, mathematics and science and compared to outcomes at the end of the year. These are usually met because they are arrived at from pupils' individual targets which are set using P scales and National Curriculum levels. Bilingual pupils who speak English as an additional language are additionally assessed by the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher. She works with teachers on setting appropriate targets and planning lessons so that these pupils quickly begin to progress and achieve well. They are further supported by the comprehensive way the school involves parents in their children's education. Because the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher and learning support assistant also speak the languages spoken by parents they can discuss work and schooling with them. This has a positive and measurable effect on achievement. They have also put on English lessons for parents that result in their added confidence in approaching the school. Overall parents consider their children make good progress while at school while pupils and students appreciate the chances given weekly to talk about their progress.

5. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 greatly benefit from the good range of awards and certificates that are appropriate to their age and needs. Very well planned programmes challenge pupils and they are keen to do as well as they can. While some accreditation begins in Year 7, when pupils begin ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Key Steps in PSHE, by the time they are in Year 10, pupils have access to a range of external awards such as Entry Level and both the ASDAN Youth Award and Transitional Challenge. These, along with college courses, ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve well enough to have the confidence to go on to college. Those with severe learning difficulties continue in to the Post 16 provision. They achieve well in the National Skills Profile modules aimed at giving them a range of relevant skills needed for adult life - as well as various basic skills awards in literacy and numeracy.

6. The school has begun to admit pupils with additional and more complex needs such as those with severe learning difficulties. Where taught by more inexperienced teachers, planning for the more practical activities needed to make sure these younger pupils achieve as well as they can is not always detailed enough. Consequently, work is not yet always appropriate to their needs and these pupils, while making satisfactory progress, do not always achieve as well as other pupils. Progress has been made in the use of alternative communication skills such as signing, so pupils are more involved in lessons, however, this is not consistent throughout their lessons and some opportunities for communication are lost.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

7. Pupils' and students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very well developed. Attendance levels are satisfactory and punctuality is good. Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning and behave well which is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show high levels of interest, a genuine desire to learn, take part enthusiastically in all daily routines and activities on offer and are keen to accept responsibilities.
- The school is an orderly and positive learning environment in which pupils respect the behaviour code and enjoy very good relationships with each other and with all staff.
- The cultural dimension of pupils' development is a strength.
- The improvement in attendance reflects the school's successful efforts to discourage absence and support pupils with problems.

Commentary

8. Pupils like attending Belvue School. They are very enthusiastic young people enjoying their activities and making the most of what the school offers. Pupils highlighted a wide range of subjects as being their favourites. They indicated a keen interest in lunchtime and after school clubs, which many stay to, as well as out of school activities such as the Friendship Group. They spoke excitedly about outings and residential visits. Much improved attitudes result in all pupils and students being proud to take on responsibility. For example, Year 10 pupils revel in the organisation and running of the breakfast club and Year 8 and 9 pupils proudly represent the school and help new pupils at induction sessions. Older pupils value the opportunities to attend mainstream schools and adapt well to college courses and work experience placements.

9. The school is a safe environment, free from bullying and harassment, in which pupils' achievement and development are positively encouraged. Behaviour is now good in lessons and around the school and this improvement is due to the consistent use of behaviour management procedures. Pupils are happy to follow the code, respond enthusiastically to the merit and target setting scheme and show pride in their own and others achievements. At breaks pupils socialise with each other and adults in a friendly and polite manner. Pupils were happy to enter into conversation with inspectors and were keen to offer directions or hold open doors in a natural and polite manner. In lessons, pupils often become engrossed in their work and activities. The exuberance and excitement of some pupils can become very demanding in a few lessons, but is handled very well by staff. Staff are very good, consistent role models and enjoy very positive relationships with pupils. Where there are occasional instances of disturbed or poor behaviour, the school works effectively to minimise the disruption to others' learning and to support the pupil concerned. Parents appreciate this. They feel that their children's behaviour improves, they manage their emotions better and become more grown up.

10. Personal development is very good throughout the school. The strong promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. This is effectively demonstrated by the consistent and very positive way in which pupils show respect and value each other's opinions. Moral and social values are deeply embedded into the school's ethos and every aspect of school life. As a result, pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, illustrated when older pupils sensibly and effectively discussed the recent national publicity surrounding a recent high profile court case. Lunchtimes in the hall are pleasant, well-managed social occasions. Daily assemblies provide highly effective opportunities for moments of quiet, personal, spiritual reflection and encourage pupils in seeking self-knowledge within their own faiths. The exceptionally wide range of cultural activities involving local religious communities; national and local arts providers; together with the use of quiet, classical background music in lessons, very strongly contributes to the enrichment of pupils' lives and is a strength of the school. The many, varied multi cultural events put on by staff reinforce this very well. The multi-ethnic diversity of both the pupils and staff significantly adds to harmony throughout the school day and the school's living celebration of 'culture' in its widest sense.

11. The school has worked hard to make sure that attendance levels have risen and this is having a positive effect on the progress pupils make. There is thorough monitoring and follow up of absence. Pupils who experience difficulty with attendance are supported sensitively and effectively, often through the school's own educational social worker who also carries out group work with pupils experiencing particular problems. Successful initiatives to encourage attendance include the award of certificates and competitions with prizes donated by local businesses. While punctuality is good, the few pupils arriving late due to transport difficulties miss the significant social development opportunities at the breakfast club and with their friends and class teachers in the registration period.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	9.4
National data	9.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.1
National data	2.3

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
52
2
4
1
32
10
7
10
1
5

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0
0	0
0	0
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
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

12. The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good and pupils and students learn effectively because teachers and learning support assistants know them well. There is a strong focus on providing a very wide range of high quality activities appropriate to the age and interests of pupils both by school staff and others with relevant expertise. Staff care for pupils and students very well with time given to provide very effective personal support. Pupils and students have many opportunities to state their views. The very good contacts with parents have helped to improve their children’s attendance and achievement.

Teaching and learning

13. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well, supported very effectively by the strong emphasis on personal development. Assessment procedures are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage pupils very well and expect high standards of behaviour and work.
- Teaching and learning are very good for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- While most lessons are well planned so pupils know what is expected, work is not always organised to take in to account the different needs of some pupils.
- Teaching is most effective where there are very good relationships and lessons are well organised.

