

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BROOKFIELD SCHOOL

Hereford

LEA area: Hereford

Unique reference number: 131817

Headteacher: Oreme Evans

Lead inspector: George Derby

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th July 2005

Inspection number: 268543

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 – 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	49
School address:	Grandstand Road Hereford
Postcode:	HR4 9NG
Telephone number:	01432 265153
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Jones
Date of previous inspection:	16 th – 17 th June 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Brookfield School is an average sized special school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It opened in 2002 as a new school in a new building. Late in 2002 it was placed in special measures, following its first inspection. In 2003 it was inspected again by HMI who removed it from special measures.

Many of the pupils' difficulties with behaviour stem from problems they have with their language, learning or social needs. Just over half of pupils are of average ability. Of the remainder, a small number have moderate learning difficulties or mild learning difficulties, some have specific learning difficulties and a few have mild forms of autism. Overall, most pupils enter the school with attainment which is below average. Many have gaps in their knowledge, often because of their time out of mainstream school due to exclusion. Although the school can take pupils from the age of five, it rarely does, and the current pupils range from Year 3 (eight years) to Year 11 (16 years). Nearly all the pupils are boys. The two girls in the school are educated in the special classes identified below. Eight pupils are taught in the primary class and secondary pupils are taught in four mixed age classes. The school draws its pupils mainly from Hereford and outlying areas. All pupils come from white (British) backgrounds and around 50 per cent are entitled to free school meals.

The school has two groups which differ in the way they work compared with the rest of the school. The intervention group admits pupils from mainstream school who are experiencing difficulty in coping with their behaviour in mainstream schools and who are at risk of exclusion. The pupils (up to eight in total from reception to Year 6) are dual registered and attend the intervention class usually for two or three days per week and from eight to 12 weeks in total. They return to their mainstream schools for the remainder of the week. This group is taught in the separate primary building on the school site. The Arrow Group pupils are those in Years 10 and 11 who have had considerable difficulty in the past engaging with education, usually had severe behaviour problems and their attendance has often been very poor. The group is situated offsite, approximately 10 minutes away. The group often use local facilities in order to develop their work-related skills.

The school gained a Sportsmark Gold award in 2003, a Football Association Charter Mark in 2004 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25349	George Derby	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology
9146	Mark Brennard	Lay inspector	
10099	Sue Lewis	Team inspector	English Modern foreign language Music Physical education Special educational needs
8810	Sue Aldridge	Team inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship Religious education

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
WORK RELATED LEARNING	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 TO 4	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. It makes a significant difference to pupils' lives and their futures. Pupils' achievements are good, as is the quality of teaching and learning. The school is also successful because of the way it values the pupils, gives them a great sense of achievement and improves their self-esteem. The leadership of the headteacher is good; she has a clear vision of what needs to be done. Overall, leadership and management are good, although management is satisfactory. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The improvement in pupils' personal development and particularly in their behaviour, self-esteem and confidence is very good; one pupil received an award for bravery recently.
- The relationships between pupils are good and are very strong with staff; there is great respect for one another.
- Staff are very good role models for pupils.
- Provision for physical education and sport is very effective; achievement in art is very good.
- Support for pupils' self-expression and their achievement in speaking and listening is very strong for most pupils.
- There is insufficient oversight of the curriculum across the whole school; a few pupils are not taught French and music in the secondary department and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory in the primary department.
- Support for learning outside lessons is inconsistent.

Improvement since the school was inspected in 2003 has been satisfactory. The school is demonstrating a good capacity to improve further. Pupils' progress in reading is good. Pupils' progress across the year groups and departments has improved because planning is better. However, the overview of progress from the primary to secondary stages is insufficiently clear or managed. Pupils have clear targets in pupil-friendly language which address well their specific behavioural needs.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievements are good. These are good in Years 3 to 6 (primary) and in Years 7 to 11 (secondary). A small number of pupils do well to reach the expected level for their age (and occasionally higher) in the Year 6 and 9 national tests. Older pupils go on to attain GCSE passes in mathematics and art and design as well as passes in Entry Level (English and history) and in the computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) course. Some take the latter awards in Year 10. Best progress is made in communication (speaking and listening), physical skills (physical education and sport) and art and design, where it is very good. Pupils achieve well in ICT in secondary, and in English, mathematics and religious education. Achievement is satisfactory in science mainly due to satisfactory teaching. It is satisfactory in the subject of personal, social and health education (PSHE); although there is no formal programme of study there are many opportunities provided. It is unsatisfactory in ICT in the primary department. The pupils do well in word processing and the use of the Internet but the programme of work concentrates mainly on these aspects and so is underdeveloped. The success of the intervention class is measured by the

many pupils choosing to attend mainstream school. The Arrow Group makes a positive difference to pupils who would not engage in education previously. Achievement in vocational learning is good. However, there is still room for improvement in their attendance.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are good and their moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils' interest in their lessons and their behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory overall. It is unsatisfactory for the Arrow Group, although the pupils' improvement in attendance since entering the school is good. Punctuality is good. Exclusions have been very high but have significantly reduced and there are none currently.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good as is the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is good across the school. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of their subjects and generally have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. Staff manage the pupils very well and provide interesting and challenging activities which involve the pupils well in their learning. The targets to help pupils improve are written in child-friendly language, although staff do not always refer to them in lessons. The use of good quality resources interests and motivates the pupils well, although only a few use the interactive features of the new interactive whiteboards and there is little use of computers by pupils for learning. A weakness is homework. Little is provided; this is unsatisfactory. The satisfactory curriculum is supported by an adequate range of opportunities overall to enrich pupils' learning. These are very good for sport. However, a few pupils in Year 9 do not have French and music as required. Care for pupils is good, as are the links with the community. Links with parents and assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. However, the quality and amount of information parents get in the prospectus and in reports are limited.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management overall, and the governance of the school are good. The headteacher continues to lead the school well and is ably supported by the senior team. There is a clear view of what needs to be done. However, there are some still some aspects of its work, such as the provision for subjects for all age groups, that are not fully up and running, although development is planned for. Only two subjects in the primary department are fully led and managed whereas all except music are in the secondary department. The governors provide knowledgeable and effective support. However, not all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils generally have positive views of the school. There are very few criticisms of the school's work. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are:

- Improve the management of the curriculum overall and the leadership of subjects across the whole school, ensuring that all subjects are fully led and managed, providing full programmes of work for all subjects and especially ICT in the primary department.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to learn outside lessons through homework.

and, to meet statutory requirements, ensure that:

- The full National Curriculum is taught to all year groups.
- Those pupils who have speech and language therapy provision on their Statements receive it.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Pupils' achievements are good. They are good in Years 3 to 6 as well as in Years 7 to 11. Standards in all subjects are below what they should be for the pupils' ages, although for some individual pupils across the school these are nearer to those expected for the pupils' ages. There is no significant difference in the achievement of the boys and the two girls. Those with additional needs make similar progress to the rest of the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's ethos and the way it supports pupils' self-esteem has a positive effect on pupils' achievement.
- There is strong support for pupils' with additional needs in literacy and numeracy; where pupils have more complex needs, such as a few who have complex communication difficulties, they are not supported sufficiently, as outlined on pupils' Statements.
- French, music and ICT are not fully taught to all pupils; this limits pupils' achievement in the primary department in ICT.
- Achievement is good in most subjects inspected; it is very good in physical education and art and design.

