

INSPECTION REPORT

Chalcot School

London

LEA area: Camden

Unique reference number: 100092

Headteacher: Miss Donna McCallum

Lead inspector: Charles Hackett

Dates of inspection: 18th to 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 268548

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 special |
| Age range of pupils: | 11-16 |
| Gender of pupils: | Male |
| Number on roll: | 47 |
| School address: | Harmood Street London |
| Postcode: | NW1 8DP |
| Telephone number: | 020 7485 2147 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr. Tony Burgess |
| Date of previous inspection: | 07-Jun-1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Chalcot is a day school for boys of secondary age with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Before joining the school, the pupils have experienced disruptive periods of education, often having been excluded from one or more mainstream schools, and being out of school for lengthy periods of time. A few have additional special needs such as specific learning difficulties. As a result, pupils' attainment of entry to the school is well below that expected for their age. Most pupils come from very difficult home backgrounds and a high percentage of pupils have been before the courts for criminal activities, some of which are drug related. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Of the current 47 pupils on roll, less than half are of white British backgrounds and the others are from a diverse range of ethnic background. There are currently three refugees or asylum seekers. There are, though, no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Recruiting staff to work in this area of London, and in this field of education, is very difficult and of the current 15.7 teachers in the school, 10.3 are unqualified. The school achieved the Investors in People and Healthy Schools awards earlier this year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---|
| 21081 | Charles Hackett | Lead inspector | Mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education |
| 31754 | Charlotte Roberson | Lay inspector | |
| 23643 | John Ward | Team inspector | English, citizenship, history, geography, religious education, personal social and health education |
| 20024 | Paul Wright | Team inspector | Science, art, design and technology and music |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Chalcot is a good school for pupils with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. High quality care and teaching are ensuring that pupils make good progress. The leadership and management and governance of the school are effective and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve and, as a result, pupils pass more GCSEs than is normal in schools of this type.
- The high quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress overall and very good progress in art and personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- Effective support and concern for pupils together with very good relationships between staff and pupils help improve pupils' attendance, attitudes and behaviour.
- A system to track pupils' behaviour, work, effort and punctuality during each day is good in principle, but is inconsistently applied by staff.
- The emphasis the school puts on pupils' personal, social and citizenship education is very good, but is reduced because of vacancies in the other agencies that support pupils.
- The curriculum is good, however pupils' opportunities to achieve in music are unsatisfactory and there is an inadequate emphasis on pupils' spiritual development.
- Pupils' punctuality both for school and lessons is unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Pupils' behaviour has improved, sex and drugs education policies agreed, design and technology facilities developed and the school day lengthened, with a better balance of time for each subject. Punctuality, though, is still a problem and pupils' individual education plans would still benefit from more academic targets.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' overall achievements are good. They make very good progress in art and personal, social, health and citizenship education. Progress is good in English, science and is satisfactory in mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education. Achievements in photography are excellent. However, pupils are unable to achieve in music. In English, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well and, as a result, in Years 10 and 11 pupils are able to join in good quality discussions with staff. The personal development of pupils, including their moral, social and cultural development is good, but their spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to education and their overall behaviour are much improved from before they arrived at the school and are now good. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and improving; in the last year the level of unauthorised absence has been reduced considerably. However, pupils are not punctual to school in the morning or during the teaching day. This often results in lessons starting late or with pupils missing the first part of each lesson.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education in the school is good. All staff are committed to supporting pupils whatever the severity of their difficulties. Teaching and learning are effective and ensure that pupils make good progress. The very good relationships staff have with pupils help encourage them to engage in

