

INSPECTION REPORT

SHERBORNE LEARNING CENTRE

Sherborne

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 130315

Manager: Ian Hedley

Lead inspector: Dr D Alan Dobbins

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 265006

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	40
School address:	Simons Road Sherborne Dorset
Postcode:	DT90 4DN
Telephone number:	01935 814582
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Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of chair of management group:	John Pay
Date of previous inspection:	September 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CENTRE

Sherborne Learning Centre is a pupil referral unit that is part of Dorset Local Education Authority's provision for pupils who have who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. Pupils who attend the centre are in Years 7 to 11; the centre also provides tuition for pupils at home who can be in Years 1 to 11. Pupils come from the northern region of Dorset. The agreed maximum number of pupils to be taught at the centre is twenty. Currently, there are thirteen boys and ten girls. Three of the boys and six of the girls are dual registered with mainstream schools. Seventeen other pupils are taught at home. All pupils are of white British origin. There are three traveller children and no one is learning English as an additional language. The attainment of most pupils when they enter the centre is below that expected for their age. Seven pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The centre is not involved in any national initiatives but the programme for re-integrating pupils links four secondary schools to the centre. Money is gained from the New Opportunities Fund to benefit the provision.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27424	Dr D Alan Dobbins	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology, design and technology, special educational needs.
19567	Mary Malin	Lay inspector	
14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Science, art and design, physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Sherborne Learning Centre provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Permanently excluded pupils make good progress toward the next stage of their education and the world of work. The programme for returning pupils to mainstream schools is less effective. Pupils who are taught at home make good progress in their learning. Many changes in the leadership over the last few years have slowed the development of the centre. The centre gives satisfactory value for money.

The centre's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared well for the next stage of their education and the world of work.
- The good quality of teaching and pupils' very good behaviour helps them make good progress in most of their lessons.
- The arrangements for leading and managing the subjects are unsatisfactory and, for many of the subjects, there are too few resources to support teaching and learning.
- The procedures for checking the work of the centre do not provide sufficient information for the centre manager or for the Friends Management Group to judge the effectiveness of the centre.
- Too little information is given by the Admissions Panel on how the centre should provide for pupils that are referred to it.

This is the first inspection of the centre as an independent unit.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement of pupils at the end of:	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 9	Satisfactory	Good
Years 11	Good	Good
For pupils who are taught at home	Good	Good

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Pupils in all years make good progress in their personal and social development and especially in controlling their behaviour. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve satisfactorily in the subjects. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 improve their self-confidence and self-esteem sufficiently to have a good chance of being successful in the next stage of their education or when they begin work. They achieve well in English, mathematics and science and gain mostly the C to E grades and, occasionally, the B grade on the GCSE examinations. For the first time, a small number of pupils are being prepared for the GCSE examination in art and design, business studies, design technology, child development and French. In information and communication technology pupils achieve satisfactorily, but are not able to gain an accredited qualification. In all of the subjects, pupils are making better progress than was the case in their previous schools.

Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Staff quickly develop very good relationships with pupils and have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The quality of learning in personal, social, health and citizenship education is good and is supported very well by tutorial work. Staff are excellent role models. Each of these contributes to very good progress pupils make in their moral and social development, including developing very good attitudes to learning and to improving their behaviour. Progress in spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Most pupils attend more regularly than was the case at their previous schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Teachers and support assistants know the pupils in Years 10 and 11 very well. They have developed good skills in teaching classes with small numbers of pupils. Rarely is there a need to remind pupils of their responsibilities as learners. Good planning and pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour mean that learning occurs over the full duration of lessons. As a consequence, the quality of learning is good. The teachers and teaching assistants do not know the pupils in Years 7 to 9 as well, or what they are capable of in the subjects. In some lessons tasks are selected that are not as interesting or relevant and learning is compromised. Overall, for these pupils, it is satisfactory. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. **The partnership with parents is satisfactory.** The parents of pupils who are taught at home make a significant contribution to their learning. **The links with the community are good.**

The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is good. It is relevant to their needs because it focuses on promoting personal and social skills and literacy and numeracy and prepares them well for life after school. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. It is not designed well enough to return pupils to mainstream schools quickly and successfully. In this, is not helped by the centre's very limited links with mainstream schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The frequent changes in leadership over the last few years have constrained the development of many aspects of the centre, especially the co-ordination of the subjects. Over this time, the day-to-day routines have been satisfactorily managed because of the good contributions of teachers, support assistants and the administrative staff. As a result, the centre is an environment that emphasises support and encouragement and the celebration of good effort. The newly appointed centre manager has the experience and capability to improve the centre in accord with the Dorset Local Education Authority's vision for learning centres, including making home tuition an integral part of the centre. The county-wide structure for governance of the centre is good, but is newly formed and has not yet contributed to the running of the centre. The Friends Management Group has yet to develop formal procedures for judging the quality of the work of the centre.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE CENTRE

The views of parents are **good**. They are, especially, very appreciative of the work of the home tutors. Pupils report that they are comfortable at the centre and they appreciate the effort staff make in helping them become mature and responsible. They know that they are making better progress in their learning than was the case in their lessons in mainstream schools, and good progress in dealing with their other difficulties.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the centre should do to improve is to:

- Provide curricular provision that is very clearly aimed at preparing pupils for return to mainstream schools.
- Co-ordinate the subjects more effectively.
- Increase resources to support teaching and learning in many of the subjects.
- Establish home tuition as an integral element in the work of the centre.
- Operate procedures to gain information so that the centre manager and the Friends Management Group can check the work of the centre.
- Ensure that the Admissions Panel gives clear guidance on how placement at the centre is to contribute to pupils' educational entitlement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve satisfactorily and are making satisfactory progress in the subjects. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well and are making good progress. All pupils are making good progress in their personal and social development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good progress pupils make in their personal and social development underpins their achievement in the subjects.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve good grades on the subjects they take for the GCSE.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not able to take a nationally accredited award in information and communication technology.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 should be doing better, especially in English.
- Pupils taught at home achieve well.