Commentary

1. The school's climate for learning is good and fully supports pupils' personal and academic achievement. This means that pupils who previously were often antagonistic to learning and to school generally, leave with attitudes and skills that form a real foundation for later achievement. The very good teamwork results in pupil plans which are generally specific and which optimise the efforts of the staff; these ensure that pupils make the best progress. However, occasionally not all plans take full account of all pupils' special educational needs and focus mainly on reading, numeracy and behaviour instead of dealing with some of the underlying causes. In addition, a few pupils with more complex needs identified on their Statements do not get the support outlined. This is because of a lack of external support. Overall, the support for pupils who have additional difficulties with reading and numeracy is effective and these pupils achieve well. Good personal support, as well as the good use of ICT, contributes well to their positive achievement.
2. Good teaching leads to strong learning. The broad range of activities in lessons means that pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points and by the time they leave have improved significantly in their ability to deal with life and work among others. However, not all aspects of all subjects are taught. Three Year 9 pupils miss out on French and music and are unable to make progress in these subjects. In addition, the lack of a formal programme for ICT in the primary department means that not all aspects are taught and the curriculum is narrow. As a result, pupils' achievements in ICT are unsatisfactory in this part of the school.
3. Pupils achieve well in English and particularly well in their speaking and listening skills. However, those few pupils that have identified communication difficulties get little support for their needs, as mentioned above. Achievement in reading is good. Although achievement in writing is satisfactory, there are not enough opportunities in lessons and little ICT is used to aid reluctant writers. Pupils achieve well in mathematics because it is well taught and staff are skilful at extending pupils' understanding through practical everyday applications. They achieve well in their examinations in Years 10 and 11. Good planning in ICT and effective teaching in the secondary department result in good achievement by pupils. They do well in their award bearing courses in Years 10 and 11. Secondary pupils achieve well in religious education. This good achievement is associated with pupils' positive attitudes towards the

subject, good teaching and learning, and good improvements in provision in recent years. Very good achievement in physical education is as a result of a comprehensive programme, planned and taught with a high level of expertise.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is satisfactory overall and punctuality good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong moral code has a positive influence on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- The school's approach to valuing pupils' contributions significantly enhances their confidence and self-esteem.
- The way in which the school promotes good relationships is very effective.
- The provision for spirituality is good, although, at times, staff miss opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own performance.

Commentary

1. The very structured start to the school day is indicative of the school's desire to set clear boundaries and high expectations. This strong moral code is central to the school's approach to behaviour management with clear rules, and close supervision by staff of all activities. Pupils respond well to these arrangements and, as a result, they behave well. In lessons the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy, together with recognition of good work through praise, helps to raise their self-esteem very well. Pupils value the positive interaction with their teachers who respect and value their contributions. This positive ethos also makes a significant impact on attitudes, where the rise in the number of pupils attending on a regular basis (compared with their attendances prior to their admission at Brookfield) provides the clearest indication that pupils enjoy coming to school. Teachers provide very good role models and their supportive approach encourages pupils to work hard in lessons.
2. The creation of a positive ethos has resulted in a school where everyone feels valued. Relationships between the staff and pupils are very strong and between pupils themselves are good. Much work has been directed at helping pupils to relate well to one another through listening to them in lessons and resolving their concerns. Sport is a particular strength with team games helping to make a significant contribution to pupils' social development. The Arrow Group has also been successful in getting pupils to appreciate the concepts of trust and sharing.
3. The strength of provision aimed at producing individuals who are fit to play their role in wider society is enhanced further by the strong emphasis on spirituality, especially self-knowledge and reflection. Pupils demonstrated great compassion and maturity in an English lesson about Wilfred Owen and World War I and a circle time debate on euthanasia. Pupils were inspired by visits to see the woodcarvings of conceptual artist Ashley Giles together with a tour of the Old Trafford Stadium. At the end of lessons, however, there is not always enough discussion on how well pupils have learned or behaved. Too often, staff tell the pupils rather than involve them in evaluating their own performance.
4. Attendance at 81.6 per cent for the current year is satisfactory and is a considerable improvement on previous years when attendance figures were low. Improvements have resulted from improved monitoring and by introducing a system of first day phone calls to follow up absences. Incentives in the form of awards are also helping to encourage good attendance. Despite these improvements, administrative arrangements for monitoring the attendance of pupils who attend the Arrow Group lack clarity. Many pupils in this group show significantly improved attendance; however, the overall attendance of this group (61 per cent) is much lower than the rest of the school and needs improving. Exclusions, in the past, due to

difficult behaviour have been unacceptably high. They have reduced this year to just 67 relating to 17 pupils (all boys) and in the six weeks before this inspection there had been no exclusions at all. The school recognises it needs a more varied and staged approach to providing for pupils who exhibit extreme behavioural difficulties.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	9.3	School data	9.1
National data	Not applicable*	National data	Not applicable*

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

** Data is not available for latest reporting year*

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
49	145	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. This is mainly because the quality of teaching, learning and care is good. The sound links with parents and the very good use of the community have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Links with schools and colleges are also good. The curriculum is satisfactory as are the opportunities outside lessons to enhance learning and personal development.

Teaching and learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are calm and pupils work productively.
- Staff's knowledge of their subjects is strong; this inspires pupils.
- The best written planning identifies what each individual should learn by the end of the lesson.
- Opportunities to discuss pupils' response in lessons are sometimes squeezed out because of lack of time.
- Although assessment procedures have improved recently, the school still does not have in place documentation that gives a clear picture of how each pupil is doing in all subjects.
- Homework is limited, as are pupils' opportunities to work together in lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	9 (20%)	27 (60%)	9(20%)	0	0	0

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

5. Teachers manage pupils very well. This is based on the very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. There is a great deal of respect for pupils and in turn the pupils

respect their teachers and assistants. There are very few difficulties in lessons and pupils work hard because they are interested and rise to the challenges that are set. Pupils' responses are very carefully monitored during lessons and their effort and attainment rewarded at the end of the lesson. Pupils gain a great sense of achievement when they hear how well they have done but sometimes staff do not have enough time to discuss this with pupils and to ask the pupils for their own evaluation of their performance.

