

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**BROOKE SCHOOL**

**Rugby**

**LEA area: Warwickshire**

**Unique reference number: 125801**

**Headteacher: Sheila Cowen**

**Lead inspector: Michael McDowell**

**Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

**Inspection number: 268531**

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

<b>Type of school:</b>	<b>Special</b>
<b>School category:</b>	<b>Community special</b>
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	<b>2 – 19 years</b>
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>Number on roll;</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>School address:</b>	<b>Overslade Lane Rugby Warwickshire</b>
<b>Postcode:</b>	<b>CV22 6DY</b>
<b>Telephone number:</b>	<b>01788 812324</b>
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<b>Appropriate authority:</b>	<b>Local Education Authority</b>
<b>Name of chair of governors:</b>	<b>Mrs. C. Williams</b>
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> May 1999</b>

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Brooke School is a broad-spectrum special school for pupils aged between 2 and 19 years who have statements of special educational need because of severe, moderate, or complex learning difficulties. Children who do not have statements attend the nursery for assessment purposes. There is a full-time equivalent of 132 pupils on roll, with twice as many boys as girls. Ten of these are also registered at other schools.

The pupils are drawn from Rugby, and surrounding villages, with a small number coming from elsewhere in Warwickshire or neighbouring counties. The attainment on entry of pupils with statements is very low. Almost all of the pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a small number being of mixed White and Black or British Indian origin. Four pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English because this is not their first language, and a small number of pupils are in the public care.

The character of the school has changed since it was last inspected. There are now more pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and the school is now on one site with new and recently refurbished buildings.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1405	Michael McDowell	Lead inspector	Art, citizenship, personal, social and health education
13450	Jenny Madden	Lay inspector	
10781	Bob Thompson	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology
27409	Sue Hunt	Team inspector	English, geography, history, religious education
10782	Henry Moreton	Team inspector	Science, music, physical education
25509	Adrian Simm	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, French

The inspection contractor was:

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3, and 4</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>35</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The overall effectiveness of the school is very good.** Teaching and learning are very good and pupils of all capabilities, including those whose home language is not English, achieve very well. The school is very well led and managed and gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is very good overall.
- Teaching and learning are very good and they are excellent in the nursery.
- The school is very well led, managed, and governed; it has excellent procedures for reviewing its performance and for analysing its strengths and weaknesses.
- Commitment to inclusion is excellent and the school provides outstanding opportunities for pupils to integrate with their peers through placements in mainstream schools.
- Pupils enjoy attending school and relationships between adults and pupils are very good.
- Too little time is allocated to practical subjects for pupils in Years 7 to 9, and pupils in Years 10 and 11 have too little choice about the subjects they take.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality of teaching and learning is now much better than it was. It is excellent for children under five. Achievement is significantly higher and is now very good across the age range in English and mathematics. The quality of the accommodation has been greatly improved. Leadership, management, and governance, are now much more effective. The school has dealt well with the key issues for improvement identified by the last inspection. The learning objectives of each lesson are now clearly identified in teachers' planning. Governors monitor the school more thoroughly and newly built or refurbished accommodation has increased opportunities for learning. The management of pupils' arrival and departure now ensures safety. The curriculum is very well enhanced by opportunities for learning outside the school day. It is good, overall. In the Foundation Stage it is very good. However, in Years 7 to 9, it is only satisfactory because the time allocated to art, design and technology, history and geography needs to be adjusted. The school plans its future development and improvement very well.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 2	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Year 6	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Year 9	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Year 11	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Year 13	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

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

**Achievement is very good.** The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is very good as they move towards the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Achievement is very good across the age range in English and mathematics. It is good in science, information and communication technology, (ICT), geography, religious education and, in Years 2 to 6, in history. In art and design, achievement is good, overall, with very good achievement by pupils in Years 2 to 6 and in the examination group in Years 10 and 11. In both art and design and history in Years 7 to 9, achievement is satisfactory, because too little time is given to the subjects. In French for pupils in Years 7 to 11, achievement is satisfactory. Year 11 pupils are on course to successfully complete a range of externally accredited courses, which include Entry Level qualification in ICT, French, science, English, mathematics, and life skills. A small number are likely to gain a grade in the

GCSE art examination. Most are on course to succeed in Youth Award Scheme Bronze and Silver Challenges. Achievement in personal, social, and health education is very good across the age range. Those in Years 12 to 14 who make up the post-16 class achieve very well in their work related learning and in the accredited courses they follow, which include AQA Unit Awards in ICT, and ASDAN "Towards Independence". Children and pupils of all ages achieve the targets set for them in their statements and individual plans very well. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are, also, very good. Relationships between pupils are very positive and there are, consistently, very good relationships between pupils and the adults who teach, care for, and support them. These relationships are of great benefit and underpin the very high quality of teaching and learning. Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good.** In the nursery, they are excellent. Teaching in English is also particularly strong with almost all lessons being very good or, occasionally, excellent. In all subjects, across the age range, teachers plan their work thoroughly and make clear to the pupils what it is that they are to achieve. Assessment is very good. Teachers have accurate knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do, and use this to closely match tasks and activities to pupils' capabilities. As a result, pupils are keen to do their best and they work hard. They enjoy their lessons. The curriculum is good. It meets the needs of pupils well. It is very well enriched by the opportunities for learning provided outside the school day. However, the time given to some foundation subjects in the secondary phase needs adjusting and older pupils have insufficient chance to choose some of the subjects they study. Arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. Teachers monitor pupils' behaviour, attitudes, personal development and achievements thoroughly. They know their pupils very well and give them excellent support, advice and guidance. The school works very well in partnership with parents, other schools and the community. The strong links forged with other schools and colleges are of immense social and educational benefit to many pupils who have the opportunity to attend mainstream schools with their peers. Older pupils and those in the post-16 group benefit, particularly in relation to work related learning, from the school's very good partnership with the Connexions service and the Education Business Partnership.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and has proved to be extremely effective in bringing the school through a difficult period of redevelopment and renewal. She has an excellent understanding of what the school must do if it is to continue to improve. The leadership of those in senior management and other key roles is also very good. The school is very well managed and governance is very good. The governors monitor the work of the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents have a positive view of the school. Most believe strongly, that it meets the needs of their children well. They feel that the school deals properly with their questions or complaints. Pupils who offered an opinion said that they like the school very much and enjoy attending it.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Allocate sufficient time to art and design and technology for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and give those in Years 10 and 11 more choice about the subjects they will take.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is **very good**.

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

- Children make very good progress towards the goals that they are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- The targets set for the school as a whole and those set for individuals, are achieved successfully.
- Achievement in English is very good, especially in the development of communication skills, and achievement in mathematics is very good.
- By the end of Year 11, most pupils have gained external accreditation for many aspects of their learning. Post-16 students gain additional external accreditation in the courses they follow and do very well in their work related learning.
- Achievement has improved since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children in the nursery get off to a very good start; they benefit from the excellent quality of teaching, and the excellent relationships that they form with the adults who teach and support them. As a result they gain in confidence, develop very positive attitudes and come to think of themselves as very successful learners. In Class1, children in reception and Year 1 also work to the Foundation Stage Areas of Learning. This is appropriate. Their personal, social, and emotional, development continues to progress well, as is shown in their acquisition of good work habits and increasing independence. Communication, language and literacy skills grow apace. Children respond to writing and to symbols and enjoy their reading activities. Their emerging mathematical skills are reinforced very well by their use of touch screen computers. Over time, children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, their creativity and their physical prowess at a very good rate.
2. The school sets targets for the performance of groups of pupils by the end of key stages, and also for individual pupils. It has succeeded in reaching the group targets that it has set in the past, and assessment records suggest that the current group targets will be met. Because the numbers in each cohort of pupils, upon which the targets are based, are very small, it is not sensible to use percentages when quantifying the proportion of targets reached. In 2003, the targets in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage1 were comfortably exceeded, while at Key Stage 2 the targets were met or exceeded by most pupils. At Key Stage 3, target setting in reading and numeracy was disrupted by external factors, such as pupils leaving before the end of the Key Stage. Those set at Key Stage 4 were largely met in literacy, and well exceeded in mathematics. The school analyses its success in enabling pupils to reach individual targets. Where targets set for pupils in their individual plans at reviews are succinct, measurable and achievable within a prescribed time, pupils have very good success in reaching them.
3. Pupils across the age range achieve very well in English. Within this, pupils' communication skills using speech, signing or symbols and pictures, are developed very effectively. This is a result of very good leadership of the subject, which has skilfully adapted the National Literacy Strategy to match the school's particular requirements. Pupils across the age range become confident communicators and their developing literacy skills support their learning in other contexts. In mathematics, the subject leader's and teachers' thorough knowledge of individual capabilities leads to high achievement. Work set, therefore, is always relevant to



needs and appropriately challenging. Very good use has been made of the National Numeracy Strategy to improve teaching and learning. As a result of all of this, pupils across the age range, are motivated to learn and are confident in calculation, especially where this is based on "real life" situations.