Commentary

1. Most pupils enter the centre after having difficulties in dealing with the routines and expectations of their mainstream schools. Some chose not to attend at all and many attended irregularly. Most have a poor self-image and lack in self-confidence. Some are frustrated and a small number are angry. Nevertheless, they quickly form very good relationships with staff and with each other. They enjoy each other's company and, in lessons, are quick to help one another. The respect and trust they have for staff shows when they have an issue that is bothering them. Staff encourage, advise, support and guide pupils and help them make good progress in their personal and social development. As a consequence, as pupils spend increasing time at the centre, they gain a better understanding of their emotions and achieve greater control over their behaviour. They feel comfortable at the centre and display a self-confidence and self-belief, which helps them in their learning. As a result, pupils in Years 10 and 11 are fully committed to being successful in the next stage of their education or the world of work. Many thought this an impossibility when they entered the centre. They are making good progress in becoming mature and responsible.

2. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 typically gain creditable grades on the GCSE examination in a small number of subjects. In English and mathematics, the highest attaining pupils gain the B grade. This is a considerable achievement given their disruptive history in their previous schools. Some subjects are being examined for the first time, for example the resistant material element in design and technology and business studies. Others, such as child development have been taken for examination by previous pupils. They gained creditable grades and did well. Pupils confirm that they are very pleased that they are taking examinations in the GCSE. They report that if they were at their previous school and were still experiencing difficulties, most likely they would not be taking any examinations at all. On this basis, it is easy to conclude that the grades pupils achieve at the centre are better than they would have gained if they remained at their other schools.

3. The number of subjects that pupils are able to take for examination is smaller than is the case for many other equivalent centres. Some pupils are capable of taking the full GCSE in more subjects than is offered. Others would be better off taking the Entry Level examination. An important subject, information and communication technology, is not studied to GCSE examination level, even though pupils are capable of gaining a pass grade. Pupils have no way of demonstrating the extent of their knowledge of computers to prospective employers and college admission officers.

4. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not doing as well as those in Years 10 and 11. They achieve satisfactorily well in most of the subjects, but this is disappointing. They should be doing better.

Teachers are not taking full advantage of the very small number of pupils in the class. In a small number of lessons, tasks are not relevant or interesting to pupils. Their capabilities in the subjects are not known and, for these pupils, computers are not used well in helping them become literate and numerate.

5. The tutors who teach pupils at home are creative and adaptable. They use these attributes in enabling pupils to achieve well and to make good progress in returning to mainstream schools. English and mathematics make up most of the lessons, but other subjects are taught for GCSE examination, such as French and geography and, when required, to advanced level. The good progress pupils make is very much appreciated by parents, who are quick to express their gratitude to the tutors for their support and encouragement, as well as their teaching skills.

6. Boys and girls make equivalent progress. The small number of pupils who do not attend the centre regularly do not achieve the same standards or make the same progress as those who do.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

7. Pupils' attitudes are very good. Behaviour is very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and to the centre.
- Pupils' very good behaviour in lessons, and throughout the day, makes the centre a good place in which to learn.
- Staff are excellent role models, which pupils aspire to and this helps in developing their personal, social and moral skills.
- Attendance is improving.

Commentary

8. Most pupils are keen to attend the centre. In lessons, they work hard and concentrate very well on their tasks in an effort to do their best. For example, Year 10 pupils designed and made a healthy meal for four-year-olds. They took great pride in explaining why it needed to be beautifully presented, why it included fruit and vegetables and how the children would want to eat the meal because it was laid out as a smiley face. Computers were used well to word process the instructions for making the meal and digital photographs showed how attractive the meal looked. Pupils are, mostly, interested in their work. They are proud of how well they are doing and of the commitment they are making to their own education. For example, some talk of going on to take A-levels as a step to a university degree. They openly tell visitors that when they entered the centre such a goal was not realistic.

9. The high expectation staff have for pupils' behaviour and for their learning quickly becomes clear to pupils. They understand what is expected of them and behave in a mature and friendly way. Staff treat each other and the pupils with respect and provide excellent role models for pupils. Pupils recognise this and learn from it, and this shows especially when they deal with others. All staff, including the administrative assistants, demonstrate great patience with pupils, give lots of positive praise and are always willing to listen. Pupils have very many opportunities to distinguish between right and wrong, and between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

10. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is less well defined. Although the provision is satisfactory, there are too few artefacts on display throughout the centre and little evidence of teaching and learning about different lifestyles or religions.

Attendance

11. Most like and enjoy the centre and attend regularly. More pupils attend the centre more regularly than is the case for those in many equivalent centres and all attend more often than they did at their previous schools. Nevertheless, unauthorised absence is high, but more than half of the absences are accounted for by three persistent non-attenders. All pupils are brought to the centre by taxi, except those who live locally. On most mornings, they arrive on time,. Good systems are in place to make contact with families on the first day of absence and one of the aims of the new centre manager is to improve attendance. The very good relationship with the educational social worker means that pupils and their parents are provided with as much support as is realistic in ensuring their children attend. Recording attendance in the register is not as clear as it should be because those pupils who attend for less than the full-time week are not identified as part time attenders. Attendance has improved term on term over the last year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
Centre data	2.8

Unauthorised absence	
Centre data	20.3

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE

12. The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good. The aim, of returning pupils in Years 7 to 9 to mainstream schools, is not being met well. The curriculum is not well-focused and the links with mainstream schools are not sufficiently supportive. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 experience a better curriculum and are being prepared well for life after school, in part because of the good links established with the community. Pupils gain good support, advice and guidance. The procedures for ensuring pupils' care and welfare are good.