6. Teaching assistants provide much valuable help during the practical parts of lessons and provide valuable academic and emotional support for pupils. Due to their very good relationships with pupils they can often completely turn a pupil around who may be displaying a negative response. At times, however, when the whole class is taught, they do not always have a clear enough role and often sit and listen to the teacher with the pupils. They complete the pupils' behaviour log sheet at the end of lessons and at times contribute to the evaluation of a pupils' response. Occasionally, when this is part is rushed, they have little say in this assessment.
7. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and of the pupils' special educational needs. This helps them plan well for their individual needs and they generally take good account of these. Overall, the written planning is satisfactory. It varies from detailed plans which identify what specific pupils will learn to more generalised plans where there is just one objective for the whole class. In physical education and art and design, in particular, the staff's knowledge is very good and through their own skills teachers inspire the pupils to try hard with their work. The pace of lessons across the school is generally swift and activities are highly motivating and maintain pupils' interest.
8. Pupils are clear about what they are learning; objectives are shared with pupils and teachers ensure that activities are well matched to the pupils' age and stage, as well as their emotional and learning needs. Staff are beginning to pay attention to pupils' differing styles of learning and lessons are reasonably well balanced in the way activities address the pupils' visual, auditory and kinaesthetic needs. Teachers are starting to make use of ICT to do this and the relatively new interactive whiteboards are beginning to be used. However, at present, few make full use of their interactive features. There is a recognition that these can provide highly motivating starts to lessons, which can engage pupils sometimes more effectively than more traditional methods which just involve teacher talk.
9. Little homework is set and there are few opportunities for pupils to learn outside lessons. In addition, in very few subjects do pupils have opportunities to work together and collaborate in their learning. Where this takes place, such as in physical education, this is done well.
10. The improvement in assessment since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has introduced the use of a commercial scheme, 'Goal', to help make collection of data more systematic. This has strengthened assessment, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science (and ICT in the secondary department), but assessment in a number of other subjects is inconsistent. For instance, there is no assessment system in ICT in the primary department. Assessment is very good, for example in physical education, where detailed records are kept of pupils' skills levels and responses to lessons. The school has a planned programme to move forward the moderation of pupils' work in different subjects. In English and mathematics the information gained from assessment is used well to 'set' pupils in groups by their ability. Data is more systematically collected in these subjects and the school has made a good start in the analysis of it to support whole-school and group target setting. Not all teachers know this information, however, so some miss opportunities for supporting literacy and numeracy in their lessons. Most teachers and teaching assistants do, however, have very good informal knowledge of where pupils are up to in their subjects and give strong support in classes so that pupils achieve well. However, marking is variable and is not always used effectively. Targets in individual educational plans are shared well with pupils and most know what they need to do to achieve even more. However, they could be involved even more in evaluating their own learning.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular opportunities is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The move to a secondary model of subject teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11 (as would take place in a secondary school) and a good number of subject specialists have helped to raise standards.
- The provision for the Arrow Group is well matched to pupils' needs.
- The intervention class curriculum requires revision as it is not balanced enough for the part-time pupils.
- There is a very good range of sporting activities.
- Not all pupils in Year 9 have French and music as required.
- There is no planned written programme for PSHE or for ICT in the primary department.
- Although the accommodation is fairly new, there are a number of significant weaknesses and subject resources in ICT are limited.

Commentary

11. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection two years ago. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are now organised into classes that are taught by a good range of subject specialists. Several teachers are experienced in teaching pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and most staff manage pupils well. As a result of these changes, teaching, learning and achievement have all improved. Staff have worked hard to develop subject planning. However, plans rely on a two-year cycle and this does not match the organisation of pupils into classes. This means that teachers have to track what each pupil has covered to ensure that they do not repeat or miss out on topics. They generally do this well but it takes time and occasionally there is some repetition.
12. Provision for the Arrow Group is strong in several respects. Staffing is good; a full-time experienced teacher is in charge and a teaching assistant, who is a trained counsellor, provides good support. The curriculum is highly individualised and a large number of links enable previously highly disaffected pupils to learn in settings which are quite unlike school. This is what attracts the pupils to the provision. There is a strong focus on preparation for the world of work and the curriculum includes independence skills and activities such as outdoor pursuits. Pupils' needs are met well. A few have improved their attendance dramatically; several obtain nationally recognised qualifications, and most go on to meaningful placements, either in work or further education. The accommodation, distant from the school, is of poor quality and there are few resources for learning, but pupils spend little time there. Although literacy, numeracy and PSHE are integral to pupils' individual programmes, no basic entitlement for pupils is clearly identified, such as in a curriculum statement. Overall, the provision is satisfactory.
13. The intervention class is made up of part-time pupils who generally attend for two to three days each week and are taught in their mainstream schools for the remainder of the time. The curriculum planned for them aims to cover all subjects and does this well in relation to English and mathematics. Other subjects are organised according to the days pupils attend but are not related to the needs of pupils or balanced with what is provided in their mainstream schools. This group is in danger of overstretching itself and trying to cover too much, as a result. Discussion with the leader of this class identified that the school is aiming to develop a more 'topic-based' approach in September. This is where the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are identified and where humanities, creative and practical subjects can be 'integrated' to ensure greater relevance for the part-time pupils. This is a more appropriate way of organising the curriculum across the week given the part-time nature of pupils.

14. Pupils have access to a very wide range of competitive sports, including opportunities to play alongside mainstream peers. Photographic evidence of the Arrow Group shows particularly challenging activities such as wall climbing and abseiling. At present, there are activities after school on one afternoon each week. However, there are few school journeys or residential experiences. The school has plans to improve this situation from September 2005.
15. Although the school strives to ensure that it provides all the required subjects, it has not yet achieved this in Years 7 to 9, where a small number of Year 9 pupils, taught alongside Year 10 and 11 pupils, do not have French or music. The curriculum for music is narrow and not formally planned. Arrangements are in place to ensure that all receive their entitlement next September.
16. Provision for PSHE is satisfactory. Experiences are provided as part of the teaching in science, physical education, food technology and circle time. The Healthy Schools Award has led to visitors, such as the police and a theatre group, providing sessions on topics such as drugs and alcohol awareness. The school nurse supports sessions on sex and relationships education. However, these are not provided as part of a planned programme and so parts of the PSHE curriculum are not as secure as they might be. The PSHE policy states that there is a rolling programme of experiences, but this is not written down. The ICT curriculum for pupils in the secondary department is good and well planned. By contrast, there is no such planning in the primary department.
17. The building is only just over three years old and has a number of strengths. It is modern, light and has generously proportioned rooms, including a reasonable number of specialist rooms in the secondary department. The separate primary accommodation is a strength, although some practical areas are very small. The external environment is good. However, the building is not fully accessible to people with mobility difficulties. The storage rooms in the hall are not accessible, being located about three metres above floor height without any stairway. The changing rooms and showers for physical education are located in an adjacent social club and the door into this is locked. The kitchen is small and there is no music room. The shared design and technology/art and design workshop is laid out with machinery in such a way that makes practical working in art difficult at times. Although resources are satisfactory overall, they are limited in ICT. They are adequate for teaching the subject and good for supporting independent learning in literary and numeracy. However, for other subjects, the range is narrow. Not enough emphasis is placed on identifying and purchasing these by subject leaders.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils is good. Procedures for support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are satisfactory. The way in which the school seeks and acts upon the views of pupils is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for meeting pupils' pastoral needs are good
- The trust which staff develop with pupils is very good.
- There is strong personal support for pupils based on staff's good knowledge of pupils.
- The arrangements for health and safety and child protection are effective.

Commentary

18. A number of the pupils attending Brookfield have experienced a lack of care and attention in their early lives. It is, therefore, important that the school fills that gap and this it does very successfully. In both the primary and secondary phases there is a good ratio of staff to pupils ensuring that all pupils receive significant levels of attention. Ensuring that pupils improve their behaviour is central to the school's work and to facilitate this there are effective arrangements for monitoring individual behaviour targets. Pupils also respond well to the opportunities to

earn merit awards and raffle tickets in order to gain a prize in assembly. This has also helped to raise their self-esteem and confidence.