learning, which for many is often for the first time in their lives. There is a clear emphasis in the school for pupils to achieve as well as possible. The learning support assistants provide very good individual personal support for pupils and encourage them to remain in lessons and continue with their work. The monitoring of pupils' progress in their personal development is good, and, satisfactory, in relation to their academic progress. Pupils' reading skills are assessed when they first join the school and results are used effectively to develop appropriate support programmes. However the systems to check on pupils' mathematical skills are not as effective. The curriculum is good. A very appropriate emphasis is given to personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Pupils also have the opportunity to undertake work experience, but, partly because of difficulties in accessing college places, there are limited vocational courses for pupils to undertake. The school's development plan is rightly seeking to address this weakness. The lessons in school are well supported by additional activities to which all pupils have access. The quality of care and support given to pupils is good. It is very evident that all pupils feel that they have the opportunity to speak to an adult they can trust should they have the need to do so. Current vacancies in the personnel available from Connexions and the youth offending team, though, have had a negative impact on the school's efforts. There is a clear emphasis on monitoring pupils' behaviour, work, effort and punctuality in lessons, however the system is not always consistently applied by staff and fails to accurately record pupils' responses in and out of lessons. The accommodation and resources in the school are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is ambitious for the school to be effective and play an important part in the lives of its pupils. She is well supported by her senior colleagues. The overall quality of the leadership and management of each subject are satisfactory. The governance of the school is good. Governors are very supportive of the staff and their work. They do not, though, have an effective system to link the budget to the priorities in the school's development plan.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The few parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire all had very positive views about the school and the impact it had on their children. Pupils are pleased with their placement. Many expressed the view that they appreciate what the school has done for them and the opportunities to learn they now have.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Ensure that all pupils have the chance to achieve in music.
- Give more attention to supporting pupils' spiritual development.
- Put an increased emphasis on the need for pupils to be punctual to school, and for lessons.
- Amend the system for monitoring pupils' behaviour, work, effort and punctuality so that it is applied more consistently and covers a wider range of possible responses from pupils throughout each school day.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

The overall achievement of pupils is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils pass more GCSEs than is the national average for schools for pupils with similar special needs.
- Pupils have achieved excellent results in photography and make very good progress in art and design and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
- Pupils' progress in English and science is good.
- Weaknesses in planning what pupils will learn have contributed to pupils' progress in mathematics and information communication technology (ICT) being only satisfactory.

Commentary

1. Throughout the school there is a very clear emphasis placed on pupils being given opportunities to achieve. This has resulted in improved successes in GCSEs in recent years. Last year pupils achieved more passes than the national average for schools of this type. In 2003, the progress of those pupils who took examinations in Year 11 compared with their achievements when they were at the end of Year 9, meant that their rate of progress was higher than that seen in all other schools within the local authority. Care, however must be taken in considering these results because of the very small number of pupils in Chalcot compared with mainstream schools. Nevertheless, these results demonstrate that pupils are making good progress in developing their academic skills.
2. In art and design, pupils produce work of a very high quality and their paintings make very significant contributions to the high quality displays around the school. The recent photographic work has meant that their work has been on display in a local gallery and many of their final prints have been privately purchased. The quality of photographs on display is excellent.
3. The school, quite rightly, puts considerable emphasis on ensuring that pupils are successful in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The staff 'face up' very well to quite explicit comments made by pupils in relation to drugs and sex. The quality of their support and advice is extremely high and it is clear that pupils gain considerable support and encouragement to amend their beliefs, which, in many cases, have been severely tainted by other experiences in their lives.
4. The good progress pupils make in English and science is demonstrated by the improvements to the quality of their work as they progress through the school and achieve successes in GCSE. In English, pupils listen and discuss a whole range of topics. From Year 7 to Year 11 pupils' ability to join in discussions is considerably improved. Pupils enjoy science and work reflects an increasing understanding of basic scientific principles. Pupils have achieved success in GCSEs in mathematics and ICT, but their progress throughout the school has been restricted by inadequacies in planning. The very new teacher responsible for ICT is already addressing these weaknesses. Progress is satisfactory in religious education and a newly appointed teacher is striving to encourage pupils to take a more enthusiastic approach to the subject. The inadequate arrangements for pupils to learn music mean that pupils have unsatisfactory opportunities in this subject.
5. Pupils with additional special needs, such as those who have specific learning difficulties make good progress, particularly in their reading where the use of a specialist programme is making a

big impact. Because of the effective approach to inclusion, there are no differences in the achievements of the different ethnic groups in the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Pupils' personal development, including moral, social and cultural development, is **good**, but pupils' spiritual development is **unsatisfactory**. Attendance is **satisfactory**, but punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are proud of the school and relate well to staff.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff are good.
- Pupils accept the school's systems to monitor their behaviour, but the procedures adopted are inconsistently applied.
- Pupils have many good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures, but little guidance on spirituality.
- Although absence rates are a little better than in similar schools, lack of punctuality remains a persistent problem.