Teaching and learning

13. The quality of teaching is good and this results in good quality learning. In one lesson in three the quality of teaching and learning are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relationships established between staff and pupils are very good and help pupils develop very good attitudes to the centre and to their learning.
- The high expectations of staff for pupils' learning challenge pupils to do their best.
- The range of resources to support teaching and learning in many subjects are unsatisfactory.
- Information and communication technology is not being used well to support teaching and learning in most subjects.
- Teachers who are unqualified and support assistants with little specialist knowledge teach some lessons.

Commentary

14. Pupils quickly realise that the staff want them to do as well as they can, both in their learning and in developing their personal and social skills. The adult-pupil ratio is very favourable and staff are able to spend more time with pupils than is the case in mainstream schools. As a consequence, teachers and teaching assistants get to know their pupils very well and develop very good relationships with them. They deal sensitively with pupils, routinely encourage them and, in most lessons, choose tasks that engage them very well. As they re-gain confidence as learners, pupils achieve increasing success. This contributes to them enjoying lessons, even looking forward to them. As a consequence, they feel better about themselves and about attending the centre.

15. In their previous schools, pupils were not able to commit themselves to their learning because they experienced difficulties in accepting the procedures and in meeting teachers' expectations. In most lessons at the centre, teachers and teaching assistants have clear and consistently high expectations for learning. They guide and encourage pupils so that most pupils match these expectations because they work hard to do their best. For many pupils this is considerable accomplishment and reflects an important change in their attitudes to school and to their own learning. In only a small number of lessons is learning interrupted because teachers have to remind pupils of their responsibilities.

16. In most subjects, there are too few resources to provide satisfactory support for teaching and learning. This limits the strategies teachers can use and what topics can be taught. For example, human biology is taught as a GCSE subject for examination rather than science. The lack of resources, and of a specialist teaching room, means that the syllabus for science cannot be satisfactorily taught. Similarly, resistant materials is the only element of design and technology that can be taught to examination. In English, the lack of suitably challenging reading material for pupils in Years 7 to 9, limits their progress in reading. This is even in lessons where there are as many pupils as there are adults and pupils are able to gain the individual attention of the teacher or the support assistant most of the time.

17. Computers are used well in creating final drafts of reports and presentations, but they are rarely used in helping develop new learning or in reinforcing existing learning. In most subjects, the very small number of CD-ROMs available limits the use of the computer as an aid to learning. For example, there are no CD-ROMs that provide movement and colour in explaining how the processes of the body work. Also, there are too few specific programs that help in teaching literacy and numeracy. This is a particular issue for pupils in Years 7 to 9. They do not read, write, spell or manipulate number as well as most pupils of their age. In many equivalent centres computers support progress in literacy and numeracy through repeated and innovative presentations of words and sentences and of calculations in the four basic procedures in mathematics. Specific programs and independent learning systems enable pupils to work at their own level, and the progress they make is precisely recorded and gives useful information for lesson planning. Finally, the very slow response time when pupils use the Internet seriously reduces its effectiveness in providing new knowledge through searches or when supporting learning generally. It can take up to five minutes for pupils just to log on.

18. A significant number of lessons are taught by unqualified teachers or are led by teaching assistants. The overall judgement on teaching shows that they do well. However, in this they are helped by the very small number of pupils in the classes, the very good relationships they have with the pupils and the detailed information they have on the difficulties pupils are dealing with. However, the lack of specialist training in the subjects, or of training, for example in using computers, limits their effectiveness. Also, they have too little knowledge of assessment procedures, including assessment against the levels of the National Curriculum. This means pupils' records, especially those for pupils in Years 7 to 9, are not accurate representations of what they know and understand in the subjects. This makes it difficult to recognise the progress they are making and to plan lessons that match the needs of each pupil. The records of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are better, in part, because they are assessed at the end of each module of work as part of the syllabus for the GCSE examination.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0.0%)	11 (35.5%)	17(54.8%)	2(6.5%)	1(3.2%)	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.

The curriculum

19. The curriculum adheres to the local authority's curriculum policy for pupil referral units. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, it is good. It is inclusive in content and organisation and ensures equality of access and opportunity by meeting pupils' different needs. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. It is not helping prepare pupils well enough for their return to mainstream schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good way the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 prepares them for life after the centre.
- The very good planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is supported very well by the very good relationships staff have with pupils and the good use local facilities.
- The good opportunities pupils in Years 10 and 11 have to find out about the world of work through careers education and the work experience programme.
- The leadership and management of the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is ineffective.
- The absence of any specialist teaching rooms limits what can be taught.

Commentary

20. The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11, appropriately, focuses on personal and social growth. Many well organised opportunities are provided for pupils to gain in self-confidence and self-esteem as a first step to committing themselves to their learning. The number of subjects that pupils study for the GCSE examination is small and is limited by the absence of any specialist teaching rooms. Pupils choose from English, English literature, mathematics, human biology, business studies, French, resistant materials and child development. Many other equivalent centres offer more subjects because they make better use of the provision available at local colleges and secondary schools. The curriculum is beneficially extended by the use of a very good outdoor activity centre and the centre for ancient technology. Pupils sail, climb, canoe and learn caving at the outdoor activity centre, at the centre for ancient technology they improve their practical and creative skills when experimenting with techniques from the past. Time spent at these centres helps make the curriculum relevant to pupils because both centres provide many very good opportunities for pupils to gain confidence and to practise their social skills as members of a team.

21. Developing the personal and social skills of pupils is a strength of the centre. The planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good and includes sex and drugs education and selected aspects of citizenship. It is supported very well by the experiences pupils gain attending the off site centres and, especially, by the very good relationships pupils have with staff. Pupils trust and respect staff and listen to them. Through tutorials and regular individual discussions with pupils, teachers, teaching assistants and the administrative staff offer advice, guidance and support that pupils' value and most often act on.