19. Comments in the pupil questionnaires and interviews with pupils indicate that they appreciate the way in which teachers treat them with great respect. This engenders a sense of trust between staff and pupils and is an important aspect in helping to develop their social skills. In lessons the effective use of praise and humour creates an atmosphere which encourages pupils to work hard.
20. The personal support given to pupils is good and staff's informal knowledge of pupils and their development, especially their personal skills and social and emotional needs, is also good. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are tracked regularly and adequately through the records kept by staff about pupils' responses in lessons and throughout the day. Assessment informs planning in the core subjects but is less developed in the non-core subjects. The information is collated through the 'Goal' assessment system and is enabling the school to examine variations in progress and to identify where pupils are having difficulty. Good advice and guidance is provided for older pupils through work-related studies, PSHE opportunities and careers work.
21. The headteacher, as the child protection officer, is well versed in the procedures outlined in the school's child protection policy. This is of paramount importance and is effectively managed. She has sensibly ensured that there will be cover for her during any absence by training a teaching assistant in child protection. The school's health and safety policy is also good, clearly identifying roles and responsibilities. There is good provision for first aid with five fully qualified first aiders. The new condition of the building means that it complies with all the necessary fire regulations and the caretaker and cleaning staff ensure that it is maintained in a good condition.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The links with the community to develop confidence and responsibility are very good.
- The links with other schools and colleges, to promote team work and inclusion, are good.
- The efforts to engage parents in their children's education are good.
- The quality of information provided by the school on its work and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

22. The very good links which Brookfield has established with the community are built around sports and outdoor activities. At the heart of this provision is the South Wye Valley Community Project whose remit is to use sport as a tool to tackle drug misuse and anti-social behaviour. Through football, rugby, archery, canoeing and outdoor pursuits such as mountain biking, climbing and kayaking, pupils get the opportunity to learn vital skills such as teamwork, looking after one another and adhering to the concept of rules. Such has been the impact of these activities on building confidence and taking responsibility that, amongst pupils at Brookfield, five are now pursuing the Junior Sports Leader Award. Furthermore, these pupils have become known and respected within their community and, as a result, the school's reputation has benefited greatly.
23. Sport also plays a vital role in developing links with other schools and in providing opportunities for all pupils to be included in activities. There are regular fixtures in football and cricket and through these the emphasis on team spirit galvanises pupils to work together. The work of the intervention class is well regarded by those mainstream schools who benefit from

the facility, and as a result, close links are created and expertise in behaviour management is shared. Brookfield is part of a local school cluster through which funding has been secured to organise joint events to promote cultural development. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 took part in an art day and a Japanese drama day. Through being included in mainstream activities, Brookfield pupils have demonstrated that they can behave well and be respected by their peers.

24. The school has also been successful in creating good relationships with parents. From the time children join Brookfield the headteacher insists that they take an interest in their pupils' education. This creates a solid foundation on which ongoing relationships are built. Parents responding to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the benefits that the school has brought to their children, particularly in regard to improving behaviour. The school has also made strides to engage parents in their children's education by inviting a group of four parents to attend the weekly cookery lesson in the primary department. Although on a small scale this early parental involvement is helping to erode some of the scepticism that many of them harbour about the benefits which education can bring.
25. The quality of information for parents about the school and pupils' standards and progress is lacking in a number of ways. The prospectus has a number of sections missing and, as a result, does not meet statutory requirements. Annual reports to parents do not give enough information on what pupils know, understand and can do. There is little information about the level their child is working at and few clear, specific targets for improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership by the headteacher is good. She has high aspirations and a clear vision for the school and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. This has helped to move the school forward well from its previously weak position. Governance is good overall. Management is satisfactory as is the leadership by key staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher shows great determination to improve the school.
- Planning for school improvement is detailed and thorough, although how it measures its success could be sharper.
- The school reflects well on its work, its core values of respect, and building pupils' confidence, trust and self-esteem.
- Not all subjects in the primary department have a subject leader and the links between primary and secondary programmes are not fully developed.
- At the heart of improvement has been direct observation of the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher and key staff.
- Governors are very supportive of the work of the headteacher and staff know the school and its pupils well.
- Not all statutory requirements are met, but some are because of a lack of external provision.

Commentary

26. The headteacher leads the school well and is effectively supported by an experienced senior management team. The school is just three years old and had a very weak beginning; however, it has come a long way in the three years. With few resources, unsatisfactory teaching and an undeveloped curriculum it was placed in special measures in its first year. It did remarkably well to be removed from special measures a year later and this is testament to the sheer hard work of all staff and the strong leadership of the headteacher. It had additional work to do and still needs to develop the curriculum and its management further. However, it has much to celebrate in what has been achieved thus far.

27. Improvement in leadership and management since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The key issues from that inspection have been satisfactorily addressed and the school has drawn up a detailed and comprehensive school improvement plan. Strategic planning is satisfactory overall. Although the plan is not fully costed, it reflects clearly the priorities of the school and there are good systems in place for reviewing progress against it. However, success criteria are insufficiently sharp at times.
28. There is a strong sense of direction and determination for high standards of behaviour as well as for high academic standards. The school is well on the way to achieving its goals in this respect. The needs of the pupils are paramount in all its thinking. Good behaviour is evident from the lessons seen and pupils' achievements from their starting points are good. A very good team spirit and a strong ethos are the ingredients of this success, as well as the ability to effectively manage such pupils. As a result, the school has a calm, orderly and effective learning environment. Staff are very good role models for the pupils and this has led to very strong relationships and high levels of respect.
29. Decisive action has been taken on re-organisation of the curriculum to mirror the practice in primary and secondary schools, with pupils in Year 7 to 11 being taught by a good range of subject specialists. However, some subjects are not yet fully developed such as music across the school (because of staffing difficulties) and ICT in the primary department (because the programme there has not been developed). Classes in the secondary department are organised with mixed year groups and staff have to regularly re-organise their planning to ensure that work is not repeated. They generally do this well, but it takes time. At present, there is insufficient overview of the curriculum as a whole by senior staff to ensure that all its aspects fit together and that co-ordination is effective across all the school. This is why management is only satisfactory.
30. The programme of observations undertaken by the headteacher and senior staff, together with training on effective teaching and learning, has ensured that the quality of teaching is good. Judgements are accurate and evaluations clear. However, the few staff who are responsible for subjects where there is more than one teacher teaching the subject (English and mathematics) have not had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning across the school. An effective performance management system has been introduced and all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The quality of the professional development, induction and training for teaching and learning support staff is also good and there is a culture of continuing improvement.
31. Subject leadership is well established in the secondary department with leaders knowledgeable about their roles and all subjects (except music) having a leader. Most have a clear view on how their subjects should develop, although some do not always pay enough attention to the role of ICT in supporting teaching and learning. In the primary department the picture is somewhat different. The department is organised separately from the rest of the school and only two subjects, English and mathematics, have subject leaders. Those with subject responsibility in the secondary department have no role in relation to the primary department, although some teachers, such as those in design and technology, art and design, and physical education, do teach there. The result of this is that the large majority of subjects have no leader and are not overseen in relation to their development. The management of these across primary and secondary department is, therefore, not 'joined up'.
32. The governing body is very committed, is highly supportive and brings many relevant skills to the school. Governors have worked hard to address the issues identified over the past three years. They know the school well and its main strengths and weaknesses. They have helped to shape it very well. Their determination that pupils should develop personally and academically is very strong. Their direct observations of the school's practice are giving them first hand knowledge. The committee structure, reports from staff and the visits of governors are enabling them to fulfil their 'critical' friend role as a further means of providing support. They recognise the need to extend this role even further. They are not aware, however, that the school's requirement to admit a few additional pupils who were subsequently placed with

Year 10 pupils has meant that they do not always get their entitlement to the whole National Curriculum. This is to be resolved next year as agreement has now been given for the school to form an additional class. They are not aware also that the information to parents is not always as complete as it should be. They are, however, determined to resolve this as soon as possible.