4. By the end of Year 11, all pupils for whom it is feasible have completed courses that lead to certificates awarded by national examination boards. The range of courses that lead to certification and the degree of success in these is good in comparison with similar schools. In 2004 higher achieving pupils gained certificates at Entry Level in numeracy, ICT, French, science, and mathematics. A small number gained grades in GCSE art. Many pupils in Year 11 gained the Bronze or Silver Level in the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme and a number were successful in the AQA achievement test in literacy. Post-16 students also have success in externally accredited courses. Depending on their capabilities, they are entered for a range of achievement tests and unit awards in literacy and numeracy, and they have their work related learning, including work experience, accredited through ASDAN.
5. At the last inspection, achievement was judged to be good. There has been significant improvement in important areas including English and mathematics. The good standard of achievement in science has been maintained, and achievement in personal social and health education remains very good. The achievement of pupils in relation to the individual targets set for them is much improved. It was satisfactory but is now very good. Achievement in history and geography has improved well.

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

Attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development overall, is **very good**. Attendance is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are very good; they lead to very good behaviour and attitudes to learning, and have a positive impact on achievement and personal development.
- Pupils know and understand what is expected of them because there is a clear code of conduct.
- The school provides many opportunities that lead to personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, being very good.
- Thorough monitoring and very good links with parents have improved attendance.

### **Commentary**

6. Pupils get on very well with one another and with the adults who teach, care for and support them. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and they form the bedrock upon which positive attitudes to learning are built. Pupils speak to visitors with confidence and enthusiasm about school life. They like the rewards they can earn for doing well. The atmosphere of constant praise, encouragement and recognition of their good work helps them concentrate and feel that they are making progress. Every pupil and student, including those with additional special educational needs and complex difficulties, is expected to take on tasks within the classroom or in the wider school. They perform these duties sensibly and they learn to work independently on difficult tasks.
7. Pupils and students develop very good attitudes to learning and they enjoy their lessons. Gradually they show more maturity as they move through the school and in classes for older pupils and students the mood is calm, happy and industrious. For the small minority of pupils whose behaviour is more challenging and for whom concentration is difficult, clear behavioural strategies are employed. Pupils know what is expected of them, and rules are

few and clear. The number of fixed term exclusions has significantly fallen over the last year due to hard work by the school. There is no reported bullying, oppressive behaviour or harassment, including racism or sexism.

8. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very well supported through religious education, school assemblies, individual class assemblies and collective worship. Assemblies for the senior classes are planned around a theme. Important social and moral issues are explored over time, and there is provision for spiritual learning through considering the beliefs and needs of others, and through prayer and quiet reflection. Pupils and students are taught directly about right and wrong and they know the difference when asked. Staff provide very good role models and always show care and concern for the pupils and students helping them to overcome their difficulties.
9. Pupils and students are encouraged to undertake responsibilities. These vary according to their capabilities and degree of support given. Pupils return registers to the office, put out and tidy away classroom equipment. Some pupils take the role of School Council member very seriously. They are immensely proud of being selected to the council and of discharging their duties to the best of their ability. Their sense of responsibility is well illustrated by the fact that they have chosen to hold their meetings on Fridays, after the school day has finished, so that learning will not be interrupted. They are diligent and successful in bringing forward others' views to the Council. For example, they have pressed for the creation of more lunchtime clubs such as a youth club twice a week and an ICT club for secondary pupils.
10. Students in the post-16 class run two business enterprises. They were seen to fully participate in a whole day of 'Business Enterprise' complementing work related learning in school. Pupils help one another and are quick to celebrate each others' successes. These good attitudes and development are reinforced in personal, social, health and citizenship education where pupils and students achieve very well. Pupils' cultural awareness is also developed very well through subjects including French, history, geography and religious education.

## Attendance

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/2004***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	9.4	School data :	0.6
National data:	7.7	National data:	1.9

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

## Exclusions

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
81	1	0

White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	25	5	0

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

## Commentary

11. Attendance is very closely monitored with help from the local education authority and has improved since the last inspection. Very good links with parents enable the school to follow up unexplained absence. Bus escorts play an important role as a link between parents and school often explaining absences. Certificates encourage good attendance. The number of pupils attending the school is small and the absence of one or two pupils makes a significant difference to the attendance rate. In addition, some of the children at the school are frail in health and absences for bouts of illness or for hospital treatment occur. This has a disproportionate effect on absence rates. Attendance in the last reporting year was, despite this, average for similar schools, and unauthorised absence is low.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### The quality of education

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. Teaching and learning are very good and the curriculum is good. It is strongly enhanced by the very good opportunities provided for learning beyond the classroom and by the high quality of the accommodation. Pupils' personal development is very good and they receive very good support and guidance.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good**. Assessment is good, overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the nursery are of the highest standard
- In key areas of the curriculum, including English and mathematics, teaching and learning are of very high quality.
- In subjects across the curriculum, teachers' knowledge of what is required at each stage is high. Because of good assessment, they have very clear knowledge of what pupils know, understand, and can do and they match their planning very precisely to pupils' needs.
- Classroom teams are very effectively led by the teacher and team work is, overall, of very high quality.
- Very good use is made of augmentative communication to ensure all pupils are fully included in the lesson.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the last inspection.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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5 (10.4%)	22 (45.8%)	19 (39.6%)	2 (4.2%)	-	-	-
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*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

12. Children admitted to the nursery may or may not have special educational needs. Where necessary, a full assessment process is undertaken, so that children approaching the reception year may do so with the protection of a statement of special educational needs. This assessment function of the nursery requires that the learning experiences offered are sufficiently challenging and broad in scope that children might fully demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do. The teaching offered is excellent and completely meets these requirements. The teacher and her classroom staff have a full understanding of each child's individual needs that is a result of very thorough continuous assessment. Very careful planning has established an excellent milieu, in which children flourish, supported by established routines that add the essential element of predictability to each day's learning. The nursery staff team work as one as they ensure that every minute is used positively. As a result children are fully involved in their activities. From an early stage children are encouraged to develop independence and make choices, and, by excellent use of voice and signing, the teacher keeps the children engaged and responsive.
13. Teaching in English and mathematics is very good. Very important features in ensuring this high quality are the thoroughness of planning and the accuracy of the assessment of pupils' achievements that underpins it. Teachers take full account of the capabilities of learners. The best teaching is lively and is facilitated by the excellent relationships which teachers have built up with their pupils. Those children who formerly lacked confidence, blossom in the positive learning climate which teachers create. Pupils in Year 3, for example, were seen to benefit from some excellent teaching of English in which the teacher first engaged the pupils in a game to illustrate correct and expressive reading. She used Makaton signing as she spoke so that those who needed such support were fully included in the lesson. As a result, the pupils all understood the point being made, and after such a lively start the rest of the lesson, which was about initial and final letter sounds in words, was tackled with great enthusiasm. Similarly, in the teaching of mathematics, very good relationships between pupils and those who teach and support them lead to a positive attitude for learning. This, in turn enables teachers to offer work of a progressively more challenging standard. The high expectations of teachers are met by the efforts and commitment of the pupils. There is a very good emphasis on the practical application of mathematics for older pupils. Those in the post-16 class, for example, really enjoyed a work - related task in which they calculated material and labour costs, as they sought to turn a profit on small items that they might make and sell.
14. Subject leaders take responsibility for the broad planning of what is to be taught. They work hard and effectively to ensure that, even where much of the teaching is done by others, sufficient information and support is made available. This arrangement has proved effective in enabling teachers to gain good knowledge of curriculum requirements in each subject. They make very good use of techniques derived from relevant national strategies in the teaching of numeracy, and literacy. Teachers also know their pupils' learning characteristics. They observe them closely, analyse their responses, and accurately assess what they know, understand and can do. The insights that teachers gain from this is used in careful lesson planning, in which what is to be learned is made clear. The means by which learning is to be brought about is very well matched to what is known about each pupil's capabilities.
15. In those classes in which the teacher and the teaching assistants have worked together for some time there is excellent teamwork. Each assistant is familiar with the purpose of the lesson, has very good understanding of the learning needs of each child and is confident in taking responsibility to support learners. This has great benefits for the pupils because they are never left without reliable support.