- The school has a wide range of effective assessments, however, they are not always used to consistently inform lesson planning for a few pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (20 %)	20 (46 %)	15 (34 %)	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.

Commentary

14. There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection where there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. This has been achieved despite a significant turn over of staff and is due to relevant training for both teachers and learning support assistants. There is a great emphasis put on ensuring pupils behave well and teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils’ behaviour consistently. These high expectations mean that pupils know what is expected and respond positively to staff. They know that staff are familiar with any behaviour targets set and that these will be discussed with them at the end of the lesson. This has meant that little time is lost in lessons as pupils listen carefully and concentrate on their work and so progress well.

15. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 do particularly well because they are taught by experienced staff with high levels of expertise. Teachers make sure pupils benefit from well chosen external awards matched to their age and needs. They are very clear on requirements for assessed pieces of work and expectations for pupils’ performance. They ensure all pupils are included in their learning by discussing targets and pupils feel valued and involved. Work related learning activities, such as mini enterprise, are realistic and very well organised to make sure pupils learn a good range of practical skills. This they appreciate, as the skills taught help them towards independence and are useful to them once they leave school. For example, in one Year 11 lesson pupils were learning about the importance of teamwork and helping each other in food production while packaging up cookies they had made for sale.

16. A significant number of teachers are new to the school, many of whom teach pupils in Years 7 to 9. For these pupils teaching is good mainly due to the development of the Key Stage 3 Strategy and associated training. The use of the three part lesson with its clear introductions, which include recapping on previous learning, carefully chosen activities and a summing up which checks on the skills the pupils have gained has helped to improve planning. Throughout the school, lessons are planned so that learning support assistants know what they have to do to make sure pupils are engaged in tasks set. Generally pupils are involved because activities are planned beforehand to be interesting and with extension work such as in a Year 7 mathematics lesson.

17. However, the needs of pupils entering the school are changing. The school is now taking in more pupils with additional needs. Although staff mainly meet their needs, there are occasions when planning does not always show how pupils with differing needs are to be taught and some opportunities for them to learn are missed. This is due to a lack of experience in teaching pupils with a wider range of needs. While this is mainly so for a few younger pupils, it occasionally also happens for older pupils. Staff have received some training in the use of alternative communication. However, they are still developing these skills themselves and not always incorporating signs and symbols in to lessons so pupils who need them for communication can be taught them consistently. They are also not yet fully confident in the skills needed to provide the range of experiences these pupils need. For example, in several lessons opportunities were missed to use a variety of very specific practical experiences - such as sensory activities where the use of touch, taste and smell reinforce learning in different ways.

18. Overall pupils and students do learn effectively because staff know them well and discuss their targets with them. This is particularly so for the lower attaining Year 12 group where the teacher and learning support assistant work hard to make sure these students gain independence skills and are prepared for life after school. Relationships are very good and play a positive part in the quality of learning. Pupils and students appreciate this and work hard. For example, in one Year 10 English lesson, pupils' contributions were clearly valued. Pupils manifestly grew in confidence during the discussion and were delighted when congratulated on their contributions. Most lessons are well organised and managed. As a result pupils and students want to learn, particularly enjoying practical subjects such as design and technology, art and science where staff work hard to make the work practical and relevant. Praise is used well and helps to maintain a calm atmosphere where all learn, as in a Year 9 design and technology lesson where pupils concentrated exceptionally well on making a novelty clock.

19. Since the previous inspection, assessment has improved well. Upon entry to the school, a wide range of baseline assessments are undertaken which effectively help the teachers to plan for pupils' needs. 'P' level assessments across the curriculum, together with standardised tests in reading and number, are used yearly to show achievement over time. Other assessment is frequently used in all subjects to show pupils evidence of their continued progress. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to make positive contributions to their own assessment. This is often through their individual education plans where they have chances to indicate what they can do and how they can improve. Parents consider that this gives their children a sense of their own learning.

20. Assessment information contributes well to the writing and reviewing of individual education plans and towards on-going lesson planning. However, this information is not yet always specifically used to plan small steps of work for a few pupils with additional needs. This is because most of them are new to the school and the school rightly feels that targets need to be broken down more. Consequently, some opportunities are presently missed to effectively plan for their future learning.

The curriculum

21. The curriculum is good. It is extremely well supported by a very good range of additional activities and by the good accommodation and resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well adapted to meet the age and needs of pupils and students and has been particularly innovative for older pupils.
- There is a very good range of activities outside the classroom that supplement pupils' and students' learning experiences and make a valuable contribution to their personal development.
- Very strong promotion of the arts and sports enriches the curriculum significantly.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social development and health education.

Commentary

22. Since the previous inspection improvements in National Curriculum subjects have been good. Staff also draw very extensively from beyond the school to offer pupils a very broad range of learning experiences. As pupils move through the school, the curriculum is successfully adapted to meet their age and needs. For example, the implementation of the National Strategies has been beneficial in effectively enhancing lessons for pupils, and staff are now more confident about teaching these subjects. This is being further developed as the Key Stage 3 Strategy is implemented in other subjects such as science. Developments in this area are successfully enabling all pupils to participate as fully as possible in their lessons and other school activities.

23. Students in Year 12 have a course tailor-made for their needs which includes basic skills with a very good emphasis on personal development and independence. The good quality links with colleges and work experience, which have been developed for all pupils and students between Years

9 and 12, contribute significantly to this and provide very good support for pupils' transition to the world of work. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 also benefit from the good work-related curriculum including college links, the ASDAN Award and Transitional Challenge and work experience.

Innovative and well-constructed programmes ensure that pupils of all abilities receive the experiences they need to support the transition to work or college. Visits to a range of venues including the theatre, cinema, museums, shops, post office and banks emphasises the practical nature of the curriculum. It make learning relevant to the needs of pupils and students' and keeps them interested. Along with work experience and the recently introduced Coffee Bar, as part of a mini-enterprise project, these offer a variety of opportunities for all pupils not least of which are the very strong links to personal development. The opportunity for some limited choices in which subjects pupils take In Year 10 gives them experiences of the kind of options that they would have in mainstream secondary schools.