33. The management of pupils' additional needs is satisfactory. The school is well aware of the complex make-up of pupils' needs and the requirement to meet these through effective support. Its focus on, and management of, reading and numeracy support for those pupils who have greater difficulties than the rest are effective. However, the provision for a few pupils with wider ranging needs is not fully in place. This is mainly because no speech and language therapy is provided, despite this being specified on some Statements.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	777,208	Balance from previous year	61,646
Total expenditure	801,194	Balance carried forward to the next	37,660
Expenditure per pupil	15,861		

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

34. It was not possible to fully report on the provision for work-related learning. The provision for work-related learning is planned satisfactorily. Work experience provides the basis of all work-related opportunities which start in Year 9 through local college links. These include construction, gardening, horticulture and agriculture. All placements are based on individual needs and tailored well to these. The school has a wide range of supportive employers who are used to placing pupils with behavioural difficulties. The pupils' performance is monitored well. School related activities, such as work in careers, also give pupils a good insight into the world of work. Through design and technology, pupils have set up a business model based on making and selling bird boxes. The newly formed school council is being used as the basis to establish the simulated business through which pupils will gain an appreciation of business methods. The work undertaken in this area is having a positive effect on pupils' personal development. The programme designed for the Arrow Group has appropriate emphasis on work-related learning and vocational opportunities. This is effective and helps pupils who would be otherwise out of education to engage well in learning.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 TO 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are very well promoted in English and in other lessons.
- A small number of pupils with specific speech and language needs do not have access to speech and language therapy support for these.
- Systematic support for spelling and reading supports confidence and good progress in these areas, although there are few opportunities for independent writing in some subjects.
- Teaching is lively and expert, and teaching support assistants generally contribute very well to pupil achievement.
- Assessment and the learning opportunities provided in English in the secondary school are being developed to raise achievement even more.

Commentary

35. On entry to the school pupils' attainment in English is low because of their learning difficulties and their often inconsistent school attendance prior to this. The youngest pupils are at early stages of reading and writing. A few have speech and language delay or difficulties and often have a Statement which says they should have speech and language therapy support.
36. The good teaching means that pupils' achievements in English are good overall by the time they leave school. Although currently there are few opportunities for writing in subjects other than English, this is an area for school development.
37. There is very strong support for speaking and listening skills throughout the school and the quality of discussion about the topics and books the pupils are studying is often very high. Staff use questioning very well to help pupils express themselves more clearly and in more socially acceptable ways. Their stronger speaking and listening skills contribute very well to their personal and social skills and self-awareness. A few pupils who have very specific speech and language needs, however, do not have support for these difficulties through speech and language therapy and specifically targeted programmes, because it is not available externally. Their teachers' very sensitive support means that the pupils do make good progress in their willingness to offer ideas but they could make even more progress if specialist advice was available. This lack of speech is in breach of their statutory entitlements, as some of these pupils have such provision written into their Statement of Special Educational Need. This is beyond the school's control.
38. The school's very strong response to, and adaptation of, the National Literacy Strategy in the primary years ensures that reading and writing skills are very well explored and developed. Pupils' reading and spelling skills are systematically developed and monitored throughout the school. There is very good use of ICT software such as *Starspell* and *Successmaker* to support this. Pupils enjoy these sessions and feel that they are making good progress in their reading and spelling as a result of this work. Pupils enjoy English lessons because the teaching is lively, uses good humour but also helps them to think about issues. Their teachers' expressive reading and story telling hold their attention very well. This means that pupils want to read on in the texts that they are studying, and empathise very well indeed with the characters. For example, pupils in Year 8 and 9 thought carefully about the horrors of the trenches in World War I whilst reading poetry. Even those who are the weakest readers try to

follow very well and show a real appreciation of the language and ideas. They are supported well by a specialist teacher and assistant who provide additional specific reading support.

39. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing skills overall. The school recognises that the pupils could make even more progress if it had a more systematic whole-school approach and is developing plans accordingly. In particular, there could be more use of ICT throughout the school to support lower achieving pupils' more independent writing. Too often these pupils copy information, rather than use other ways of recording what they want to say for themselves.
40. Teaching in English is good and often very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and relationships with pupils and know their pupils very well. Good use is made of the assessment data the school has. Literacy profiles have been introduced for the youngest pupils and are to be extended to the rest of the school. This is good practice and will enable all teachers to have a clearer understanding of pupils' literacy needs. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and very high expectations of their behaviour. Their knowledge of pupils means that tasks are generally well suited to pupils' needs and help them to move on.
41. A good range of reading materials, adapted texts, stories and non-fiction texts is used. The learning opportunities provided are strong, particularly in the primary department where they fit very well into the national strategy. In the secondary department very good and knowledgeable teaching ensures that the learning opportunities there are also strong. However, the school rightly recognises the need to refine these further, to take account of the mixed age ranges in classes and the national strategies in more depth. In particular, the qualifications and accredited courses followed by higher attainers are being reconsidered as currently these are at a lower level than other subjects. Almost all pupils take an Entry Level Qualification and achieve a good range of results.
42. English is well led and managed by a committed and very experienced co-ordinator, who monitors planning, and has a clear vision for the subject and high expectations for pupils. The subject has moved on well as a result, over the school's three years. However, he is not yet involved in monitoring teaching. Visitors, including theatre groups, as well as visits to the locality enrich the curriculum considerably. English makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural, social and moral understanding and their personal development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43. Overall, the use of this is satisfactory. Although staff extend and support pupils' speaking and listening very well in most subjects, there is less consistent support for literacy. This is because there is no formal literacy across the curriculum policy and limited monitoring of teachers' planning for this. Some teachers do not know pupils' literacy targets and, therefore, there are missed opportunities for reinforcing these. Although there are good examples of writing in subjects such as religious education, history and geography, too often work is copied or from worksheets. Opportunities are thus missed for reinforcing writing, spelling and reading strategies.