16. For some pupils, who, because of their special educational needs, cannot communicate by speech, augmented means of communication must be used. These include the use of signing, pictures, and symbols and, sometimes, technological devices. These methods are used very well with all members of the classroom team recognising their importance and making effective use of them. Because of this, pupils with communication difficulties are enabled to make known their requests and responses, and they become full partners in the activities of the lesson.
17. When the school was last inspected teaching was good overall but there was no excellent teaching and a few lessons were unsatisfactory. It has improved well. This is because the school now has in place structures to observe classroom practice and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Targets are set that help teachers to further develop their skills. The appointment of knowledgeable subject leaders who can advise colleagues on best practice, and support their teaching with clear long term and medium term planning, has been very effective in increasing subject knowledge. Teachers' lesson planning is now much more rigorous and this results in lessons that are much more effective in meeting pupils' needs.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. Opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. The quality of the accommodation and resources is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is good: it is sufficiently broad, has improved well since the last inspection, and meets statutory requirements.
- Communication is promoted very well.
- Opportunities for learning outside of class and beyond the school day are very good.
- In Years 7 to 9, insufficient time is allocated to subjects including art, design and technology, and history and geography. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have too little choice over the subjects that they take.
- Subject leadership is good.
- The pupils' learning and personal development are very well supported by the accommodation, resources for learning and staffing provided.

## Commentary

18. The curriculum is good. It has improved since the last inspection and a broad range of activities is now provided for all pupils and students. Statutory requirements are met, and, for each age group, there are timetabled lessons in the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has implemented the Key Stage 3 strategy well and the planning of three part lessons is consistent across subjects. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT), that was formerly weak, has improved and it is well taught through other subjects as well as in specific lessons. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented well in Years 3 to 9 while, in Years 10 and 11, and in the post 16 class, pupils are given opportunities to follow courses that lead to external certification. They are also offered good opportunities for work related learning. Post-16 students participate in a mini enterprise, and pupils in Years 10 and 11, as well as students in the post-16, group, have programmed work experience. Post-16 students now study the adult core curriculum in literacy and numeracy, which is transferable to a college course. This supports continuity and progression. A great deal of importance is placed on personal development, particularly through personal, social and health education, (PSHE), which is taught both as a discrete subject and through planned activities at lunchtime and in lessons in other subjects. Education about sex, personal relationships and about drug misuse is thoroughly planned and well taught to secondary age pupils.

19. The development of pupils' communication skills has been strongly promoted since the last inspection. This has been done by ensuring that the best means to meet the communication needs of each individual pupil is discovered and used. Signing to supplement the spoken word is used effectively by staff and pupils, and other alternative and augmentative means of communication, including symbol writing, electronic devices and picture exchange systems are used when they are required. Teachers and classroom staff encourage children to listen carefully and to speak out clearly at every opportunity. This is done to great effect and, as can be seen in assemblies or at meetings of the School Council when pupils and students are confident communicators. In tandem with its efforts to further the development of speaking and listening, the school has put in place effective means to extend literacy skills. For example, planning in all subjects includes reference to key words to be learned and used.
20. The curriculum is very well enriched by opportunities for learning outside the classroom and the school day. There is very good provision for outdoor education and some secondary aged pupils are offered the chance to go on two residential visits every year. One of these visits is led by the school, and one by the Connexions Service. While attending these courses pupils take part in activities that build up their confidence and help them to become more self-reliant. There is, also, a wide range of lunchtime clubs for older pupils including a singing and a computer club. The lunchtime opportunities for primary aged pupils are also being developed. Pupils are encouraged to become socially aware and to work for others. Many are very involved in raising money for charities. Each year pupils take part in local sporting events.
21. There is a shortfall in the time allocated in Years 7 to 9 to certain foundation subjects such as art, and design and technology, and to a lesser extent history and geography. This is unsatisfactory and needs to be rectified. Under present arrangements pupils in Key Stage 3 have only thirty-five minutes allocated to art and to design and technology each week. This is insufficient to ensure that all pupils have the chance to achieve as well as they might. It has had the effect of reducing achievement in, for example, art for pupils in Years 7 to 9. At Year 10, pupils have little choice about the subjects they will take. To acknowledge their growing maturity and to provide for their need to have a voice in their own education, they need to be given more option choices.
22. Leadership in the curriculum is good in most subjects and very good in a minority. Most subjects have two subject leaders, one primary and one secondary. This is helpful in ensuring that provision is relevant to the age of the pupils. However where there is but one leader it is sometimes difficult to ensure full oversight of the provision across the age range when timetabling difficulties arise.
23. Over the last two years, accommodation has been greatly improved by new buildings and refurbishment. One building now houses primary and secondary aged pupils, but care has been taken to ensure that each department has its own identity. There are separate entrances for older and younger pupils and separate play areas. Excellent specialist rooms for ICT, art, and science have been provided, and a room for design and technology is nearing completion. There are two libraries, a heated therapy swimming pool, a sensory room and soft play areas. The outside gardens and courtyards provide a very attractive shaded area in which pupils and students can sit and reflect in fine weather. In addition, there are very good resources that support the school's work in all subjects. Staffing is very good and there are high numbers of support staff, who are well trained, and carry out their role of supporting learning very effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**, and they are given excellent support, advice, and guidance. The school involves its pupils very well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- All staff work in the very best interests of pupils to safeguard their welfare in and around the school as well as during visits.
- Staff are acutely aware of pupils' pastoral needs through their careful monitoring and they provide excellent guidance and support for pupils.
- Dual-registration is enabling pupils to benefit from provision in mainstream and special education according to their needs.
- Preparation for the world of work is consistently expanding pupils' horizons and expectations, and provision for work related learning is very good.
- Pupils are asked to volunteer their opinions in a wide range of situations that influence school life and are increasingly involved in discussing and assessing the progress they make towards their own targets.