Commentary

6. The large majority of pupils enjoy being in school and develop progressively positive attitudes to learning. This represents a radical change in pupils' response to education from before their admission to Chalcot. They have a clear understanding of school rules, expectations for their behaviour and their responsibilities towards others. The principle of awarding credits for their efforts in lessons helps develop these improvements to attitudes and the high quality of relationships plays a key role. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and produce a good climate for learning. Pupils themselves express their appreciation of what the school has done for them. Overall, these judgements represent good improvement since the previous inspection.
7. Pupils' behaviour improves well whilst at the school. Observations of lessons and breaks confirm that most of the time pupils react well to the expectations of the school. They usually respond well to the behaviour monitoring system which is aimed at rewarding pupils' behaviour in lessons. However, because the system is not always applied consistently by staff, pupils put staff under pressure in the awarding of credits. The school has comprehensive procedures for reporting incidents of bullying and pupils report that the school's handling of these incidents is prompt and effective. Exclusions for a school of this type are low and only issued as part of the whole school behaviour management system. There are good procedures in place for pupils to re-enter the school after a fixed-term exclusion.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| White – British | 5 | |
| White – Irish | 2 | |
| White – any other White background | | 1 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 2 | |

8. As a result of the emphasis the school puts on supporting pupils' personal development, pupils improve their social skills and increase their awareness of moral issues. Staff regularly refer to

these aspects with pupils. For example, at the end of lessons and during tutor periods and assemblies pupils are asked to consider the consequences of their own and others' actions. The school's involvement in the "Chalcot's Eyes" project is a very successful example of pupils working together to look at their cultural heritage. An appreciation of their own and other cultures is also successfully fostered in subjects such as art, English and history. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. There is no spiritual element to assemblies and, although in religious education pupils learn about different religions, they are not given sufficient guidance on how spirituality influences peoples' lives.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|------|
| School data: | 17.49 | School data : | 3.66 |
| National data: | 11.5 | National data: | 7.3 |