22. Careers education is very good. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared very well for interviews because they practise these as part of their lessons. They write letters of application for employment and for a place on a course at a further education college. The stock of careers literature is good and is used well by pupils. The work experience programme is also very good. It is organised well and provides pupils with insight into the demands of work and at the same time helps them develop their personal and social skills. Regular placements include a riding stable, hairdressing salons, an animal care centre, child care centres, a travel agency, a veterinary practice, a scaffolding firm and local garages.

23. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. It is not led and managed well and, as a result, does not match well enough with the aim of returning pupils to mainstream schools after a specified period of time at the centre. It emphasises the development of pupils' personal and social skills and improvement in literacy and numeracy. There is very little time for science and no

time to study geography and history or physical education. It is not presented as well as is the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Personal and social skills are developed well enough, but progress in literacy and numeracy is not sufficient given the very favourable ratio of staff to pupils. Also, the procedures for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do are not working well. Too little information is recorded on the progress pupils are making and, as a consequence, very little information is available to teachers in the mainstream schools when pupils return. Neither the pupils, nor the staff of the mainstream schools, are being prepared well enough.

24. The centre is located in a building that was originally a primary school. It is looked after well and there is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti. There are many displays of pupils' work that appropriately celebrate their achievements. The administration staff make visitors very welcome and create a very good first impression for parents and others arriving at the centre. The lack of specialist teaching rooms for any subject makes it impossible to study some subjects to GCSE level, and makes preparation for examination in other subjects, such as human biology and resistant materials, difficult.

Care, guidance and support

25. The quality of support, advice and guidance is good. The provision for care, welfare, health and safety is good. Pupils have good opportunities to present their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very favourable ratio of adults to pupils helps provide a good level of care and safety.
- Pupils trust and respect staff and this helps them listen to and act on the advice and guidance they are offered.
- For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the procedures for recognising progress in the subjects do not help sufficiently in lesson planning or inform teachers in mainstream schools of the gains pupils have made while at the centre.
- The views of pupils are sought and valued and this helps raise their self-esteem.

Commentary

26. The very favourable ratio of adults to pupils helps staff know the pupils, and their personal circumstances, very well. They are very good at monitoring pupils' well being and in taking action when a pupil enters the centre troubled by issues that he or she has to deal with. Close contact is maintained with parents and carers and the relevant support agencies, who work well together in setting up plans for pupils. Risk assessment is undertaken before pupils go off site and is good and no unsafe practices were observed at the centre, but there is no designated Safety Officer. The arrangements to deal with first aid needs are effective. The fire bell is tested weekly, but the requirement for the regular practice of fire drills is not met. Further training for staff in child protection procedures and in the use of restraint has been booked for the very near future.

27. The very good relationships between staff and pupils are at the heart of the progress pupils make both personally and academically. Pupils respond very well to the trust and respect shown to them by staff and to their high expectations for learning and behaviour. Pupils feel valued and most make good use of their time at the centre. They appreciate that there is always someone to turn to for support or advice. They report that all adults, including the administrative staff, are consistently cheerful and encouraging and this gives them the confidence to share their concerns and talk about their successes. Induction arrangements are good. Pupils settle quickly.

28. The progress pupils make in the subjects is not recorded well and is not helping sufficiently in planning lessons. This is especially so for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Teachers and teaching assistants know the academic and personal targets that are written for pupils in their individual education plans. Pupils are involved in forming these and in their review. However, they are sometimes too broad for success to be measured accurately. This means that information provided to teachers in the mainstream schools that pupils return to is also not as helpful as it should be and it does not provide

a good picture of the progress pupils have made over their time at the centre. The educational provision identified for the small number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is met.

29. Pupils express satisfaction with the way they are listened to. They feel they can make a difference. For example, they negotiate their work experience placement. They say that when they have problems with learning they quickly gain help, either from the teacher or the support assistant. Although staff and pupils do not have regular formal meetings where views are shared, for example through a Council of Pupils, one pupil said that 'We can always say if something should be changed'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

30. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community are good. The links with other schools, especially those to which pupils may return are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and carers have good feelings for the work of the centre.
- The information provided to parents does not give a sufficiently detailed picture of how their children are doing.
- Good use is made of places and people in the local community to broaden the learning experiences of pupils.
- Home tuition tutors work hard to provide good replacement education for pupils who are not able to attend school.

Commentary

31. Parents attending the parents' meeting were very positive in their praise for the centre. This view was also reflected in the parents' questionnaires. They say that their children enjoy attending the centre and they feel they are making good progress. The centre draws pupils from a large area. Nevertheless, staff know parents and carers very well through regular telephone contact and parents and carers find staff extremely approachable when they have a problem. Most talk regularly with the administrative staff and most visit the centre to review progress against the targets identified in their children's individual education plans. Through visits they have a good knowledge of the progress their children are making. Parents have a very high regard for the staff and how they are dealing with their children.

32. At this time there is no prospectus for parents and the newsletters, which were sent out every term have ceased. However, the new centre manager is in the process of re-starting the newsletters, publishing a prospectus and re-working the format of pupils' end of year reports. The reports issued last July did not give a clear indication of what pupils knew, understood and could do in every subject. For example, in English and mathematics no levels of attainment of the National Curriculum were reported and there was even less information for the other subjects. Results gained on GCSE examinations are not published. Information on how well pupils meet their targets is not given, neither is information on their attendance. Good information is provided on work experience. Letters are sent to the home giving a very good amount of information on the work experience placement. They state where the pupil is working, their progress, attitude and, where applicable, what they have learned.