### **Commentary**

24. All the decisions taken about pupils' individual and corporate health and safety are based on well thought out risk assessments. The daily routines, which support these, are carried out scrupulously by all staff. The building provides a safe, secure and well-maintained environment for pupils, where they are taught about personal safety and healthy living through many aspects of the curriculum. Minor accidents and incidents are consistently monitored to identify their causes and frequency, so that any necessary measures can be taken. Child Protection arrangements are comprehensive and all staff are knowledgeable and well trained.
25. The staff are all extremely knowledgeable about pupils' needs. On entry into the nursery, relevant and individual targets are set, against which they are assessed. This individualised monitoring continues through the school so that pupils can be properly supported by staff and outside agencies according to their level of need. Music therapy has recently been introduced for a few pupils, occupational therapy is available for high priority children, and therapists in all areas work closely with teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that each pupil receives the maximum benefit.
26. The school has worked hard to set up a dual-registration system for pupils from this school and local mainstream schools to offer education in the most appropriate setting for their individual needs. This has proved very successful in providing pupils with the specific academic and social opportunities to ensure these needs are met and skills developed.
27. Provision for work related learning is very good. The school begins to approach the move from school into work and training as pupils reach Year 7 when it is made clear that school is a preparation for work. From Year 10 they take part in, work experience, and pupils of all levels of capability make visits, listen to talks and watch drama productions. The Connexions Manager works closely with pupils over a three year period, and, particularly for those in the post-16 group, the Local Education Business Partnership provides vital support. The range of colleges attended by pupils is increasing, as the use of further suitable venues is constantly being explored.
28. The school is very clear that pupils' opinions count, and provides a wide variety of opportunities for these to be voiced, including the School Council and the interviewing of prospective candidates for vacant posts. This results in pupils who feel fully included in the life of the school and who are offered the opportunity to take part in such experiences as the local Youth Parliament.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community is **very good**. There are very good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very closely involved in the development of their children through regular meetings and reports provided by the school. Their opinions are sought at all times and highly valued by the school.
- The very good links with other schools clearly support pupils' academic and personal development, and also benefit those pupils from mainstream schools who attend Brooke School on a regular basis.
- Many organisations in the local and wider community provide highly effective support for the school. The high quality of visits, including a residential course, enriches the curriculum and the personal development of pupils.

### Commentary

29. The school involves parents in the education of their children very effectively. Information is shared through diaries, informal discussions and network and review meetings. The annual reports to parents show a remarkable insight into pupils and are very much appreciated by parents. The network meetings for pupils with complex needs give parents the opportunity to work with other professionals as well as teachers, teaching assistants and the schools senior managers. When pupils reach Year 9, parents take part in transitional reviews with the Connexions service, and sometimes social services, and these are beneficial in helping their children prepare for life beyond school.
30. The links that the school has built up with mainstream schools and colleges are extensive. They are of great value both to its own pupils and to those in the other schools with which it works. In addition, curriculum links have developed with other special schools in, for example, ICT and religious education. Mainstream school links support the science curriculum and provision for sport is being developed with a neighbouring comprehensive school. When appropriate, pupils spend time accessing a more challenging curriculum in mainstream schools, and post-sixteen pupils pursue some of their learning in local and regional colleges.
31. There are highly productive and well managed links with external organisations, which capitalises on their skills to the benefit of pupils in the school. The very close partnership with the Connexions service ensures pupils and their parents receive high quality information and counselling during the move towards the world of work. Business days organised by the Education Business Partnership provides pupils with hands on experience in the school setting. Through the Connexions Service, the school continues to form close links with those organisations providing work experience for pupils. Students have had joint residentials with Year 11 students from other local schools and similar experiences are planned for the future. This is of great benefit to their personal development.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent** and that of other key staff is **very good**. The effectiveness of management is **very good**. Governance is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses



- The headteacher gives outstanding leadership.
- The governors are very involved and supportive.
- Management, including the management of financial resources, is very effective.
- The school is well placed to continue improving.

## Commentary

32. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She brings her experience to bear in an extremely effective way. Communication is open and the headteacher is accessible. The task of developing the school on its new site has been very successfully carried out. She has an excellent understanding of what the school must do to continue to improve. There are well defined roles and responsibilities within the leadership team, and the other members support the headteacher very well. There is a clear sense of teamwork and shared values. All staff with particular responsibilities carry them out very well. The school is very inclusive and has a very strong ethos. Systems to monitor aspects of performance are securely in place. The school improvement plan focuses on pupils' achievement very well. This means that many pupils leave school with external accreditation in key skills, including numeracy and literacy. The school is developing the strategic planning for all subjects and phases.
33. Governance of the school is very good. Governors are very supportive and work hard on the school's behalf. They bring a wide range of personal and professional expertise to the school. They are ably led by a very experienced and committed chairperson and vice chairperson. Governors are directly involved in school life and challenge the leadership to improve the school. When they make a visit for any purpose, including a visit to the classrooms, it is their custom to write a few brief evaluative comments which are then shared. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It keeps the school under review and takes effective action to make necessary changes. It is very well involved in setting the strategic direction of the school. Since the last inspection governors have been considerably more involved in curriculum monitoring and overseeing the quality of teaching. All statutory requirements are in place.
34. Management is very good. The school's performance is evaluated carefully. The Local Education Authority is supportive in this process. Performance management is very well organised and successfully implemented. The outcomes are used effectively to determine training needs and link to school priorities. Subject leaders monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects through scrutinising planning, assessment and pupils' work, and in some cases, by observing teaching. The headteacher works very well with the bursar and the school's financial procedures are very good. This enables teachers to concentrate on teaching and governors to be active in fulfilling their role of monitoring the budget and planning improvements. There is strong financial planning and resources are harnessed to achieve the priorities of the school improvement plan. The school provides very good value for money. Finances for the year 2003/2004 are shown in the table below.
35. The school managers, governors and staff have worked assiduously to redress the issues arising from the last inspection. They have done this very successfully. The school has a very clear sense of direction, is ambitious and has the capacity to develop further.

## ***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,339,126	Balance from previous year	69,196
Total expenditure	1,375,715	Balance carried forward to the next	36,589
Expenditure per pupil	10,222		



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. It provides children with a very caring and effective start to school life.

36. There are currently 13 children in the Assessment Nursery. Children can start when they are two. All Nursery age children attend on a part-time basis with the three to four year olds in school in the mornings and the two to three year olds in the afternoons. In the Nursery, children tend not to have a statement of special educational needs. Currently there are ten children in the Reception Class, four children of Reception age and six in Year 1. Provision in the Nursery is outstanding because of the excellent quality of teaching and learning, the excellent relationships with the children, which give them security and confidence, and the way in which teachers and assistants work together to care for the pupils. The staff team in the Reception class have not been together long but are proving very effective overall. They are building on the very well established systems developed by the previous teacher. The children have very positive attitudes to school and develop high self-esteem. As a result, children achieve very well in all areas of learning. They make very good progress towards their individual targets and the general targets expected of them in the Foundation Stage.
37. The induction procedures for children starting in the Foundation Stage are excellent. They are geared to suit individual families' needs. Teaching and learning overall are very good in all areas of learning. They are excellent in the Nursery. Extremely high expectations are set and a very imaginative curriculum meets children's needs extremely well. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good overall. Very good leadership and management have kept the department on an upward track, managing change and improvements skilfully through very good procedures in planning, monitoring and assessment. Improvement has been very good since the last inspection. Staff have a very good range of ways of working out the children's exact learning needs. As a result, work is planned at three different levels to accommodate the needs of all children including those who are higher attaining or lower attaining. Overall, accommodation is very good with high quality resources. Children have an exciting place in which to learn. The school's indoor soft-play environment is very well used and provides an effective venue for adventurous activities.
- 38.

#### Example of outstanding practice in the Nursery

**Every minute of each day is taught time. The use of registration, drinks times and break times enhances pupils' personal development extremely well.**

From the moment children are welcomed by staff at the school door, they enter a "world of learning" that is geared exactly to their needs. Children "self-register" by recognising their name-cards, which they attach, mostly independently, to life-sized cut-outs of themselves dressed in their own clothes. This is exceptionally effective because it stimulates the children to gain increasing confidence in doing something for themselves. This confidence is built on very effectively. Children are taught by making use of their own everyday experiences. What they see, hear, and touch around them is used to reinforce learning within chosen themes. What is meant by "one" and "two" becomes clear as children choose between drinks at snack time. Their recollection of learning about water and floating is re-engaged when the fruit they are offered is shaped and decorated like a sailing boat. Even rain puddles are used by the staff to stimulate thinking and speaking when the puddles are coloured with paints to call to mind sea and sky. Parents are given help and encouragement to seek similar ways of stimulating their children's interest at home. They are also asked to join with the staff in teaching the children action songs. Currently the song "Row, row, row your boat" is being enjoyed greatly by the children, and on many occasions during the day, children sing and row their pretend boat with great glee.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of highly effective learning.
- Daily routines incorporate high expectations of behaviour. The children respond very well.