French

44. This subject was sampled as only a limited number of French lessons were seen. Very little work was available, although teacher records and the little amount of teaching observed show the learning opportunities and achievement to be at least satisfactory. The teaching observed was good. Pupils clearly enjoy their French and try very hard to pronounce accurately and to remember the key words and phrases they know. Speaking and listening in French are well promoted, although there is little emphasis on reading and writing in French. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed by a relatively new co-ordinator who has great enthusiasm for the subject and clear understanding of how French should be developed further. The organisation of timetables and classes at the time of the inspection meant that a few Year 9 pupils did not have French lessons. The school, therefore, is not fulfilling its statutory

responsibilities in this subject. Plans have already been made, however, to ensure this is not the case next year.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and approaches which help pupils understand well what they are learning.
- Staff are sometimes not as well deployed as they could be.
- Links between primary and secondary departments are insufficiently strong.
- Assessment in the secondary department is good.

Commentary

45. Mathematics is well taught by staff who clearly enjoy teaching the subject and helping pupils make the progress they are able to. The national strategies have been adapted well and staff use a wide variety of approaches in their teaching to interest, involve and assess pupils' learning. The three-part lesson is well embedded with mental starters a particular strength. Quick-fire questioning and opportunities to use and apply mathematics in practical contexts, interest pupils well and they rise to the challenge of the tasks they are set. They concentrate remarkably well and work very hard. Teaching assistants support learning well in the practical part of lessons but sometimes have too little to do when the teacher is teaching the whole class.
46. In the primary department each of the two class teachers teaches the subject. Teaching is good and the good use of interactive whiteboards aids pupils' understanding well. These are used to full effect using software which is designed to challenge pupils. Explanations are clear and questioning probes and extends pupils' understanding. Pupils are challenged effectively to use their mathematical knowledge in order to solve problems. Work is well matched to the pupils' needs and level of attainment; as a result, some pupils reach the expected level for their age. Occasional weaknesses include making too big a leap for some pupils, although work is generally provided in small steps. Sometimes, inaccurate work is accepted, such as 24-hour time being recorded incorrectly. A significant strength is in the approach to mathematical investigation; this helps pupils gain a thorough knowledge of numbers and especially of patterns and relationships. The new subject leader for the primary department was appointed only recently. She has made a reasonable start in managing the subject and has audited resources. She is beginning to look at the quality of planning and teaching but as yet there are no links being made with the secondary leader.
47. The temporary subject leader for the secondary department teaches all lessons in Years 7 to 11. He is a very experienced and knowledgeable teacher who is highly respected by pupils and who has considerable skill in explaining ideas and helping pupils gain maximum success. A particular strength is the way mathematical problems are often made practical in nature. This helps pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning. Learning takes place in very small successful steps for most pupils, although extension work and greater challenges are planned for the more able pupils. The challenge in the work for pupils is just right and they try very hard and behave very well. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboard for explanations but there is little interactive use by pupils.
48. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school had been unsuccessful in appointing a permanent secondary co-ordinator/teacher until recently. The new person is to start in September 2005. The current secondary leader has ensured adequate development, especially improving assessment through the 'Goal' assessment and the collection and tracking of pupils' results and achievements. Assessment in the secondary department is now

good. The primary and secondary departments are organised separately with separate co-ordinators. Little in the way of liaison or joint planning has yet taken place, although handover arrangements and transfer of information are good when pupils move from Year 6 to Year 7.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49. This is satisfactory. Adequate opportunities take place in many subjects, such as science, design and technology and ICT as well as for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Staff seize the moment and make good use of opportunities which arise. However, mathematical opportunities are not always specifically planned in each subject.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve well; a few reach National Curriculum attainment levels that are expected for pupils of their age.
- The subject leader does not have an overview of the provision in the primary department.
- Secondary pupils are taught by a subject specialist who has high expectations of what pupils will learn; occasionally, pupils' behaviour gets in the way of learning.
- The curriculum does not reflect the organisation of pupils into classes in Years 7 to 9.
- The lack of a technician makes the job of teaching secondary pupils more difficult than it should be.

Commentary

50. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, although those in Year 6 achieve well. This summer, results of national tests show that a few pupils reached Level 4 in science. This is the level that is expected for pupils in Year 6. Those in Years 7 to 11 achieve satisfactorily. By Year 9, a few pupils reach Level 5, and, by Year 11, pupils who attend regularly leave with nationally recognised accreditation, in the form of Entry Level examination passes. The school does not yet provide award courses at a higher level, however. The school should give consideration to entering the most able pupils for GCSE examinations as a few are capable of passing these.
51. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a broad range of learning experiences, and so pupils steadily acquire knowledge and understanding across all the areas required. However, there is no data-logging equipment or use of such equipment and the use of ICT to support learning is limited. In the primary classes, pupils' work shows that they tackle practical tasks, such as an investigation into the effects of darkness on plant leaves. Pupils in Year 6 are able to predict what might happen and they understand how to make the investigation fair. In Years 7 to 9, the science curriculum is taught in a two-year cycle and this does not match the organisation of pupils into three classes where a few pupils are taught with Year 10 pupils. In order to avoid repetition and ensure that topics are not missed out, the teacher has to carefully track what each pupil has covered; however, this should not be necessary.
52. No science lessons were taught in primary classes during the inspection period, and so no judgement can be made on teaching here. In the secondary classes, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teacher, who has been appointed since the last inspection, is an experienced subject specialist who has high expectations of what pupils will learn. The planning closely reflects the national guidance for mainstream schools and as many practical experiences as possible are incorporated into the work. However, the lack of a technician is a limiting factor in this respect and much time is spent by the teacher organising and cleaning resources. Pupils enjoy practical work, which helps them to develop investigative skills. For instance, Year 8 and 9 pupils carried out an investigation into chemical reactions, which started with them heating

limestone. They made sensible predictions about what would happen, and spontaneous observations, such as, "Mine has turned to powder". They noted the effects when water was added, and tested the resulting solution using universal indicator. However, when it came to correctly sequencing a series of statements about the exercise, pupils found this difficult because the teacher had not teased out learning points as the task progressed. In particular, few pupils were aware of the points at which new chemical substances had been formed. The secondary teacher maintains detailed records but misses opportunities to involve pupils in assessing their learning in lessons. Overall, assessment is satisfactory.

53. In Years 7 to 11, pupils' attitudes to science are not as positive as they are in other subjects; occasionally their behaviour gets in the way of learning as the teacher does not have strong skills in behaviour management. Teamwork between her and the teaching assistant deployed to support science lessons is usually effective in keeping pupils engaged, however.
54. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and so is improvement since the last inspection. The subject leader's job description does not include oversight of science in the primary department. As a result, the direction of the subject is determined by the teachers who teach it, rather than a total oversight of development across the whole school. Planning has been improved, monitoring of teaching and learning introduced, and there has been moderation of assessment in the subject. The lack of an interactive whiteboard in the science laboratory is a weakness that restricts the possibilities of explaining and demonstrating complex ideas in a simple way. Overall, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**. Strengths only just outweigh weaknesses, however.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in Years 7 to 11 because they are challenged well by work which helps them to critically appraise the use and application of ICT.
- Achievement in the primary class is unsatisfactory.
- No one is leading the development of ICT in the primary department; the person designated as the ICT subject leader has responsibility for Years 7 to 11 only.
- The subject is well led in the secondary department.
- Software resources for subjects other than ICT are limited.
- The ICT accommodation is currently far too small with poor ventilation.