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

- Attendance rates have been raised since the school has been involved with a behaviour improvement project (BIP). Rates of attendance are a little above similar special schools at 78.8% for the last complete year. Rates of unauthorised absence are lower than the average for schools of this type. Staff check closely why any student is absent and the education welfare service is effective in the support it gives families of boys in the school. Figures for attendance are also affected when boys have to make appearances in court, or are taken into custody.
- Poor punctuality remains an issue facing the school not only at the beginning of the morning session but also because pupils are often late for lessons. Even allowing for the fact that many pupils have to travel a fair distance to get to Camden, too many boys arrive late. Furthermore, pupils are only officially logged as late if they arrive after 10.50 a.m. which further compounds the problem.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is effective and the pupils are provided with a good curriculum. This is enriched fittingly by additional activities. Care, support and guidance are good and the quality of the accommodation and resources is satisfactory. There are good links with parents and satisfactory links with the community and other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers relate well to pupils and adapt their teaching approaches very effectively.
- Teachers use their subject expertise well to engage pupils in learning.
- Learning support assistants offer very effective help to individual pupils, but in a few lessons they are not used effectively.
- For the majority of lessons, planning shows what pupils are expected to learn.
- Teachers make little use of ICT as part of their teaching.
- Very good assessment of pupils' skills in literacy, art and PSHCE is used successfully to plan future work, but in other subjects assessment is less effective.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 4 (12%) | 17 (53%) | 10 (30%) | 2 (6%) | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. Teachers and support staff are very sensitive to the emotional frailty of many of the pupils. They use a non-confrontational approach to encourage pupils to engage in learning. In the majority of lessons this is effective with pupils showing improved responses in their attitudes and behaviour. In the teaching of English to the older pupils in the school, the approach of the teacher ensures that there is relaxed atmosphere and that pupils are able to settle quickly to their work. This was the case in a lesson for Year 11 pupils. The pupils were learning how to write a leaflet using the size of print to attract attention to key words. The teacher engaged the pupils well and almost without the pupils realising they were able to undertake challenging tasks. Similarly, in science, the teacher's response to pupils arriving late avoided a confrontation and enabled them to settle and immediately start work.
12. Pupils benefit from the good quality subject knowledge of teachers. This is now the case in ICT and in design and technology. The ICT teacher ensures that pupils make effective use of different software and in design and technology the teacher, in addition to a very competent support technician, ensure that pupils use tools in a correct and safe manner. This was also the situation in a PSHE lesson for Year 7. The school's educational psychologist, together with a teacher and learning support assistant worked with pupils about how to resolve conflicts. Their expertise in questioning and counselling meant that within the session pupils increased their self-esteem and were able to better recognise their strengths.
13. The quality of the work of learning support assistants is a real strength of the school. They know the pupils well and offer consistent support particularly in dealing with pupils' behaviour conflicts and encouraging them to work and stay on task in lessons. They also play a key role in monitoring pupils' response throughout each teaching day. There are, however, times when they are unsure as to their role within particular lessons. This is often because they have not been involved in the planning and the teacher makes insufficient attempts to ensure that they know what they should best do to help. Occasionally, whilst trying to be helpful, they do too much for the pupils rather than encourage them to be independent.
14. Teachers have worked hard to develop their skills in planning what they expect pupils to learn in lessons. Often these are written on the board and there is a recap of pupils' achievements at the end of the lessons. This was seen in a Year 10 lesson of PSHE where pupils were looking at healthy food lifestyles. The lesson started with a brief opportunity to recall previous work and then a clear presentation of what would be covered in the lesson. Following some varied and interesting activities, there was a good recap to check what pupils had understood at the end of the lesson. Only in a few lessons is it not clear what teachers expect pupils to learn.
15. The school recognises that there is a need to develop the use of ICT in the teaching of other subjects. Little use was seen, during the inspection, of the use of computers or digital cameras or other forms of technology and in pupils' work there is little evidence of ICT being used. A recently purchased interactive whiteboard is now being used effectively in the teaching of specific ICT lessons, but similar technology is not used in the teaching of other subjects. Pupils show that they enjoy learning through using computers and this could be further exploited by teachers throughout the school in the teaching of other subjects.
16. Assessment in the school is satisfactory and there is a considerable emphasis placed on monitoring pupils' personal development. However, there are limited targets set for pupils to improve in academic areas. There are initial systems to check pupils' literacy skills and this is

used well to identify those pupils who need additional support to develop their reading. However, this is not the case in mathematics where there is a very limited link between any baseline assessments undertaken and the work pupils will attempt. In art and PSHCE, pupils' progress is monitored well and pupils have opportunities to record their achievements. Overall, numeracy and ICT are not given sufficient focus in the teaching of other subjects.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. There are **good** arrangements to enrich pupils' learning through participation in sport and visits to places of interest. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum takes good account of the needs of pupils as they progress through the school.
- Opportunities for pupils to take courses leading to GCSEs are good.
- The school provides a very good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE); pupils grow in confidence and maturity as a result.
- The school does not presently offer sufficient opportunities for the study of music and there is no provision for drama within the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is very good and enables those pupils to make significant gains in their learning.
- The opportunities provided to enrich pupils' learning are particularly good in photography and outdoor education activities.
- The accommodation reduces pupils' opportunities in physical education.

Commentary

17. The school provides an interesting and relevant range of activities that meets the interests, aptitudes and needs of pupils. The curriculum is effective because there is a good balance of time allocated for lessons in English, mathematics and science and additional literacy lessons. An increase in time for citizenship and religious education in Years 10 and 11 support the development of pupils' personal, social and moral development in preparation for their life after school. The school has worked successfully at tackling the weaknesses at the previous inspection. The design and technology programme now meets statutory requirements and the substantial amount of time allocated for the teaching of physical education has been reduced. However, arrangements for the teaching of music are unsatisfactory as not all pupils are timetabled for lessons and the lack of drama limits the curriculum for the expressive arts.
18. In Years 10 and 11, the timetable allows pupils to follow courses leading to GCSE and entry level certificates. As a result, pupils, generally speaking, achieve well in their courses. A suitable programme of work experience is undertaken by pupils which enables them to develop work related skills prior to leaving. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to attend college courses.
19. Topics in personal, social and health education, including sex education and drug misuse, are very good. Citizenship is taught very effectively as a separate subject. The very well planned programme for these aspects improves pupils' ability to make informed decisions and choices. The school is committed to the importance of both aspects and has developed a very detailed tutorial programme for pupils in years 7 to 9. In these sessions, pupils are well supported in developing their personal organisational skills and on issues about the way they view themselves and others. They also evaluate the progress they make in their individual education plans.
20. A significant strength of the curriculum is the very good attention given to meeting the literacy needs of pupils with additional special needs. The teaching of literacy to pupils in Years 7 to 9 has high priority and specific literacy lessons are included on the timetable. In addition,