### Commentary

39. This area of learning has an extremely high profile in the Nursery and Reception Class. The adults are very effective in nurturing pupils' personal and social skills and generate a warm and secure atmosphere. Outstanding links with parents, both before their children start school and when they are in school, support children's development very well.

40. Classroom routines are quickly and securely established. They provide very good opportunities for children to develop independence and show responsibility in simple matters of routine. Interesting activities lead to very good work habits because they are designed to sustain children's concentration. Children are very well motivated and relate to each other very well.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective teaching of speaking, listening, and reading skills results in very good achievement.
- Writing skills are less well developed but are improving at a very good pace.

### Commentary

41. The children achieve very well. Achievement is very good because of teachers' thoughtful questioning, sensitive listening and the many varied opportunities that children have to talk, listen and read. Speaking and listening skills are taught very well and reinforced through a wide range of other activities, such as the role-play corner in the Nursery, which is currently a 'garage'.

42. Children recognise and respond very well to a broad range of signs and symbols used by staff as part of everyday reading and communication. They make good attempts to write by making marks on paper and on the writing boards in the outdoor area. Higher attaining children recognise and name the animals that went into Noah's Ark from animal noises recorded on a 'Big Mac'. They sit with books and magazines and turn the pages correctly. In Reception, children concentrate fully on storybooks that they share with staff. They talk about what is happening in the story and answer simple questions.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers grasp opportunities in all activities to promote children's mathematical understanding.
- Very good equipment and activities help children to achieve very well.

## **Commentary**

43. The very good quality teaching of practical activities, including counting, sorting, making patterns and working with different shapes makes a significant contribution to children's achievement. Staff make learning fun.
44. Children use computer programs, for example, to match the correct number to the number of 'ducks' on their 'touch screen'. Pupils are constantly asked to make choices about the order of the activities they are going to do. In the Reception Class, some children recognise, match and count numbers from one to five.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff plan a very good range of interesting activities that lay a strong emphasis on practical investigation. This makes learning interesting and exciting.
- The very well-planned outdoor activity areas enable children to have regular access to very effective experiences.
- Children are introduced to ICT at an early stage. They use computers and other equipment, such as 'Big Macs' regularly.

## **Commentary**

45. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about their world. Activities are interesting and are very well planned with a strong emphasis on investigation. Higher attaining children, for example, know that hot water will help turn jelly cubes into a liquid and that afterwards, a refrigerator will chill the jelly ready for eating.
46. Very good use is made of the outdoor area. For example, some children in Nursery became very involved in riding together on their large wooden toy train as they steered it around the secure play-area pathways. Those involved had to co-operate very well to ensure the train went in the chosen direction. Others investigated how water flowed through pipes in a specially prepared activity.
47. The staff provide well-chosen ICT programmes that reinforce the children's basic skills, for instance in counting, matching, learning numbers and recognising letters.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well because there are many opportunities for them to develop their skills, particularly in the very well resourced indoor soft-play room.

## Commentary

48. Children achieve very well in handling chalks, crayons, brushes and other tools because of the high focus on developing these skills. The soft-play area is of a very high standard and provides children with very good opportunities to develop skills such as balancing. The children are trustworthy, use equipment sensibly, and jump, crawl and climb with high levels of confidence. Large-wheeled toys are handled competently and children use balls and small equipment very well to develop manipulative skills.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very well planned and imaginative activities encourage creativity and contribute very well to the children's language development.
- Children are given very good opportunities to express their imaginative ideas in a wide variety of materials.

## Commentary

49. In the soft play area, children are constantly encouraged to recognise the vast array of coloured shapes, which they climb over or move through. All the children recognise the music used to signal the end of particular activities in the Reception class. They also respond very well to 'quiet time' at the beginning of some lessons when a lit candle and quiet music offers a very good spiritual moment. Children learn very well from role-play. Their responses indicate that they are observing and remembering real-life situations well.
50. The children work with a wide range of materials and media. They create bright paintings with chalk and paints. Those who need much adult support make colourful patterns with the wheels of their wheelchairs.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

Provision for English is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership in both the primary and secondary departments is very good and has led to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Achievement is improved, especially in writing, where it is now very good.
- Students in the post-16 class have good opportunities to learn in practical situations.
- Communication is used very well to promote inclusion.
- Effective planning extends the promotion of literacy skills across the curriculum.

## Commentary

51. Leadership and management in English are very good. The primary and secondary subject leaders are very effective. They have put in place measures to address the issues for

improvement in provision for English, which were identified by local authority literacy consultants. Both leaders have very good knowledge of their subject and of how to improve standards within it. They meet regularly with the local education authority's English adviser to share and improve these strategies. They monitor closely teachers' planning and the secondary subject leader, in her role as senior teacher, has monitored teaching. The primary subject leader plans to do this later this term. Monitoring has led to the provision of high quality, professional development and training for all teachers of English. Teachers respond to guidance from the subject leaders and plan their work very well. They are skilled at assessing the individual needs of their pupils and their strengths and weaknesses as learners. In Years 2 to 9, teachers follow the guidance of the National Literacy Key Stage 3 Strategy as appropriate, adapting these well to meet their pupils' special needs. All of this has had a strong impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the whole school, and has helped to bring about the significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is now very good with some that is excellent.

52. Pupils and students of all abilities, across the age range, achieve very well. This is chiefly due to the consistently high quality of teaching and learning and represents significant improvement since the previous inspection when achievement was good. From Year 2, pupils get off to a very good start and continue to make rapid gains. Writing has been targeted and teachers throughout the school have worked hard to encourage pupils and students of all ages to write fluently. This has paid off. Pupils in Year 5, eagerly write short sentences related to the themes of their lessons. By Year 7, pupils independently compose up to six sentences of creative writing and use the computer to improve and present their work. As pupils move up the school their creative writing skill improves, and by Year 11 pupils write their own brief poems contributing to an anthology. Reading is very good throughout the school, and by Year 7 pupils become sufficiently confident to read aloud to their class. Within the small group of pupils with profound and multiple difficulties, listening skills are extended very well. The work of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is externally accredited. This is through achievement awards and Entry Level examinations of the Welsh Examination Board. The extent and range of externally accredited courses completed is significantly higher than in most similar schools.
53. Students in the post-16 class are provided with many good opportunities to develop and extend their communication and their literacy. Their work is skilfully related by their teachers to a broad range of practical experiences that include learning in the work place, taking part in "Business Days" arranged by the local Education Business Partnership, and in a mini business enterprise. Since September, they have worked towards language and literacy on an adult literacy course which can be continued at the local college.
54. Those pupils and students who have oral language skills, are very keen to engage visitors in conversation, and, in lessons, relevant, lively and informative discussions take place. The school has taken significant steps to ensure that all pupils are given the means to communicate. It has done this very well. Signing, in MAKATON, is used very consistently and effectively and alternative and augmentative communication is becoming very well established. Electronic aids such as the "GO TALK" machine are used by non verbal pupils to help them join in discussion, and picture exchange communication systems and symbolic writing are also used.

## **Literacy across the curriculum**

55. Effective planning enables pupils and students to use their developing language and literacy skills to great effect in most subjects. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, and as a result speaking and listening have been strengthened. Key words are identified in the lesson plans for a range of subjects and used to very good effect to extend vocabulary and literacy skills. The promotion of imaginative language through play and multi sensory experiences enable pupils to think about and express how they are feeling. The development of accurate and well structured writing, as well as opportunities for reading, are

identified as important objectives in subject planning. The effective use of Individual Education Plans, (IEPs), to target the support given by teaching assistants strengthens language and literacy development very well.

56.