24. A wide range of activities in sport and art capture their interest and make a significant contribution to their academic and personal development. The diverse programme in physical education offers opportunities both in and outside school and includes activities such as diving and table tennis. Pupils represent the school and borough in competitions across the ability range. Practising artists' compositions supports pupils' work, in addition to their involvement in a number of public exhibitions, participation in workshops and numerous organised visits to galleries and exhibitions.

25. The day-to-day work of the school is aimed at supporting pupils' and students' personal development and, as a result, self-esteem and responsibility grow steadily. A specific programme of PSHE supports this aim well throughout the school. Work in PSHE, citizenship and the mini enterprise scheme is helping pupils gain an awareness of social issues and confidence in taking responsibility and expressing an opinion. The programme takes appropriate account of matters relating to sex education and relationships, as well as alcohol and drugs misuse. Topics such as personal care, safety, healthy living, bullying, and sex and relationships are all taught in a structured and progressive way. Elements of citizenship are built into the programme, contributing very effectively to preparation for life after school.

Care, guidance and support

26. All staff work very effectively to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Well informed support, advice and guidance are made available to all pupils and students as they progress through the school. Their views and opinions are very effectively and constantly sought and the school acts on suggestions wherever practicable.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff care for pupils and students very well and they work hard and successfully to build positive relationships.
- Well managed monitoring and review systems ensure that all pupils and students receive very good support and help with their personal and social development.
- Good quality impartial advice and guidance help pupils towards appropriate further education and job opportunities.
- Pupils and students are effectively involved in their own development and their views and opinions on school routines and development are valued.

Commentary

27. Good improvement since the previous inspection includes child protection and health and safety procedures which are now very effective. Daily routines are well established and respected by pupils and staff and the school is both vigilant and sensitive in exercising it's responsibilities. Staff show consistently high levels of care and concern and have pupils' well being in mind at all times. This successfully contributes to the very good relationships there are between pupils, students and

staff. Appropriate supervision is always provided and pupils attending off site activities are well supported. Very good systems ensure that identified hazards or safety concerns around the site are quickly eliminated and staff ensure that all day to day activities are carried out safely. Comprehensive records of incidents and accidents are maintained and the school is quick to inform parents of any illness or injury. Pupils respond very well to the consistent caring approach and enjoy strong, trusting relationships with all adults. They feel teachers are kind, help them sort out problems and always have time to talk with them.

28. Very effective recording and monitoring systems ensure that pupils' and students' behaviour and personal development is closely tracked and realistic. Achievable improvement targets are set and reviewed with pupils and students on a weekly basis. Any pupils experiencing difficulties are quickly identified and tailored support is effectively provided. Good procedures ensure that staff comprehensively track and record pupils' academic progress.

29. The induction arrangements are good and effectively enable new pupils to make a smooth transition to the school. As pupils progress through the school, they receive good quality advice and guidance on the world of work and future career opportunities from the Connexions advisor, staff at work experience placements and from college. All pupils have closely supported job placements and all benefit from opportunities to visit a range of businesses and working environments in the community from which they obtain further help and support. For students in Year 12, this advice is very good and aids them in making knowledgeable choices about future placements. A good range of taster and entry level courses at local colleges are experienced and valued by Year 11 and Post 16 students.

30. Pupils are constantly asked to express their views on day to day routines and as they progress through the school they openly volunteer opinions in the knowledge that comments will be treated seriously. The School Council is used enthusiastically to formally register suggestions and a number of changes to routines have been implemented as a direct result. The established practice of individual lesson monitoring and weekly review and target setting is highly valued by pupils. This effectively enables them to be involved in monitoring and controlling their own rates of personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

31. The school enjoys a very effective partnership with parents that has improved significantly since the last inspection. Good use is made of the local community to enrich learning opportunities. There are good links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and very satisfied with the quality of education that their children are receiving.
- Parents receive good quality information on pupils' progress and a range of recent initiatives has significantly strengthened the partnership.
- The school uses the local community effectively to extend the learning opportunities available for all pupils.
- There is effective interaction with other schools and very good links with local colleges.

32. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children like attending Belvue, that induction arrangements are good and that children find the range of activities interesting and enjoyable. No significant concerns were expressed at the meeting or through the questionnaire and the great majority of parents are very happy with the progress towards maturity and independence that they see their children making. They are particularly happy with the range of out of school activities that they feel support their children effectively in acquiring social skills and involve them in activities in the community. There was particular praise for the Friendship Group and Youth Club and the contribution that these make to pupils and students social contacts outside school.

33. Communication with parents and the involvement of parents in the life of the school has improved immensely over the last two years. A significant part of this improvement is rightly down to the school recognising the need to provide translation, transport and crèche facilities at formal and informal events. Very good quality information on pupils' progress is made available formally through well attended, termly and annual reviews and through the annual report. This helps to involve parents in their children's learning and target setting, effectively supporting achievement. Good daily contact is maintained through home school diaries and with good news telephone calls. Staff are quick to involve parents if they have any concerns so they can be sorted out and little learning is lost. In pursuit of this, they are always happy to discuss parental worries. Initiatives to involve parents in the life of the school and to enable parental help with learning are proving increasingly popular. For example, parent empowerment evenings are well attended, giving parents the confidence and skills to assist with work at home. Social events are valued and extremely popular with pupils, parents and extended families. The Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher is instrumental in supporting parents of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language so they feel confident in coming in to school to discuss their children's progress. It is notable that in response to parental requests the school is planning to run some basic computing courses and will use older pupils as tutors alongside school staff.

34. There are positive links with community organisations and facilities that are well used to widen the learning and development experiences for pupils. Regular visitors successfully contribute to pupils' education, for example musicians, theatre groups, members of local churches and religious groups. Frequent visits to local community facilities are much enjoyed by pupils and add a different dimension to their learning. For example, a group of Year 10 pupils visited the local pizza restaurant during the inspection and were delighted to make and box their own pizzas. There is a very strong link with the local mosque which supports a number of events and activities, and there are very good sporting links through the Sports College and with local teams.