33. Pupils benefit from the good links with the community. Taking part in the activities of the outdoor and ancient technology centres and in the work placements extends pupils curricular experiences well and gives opportunities that are not possible at the centre. The links between centre staff and key staff in the mainstream schools that pupils return to, such as the special educational needs co-ordinator, are not well established. This limits their easy return.

Home Tuition

34. The home tuition service is satisfactory. Its strength lies in the quality of the seven tutors. They are motivated to provide the best service possible to minimise the effects of pupils' disrupted schooling, which for most pupils is the result of ill health, phobia or exclusion. Tutors negotiate with pupils, parents, schools and the centre as to what subjects will be taught during the allotted hours. Typically, these include English and mathematics. The tutors are independent, creative and adaptable. They liaise with schools and agencies, assembling resources and teaching pupils of all ages, from infants to A level students, over a wide range of subjects. Most often, pupils are successfully re-integrated into mainstream schools after they have overcome their health, or other, issues. A good example was seen at the centre. A home tutor had arranged lessons at the centre for a pupil who had been out of school for a considerable time as a first step to return to a mainstream school. The centre teacher had been prepared well and careful planning and good quality teaching helped make the visit to the centre successful. It is not surprising that parents, as well as pupils, express gratitude for the support and encouragement they receive. When re-integration into mainstream schools is not possible pupils are still able to take examinations, such as the GCSE, so that they have the satisfaction of ending their schooling with recognised qualifications.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

35. The leadership of the centre has been badly affected by the turnaround in centre managers during the last three years. Over this time, there has been little development. Day-to-day management has been satisfactory because of the considerable contribution of staff, including the administrative staff. The new centre manager has been in post for too little time to judge the quality of his leadership and management. The new structure for governance in which the Friends Management Group report to the county wide Management Group for out of school children is sufficiently well formed to meet its responsibilities and to provide considerable support to the centre.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are not being prepared well enough for their return to mainstream schools.
- The subjects are not led and managed well.
- The home tuition tutors do not work closely enough with centre staff.
- The procedures for checking the quality of the work of the centre provide too little information for the centre manager and for the Friends Management Group.
- The Admissions Panel provides too little information to the centre on its role in educating pupils.

Commentary

36. There are a number of reasons why the centre is not preparing pupils well enough for their return to mainstream schools. Target dates specifying when they should return are not set when pupils enter the centre and there is no specific curriculum plan designed to support their return. The centre's links with the schools to which pupils will return are not strong enough. The assessment procedures within the centre do not provide sufficient information for staff in the returning schools on what pupils are capable of in the subjects or on how they have progressed while at the centre. They also provide too little information on the progress pupils have made in their personal and social development, especially in controlling their behaviour. Each contributes to the programme for returning pupils being unsatisfactory.

37. The staffing structure is making the leadership and management of the subjects difficult. The small number of qualified teachers and the requirement that unqualified and part-time teachers co-ordinate subjects is limiting the development of the subjects. A significant number of co-ordinators have recently been appointed, their roles and responsibilities are not clear to them, the requirement for reporting on subjects to the centre manager is not made and an audit of subjects is not conducted. Some parts of some subjects are not taught, for example food studies in design and technology. All subjects, other than French, have insufficient resources to provide satisfactory

support for teaching and learning. Planning documents for pupils in Years 7 to 9 are very brief. They provide too little guidance on what pupils will learn and how learning is to be sequenced so that new learning is based on prior learning.

38. The centre provides too little support for the home tutors. They operate autonomously and do not report on their work to the centre manager. Tutors are not expected to abide by the procedures that operate in the centre. Their work is compromised because of this as they do not benefit from the experience of staff or make use of the resources available at the centre. They are not able to extend their skills and knowledge through being part of a planned programme of training, and are not able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their work. Similarly, the centre manager and the Friends Management Group gain insufficient information to be able to judge the quality of the work of the home tutors. This is unsatisfactory.

39. Teachers, and the newly appointed centre manager, visit each other's lessons regularly, mostly to support the learning of individual pupils. Because of this, the capability and competence of each teacher is known very well. Therefore, the formal monitoring of teaching and learning through clearly defined procedures provides less information than might be the case in centres and schools where there are more teachers. Nevertheless, the procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning should operate more formally, to include a discussion following a visit to a lesson and the writing of a report. Performance management procedures make an unsatisfactory contribution to development. Target setting for staff, as a means of improving their effectiveness and the quality of the work of the centre, is at its beginning. The principles of performance management need to be observed more closely so that the centre manager and the Friends Management Group gain better information on which to judge the effectiveness of the centre. The centre manager needs to have targets set through an external accredited advisor as soon as possible.

40. The centre gains too little information from the Admissions Panel on its role in educating pupils that are identified to. The absence of any precise information, for example on why pupils have been identified to the centre and how the centre can help, is blurring the focus of the work. This is especially so for pupils in Years 7 to 9, who will most likely return to mainstream schools. Also, some pupils attend the centre for less than a full week and require alternate placement to gain their entitlement to full-time provision. At this time, this information is not specified as part of the documentation the centre receives when pupils are admitted. The Friends Management Group is well capable of dealing with these and related issues and of being an effective and productive link between the centre and the relevant professional staff and committees of the local education authority.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	287097.00
Total expenditure	287097.00
Expenditure per pupil	6835.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0.00*
Balance carried forward to the next	0.00*

* The centre's money is controlled at the level of the local education authority. No money can be transferred from one year to another.

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Seven lessons were seen in English. Discussion took place with the co-ordinator and pupils were spoken to. Teachers' planning documents and pupils' work were looked at. The use of English in lessons in the other subjects was taken into account.

41. Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 and the good results they gain on the GCSE examination in English and English literature.
- The unsatisfactory provision for pupils in Years 7 to 9.
- The good quality of teaching, especially for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- The progress pupils in Years 7 to 9 are making is not recorded well and contributes too little to lesson planning or to what they are learning.
- The co-ordinator is not required to report on the quality of the work in the subject to the centre manager.

Commentary

42. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well in English. A small number gain higher level B and C grades in the English and English literature GCSE examinations. Other pupils gain grades at lower levels or the certificate in basic skills. These results demonstrate the good progress they make over their time at the centre.

43. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing. When they leave the centre their skill in English is sufficient to support further study and to deal with the literacy demands of many occupations. They are at ease talking with each other, to staff or to visitors and adapt their speech well for the listener and the situation. In this, they benefit from mixing with adults during work experience and when they are at the two activity centres. Both help increase their vocabulary and provide opportunities to practise their social skills. They read well. They have sufficient skills to explore a wide range of texts including poetry and extracts from Shakespeare, as well as being fully capable of searching for information on the Internet. The best readers understand implied meaning in texts and are able to spot bias, for example in media reports. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 increasingly use the computer to draft and re-draft work. They identify the common features of advertisements in the local paper, then construct an example for themselves. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining pupils write well. They create poetry, critique a portion of a Shakespeare's play and write on controversial topics like fox-hunting.

44. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have good speaking and listening skills and they achieve satisfactorily in the other aspects of English. But, but given the small number of pupils in the class they should be doing much better. They enter the centre with reading ages well below average and gain benefit from the structured teaching of phonics. However, opportunities for the practise of reading are limited because there are too few books and reading materials, such as magazines and leaflets, that interest them. Also, the centre has no designated library or quiet place where pupils can read for information or enjoyment. The progress pupils make in writing is slowed by their reluctance to write and their inaccurate spelling and use of punctuation. Presentation is untidy. In this pupils are not

helped because they have too few opportunities to practise writing in English lessons and in the other subjects. They are rarely required to write more than a few words.

45. Overall, teaching and learning are good, although there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 9. The very good relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and the pupils contribute to pupils' very good behaviour and their willingness to work hard. They gain in confidence as they achieve success in lessons. This, as well as the encouragement and supportive comments of staff, and the realisation that they are taking the same examination as mainstream pupils, improves their confidence and self-esteem. Competent support assistants liaise well with teachers and contribute significantly to the progress pupils are making. They teach pupils in small groups and help pupils, including those with additional special educational needs such as dyslexia, to complete their work. When teaching and learning are unsatisfactory there is too much of a concentration on phonics, tasks do not challenge pupils sufficiently well and resources are not matched to pupils' age or capabilities. Other than for word-processing, teachers rarely use computers to reinforce learning or to practise new learning.

46. Assessment for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is an integral part of the modules they complete as they move through the syllabus for the GCSE examination. These are working well. The procedures for assessing the progress of pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not working well. They are not helpful in planning lessons or in deciding what pupils should be working on. The centre gains very little information on the capabilities in English of pupils when they enter. The base-line assessment procedures do not provide sufficient information to against which to judge the gains pupils are making in speaking and listening, reading, writing and spelling over their time at the centre. Targets for literacy in individual education plans are not precise enough to guide lesson planning or to judge when they have been achieved.

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator, although not sure of the responsibilities associated with her role, has done well in enabling older pupils to leave the centre with good qualifications. Planning is good for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Too little attention is given to planning the work for the pupils in Years 7 to 9. There is no requirement for the co-ordinator to report on English to the centre manager or to audit the subject as a step toward improving the provision. There are too few dedicated computer programs that can be used to practise emerging skills in the four basic calculations.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills across the curriculum because all staff encourage and model good communication. There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise reading and, especially, writing skills in lessons in the other subjects. Only on a very few occasions do pupils engage in extended writing. This is because there is no planning for language and literacy across the curriculum, in part because teachers and teaching assistants have not been trained in the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy.

MATHEMATICS

Five lessons were seen in mathematics, some lessons in other subjects included the use of mathematical skills. Pupils were talked to and their completed work analysed.

49. Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum planning, which gives pupils good opportunities to work at their own level.
- The good quality of teaching for pupils in Years 10 and 11, which results in good quality learning and good grades on the GCSE examination.

- The lack of a designated co-ordinator, which limits development and makes it difficult to judge the quality of the provision.
- The limited use made of opportunities in the lessons in other subjects to practise and learn mathematics.

Commentary

50. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well, those in Years 7 to 9 achieve satisfactorily. The best at mathematics leave the centre with B or C grades on the GCSE. All pupils leave the centre with sufficiently developed mathematical skills to support their further learning and be able to function well when using mathematics in real life.

51. Pupils arrive at the centre with a wide range of mathematical ability ranging from those with well-developed skills to those who have difficulty completing the most basic of mathematical tasks. Teaching is effective because it focuses on the learning needs of individual pupils and each pupil follows an individual learning programme tailored to his or her capabilities. Much of the work is about learning basic numerical skills and most pupils successfully learn to compute numbers, quickly and accurately according to the four rules. They apply these well to measures of weight, size, distance, money and time. They also learn about shape, space and simple procedures for handling data. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have a wide range of capabilities and experience in mathematics. They work on individual targets and progress satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow the syllabus for the GCSE examination. They work at their own speed and gain good guidance and support.

52. Teaching is good, especially in the lessons for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Lessons have simple clear targets. The choice of teaching strategy and of resources and materials is mostly good and learning is made relevant and suitable to the pupils. Computers, though, are not used sufficiently by pupils in Years 7 to 9 for practising the four procedures of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, even though they are unsure of them. Work is regularly marked with comments that provide good guidance on what was wrong and how it might be corrected. The relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are very good. Pupils like lessons in mathematics because they know they will be organised well and that they will make good progress. Pupils know that they are expected to behave well, work hard and do their best. In most lessons each of these expectations is fully achieved.