### **Example of outstanding practice in Years 2 and 3**

**A literacy lesson enables Year 2 and 3 pupils with severe learning difficulties, severe physical difficulties and autism to respond to the text of “The Three Little Pigs” and to sustain achievement over a prolonged period of time.**

The teacher growls, snuffles and grunts as she gives the characters voice, while, at the same time she signs the words so that all the children can enjoy the story. The teaching assistants join in. Children can't wait to answer the teacher's questions as they try to guess the character by the sounds she makes. Energised by this initial excitement the pupils work very hard. Using an interactive computer, the teacher asks them to identify the sounds made by chosen letters. Pupils, in turn, including those with severe physical disability, use the mouse to put their answers on the big white screen. They do this very quickly and accurately showing how much they have previously learned. No chance to reinforce learning is missed. Children finish the lesson by making a collage of characters labelling each with its name. They delight in each other's success, admiring the finished satin pink pigs and the fluffy wolves.

## **French**

Provision in French is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new co-ordinator is clear how the subject should develop and what steps need to be taken to improve provision and pupils' achievement.
- Very effective planning for lessons is now in place.
- Some pupils have their learning interrupted and records of assessment are sparse.

## **Commentary**

57. Since September 2004, the new co-ordinator has put in place three courses, two of which are accredited nationally. This is a good start. One is for pupils in Years 10 and 11 in French, and the other in multicultural studies for the same classes. The subject is now showing satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when French was not taught. The new co-ordinator is beginning to improve the subject well and is clear how to take this improvement further.

58. In French, most pupils in Years 7 to 9 are now achieving satisfactorily. They are revising how to greet other people, either those they know very well or others who they have only just met. They are developing appropriately a style of speaking that takes into account tone and intonation. Pupils use ICT programs independently and well to support this aspect of their learning. All signs are that provision in the subject is now improving well. Teaching and learning overall are good with some very good features. Staff have very good relationships with the pupils and activities are fun. Pupils are prepared to take part in role-play and show increasing confidence in using the French language. Lessons are prepared very well so that the content is suitable for all pupils including those who are higher and lower attaining. Teaching in multicultural studies was not seen and insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on pupils' achievement on this course.

59. Evidence of pupils' achievement since the last inspection is patchy. This is partly because pupils are rightly expected to respond orally for much of the time in lessons and little written work is available. Also, because different staff have taught the subject since the last inspection, a fully consistent approach to teaching and assessing pupils' progress had not been settled upon. Yet to be overcome is how the very small number of pupils with



physiotherapy needs, where sessions are planned during their French lessons, can receive more than 15 minutes of French per week. The children are having their prime need for physiotherapy met, but this limits their achievement in French. The school is aware of this and is planning to develop schedules for physiotherapy that do not always reduce learning opportunities in one subject.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and much better than at the last inspection.
- Achievement in mathematics is much improved and is now very good across the age range.
- Leadership in the subject is very effective and ways to bring about further improvement are sought.
- Computers are well used to extend learning opportunities.

### Commentary

60. Teaching and learning is now consistently very good, and as a result the needs of pupils, of all ages and capabilities are better met than they were at the last inspection. Assessment and recording of pupils' work is accurate and thorough. Pupils' work is regularly checked and the information that teachers gain from this enables them to draw up lessons that meet individual needs very effectively. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and teachers plan their work in accordance with it. Lessons are mapped out in great detail ensuring that there are well timed changes of activities, and, particularly, plenty of practical work. This motivates pupils and enables them to try hard for long periods of time. Due to the very good relationships they have with the staff, pupils respond positively and their enjoyment during lessons is obvious. They work hard and show great pride in what they can do. Their keenness to participate enables them to achieve at a far greater rate than expected.
61. The standards achieved in mathematics have improved very well since the last inspection. This reflects both the higher quality of teaching that pupils now receive and the well judged organisational changes that have been made to the way in which the curriculum is now delivered. Pupils from Year 7 upwards, are grouped into 'ability' sets for mathematics. This works well for pupils of all abilities, including those with additional special needs. Pupils regularly achieve the individual targets in mathematics that are set for them within the prescribed time. By the end of Year 11, many pupils show the very good progress they have made by gaining success in the Welsh Joint Examination Board Entry Level Certificate in mathematics. The course that is followed for this extends the higher attaining pupils in the school very well.
62. The subject leaders have developed and managed mathematics very well. They have a clear picture of how mathematics is developing across the curriculum since the last inspection. The secondary subject leader has built upon the very good practices established by the former primary subject leader who sadly and unexpectedly died just before this inspection. She has made effective use of assessment to gain detailed knowledge of pupils in all age groups. She is now looking further at ways to analyse electronically data about pupil performance so that valuable information about achievement by gender, age and capability will become more readily available.
63. Teachers use ICT effectively in mathematics lessons to develop knowledge and understanding and to add interest to learning. For example, a Year 6 class studying data collection used, very successfully, a "graphics" computer program. Pupils showed good

understanding of data representation, and they used the computers effectively to interpret and display their results. Younger pupils were also seen to make good use of a range of suitable mathematical computer programs such as 'Splosh, Draw and Paint' to illustrate shape and size. Teachers use ICT effectively to record their planning and to adapt work sheets for pupils who need to have information presented as symbols as well as text.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. The school provides good opportunities to promote numeracy skills through other subjects of the curriculum. Good examples seen of the practical use of mathematics included; the practice in money handling that was given to pupils and students through shopping expeditions, the developing of weighing and measuring skills in food technology, and the calculations necessary in work on forces in science. In lessons throughout the school and across the curriculum teachers readily take advantage of the many opportunities that work provides to count, to measure, to think about time and sequences, and to consider shape and size.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils work hard and are successful in improving their standards.
- Leadership and management keep the subject under review well.
- Teaching is well organised and effective.
- The well resourced science room is not used by younger pupils.
- Provision is much improved.

### **Commentary**

65. Pupils achieve well. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 11 many pupils achieve accreditation in the 'entry level' science award, equivalent to National Curriculum levels 1 to 3. Given their attainment on entry to the school this represents good achievement. Pupils work hard to reach these standards and their self-confidence is boosted as a result.
66. The two subject co-ordinators provide good leadership and management. Critical evaluation of the subject is good. Their medium and long term planning, and their record keeping, is comprehensive. Teachers are well supported, particularly through provision of exemplar lesson plans and briefing notes for all the strands of science. Support staff are deployed well in lessons to make certain that all pupils receive support that is appropriate to their capabilities. There are good links with a local secondary school.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are high expectations for behaviour. Planning is good, linking work to pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Assessment is good, showing clearly how pupils progress over time. Time is well used and pupils are actively engaged in a range of practical activities. There are opportunities to benefit from group work and whole class teaching. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed, providing support to individuals. Displays are very good, often linking with other subjects as in the case of the 'mini beasts' and 'travelling' (physical education). Pupils' numeracy and literacy are developed through measuring and the use of key words. Pupils behave well, sustain their concentration, and try hard. Pupils respond to focused questioning, and they are keen to offer their answers and to show their speaking skills. They enjoy using information and communication technology.