35. The school has developed a good relationship with the school from which most of its pupils come. There is effective co-operation and collaboration over transition arrangements that ensure pupils settle well and begin to rapidly progress once in Belvue. Good links are developing with a number of mainstream secondary schools. Some higher attaining pupils from Belvue attend courses at these schools to widen their experiences. French is effectively taught to Year 10 pupils by an assistant from one of these schools. There are sporting competitions against pupils from other schools, mainstream pupils visit the school and pupils from Belvue visit other schools for joint functions and to use equipment and facilities. All of these links provide wide ranging skills and social experiences beneficial to pupils. All Year 11 pupils get the opportunity to visit local colleges and most follow taster courses. Parents consider these transition arrangements and college courses are good. Very good links with colleges enable all Post 16 students to access a range of vocational courses.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

36. The leadership and management of the school is good. The governors understand the school well. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and by other key staff is good. Management overall is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear understanding of the direction the school needs to take to ensure pupils and students continue to receive a high quality education.
- The leadership of the headteacher has been crucial in overseeing the many positive improvements that have been made since the last inspection.
- Governors support the school well and have been particularly effective in overseeing the new building work.
- While monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school are good, there are few opportunities for comparing with other similar schools or for gaining an outside view of the school.

- There are very good arrangements for staff training but recent training has not yet equipped all staff for working with pupils with additional needs.

Commentary

37. The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that there has been a very effective range of improvements since the last inspection. The particular concentration on improving teaching and learning and the curriculum has led to pupils and students having access to a wide range of new activities that support their achievement very well. Improvements have been evaluated every year and further steps taken to make sure that developments are sustained. As a result, although there were many disruptions last term due to the building work and changes in staff, pupils continue to achieve well. The school development plan has a very clear set of priorities which reflect the headteacher's and governors' understanding of the way forward. For example, priorities include both national initiatives aimed at increasing achievement, such as the Key Stage 3 initiative, and steps needed to meet the needs of the pupils now entering with more complex needs - such as planning for additional forms of communication. Parents consider the school is inclusive, well run and outward looking because of the range of activities both in and outside school.

38. Teaching is now rigorously monitored and evaluated and this has aided the elimination of the significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching that was an issue last time. Other aspects of monitoring are equally good with subject coordinators having termly meetings with the headteacher or deputy headteacher to check progress towards their subject plans. The headteacher clearly knows which way the school needs to move because there is careful monitoring and an ethos which encourages high standards. However, the headteacher rightly feels it is difficult to gauge how well the school is doing overall or for gaining an outside objective view. This is because there are too few mechanisms in place for comparison as it is the only school of its type in the local education authority. As a result, the school, in its pre Ofsted evaluation, consistently underrated the improvements brought about by the high expectations and willingness of all staff to make sure pupils receive as good an education as possible.

39. Governance of the school has improved since the last inspection. There is a good range of committees which do the bulk of the work, all of whom effectively monitor their areas and aspects of the development plan. The chair of governors has a very good overview of what needs to be done, and is diligent in making sure improvements occur. Finances are carefully monitored and checked to make sure they are being used to properly support pupils' learning. The large underspend is designated for completion of resources in the new building such as turning the new studio into a multi sensory room to cater for the additional and more complex needs of pupils. The governors were very clear in their dealings with the local authority that the new building must be built to enhance learning and spent a lot of time and effort successfully making sure this happened. Governors are not afraid to challenge the headteacher and examples of this include questioning the high reserves and the debate on whether a deputy headteacher was needed.

40. The acting deputy and headteacher work well together. This, and the comprehensive overview of the effective behaviour strategies by the deputy headteacher, contributes greatly to the smooth running of the school. The senior management team, which also comprises the team leaders, is effective and meets regularly with a feature of meetings being feedback from all staff. This reflects departmental issues and helps staff to feel their contribution is valued. Leadership and management of most subjects are good with coordinators conscientiously devising their own subject plans and carefully monitoring the work in their subjects.

41. Overall, continuing professional development supports staff very well because teachers have unambiguous targets that are linked to their individual needs and school priorities. There is helpful appraisal for learning support assistants who also have good training. All staff evaluate courses and are strongly encouraged to be reflective practitioners, with time set aside for this. Recent training has included alternative communication, Team Teach and Makaton signing. However, this has not yet been completely successful in supporting staff when working with the increasing number of pupils with additional more complex needs. The school's determination to do more in this area is

both wise and timely. The school collects a range of data and has a database from which underachievement can be pinpointed and acted upon. Achievement of ethnic minority pupils is particularly well tracked.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1389566
Total expenditure	1321214
Expenditure per pupil	11,692

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	73,950
Balance carried forward to the next	142302

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3, 4 AND POST 16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

41. Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, based on well adapted National Strategies, ensures that pupils of all ages make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening.
- Teaching and learning are often very good for pupils in Years 10 and 11 due to thorough planning and organisation of work.
- Some lessons do not address the learning needs of all groups of pupils.
- The newly appointed coordinator has made good progress in using assessment information.

Commentary

42. The population of the school has changed in the severity of learning difficulties since the last inspection. Many pupils on entry to the school have very low literacy skills. The good achievement they make is a consequence of good quality teaching resulting from a significant amount of recent training in this area of the curriculum. Staff have worked hard to make sure the National Literacy Strategy is used well across the school. Teachers modify and adapt the strategy to suit their pupils needs and this has had a positive impact on standards.

43. All staff consistently and strongly promote speaking and listening during lessons. Pupils progress from giving simple answers in Year 7 to a more sophisticated approach by older pupils, who respond well to the contributions of others in the group. As pupils move through the school, they develop a very good ability to pay attention as well as listen, take turns and respond sensibly. They improve their vocabulary, express feelings and become self-assured in stating opinions. In a Year 11 lesson for instance, pupils demonstrated their understanding of issues relating to a recent child murder trial whilst discussing the fairness of the punishments received. Teachers successfully use their knowledge of lower attaining students in Year 12 to ask them questions as they are less confident in voluntarily expressing views. This helps them to gain confidence when asked to take part in discussions. The introduction of drama has added another dimension to the acquisition of listening and speaking skills through reading, discussion and role-play. This subject also has a good impact on pupils' social and moral development.