53. There is no co-ordinator for mathematics. The development of the subject has been considerably disadvantaged because of this. It is to the credit of the staff who are teaching the subject that the provision is as good as it is. They have managed the subject well on a day-to-day basis but, although the teaching is good, the provision needs to be improved. The centre manager gains no information on the quality of the work in the subject. The new co-ordinator will need to report on the subject and develop plans to improve the quality of the work, especially of the younger pupils. Resources in general need to be increased as should be the bank of dedicated software so that computers can be of more use in promoting learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Pupils have too few planned opportunities to practice their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. When teachers reinforce numeracy skills, it is done spontaneously and not in any pre-planned way. For example, pupils attending the ancient technology centre get ample time to use their numerical skills when experimenting with ancient building techniques. However, over all lessons too many opportunities are missed because of the absence of a policy for using mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Three lessons for pupils in Years 10 and 11 were observed. Pupils were talked to and their work analysed.

55. Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 study science for less time than do many pupils in equivalent centres.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning that help them achieve well, despite the absence of a specialist teaching room.
- Teaching is good for pupils in Years 10 and 11, despite limited resources.
- Provision in science is compromised because of the absence of a co-ordinator.

Commentary

56. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are taught science for less time than is the case for pupils in most mainstream schools or for those in many other equivalent centres. No lessons were seen and there was little completed work. Because of this, no judgement is possible on how well these pupils achieve. Planning for learning is unsatisfactory. Pupils enter the centre with different histories of learning in science and different capabilities. Even so, they study a common curriculum that includes biology, magnetism and the solar system. The learning requirements of individual pupils are not satisfactorily catered for.

57. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 prepare for the GCSE examination in human biology. They, mostly, gain the C and D grades. This represents good achievement. They are able to explain their learning well, using appropriate terms that show a good understanding of the processes of experimentation and investigation and of many topics. For example, pupils in Year 10 know that haemoglobin is a chemical in red blood cells that collects oxygen as blood is pumped through the lungs. They enjoy learning science and have good attitudes to their work. They want to know more about topics, such as the working of their own bodies. They work hard at understanding these because they gain information they see as relevant and interesting.

58. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 10 and 11 are good. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully and make good use of the limited resources. As a consequence, lesson time is used well. Pupils enjoy being active in their learning. For example, in a very good lesson on aerobic and anaerobic respiration for pupils in Year 11, the teacher used a simple demonstration very effectively. A pupil volunteered to jog on the spot with a heart-rate monitor strapped around his waist. Other pupils noted the raised colour in the jogger's face, his increased breathing and perspiration, and the higher reading on the heart-rate monitor. At the end of the lesson, they were able to explain why the body responds as it does to exercise, including explaining the link between lactic acid and oxygen debt. Good use is made of video extracts so that action and animation can help explain topics.

59. There is no co-ordinator for science and leadership in science has suffered because of this. The new centre manager is seeking to appoint a full-time qualified science teacher to teach and lead the subject. When this is resolved, the situation will be much improved. Currently, many teachers teach the subject according to their availability and interests. Science is taught in a general classroom without suitable equipment for the conduct of many investigations. This limits the topics that can be taught, how teaching can occur and the examinations for which pupils can be prepared. Information and communication technology is under used in supporting teaching and learning. There are, especially, too few CD-ROMs that bring colour and movement to topics to provide an alternative perspective to learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Three lessons in information and communication technology were seen, but some other lessons included the use of information and communication technology, especially word-processing. The co-ordinator was interviewed, pupils talked to, and their completed and on-going work analysed.

60. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The narrow curriculum and the absence of any opportunity for pupils to take an accredited award to demonstrate the extent of their learning.
- The co-ordinators good specialist knowledge.
- The time taken to fix the computers when they go down.
- The limited knowledge and confidence of teachers and teaching assistants in using computers to help pupils learn.

Commentary

61. Over all the years, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching in the lessons in ICT is good. The learning needs of pupils are dealt with well, and pupils are expected to work hard and carefully. As a result, in lessons they make good progress in their learning. However, this is over a narrow curriculum. Because of this, over the full range of the subject, pupils achieve satisfactorily.

62. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 does not include as many of the elements they would study in mainstream schools. It mainly provides opportunities to increase skills and knowledge of word-processing. Pupils do this satisfactorily. Those in Years 10 and 11 work, predominantly, with word-processing, publishing programs and multi-media presentation programs. The highest attaining pupils in Year 11 use most of the facilities available in these programs, quickly and confidently. For example, they create presentations of up to five slides that include animation and sound. The lowest attaining pupils tend only to use word-processing. They change font type and size and use the spell-checker. All pupils log on, access their own file system and create and save new files that can include images imported from the Internet. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not follow a syllabus that leads to any examination. Their experience of ICT is very narrow and does not include significant time spent learning about spreadsheets or using computers for control and modelling. They are well capable of taking the subject to GCSE level.

63. The contract to maintain the centre's computers in good working order is not working well. There is a small number of computers. If one is not working there are difficulties in meeting the needs of pupils. When two or more are not working, as is sometimes the case, pupils' learning in ICT lessons and in the lessons in the other subjects is compromised. Also, the slow speed in gaining access to the Internet causes problems. For example, it can take up to five minutes to log on and a substantial time for a request or command to be activated. This means that pupils become disillusioned and are easily distracted. This slows up their learning and has a deleterious effect on the good attitudes they, generally, have to their learning.