individual sessions are timetabled and pupils' progress is carefully monitored and, as a result, pupils who struggle with their reading and writing are supported well and make good progress. Whilst these strengthen the development of literacy skills, there are overlaps with the English curriculum and scope for greater co-ordination between what is taught in English and the literacy lessons.

21. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting and leisure activities such as photography, sailing and rock climbing. Transport arrangements create limitations to the provision of after-school clubs, though at lunch times there is a limited range of activities which includes computer club, table tennis and football. Additional enrichment is offered through a good range of experiences beyond normal lessons. These include a recent visit to the Globe Theatre's production of Romeo and Juliet, and visits to galleries and museums, which supports work carried out in class. Such opportunities have done much to promote pupils' personal, social and cultural development.
22. The accommodation and resources in the school are satisfactory. The old Victorian building is in reasonable order throughout and is well maintained. Improvements, including an extension, to the accommodation have significantly enhanced the facilities for the boys. For example, there is now a design and technology room of good standard and two extra classrooms. In addition, an all weather pitch is well used during breaks, as well as for physical education activities. Much better office facilities have been added, but there is still no library. Resources are improving and are best for art and PSHCE. Despite the recruitment difficulties, the school is well staffed.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care is good, with careful attention given to matters of health and safety and keeping students safe. Monitoring of personal and social development is also effective. The involvement of student's own views in developing the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very caring and accepting towards all pupils and committed to doing their best when supporting and guiding them.
- Procedures and policies, which guide pupil welfare and support, are reviewed regularly and promote high standards of care and wellbeing.
- A recently appointed and enthusiastic CAMHS (Children and Mental Health Services) worker has had a positive impact on pupils, but vacancies in Connexions and the youth efficiency team have reduced the levels of support.
- Insufficient attention is given to seek and involve pupils' views in planning for whole school changes. This is also reflected when reviewing individual pupil targets.

Commentary

23. As a result of the very good relationships in the school, pupils feel they can turn readily to adults for help. Staff are respectful and are very understanding of the boys' past and present circumstances which can be enormously challenging and complicated. Humour is well used and staff demonstrate many qualities throughout the day as they interact with the boys. They remain calm and firm when dealing with outbursts. The commitment of staff is demonstrated especially well at the end of the day in the debrief meeting when information is shared and staff react sensitively and carefully plan the way forward for each pupil.
24. Policies are followed, and training needs identified and met to ensure that pupils are kept safe and as settled as possible. First aid is properly managed in the school. A clear system of rewards has been developed in recent years, which is linked to the behaviour policy. This is very positive and, over time, pupils learn to conform and control their behaviour better. Behaviour is also monitored and carefully overseen by senior staff as well as class tutors and

achievements are shared with parents very regularly. With these positive aspects in mind, however, there is a lack of consistency in how pupils are awarded credits and the present system does not fairly recognise changes in pupils' behaviour during individual lessons.