44. Pupils enjoy reading and this interest helps them achieve well. Their enthusiasm is encouraged by the texts used by teachers to promote their involvement. These are chosen carefully to be appropriate to their ages and interests, successfully motivating pupils to read. The teaching of English is well supported by an effective programme of phonics taught through the National Literacy Strategy that improves pupils' reading skills. This emphasis on phonics gives pupils a constructive strategy to help them read. Staff make sure that when pupils find difficulty they persevere. When pupils read, they are encouraged to use good expression, and they often show great delight when they recognise their own achievements. For instance, pupils in Year 9 showed good levels of enthusiasm as they practiced and reacted to a play script while older pupils in Years 10 and 11 are keen to volunteer when asked to read aloud.

45. Younger pupils develop early writing skills and higher attaining pupils write in simple sentences. They continue to progress and achieve well as they move through the school. Older pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from writing for a range of purposes; such as writing about themselves, book reviews, and some aspects of argument and debate, through themes such as apartheid and animal rights. Lower attaining students in the Post 16 department use writing frames to support their writing. However, support for pupils' independence in writing for those with additional needs is less well promoted and the school is currently developing the use of computer programs for this.

46. Pupils in Year 10 and 11 gain good Entry Level awards in English. A significant factor in the very good teaching and learning that contributes to this achievement for these pupils is the way lessons are planned and organised. As a result, pupils know what is expected. In the best lessons, teachers' planning is thorough and there are clear links to learning outcomes. This helps stimulate pupils and they respond positively by working hard and showing high levels of interest. Teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils' behaviour well so no lesson time is lost. Relationships are very good and play a positive part in the quality of learning. Pupils respond well to challenge, bolstered by the support and encouragement of staff. For instance, the use of *Journey to Jo'burg* in one Year 10 class challenged pupils to consider apartheid and created a high level of interest and response from all pupils. By Year 12, students have a good range of basic skills and use them well to gain basic external literacy awards.

47. Lessons are less effective when the needs of individuals are not addressed. There is then little use made of a suitable range of different tasks, particularly very practical activities for pupils with additional needs. These less effective lessons are also rarely supported by the employment of programs that use symbols or talking word processors. As a result, some opportunities are lost for these pupils to communicate.

48. The leadership and management of English is good and this has aided the good improvement made since the previous inspection. The recently appointed coordinator, together with the headteacher, has ensured that the quality of teaching and learning has improved. This has been achieved through checking what takes place in lessons and guiding staff to improve. Assessment of progress and target setting for achievement is developing well. Assessment is regularly entered into class records and the school database so staff can check pupils' progress over time. This is then used in the reviewing and changing of literacy targets which are discussed termly with parents. Assessment also includes yearly reading tests and taken altogether now provides good information about pupils' progress which staff act upon. This is beginning to have an impact on planning. Library facilities have been improved as a result of the building programme.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. There is a high level of awareness of the importance of English in the teaching of all areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan well to guide pupils to develop their literacy skills in all subjects. For instance, in subjects such as ICT and PSHE writing frames are used to support recording. Most lessons throughout the day provide pupils with very good opportunities for using and developing their skills in speaking and listening and reading. Discussion is encouraged to enable pupils to understand the lesson topic particularly in PSHE, citizenship and religious education. The implementation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy encourages the use, and learning of, key vocabulary in subjects such as science and mathematics.

French

50. Provision for French is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy French due to good teaching.

- There is not enough use made of opportunities to speak French.

Commentary

51. Achievement overall is satisfactory. It is often good for pupils in Years 7 to 9 because there is a well planned scheme of work that assists pupils in building up a suitable vocabulary of words. These are reinforced and added to along with the use of simple questions and answers as pupils become older. In Year 10, pupils enjoy the variety of opportunities to listen, speak and practise their French such as asking the question *je voudrai* -. Good relationships and the ease with which staff teach French and build up skills means that pupils are not afraid to try new words.

52. A good range of resources and games specifically matched to the age and needs of pupils is used throughout the subject so pupils remain enthusiastic. Individual questioning is used well to make sure all pupils are involved and to assess their understanding. Praise is used successfully and this supports and encourages pupils to speak French. While teaching is good overall, with Year 10 being taught by a French assistant, not enough use is made of French during oral work. Too many words of encouragement or praise are in English and some opportunities to acquiring additional words, which would accelerate learning, are lost.

53. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory with French now taught to all pupils from Years 7 to 10 in school and to Year 11 at college. Leadership and management while satisfactory are improving as the coordinator becomes familiar with the role.

MATHEMATICS

54. Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has led to an improvement in the achievement of pupils and students.
- For pupils and students from Year 10 to Year 12, mathematics is very effectively used to promote life skills.
- The new coordinator is developing the subject well.

Commentary

55. Most pupils achieve well, bearing in mind their very low attainments upon entry to the school. Standards have significantly improved, particularly for pupils in Years 7 to 9, since the last inspection, as a result of the school's prioritising the raising of achievement in this area of the curriculum. This improvement is due, in part, to the fact that the school has effectively taken on board the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. In lessons, teachers put these into practice with a three-part structure which often includes well-paced introductions, effective activities and a plenary, which reflects on the skills the pupils have learnt and those which will be learnt next time. By the time pupils are in Year 9, they remember the properties of shapes, know the difference between two and three dimensional shapes, add and take away two and three figure numbers and use simple fractions.

56. Teaching and learning are good for pupils and students and often better for those in Years 10 and 11 where work is as realistic as possible. Pupils consolidate work in a practical way such as weighing and measuring ingredients for mini enterprise and buying and selling food for the breakfast club. Numeracy lessons particularly provide good opportunities for enhancing aspects of their personal development and improve their life skills with many opportunities to use money. Teachers know their pupils well, plan lessons carefully and choose appropriate activities and resources in order to support and effectively motivate the pupils, whatever their individual needs. Very good behaviour is demanded from the pupils by all teachers and very successful relationships effectively

add to the way in which they learn. Pupils concentrate and persevere well. Time is effectively spent re-enforcing the pupils' existing knowledge and skills in a variety of different ways. This particularly works well with those pupils with more severe learning difficulties. Sometimes, however, opportunities are missed to make the start of numeracy lessons sufficiently sharp and exciting to capture the pupils' interest but most go on to achieve an Entry Level award. By Year 12, students use these skills to gain basic numeracy awards.