Commentary

55. No lessons were able to be seen in the primary department. Work shows that pupils mainly use ICT for producing good quality posters, demonstrating their ability to write using different fonts and link graphics with text. In addition, they use the Internet to find things out. There is little other work, however. The ICT topic planned for this term is about using large databases, such as the Internet. Overall, although, there is no planned programme in the primary department to help pupils build their skills, knowledge and understanding. The new class teacher recognises this deficit and has plans to build up a set of activities to ensure the whole curriculum is covered. The interactive whiteboard is used well, such as in mathematics for investigations and pupils delight in making choices by using its interactive features. All pupils use computers competently to complete independent programmed learning activities (*Successmaker*) which support their basic skills work in English and mathematics. Overall, however, the pupils in this department do not have enough opportunities to make progress in all aspects of ICT and their achievement is unsatisfactory because of this.
56. The secondary subject leader has worked hard to develop the subject and to provide a good range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 7 to 11 which meets their needs well. There

is a clear view of how, and what needs to be done, to improve the subject further. Challenging activities are provided and pupils prepared well for a relevant award bearing course in Years 10 and 11. In fact, in 2004 Year 10 and 11 pupils achieved particularly well in the tests they took. Lessons in Years 7 to 11 are taught well by a knowledgeable specialist teacher who plans work which meets the pupils' wide-ranging needs and abilities well. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboard for demonstration which helps pupils understand ideas better, although there are few opportunities for pupils to 'interact' with it themselves. A particular challenge for the co-ordinator is the checking of the planning to ensure that pupils do not repeat work. This is necessary as the school organises its pupils in classes which contain mixed year groups which overlap. He ensures a minimum of repetition through a complex tracking and checking procedure.

57. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are enthusiastic learners and work diligently to ensure that they do their very best. Pupils behave well and show great interest in their lessons. A strength in teaching is the way praise is used to build pupils' self-esteem and also the good emphasis on self-assessment at the end of lessons where pupils often identify what aspects of their work could be done better. The management of pupils is very good; mutual respect is very evident as are very good relationships. Assessment, overall, has improved and tracking systems to gauge pupils' progress are now in place and are good. The co-ordinator also reflects well on how the provision can be made better and how his knowledge can be extended to provide better opportunities for pupils. For instance training has been undertaken in control work, an area the subject leader viewed originally as a weakness. As a result of this, the use of very good software and a very challenging approach with excellent questioning, pupils in a Year 10 lesson achieved very well in this work. They concentrated superbly on how to program the timing of a simulation of two traffic lights. The quality of teaching was very good and the teacher was well supported by a knowledgeable teaching assistant.
58. The accommodation for ICT is being re-modelled and should be completed by the start of the new term. It is currently unsatisfactory. The ICT suite is far too small for the numbers of pupils and staff, although it is used well. It is also hot and stuffy, through a lack of ventilation. Software resources are unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Overall, this is satisfactory, but only just. Its use is inconsistent. Not enough is done by leaders of other subjects in taking responsibility for identifying and using resources. Although good use is made of the Internet, and the occasional use of subject software such as a *Blockbusters* quiz in design and technology, there is inconsistent use of subject software. Good use is made in physical education to record progress and analyse movement. Science lacks sensor equipment for monitoring events and measuring changes and there is no computer-aided design and manufacture equipment in design and technology. Pupils use computers very regularly to support literacy and numeracy skills and this is having a very positive effect. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils with reading difficulties, some of which is produced by the specialist teacher herself, but there is little use of ICT in general to support reluctant writers in lessons.

HUMANITIES

Geography

60. The subject was not a particular focus for this inspection, and too little evidence was gathered to make judgements on standards and provision. One lesson was seen and in this the teaching and learning were good. A difficult topic on plate tectonics was brought to life well by using the interactive whiteboard. Good teamwork by the teacher and the assistant ensured that pupils were well supported. Pupils made good gains in their understanding during the lesson and most produced neat, correctly labelled diagrams showing the three types of plate margins. Pupils also used correct terminology, such as *core*, *mantle* and *magma*. Since the subject was last inspected, planning has improved.

History

61. The subject was not a particular focus for this inspection and too little evidence was gathered to make judgements on standards and provision. One lesson was seen, and in this the teaching and learning were very good. Role-play and group writing were used most effectively with Year 8 and 9 pupils to develop their understanding of the problems of the Vietnam War and how these led to gradual disenchantment amongst the American public. Pupils were well motivated and all were included well. Since the subject was last inspected, planning has improved.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the subject was last inspected.
- An enthusiastic teacher leads the subject well.
- The subject promotes pupils' personal development well.
- There is good use of ICT to support learning, but the school has few artefacts to bring different religions to life in the classroom.

Commentary

62. It was not possible to see religious education lessons in primary classes as no lessons were taught during the inspection period. No judgements are, therefore, made about teaching, learning or achievement in the primary years.
63. Secondary pupils achieve well in religious education. A few pupils in Years 7 to 9 have moved up one attainment level in an academic year, for instance. Good achievement is associated with pupils' positive attitudes towards the subject, good teaching and learning, and good improvements in recent years.
64. In Years 7 to 11, teaching and learning are good. Staff have good relationships with pupils and manage them well; as a result, pupils are engaged well during lessons. Expectations of work and behaviour are made clear, and pupils rise to these. Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively. The subject leader has collected a bank of suitable ICT resources on the school's intranet for staff to use. For instance, in a lesson for Year 7 pupils, a website was used well to enable pupils to see the layout and activities in a gurdwara. A display shows that primary pupils found out about Mother Teresa using the Internet. Teaching draws well on pupils' own experience too. For example, the film *Bend it like Beckham* formed a useful focus for discussion in a lesson for Year 9 and 10 pupils and this enabled pupils to recognise some of the conflicts that a young Sikh might experience in Britain today. Pupils contributed well orally, but they are reluctant writers. Although staff overcome this well by providing worksheets, well adapted to the pupils' different literacy levels, this restricts opportunities for extended writing. Particularly popular resources are the individual pupil response devices that are used with the interactive whiteboards and which enable teachers to assess pupils' learning. Pupils are given a choice of four possible answers to a question and they select one with their device. Responses can be collated by the teacher, providing a useful record of the effectiveness of teaching.
65. There are good opportunities in religious education for pupils to develop moral and cultural awareness. For instance, through studies of different religions, pupils learn to understand different customs and cultures. They are encouraged to empathise with those of other faiths too. Older pupils consider some quite difficult issues, such as euthanasia and suicide bombings. Teaching encourages pupils to arrive at a view on these and attempt to understand what motivates people to carry out acts such as these.