64. The co-ordinator has good specialist knowledge of computers and of how they work. However, the provision needs to be improved. The absence of any form of accreditation, that pupils can take to show the extent of their learning, disadvantages them. The syllabus they would follow for an examination, such as the GCSE would give a broader experience of ICT than is currently available. At this time, they have no way of showing prospective employers or college admission officers the extent of their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Teachers and the teaching assistants do not use computers or other equipment such as digital cameras well in supporting their teaching in the lessons in the other subjects. Their knowledge of computers, and how they can be used in promoting progress is too limited. For example, no teacher has completed the national training programme. This shows in the limited ways in which computers are used in lessons, which is mostly for word-processing. It also shows in lack of resources, such as CD-ROMs that are specific to subjects, and of specially designed programs to help develop literacy and numeracy.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS and FRENCH

Art and design, design technology, French, child development and business studies

66. Only a very small number of lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, French, child development and business studies combined. Child development has been taught for some time, art and design and business studies are being taught for the first time this year. In each subject, pupils are being prepared for the GCSE examination. It is not possible to make a judgement on the achievement of pupils or the progress they are making. Their teachers are predicting mostly the C and D grades. If gained, these grades would represent good achievement.

67. The subjects have much in common. They are not led and managed well. Co-ordinators have been recently appointed for business studies, art and design and design technology. Their responsibilities are not clear to them. This is also the case for the co-ordinators in place for longer periods. Some of the subjects, for example business studies are taught by teachers with little specialist knowledge or are led by staff who are part time and attend the centre for one day a week, as is the case for design and technology. There are no specialist teaching rooms for art and design or design and technology. With the exception of French, resources to support teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator of child development deals with this very well by making good use of the school nurse, health visitor, school doctor, midwife and by making regular visits to a local play group for children with special educational needs. The C and D grades predicted for pupils are only possible because there are a very small number of pupils in each class. In French, business studies and design and technology only one pupil is being prepared for the GCSE examination. Child development is the exception; six girls will take the examination.

68. Teachers know the pupils very well and have very good relationships with them. The considerable attention they and the support assistants are able to give to each pupil helps make up for the lack of resources. Teachers have learned the skills of teaching classes with very small numbers of pupils. Even those who have little specialist knowledge and few resources to support them in their task, make lessons meaningful and relevant. When the teacher has good specialist knowledge, as is the case for French, lessons are fun and the pupils make good progress. In these lessons, especially, pupils attend very well to their tasks and are committed to working hard to achieve their best grade on the examination.

69. The fragile arrangements for co-ordinating the subjects impede their development. The limited range of resources, and for some subjects the absence of a specialist teaching room, constrains the achievement of pupils and what they can study. This is most obvious in design and technology in which the pupil learns about resistant materials only, and in art and design in which the absence of a kiln limits work in three – dimensions. There is no requirement that co-ordinators of any of these subjects report on the subject to centre manager and there are no audits of the provision.

Physical education

70. Outdoor activities is the only element of physical education that pupils experience. They visit a very good local centre and take part in a good number of different activities. One day per week is assigned to outdoor activities. This is a considerable amount of curriculum time, more so than is the case for pupils in mainstream schools. Pupils gain from learning, for example sailing, canoeing and climbing, but their real gain is in the development of personal and social skills. They become more confident in themselves through succeeding in challenges that are new to them and gain in social skills through having to work with, and rely on, each other when they operate as a team.

71. Time spent on outdoor activities makes an important contribution to making the curriculum relevant to pupils and provides very good support to the planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Four lessons were observed in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The co-ordinator was interviewed, pupils talked to and visits made to an outdoor activity centre and a centre for ancient technology.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum that helps pupils understand how they can deal with complex issues.
- The very good way in which the planned programme is supported by the very good relationships between staff and pupils and by the use of outside centres.
- The good quality of teaching in the discrete lessons and the presentations made by groups from outside of the school.

Commentary

73. In lessons, pupils achieve well in a range of activities that develop them personally and socially, and extend their knowledge and understanding of health and citizenship. They make good progress in their learning because teachers know them very well, plan lessons well and use age-appropriate resources to make learning relevant.

74. The good scheme of work takes account of what young people need to live in a complex society. Their good understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens is gained through learning about well-chosen topics. Pupils consider issues of personal safety, for example in the use of Internet chat rooms, substance abuse, and the importance of hygiene in food preparation. The nurse leads lessons in sex education and teachers address issues related to sex and relationships. Pupils gain good information on First Aid by completing a course that leads to certification. Careers lessons and advice in tutorials give pupils a good knowledge of the responsibilities associated with work. Work experience provides first-hand opportunities to learn the importance of practising good relationships in a work place.

75. The planned programme is supported very well by the very good relationships staff have with pupils. The caring and supportive ethos, which includes very high expectations for pupils' behaviour, is very visible and makes an important contribution to improving pupils' personal and social skills. Staff are excellent role models that pupils aspire to. Pupils talk with them about any matter knowing that they will listen sympathetically. They know staff will help them, either by offering advice, suggesting a course of action or by arranging for them to meet with someone else. Time spent at the outdoor activity centre and the centre for ancient history support the planned programme very well by providing opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and to learn to co-operate with each other when they operate as a team.

76. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons carefully so that they link well with each other. For example, Year 11 pupils discussed the impact of winning a very large sum of money. They referred to the previous lesson on charities when they considered how to use the windfall. Pupils realised that being wealthy would have advantages, but it also brings responsibilities and problems. They learn well because teachers use relevant and topical resources that interest and motivate them and pupils are always ready to talk about what they are reading, their personal experience or what they see on television. Groups from the local community help make learning real to pupils. They broaden the curriculum by talking of issues on which they have expert knowledge. For example, a drug awareness group used drama effectively to identify the related problems of theft, violence, family breakdown and illness as a consequence of drug addiction. Making a video film in which pupils communicate their thoughts and their pressures through their acting help reinforce learning about the negative effects of drug abuse in a powerful fashion.

77. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has created a cohesive programme of lessons supported by well-chosen resources, acquired over time.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