68. The younger pupils, particularly the more able of them, would benefit from using the science room for their practical tasks. The school also has the facilities and resources to offer students in post 16 some science based activities that might serve them well in the future but does not use them to the full. This is because it strives to separate primary and secondary education, but the advantages of using the specialist room outweigh the disadvantages.
69. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The most significant development has been the new science room but lesson planning has also improved and now takes into account the needs of pupils of differing abilities. In addition, assessment has developed well. There are now good records showing pupils' progress over time.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High quality teaching and effective planning ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Good accommodation and resources provide a good learning environment.
- Leadership and management are good, as is the commitment of staff to improve their own skills and knowledge.
- Assessment at all levels is good but could be electronically recorded to make analysis of pupils' achievement easier.
- ICT is used effectively in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

70. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is consistently good. This is good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was deemed to be satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully in order to make sure that pupils of all abilities are fully included in lessons. Activities are very well matched to the capabilities of pupils so that they are challenged but not daunted. This successfully motivates learning. For example, post-16 higher attaining students develop their skill in doing word processing, while in the same lesson, their lower attaining peers work hard in the sensory room using switches to investigate 'cause and effect' using lights and fans. As a result of the good teaching they are given, pupils' progress and achievement in ICT are good in all year groups. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and students at post-16, successfully pursue the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance, (AQA), units of accreditation. To challenge more able pupils and students and ensure they achieve external accreditation, the school has written several units which are matched well to the ability of the learners.
71. Recent improvements in resources and accommodation have led to the provision of a modern computer suite, a sensory room and computers in each teaching area with access to the Internet. This has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Computer programs are well matched to the learning needs of the pupils and provide good opportunities for whole class learning and individual needs.
72. The subject is well led and managed and the co-ordinator makes herself available for formal and informal support. All teaching staff have completed their New Opportunities Fund (NOF) ICT training, which in turn enhances pupil achievement because of better trained and knowledgeable staff.
73. All staff use a commercial system of assessment and recording and record progress manually. This works well and indicates where pupils are and what they should learn next.

This system can be recorded electronically so that pupils' achievement might be analysed more thoroughly. This is not yet done but plans to do so have been made. This would be beneficial for future planning. The co-ordinator agrees and is including development in her subject action plan.

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

74. The school has placed great emphasis, to very good effect, on the use of ICT to support subject teaching and learning across the curriculum. It has done this by including it in medium term planning for all subjects. ICT is used well within mathematics to arrange data and produce graphs. In English, pupils make effective use of well chosen programs to enhance story telling. ICT is also used to promote communication where this is difficult. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, one pupil used a speech synthesiser to communicate with staff when asking for a drink. Big Macs, which are communication aids, are used frequently across the school to enable pupils to make their needs known.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

Provision for history is **good** for Years 2 to 6 and **satisfactory** for Years 7 to 11.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and helps pupils to learn effectively.
- Pupils achieve well when enough time is allocated to the subject.
- The new subject leadership has made a promising start.

### **Commentary**

75. Good teaching and learning are enhanced by the well judged use of practical and experiential approaches to learning. Field trips play a large part in the history curriculum with pupils visiting such places as Kenilworth Castle, Charlcote Manor, the Tudor walk around Warwick and the Toy Museum. The many photographs taken on these occasions, and other material act as reminders of these journeys, and are skilfully used to enable pupils to recall what they saw, heard, smelled and touched. Lessons and activities become stimulating opportunities to set the facts that are learned within a personal frame of reference. Pupils are proud to share their work in history with others. In a memorable lower school assembly, one class sturdily rowed the Viking ship that they had helped to build, across the hall to the tune of "Row, row, and row your boat". An older group, at the same assembly, showed their photographs from Kenilworth, clearly explaining to the audience the significance of each picture.
76. Achievement is good and it is better for pupils in Years 7 to 9 than it was at the last inspection. Pupils get off to a good start in their junior classes, but, since the beginning of this term, history in the senior school has been taught in a carousel programme along with geography. This reduces the time available and inevitably puts a brake on progress. However, evidence of the good effect to which pupils have worked is to be found all around the school in the many excellent displays of pupils' history work. Very good use is made of art and design technology to illustrate events through time such as the Great Fire of London and the Battle of Hastings. Pupils' work on these themes has been turned into very attractive collages.
77. The subject leader has only been in overall charge of the subject since September and she is not a subject specialist. However, she is very keen to attend relevant courses and to

develop the subject further including the introduction of appropriate accreditation. She has made a good start. There are clear processes for assessment and assessments are recorded. Teachers' plans are monitored and the teaching of history is observed from time to time. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils.

## **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well but there is inadequate time allocated to the subject in secondary classes.
- Teaching is good.
- The subject is well led and resourced.

### **Commentary**

78. Overall, achievement is good. Younger pupils, in the primary classes, have a weekly geography lesson and this is helpful in ensuring that pupils' progress is continuous. However, since September, those in secondary classes have had less frequent lessons because geography is taught as part of a carousel of activities with history. The time allocated to geography in these classes is proving insufficient to accelerate progress and build on the good start children have already made, despite the high quality of most of the teaching. Over time pupils become familiar with aspects of their local area, with climate, with the language of direction, and with elements of economic activity such as modes of transport. The study of far away places is well established. Last year, Year 8 pupils showed their familiarity with countries beyond Britain as they made models of various significant world buildings, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Building. This was for a project entitled "Our trip around the World."
79. Teaching is good and on occasion excellent. As a result of excellent practice in teaching observed, Year 8 and 9 pupils developed their map interpretation skills very well as they used complex ordinance survey maps and route planning facilities on a web site. In doing this pupils greatly increased their knowledge of their home area and Rugby town. In general, teaching enhances the pupils' understanding of places and their geographical vocabulary with very effective use of ICT sources. They are coming to learn about environments and about how human activity has an impact on these.
80. Since September there have been two subject leaders, one for each for the primary and secondary phases. They consult with each other in order to ensure continuity in the pupils' learning. The planning undertaken by teachers is monitored. However, no monitoring has taken place of the teaching. There is no specific accreditation yet in the subject although there are plans to rectify this. Geography, does however contribute to ASDAN accreditation. Geography contributes strongly to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils. There are clear processes for assessment and assessments are recorded. Good use is made of assessment to plot the progress of pupils against appropriate levels. The subject leaders have ensured that ICT is used well. Teachers include ICT use in their planning. There are good resources and the subject has maintained its provision since the last inspection.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is effective with good use of resources to support learning about world faiths.
- Pupils achieve well and this supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is a new subject leader who has made a good start.

## **Commentary**

81. Teaching is good in religious education. It promotes learning successfully because teachers make extensive and highly appropriate use of tangible artefacts and of active learning, including role-play of the ceremonies and traditions of world faiths. They wear authentic costumes, eat the food, handle the ceremonial objects, and listen to the music associated with these faiths. This approach is particularly suitable for pupils with special educational needs. There are many stimulating opportunities for pupils to be practically involved in lessons. In Year 2, for example, children greatly enjoyed dressing up in Hindu costumes and making candle holders from dough to celebrate the Hindu festival of light, Divali. Practical learning for older pupils has a different slant. Post-16 students learn effectively through the termly day conferences that they hold, each based on a faith-related topic. This term the topic is Christian charity and they will link their activities to the Children in Need appeal. Records are kept of the progress each pupil makes over time, but if assessment is to be as useful to planning learning as it should be, it needs further development.

82. Achievement is good and, through a practical approach to learning, pupils amass a wealth of facts about world religions and begin to learn the underlying importance of faith. The subject makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are calm and thoughtful as they listen to Sikh music while adorning a model of the Golden Temple with gold paper or as they hear Buddhist chanting. The use of scented candles also helps to create a peaceful atmosphere for learning in which pupils can consider their own lives and values and those of others. Older pupils and students come to learn the importance of giving to others, taking turns and working together.