66. Since the subject was last inspected, planning has improved; the agreed syllabus has been adopted and modified to suit the interests and aptitudes of the pupils. Assessment has been developed and pupils' attainments are assigned a level, so the school can demonstrate the value that it adds each year. Work is now sampled, and pupils' achievements tracked. Monitoring of teaching has been introduced and the quality of teaching has improved.
67. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic non-specialist teacher, who maintains an overview of the subject across the school. He has increased resources for teaching about different religions and has rightly identified the need to acquire artefacts associated with world religions so that pupils can have first hand experiences of these. The local area offers few opportunities for visits, to mosques or temples for instance, although local clergy do visit to support learning about Christianity.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

68. Only a small amount of teaching was seen (in the secondary department) and it is, not therefore, possible to make an overall judgement on provision in this subject. However, the quality of the teaching that was seen was very good. The high level of expertise by the teacher and the way pupils were inspired helped them to develop their ideas and improve their skills very well. Pupils were generally highly focused on what they were doing and tried very hard to improve their technique. The curriculum is very rich; although staff have worked hard to build up resources, some are still lacking, especially for pottery and ICT. The Year 11 pupils' GCSE work shows exceptional achievement. It is of high quality and demonstrates the skills the pupils have developed very well over time. Good plans are in place for a combined award with design and technology for pupils in Year 10 and 11. There is a clear view by the co-ordinator of how the subject needs to develop. However, the responsibility for leading the subject only extends to the secondary department and no one leads the subject in the primary department.

Design and technology

69. It is not possible to make a judgement on provision overall. Only a few lessons in the secondary department were able to be seen. The teaching in these lessons was effective and the support by teaching assistants was good. The work seen indicates that pupils achieve well. Pupils undertake a good range of projects which cover a full range of materials, although there is still a predominance of wood-constructed products. There is little in the way of ICT to support learning and no computer-aided design and manufacture. The resistant materials workshop is shared with art and design and the layout of the room is a compromise which makes the organisation of some lessons problematic. In addition, some basic equipment, to broaden the range of materials used by pupils such as a vacuum former, is absent. The subject leader teaches all pupils but is just responsible for leading the subject in the secondary department. This means that the provision in the primary department is not formally overseen. Work in food technology makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and especially life skills.

Music

70. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in music. The school does not have its own music specialist and has only recently 'bought' in an external specialist who teaches primary-aged pupils and two of the three classes for Year 7 to 9 pupils. Not all pupils who should be taught music, therefore, have lessons. Although the teaching in the small number of lessons observed was at least good and pupils' achievement in these lessons was also good, the learning opportunities planned for music are not sufficiently broad enough to cover the curriculum adequately. There is a good emphasis on composition and involvement and a strong development of rhythm and tempo awareness and practical skills. Pupils enjoy these sessions very much and the lessons make a very strong contribution to pupils' listening

skills and self-awareness. However, there is no music policy or curriculum which is designed to help pupils build on what they have learned previously. The school recognises that it must address this and the specialist's time is to be extended next year. There is, however, no one leading the development of this subject.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**. It has some excellent features

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good because teachers know their pupils very well, work very effectively as a team and have very strong subject knowledge and expertise.
- There are very good links with a local sports college which have supported the subject's development and provision very well.
- Pupils challenge themselves and work together very well and the subject makes a very good contribution to their growth in self-esteem, their social awareness and their ability to work with others.
- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent.

Commentary

71. The school's provision for physical education has improved very well since the last inspection. The school rightly identifies the subject as offering many opportunities for pupils to extend their own skills and performance, for them to gain a sense of personal achievement and for some to particularly excel in sport. Whatever their starting points, pupils make very good progress because staff are very skilled indeed at supporting them to the next skill level, for example in catching a cricket ball, or following a stroke through in tennis. This gives them confidence that they are making progress and many practise their skills independently at break times, as well as in supervised play sessions. Currently, the school is exploring the qualifications pupils might take that really reflect the very good achievement of its pupils in all aspects of the subject. The very strong achievement is also because the teaching is very good and expert and the learning opportunities are very good. Relationships with pupils are excellent and many pupils have skills at least equivalent to or better than others of their age by the time they leave school.
72. A wide range of sports and games is played and experienced, both at the school and by using local facilities. The school has very experienced teachers who are very well supported by teaching assistants. The two teachers who lead the subject are highly committed and very ambitious for the subject and children. Their consistently very strong teaching and the very good detailed records kept mean that both pupils and staff are very clear as to what they now need to do to improve. Where school staff do not have expertise in a particular area, the school 'buys in' specialists but also provides training for staff. Thus, the school has strengthened its gymnastics and dance programme recently and is planning to strengthen this even more next year. Pupils have the opportunity to play a wide range of summer and winter sports and ball games. They also learn to swim very well and take basic awards in sports such as canoeing.
73. There is also good attention paid to the more theoretical aspects of the subject, often in creative ways. For example, the school, in its partnership with a local sports college and other special and mainstream schools, has helped organise an 'inclusion league' for various sports. Pupils were set the task of devising a new game that pupils with physical disabilities could take part in and pupils gained experience in thinking about the physical skills involved in activities, the rules of the game and how to organise it. Very strong links are made with science, for example through 'healthy living' work with primary pupils, and with other areas such as geography in orienteering with secondary pupils. Mathematical skills are also well supported through the work which pupils do.

74. The subject is exceptionally well led by the deputy head teacher and an unqualified instructor. The instructor keeps extensive high quality skills-based records of pupils' achievements that give a clear picture of pupils' progress over time. A recent purchase of video equipment should strengthen this aspect further and, in particular, pupils' ability to evaluate their work for themselves.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has recently been given the Healthy Schools Award.
- The citizenship programme meets requirements but planning does not reflect the organisation of pupils into class groups.
- Award-bearing courses are in place for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11, but not all Year 9 pupils have the same opportunities to follow such courses.
- There is no formally planned programme for the teaching of personal, social and health education up to Year 9.

Commentary

75. There was limited evidence available to inspectors in relation to the subject itself, and no specific PSHCE sessions could be seen during the inspection period. However, the support for pupils' personal development in and out of lessons, especially in relation to their specific emotional, social and behavioural needs and especially their confidence and self-esteem, is very good. The provision for citizenship and for personal, social and health education is evaluated together.
76. Pupils across the school have a satisfactory range of learning experiences in PSHCE; teaching, learning and achievement in the subject are all satisfactory.
77. As part of the school's work towards the Healthy Schools Award, there have been several relevant activities, including the use of a theatre group to build pupils' awareness of issues such as bullying. The school nurse leads sessions on alcohol and drugs awareness as well as sex and relationships education. However, these do not form part of a planned progressive programme of PSHCE as described in the school's subject policy. Such a programme needs to be developed to ensure that the place of these topics is secure in the school's curriculum, and to enable pupils to continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding as they progress through the school. This weakness is formally recognised in the school's improvement plan.
78. There is a clear programme for citizenship, which meets requirements, and this has been written since the last inspection. As part of the programme, a school council has been developed, and this is beginning to involve pupils in the life of the school. For instance, they have made decisions about which charity they will support, and how they will raise funds. However, the planned programme is based on a two-year cycle, and this does not match the organisation of pupils into classes. This means that unnecessary repetition is built into the programme.
79. A good development is the introduction of accredited courses for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. All Year 9 pupils follow ASDAN's (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Youth Award Scheme (Bronze), and most pupils achieve this whilst they are in Year 10. For lower attainers in Year 9, the OCR (Oxford Cambridge and Royal Society for Arts) 'Initial Award in Lifeskills' has recently commenced. Although higher attainers in Year 9 do not currently have a similar opportunity, there are plans to introduce suitable accreditation for them too.

80. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, as are the leadership and management of the subject. The main emphasis has been on developing the citizenship programme; the subject leader is now planning to link all strands of current practice into a cohesive PSHCE programme.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

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