57. The curriculum is well planned to help teachers provide experiences that are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. It ensures that pupils' learning effectively builds upon what they already know, understand and can do. The effective, regular and on-going assessment procedures successfully allow teachers to monitor progress, identify under-achievement and look further at any gaps in the pupils' knowledge and skills.

58. Mathematics is well led and managed by an enthusiastic and committed teacher. The expert advice that the subject leader provides, and the other training available, is helping teachers to improve the range of different strategies, activities and materials used to support the pupils' learning and so increase achievement. There is a good range of awards for pupils and students so they remain motivated.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily reinforced in other areas of the curriculum. However, as staff become more confident this is improving. In science, French and physical education, pupils effectively practise their counting skills. Numeracy skills are particularly well developed in food technology, where pupils carefully weighed dried pasta and other ingredients, timed cooking, counted biscuits and predicted 'three times more ingredients than last time' and divided dough into twelve equal parts. Other areas which promote numeracy include the Breakfast Club and Coffee Shop; measuring in design technology, keeping time in music and using flow charts in information technology lessons. Opportunities are, however, sometimes missed to consistently include support numeracy in subject planning across the whole of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

60. Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and pupils are motivated by the practical activities which help them achieve well.
- Good opportunities are offered for enriching language and extending scientific vocabulary.
- The subject is well managed so all pupils have a chance to achieve well.
- Tasks are not consistently differentiated to meet the needs of some pupils with additional needs.

Commentary

61. Science is taught well to pupils in Years 7 to 11 by the coordinator and by class teachers. The achievement of pupils overall is good because teachers plan thoroughly and know the pupils well. The Key Stage 3 Strategy has recently been introduced in Years 7 to 9 and staff are now confidently following the three part lesson format. This has already had a positive impact on pupil's learning. There is a good balance between theory and practical activities. This helps pupils to remain motivated such as in a Year 9 lesson where pupils concentrated for substantial periods of time while carrying out an investigation on magnetic fields. A Year 7 group enjoyed 'planting' a bean in a jar and a Year 10 group were very sensible when burning foods to discover energy levels. Pupils enjoy the practical sessions because they are managed well and resources are suitable so all pupils can join in, predicting and checking results.

62. Teachers work effectively with learning support assistants carefully supporting pupils in order to help promote independent learning. Pupils work well in pairs and groups and are able to share ideas and equipment sensibly, for example, working with magnets and experimenting with burners. There is a strong emphasis on safety for example, pupils wear goggles when using burners and they are reminded of safety procedures throughout the lesson.

63. Teachers give pupils many opportunities for speaking and listening throughout lessons. Good use of questioning challenges pupils to think about what they are doing and what the outcomes may be. Language is enriched and scientific vocabulary is extended through the use of key words and clear explanations and discussion. For example, when testing levels of energy in food pupils in Year 9 discussed the terms 'prediction' and 'temperature' and were able to offer alternative words and phrases to describe these. Opinions are valued and teachers use praise effectively. Relationships with teachers, support assistants and peers are good and pupils are able to co-operate when working together.

64. Although teachers know the pupils well, work does not always meet the needs of those with additional needs, particularly those with severe learning difficulties. Worksheets are often used for recording and although these are sometimes simplified for different groups this is not always an appropriate way to ensure pupils have understood.

65. Good subject leadership and management have led to a good improvement in science since the last inspection when teaching and learning were judged to be satisfactory. Despite being a non-specialist, the co-ordinator has developed comprehensive schemes of work and assessment materials. She has supported staff and has recently introduced the Key Stage 3 Strategy with support from the local education authority consultant. The co-ordinator has worked closely with the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher to support pupils from minority ethnic groups and develop appropriate resources. The teacher also works with parents to support their children with homework. All these developments have been aimed at ensuring pupils get as much out of science as possible. The co-ordinator rightly recognises that there is a need to develop more links between science and ICT.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Mains strengths and weaknesses

- The introduction of a small ICT suite and whiteboard technology has enhanced the provision.
- The pupils are well motivated, proud of their achievements and consequently they behave well.
- Leadership is very effective and has supported the use of ICT being good across the curriculum

Commentary

67. Although pupils achieve well overall, progress made as pupils move through the school has resulted in higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieving very well. By Year 11, pupils are able to write simple programs for instance, to make a lift move up and down. Pupils use technology for controlling models and rapidly understand the cause and effect involved in this. All pupils are aware of the way in which a computer can impart and receive information. Pupils combine text and graphics, and use a database and spreadsheet to collect evidence for a number of projects. Pupils develop multi-media presentations such as in Year 8 where pupils concentrated and were interested in creating a presentation about themselves.

68. The good teaching ensures pupils are well motivated, enjoy using the computers and handle equipment appropriately. This is because their self esteem is boosted by successfully using up to date equipment in the computer suite. In one instance, good questioning helped Year 10 pupils to create a database by ensuring that they understood the difference between *fields* and *records*.

Teachers' confident subject knowledge helps older pupils use a growing vocabulary of technical terms when talking about what they are doing. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining pupils work independently and with confidence. There are good opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation.

69. Leadership in this subject is very good. Because of this, the subject has made good progress since the previous inspection, partly due to training for staff being a priority and also because the new computer suite is frequently used by both pupils and staff. This contributes well to the use of ICT across the curriculum. There is now a well laid-out plan for what pupils will learn and this has been effectively adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This improved system of planning has contributed considerably to pupils' progress. The development of the assessment system is enabling teachers to plan for pupils to move on even further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to practice and further develop their skills across the curriculum except for some pupils who need additional aids such as symbols. For instance, using the Internet to research information, improving the quality of work in English, and joint projects such as *the weather* station project, all contribute to consolidating ICT skills. Pupils experiment with font size, colour and style, organise and reorganise text, and import Clip Art to illustrate and enhance their work. An artist in residence has made a contribution to pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding through filmmaking activities, which have included: computer generated animation, editing and the use of digital photography.