83. Leadership of the subject has recently been a shared responsibility between the headteacher and a part time member of staff, who is enthusiastic and fully committed to the subject. There has been an audit of resources, which are very varied and exciting and teachers' planning is monitored regularly. Monitoring of lessons is planned. Accreditation of pupils' learning through AQA entry-level examinations will commence in September 2005. The subject has maintained its position since the last inspection when it was deemed good.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

84. Because insufficient evidence from teaching and learning was available, a full judgement on the quality of provision was not made. Discussion with coordinators shows that leadership and management are satisfactory. Much work has been done to acquire a new design and technology room. This will be ready in the spring 2005. In the meantime pupils have very limited opportunities to work with resistant materials. They do, however, have the chance to work in food technology and do so. The timetable for pupils in Years 7 to 9 at present allocates too little time to the subject.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good for pupils in Years 2 to 6 and for those in Years 10 and 11 who are following a GCSE course.
- The achievement of younger pupils is very good as is that of those in Years 10 and 11 who are in the examination class.
- Good subject leadership has led to improved planning and teaching since the last inspection.
- Insufficient time is allocated to art for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

### **Commentary**

85. Art is taught to pupils in Years 2 to 6 by their own class teachers who draw upon the clear planning and guidance provided by the subject leader in preparing their lessons. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met and art is strongly incorporated into the work done in other subjects. Pupils are given very good opportunities to draw, paint, and record from observation, for example, by illustrating what they have seen on a history field trip to Kenilworth castle, as well as from imagination. They work hard at developing control of line and of tools and techniques. Very good teaching in primary classes stimulates interest so that all pupils, irrespective of individual levels of need, work enthusiastically. It also incorporates very detailed planning to ensure that pupils are carefully and fully guided and supported throughout the lesson. As a result, pupils are enabled to grasp concepts such as tone in colour and apply these in their own work. Teachers in the primary classes understand the capabilities of their pupils very well and make an accurate record of their achievements over time. This record helps them to take full account of pupils' learning needs when planning lessons. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 who express an interest are encouraged to follow a course leading to the GCSE. The teaching of this group by the subject leader is of high quality. Pupils are carefully introduced to the work of renowned artists and to the possibilities of making art in a wide variety of media. They work with dedication and enjoyment and are proud of what they achieve.
86. In the primary department the art work of the pupils is given high esteem. Work displayed on the walls shows that pupils have experimented with a variety of techniques. It illustrates developing knowledge and understanding of colour, line texture and form. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 achieve very well both in lessons and over time. They answer questions about their own work thoughtfully and show their appreciation of the work of others. Those in the examination group are on course to gain grades in the range E to C at the end of their course. This is, in relation to their capabilities, achievement of a high level. They have a broad acquaintance with the work of renowned contemporary and past artists and draw from these, inspiration for their own work. Very good illustrative resources have led, for example, to pupils experimenting with calligraphy basing designs around Japanese Kanji. Others have produced striking personal interpretations of the work of Georgia O'Keefe or the sculpture of Giacometti.
87. The subject leader has a clear grasp of the requirements of the subject and the means by which pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding might best be developed. She produces very clear outline and medium term planning for teachers of art across the age range. Some pupils in the secondary phase are taught by the leader who is a specialist in art. Teaching quality, including assessment of pupils' achievements, has, therefore, improved since the last inspection. It is now very good in primary classes and in the examination group.
88. In organising the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9, the school has found it to be difficult to allocate sufficient time to art. Most are scheduled to receive only 25 minutes of art per week, if the time made available is averaged out over the school year. This is not enough to ensure that pupils in Years 7 to 9 for whom access to teaching in art is an entitlement, have

a realistic chance of building on the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Acknowledging this, a recent decision was made to offer art as part of a carousel of practical subjects. Pupils would receive an hour of art each week for a half term but, would then, have a half term or more in which art was not taught. This arrangement, however, seems also to undermine continuity and progress in learning for pupils for whom regular and frequent learning experiences are a necessity. The impact of this is seen in the fact that the achievement of pupils in Years 7 to 9 is only satisfactory.

## **Music**

89. There was insufficient evidence of teaching and learning to make a judgement about the provision in music. Discussion was held with staff about the place of music in the school's programme for 'Creative Arts'. As a result of the very good leadership and management by the co-ordinator there is a very clear strategic direction for the subject. Since the last inspection the most significant development is the use of a 'specialist' room. This helps to give music high status within the school community and pupils achieve well. Resources are very good, enabling pupils to access a wide range of percussion and non percussion instruments. The older pupils are taught by the music 'specialist' and the detailed assessment records show that they are making good progress over time, including in solo singing. Music 'therapy' is also provided to individual pupils on a one to one basis where necessary. The use of a visiting 'drummer', visitors from other schools and visits to the ballet, for example, add to the pupils' enjoyment of music. Every week many pupils attend the lunchtime 'Singing Club'. The regular musical productions - which recently included the primary pupils' Christmas performance, and the secondary pupils' "Oliver" and "Cats" - are a strength of the subject, and are well received by parents. School records show that most pupils are involved in some way, including in the writing and stage design.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

90. There was insufficient evidence of teaching and learning to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision in physical education. Teachers' planning and records show that the pupils achieve well and are given opportunities to experience the full range of activities that are required by National Curriculum regulations. The school rightly places strong emphasis on teaching all pupils how to swim and extensive use is made of the school pool and the local leisure centre. Links with the community are good. Pupils attend the residential 'Frontier Camp' as well as dance lessons with pupils from the local secondary school. They also use the local tennis club, participate in the 'TOPS' football initiative, and take part in a dance festival with pupils from similar schools. Leadership and management in the subject are very good. The quality of the documentation to support teachers in their planning is very good. There are 'exemplar' lessons and clear evaluations of what works and what does not work. Where appropriate, co-ordinators help with lesson delivery. The assessment of pupils is good and has improved since the last inspection.

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

### **Citizenship**

91. Too little teaching and learning was seen to enable a judgement about provision in citizenship to be made. It is clear from records and discussions with staff that the systematic teaching of citizenship through a programme that addresses all of the requirements of the National Curriculum commenced at the start of the present school year. Elements of the subject, had, however, long been embedded in the very good programme of personal, social and health education that the school provides. The subject leader has a very good



understanding of how the subject must develop and is supporting teachers in planning relevant lessons and learning experiences.

## **Personal social and health education**

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school gives, in its daily life, high priority to the personal, social and health related learning of its pupils.
- Teaching in lessons is of high quality and promotes both enthusiastic learning and contributes to very good achievement.
- Leadership in the subject is very good.

### **Commentary**

92. Opportunities are sought throughout the school day to enable pupils to establish and develop independent social skills, confidence in their own capabilities and understanding and appreciation of their own needs and those of others. For example, assemblies for younger pupils encourage children to share their work with all and to explain what they have accomplished, as well as to show their appreciation of the efforts and successes of fellow pupils. For older pupils, including those in the post-16 class, assemblies have a broader social theme. They stress the role of pupils as members of a wider society, introduce them to important social customs and conventions and include structured opportunities for pupils to collaborate with one another in a common purpose. In lessons in all subjects teachers and classroom staff address the personal and social learning targets of their pupils. They do this through dialogue, through giving time and attention to aspects of healthy living and through offering pupils opportunities to take on responsibilities for themselves and others. The teachers are particularly skilful and successful in enabling pupils to resolve emotional and relationship difficulties. Very good use of time is made at lunch to develop independent habits of personal hygiene and to reinforce behaviour that exemplifies awareness of and consideration for others.

93. Teaching is planned very well and lessons provide pupils with well judged opportunities to build on what they already know. In lessons about firework safety, for example, younger pupils showed that they understood the message and were eager to contribute their own stories and experiences. They were evidently thinking hard about the topic, which held inherent interest for them. Getting older pupils to take similar interest in caring for their clothes to ensure personal freshness was an altogether more challenging proposition, but nevertheless, in a very good lesson, the teacher fully engaged the pupils' attention. She built on her excellent relationship with the class to move them on to practical tasks at a level suited to their capabilities and that they all enjoyed. Pupils achieve very well both in their lessons, and, as can be verified from individual records, over time.

94. The subject leader is very effective and has worked hard to keep personal, social and health education at the forefront of the school's practice. She has recently introduced additional structure into long term and medium term planning by adopting a suitable published scheme for pupils in Years 2 to 6; this scheme incorporates citizenship. Clear learning objectives for each topic are made explicit and the work concentrates on developing pupils' transferable learning skills. For pupils in Years 7 to 11 planning is based on the advice of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Other units of work on sensitive issues are added to this. The leader advises all teachers who deliver the PSHE lessons. For almost all pupils, their capabilities make a finely graded, criteria based assessment scheme, such as the P-Scales, appropriate. The school has recently adopted, for the purpose of assessing its younger pupils, a version of this called "B-Squared", which is very well suited to their needs.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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