HUMANITIES

71. The number of lessons seen in humanities were five of which three were in religious education. Only one lesson each was seen in history and in geography, so no judgement is made about overall provision in these two subjects

Geography

72. The subject is taught to all pupils in Years 7 to 9 and as an option for pupils in Year 10 and 11 where they gain an Entry Level award, an improvement since the last inspection. There is evidence of appropriate geography teaching in pupils' work and displays and through assessment. In the one Year 11 lesson seen, the pupils were looking at rice growing in India and were able to demonstrate a knowledge of the differences between the seasons in India and Britain. Year 11 pupils also gave an effective presentation in the assembly comparing the quality and price of housing in three local areas after a local field trip.

History

73. Schemes of work and resources for history, along with evidence in pupils' work and displays, show pupils are taught a good range of topics and their achievement is at least satisfactory. History is taught to all pupils in Years 7 to 9. In the one lesson seen, where teaching and learning were good, pupils were looking at the parts of a medieval castle and became entranced upon the production of a model castle that they had to fit together. Once working in this more concrete manner, the pupils effectively showed their knowledge of historical terms such as *drawbridge, moat, tower and portcullis*.

Religious Education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and show respect for the beliefs and values of others because they benefit from a wide variety of religious experiences.
- Leadership and management of the subject is good.

Commentary

75. Pupils enjoy lessons and achieve well because teaching is good and this represents good improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils' understanding of religious education is significantly strengthened by the involvement of local religious communities such as the mosque, temple, synagogue and Anglican church. Visits to, and visitors from, these holy places help to re-enforce the strong feeling of harmony and respect between various faiths represented in the school. All of this is aided by the pupils' sense of concern for others, as shown in the school's Fun Run to raise money for Leukemia Research. Religious education is effectively supported by assemblies. During this time, pupils spend a few moments in quiet reflection about issues or events which affect their lives, or those of others in the world at large, and this successfully contributes to the progress they make. They take part in, and think about, celebrations such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali, gaining a further knowledge of others' beliefs.

76. Most of the work in lessons involves discussion and practical activities which motivate pupils to state their opinions, while reflecting on their own values and those of others. This contributes well to pupils' good achievement in speaking and listening. For example, Year 11 pupils were able to think about Human Rights, working individually and in groups to decide those that they thought were most important. The thoughtful way pupils discuss topics assists them in appreciating and understanding other faiths. In one Year 9 lesson, the pupils were able to effectively reflect on the life of John the Baptist and then move on to explore the importance of water in several world religions by looking at a variety of objects.

77. The subject is well led and managed by a thoughtful, committed teacher, who successfully plans and effectively caters for pupils of all varying abilities. The religious education curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus, which ensures that all pupils in the school have the opportunity to think, learn and talk about a wide range of issues. This is supplemented by good cross curricular links with subjects such as art, music and PSHE which effectively reinforce learning in religious education.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology

78. Insufficient evidence was available to make judgements on the overall provision for design and technology. In the lessons observed, however, teaching and learning were good and sometimes very good. Pupils have access to specialist equipment in designated rooms and enjoy the practical nature of this subject. They achieve some very good outcomes: for example, in food technology Year 11 pupils worked as a team to produce biscuits and Year 7 pupils worked in pairs to make pancakes. A high quality display, using photographs, shows pupils have designed and produced a range of interesting products supported by very good teaching. These use resistant materials and include novelty clocks, sunglasses and games. Currently a Year 11 class is developing ideas to make and equip tool boxes. The teachers' subject knowledge is often very good and lessons are well planned. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations enabling pupils, for example, to understand the difference between mole grips and an adjustable spanner and pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Support staff work well with teachers and pupils. They offer the right balance of

support to individuals and groups of pupils so that all pupils are included in the activities. Pupils and staff have good relationships and behaviour is managed well. Health and safety and hygiene are given high status.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

79. In this area of the curriculum two lessons were seen in art and one in music. Judgements are not made about the quality of provision in music.

Music

80. The subject is taught across Years 7 to 9 but has suffered recently from having a range of different teachers. In the one lesson seen teaching was good, highly suitable and challenging and extended pupils' learning. Very good control by the teacher meant that pupils gradually and enthusiastically built up an ensemble piece using untuned instruments and voices. Music is often planned into other subjects, so pupils get to enjoy a varied range of experiences. For example, it is an integral part of performing arts for Years 10 and 11 and for the after school dance club. A further wide range of high quality activities support music such as carol singing, live performances from Live Music Now, multicultural week which contains a music element and activities during world music week.

Art and Design

81. Provision for art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall teaching and learning in art is good, pupils are motivated and enjoy the practical nature of this subject.
- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to gain extra skills through enrichment activities.
- Art is well led and managed because the coordinator has confident subject knowledge.

Commentary

82. Pupils' achievement is good because art is effectively taught by a specialist teacher in a well equipped art room. Pupils are interested and enjoy art because it is a practical subject and they get to work with a range of different materials. By the end of Year 9, pupils have a knowledge of a wide range of basic techniques which they use to improve their fine motor skills and appreciation of art. For example, they confidently paint and draw, make models and experiment with colour, texture and style. By the end of Year 11, they have gained a deeper insight into the styles of well known artists such as Paul Gauguin. Stimulating teaching ensures that they have built upon and consolidated their knowledge and understanding of art, for example, composition and model making. They use sketch books appropriately and are well supported so they gain confidence when attempting to draw. Most are able to prepare canvases for painting. All current Year 11 pupils are following a course leading to accreditation, while students in Year 12 are taught art at college which is linked to their National Skills Profile.

83. The co-ordinator has collected a vast selection of resources, which increase motivation, present challenges and enhance pupils' learning. Enrichment activities are very good and provide pupils with a wide range of skills to add to those they acquire in lessons. For some pupils, this helps them achieve very well. Pupils have the opportunity to work with 'Artists in residence' on a variety of topics. Currently Year 11 pupils are highly motivated, working with an experienced film maker to produce a film of their own using drama and animation. This is funded through lottery grants and follows a successful film made last year. Visits are frequently organised to local art galleries and currently a group of pupils is visiting a London gallery weekly to experience 'workshops' led by

experts. Good links have been established with a local secondary school specialising in art. One pupil has been chosen to take part in a week's art course through 'Excellence in schools'. These activities successfully enhance the art curriculum.

84. Art is well led and managed. The co-ordinator organises an annual arts week, involving local artists and galleries. Parent empowerment meetings have also included art workshops, looking at glass, textiles, film, sculpture and mosaic. The co-ordinator produces schemes of work, which often have links with other subjects, for example a mediaeval project looking at art and history. There is support and advice for other staff along with suitable resources. The co-ordinator assesses pupils' work but pupils are also encouraged to assess their own work through discussion with peers and the teacher. Pupils are encouraged to show their work in assemblies and are successful in describing the techniques used. Generally work is displayed sympathetically in classrooms and around the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good due to the many varied activities which support the subject.

Physical Education

85. Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan lessons well and pupils enjoy the range of activities offered.
- Enrichment activities are very good, there are very successful links and this offers a very effective balance of activities and opportunities for pupils of all abilities.

Commentary

86. The teaching of physical education overall is good and has improved well since the last inspection where it was found to be satisfactory. The curriculum covers a wide range of activities including individual and team sports, dance and swimming. Pupils achieve well, and sometimes very well, because of the variety and balance of activities also offered outside school. They enjoy the diversity of activities. By Year 9, pupils are able to organise themselves into teams for games and have learned a range of skills and rules, for example in table tennis and hockey. By Year 11, pupils have developed a range of skills for team and individual activities, for example using a 'multi-gym'. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan thoroughly. There is an emphasis on safety during lessons, particularly when equipment is used. Pupils know where the equipment is stored and are willing and able to put it away at the end of lessons. Teachers know pupils well and are quick to respond to the needs of individuals. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and behaviour is managed well.

87. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sports activities both in and out of school hours. Teachers have worked very hard to secure links with local sports amenities, for example Ealing College, West London Academy and Brentford Football Club where pupils have access to specialist facilities and high quality instructors. Activities include rugby, football, athletics, cricket, curling, dance and use of 'multi-gym' equipment. These links have led to pupils gaining confidence in physical education and a group demonstrated curling during a Commonwealth Games festival. Pupils take part in activities organised by the London Schools Forum; for example swimming, athletics, boccia and curling which have led to achievement awards. For the past two years swimmers and athletes have been successful in winning regional championships for pupils with learning difficulties, while one pupil has successfully swum in a national championship. The school offers a good balance of physical activities including swimming, physical education and dance, which has led to a 'Sportsmark' award from Sport England. Pupils go on a number of visits throughout the year including a trip to Lords cricket ground organised by the cricket coach. There is a lunch time table tennis club and an after school sports club which pupils enjoy. All these activities very effectively enhance the physical education curriculum.

88. The new co-ordinator is already leading and managing the subject well, has good subject knowledge and is well supported by the previous subject leader.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89. Provision for personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well due to the school's great emphasis on personal development.
- Health education topics are very suitable for the ages and needs of pupils.
- Staff provide a wide range of relevant activities within lessons and throughout the day to support work in PSHE.

Commentary

90. Pupils and students' very good achievement in PSHE is well planned for in lessons and very effectively supported by a range of other activities that take place both in and out of school. These include work experience, breakfast and after school clubs where pupils and students learn skills of turn taking, sharing, cooperation, helping others, listening and socialising in a more relaxed environment than lessons. The Friendship Group set up on Saturdays to help pupils acquire skills needed to maintain and extend friendships out of school contributes very well to their personal and social development and is much appreciated by parents. Circle time helps pupils to discuss issues pertinent to their class and is linked to issues for the school council.

91. Pupils and students achievement is also very well supported by external awards such as ASDAN Key Steps for pupils in Years 7 to 9, ASDAN Youth Award scheme for Years 10 and 11 and the National Skills Profile for students in Year 12 all of which motivate them to try their best.

92. The scheme of work is planned so that activities, including health related topics are very appropriate to pupils' age and needs. For example, in Years 7 and 8 pupils learn about their body and talk about their interests while in Year 9 they discuss issues to do with the family and peer pressure. By the time pupils are in Year 11, they learn about parenting skills, dating, managing aggression and keeping safe. Work on these themes is continued with students in Year 12 where PSHE forms a large and important part of their work. In order to assist them in acquiring skills needed for life after school, health education issues such as sex and relationships and drugs are very well planned. They are taught at every stage but at a level appropriate to pupils' and students' age and needs which means that by the time they leave they have a good understanding of the importance of these issues.

93. Effective teaching means that pupils are keen to participate in discussions such as in two Year 9 lessons where pupils were discussing the risks associated with solvents and how nicotine can affect behaviour. Good subject knowledge on the part of teachers generally keeps pupils interested. However, due to the mainly oral nature of the work, explanations are occasionally too long and there is little variety in teaching strategies. As a result, pupils do not always learn as much as they could.

94. The Coordinator is new, has good ideas for development and is already managing the subject well having monitored and looked at work. There is a good range of accreditation and assessment. Improvement since the last inspection, when aspects of this subject were unsatisfactory, is very good and has had a very positive effect on personal development.

Citizenship

95. Provision for Citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of Citizenship are covered well by use of individual modules of work and through a range of subjects.

Commentary

96. For pupils in Years 7 to 9 the main aspects of citizenship are carefully taught as part of PSHE and based on the ASDAN Key Steps. However, this is reinforced by relevant work across the curriculum such as religious education in Year 9 where pupils learn about human rights, choose their five top rights and are keen to discuss their views and give personal opinions. For pupils in Years 10 and 11 there is specific work on areas such as racism, homelessness, rights and disability awareness. Pupils have opportunities to research issues and present results as well as discuss. They continue to have opportunities for accreditation through the ASDAN award scheme and in Post 16 through the National Skills Profile.

97. In lessons where citizenship was a component, teaching was at least satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Achievement is good because throughout lessons pupils are encouraged to justify opinions and many choose to take part in a range of school and community based activities aimed at making them responsible members of the community. Pupils think about a wide range of social, moral and environmental issues and reflect on choices made.

98. Effective leadership and management have meant that all aspects of citizenship have been mapped across subjects. The subject is well monitored by the coordinator through class records which contain assessments so it is clear what has been covered. Transitional reviews contain a section on pupils' progress towards citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
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).

*In a special school such as this, **standards achieved** are judged against individual targets and not national standards.*