25. Staff and governors are pro-active in seeking to establish and maintain purposeful links with the many agencies that support children and young people in the borough. For example, communication with the Youth Offending Teams is not always as secure or timely as it could be, and psychotherapy support has been reduced this year. The new monitoring system being piloted in Camden (Individual Referral Tracking), of which the school is a part, is aiming to make it easier for families, as well as for professionals, to share information and support each other. The relatively recent addition of a CAMHS worker who is teaching and counselling and using her expertise as a psychologist is a significant development in the provision for support and preventative work within the school. Links with the education welfare service are improving as staffing personnel have become more stable and can therefore get to know and support families and students effectively.
26. Despite the headteacher's persistent efforts, the support from Connexions has lapsed this year. Pupils in Year 9 did not receive their entitled advice at their recent transitional review meetings. This does not mean support for the students has ground to a halt completely because staff are themselves working hard to inform pupils of their choices for careers. In addition, the PSHCE programme supports them favourably. It is a weakness, nonetheless, and something which needs to be addressed.
27. The PSHE co-ordinator has attended training on how to go about establishing a school council in a special school and this is a positive move to enable the school to consult more formally with pupils when planning changes. Pupils do have the opportunity to express their views, for example, they have asked for the toilets to be refurbished and have opportunities to complete questionnaires on the school's provision. In a few lessons pupils complete self-assessments, but their involvement in their own learning could be extended to include a greater say in setting their academic targets.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are a good and being developed further. There are satisfactory links with the community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication to parents ensures they are kept well informed and problems are resolved.
- A few local facilities are well used for extra enrichment activities.
- The school is experiencing difficulties in maintaining productive links with a range of mainstream schools.

Commentary

28. Although responses were gained from only a few parents, their views are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They say they are kept well informed, feel involved in decisions and that this is a good school where their sons make progress. Parents believe staff handle violent outbursts well and that they work very hard for the boys.
29. Staff communicate with families on a very regular basis. They recognise that without good communication and the sharing of information from all sides, progress in overcoming difficulties and sorting out the many problems will be hindered. Parents receive statutory information in the Governors annual report and the school prospectus which is detailed and useful. Written reports to parents on progress are satisfactory, but they do not contain enough information on their children's targets, or on what they have learnt. However, many staff have telephone

conversations on such a regular basis and gain the trust of parents to such a good degree that, despite the shortcomings within the reports, information is a real strength.

30. The support that parents can give to the school and to their son's learning is in many ways limited because of the other issues in their lives, and the fact that many live some distance away. However, the school works hard to overcome these difficulties and will organise taxis if necessary for those parents wishing to work alongside their sons for short periods, or to be reassured about how they are settling into school routines.
31. Pupils use a local centre for sport and have also been involved in an environmental project on Hampstead Heath. They are not as closely involved in nearby drama projects as they were at the time of the previous report, but their photography work has been displayed locally and the headteacher is very keen to make more use of the community and increase the school's involvement in it. Governors from within the community are supportive of the school.
32. No difficulties are reported when pupils transfer from schools within the borough, but delays in sharing of information with schools further afield hinders pupils induction into the school. Links with schools currently centre around staff sharing expertise, such as leading in-service sessions. One boy successfully reintegrated 18 months ago into a mainstream school and plans are in hand for another to begin shortly. The staff member with responsibility for this has worked very hard to develop both the parents' and the mainstream school's confidence in the possibilities of the success of these plans. Links with colleges are satisfactory and older students are soon to begin courses on a part time basis.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Governance is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear sense of vision and ambition for the school's effectiveness.
- An effective staff team has been created despite the difficulties of recruiting staff to schools of this type in London.
- There is a clear structure for the responsibilities of the senior management team, but the quality of the leadership of each subject, although always satisfactory, varies.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and have contributed effectively to its development.
- Good audits of the school's effectiveness are undertaken by senior staff, governors and external consultants.
- There is a comprehensive school development plan, but there are insufficient links between this and the school's budget.

Commentary

33. The headteacher, although in only her second year since appointment, has placed considerable emphasis on pupils achieving success in examinations. As a result of this, pupils take GCSEs and entry level certificates in a wide range of subjects. The school wants to play an important part in the whole range of support provided for its vulnerable pupils. This has involved strenuous efforts to work closely with officers from local authority behaviour support team, youth offending teams, social services, health and the Connexions service. The effectiveness of this work has been reduced by the vacancies in many of the posts of these other agencies, but the school continues to press for this 'holistic' approach to tackling pupils' problems. As part of this, the headteacher has brought in, and made very good use of, additional counselling support for pupils.
34. Senior staff have been very effective in ensuring that, not only are there sufficient staff, but staff work well together as a team. In considering the recruitment difficulties of the area, this has not been an easy task and the effectiveness of the present staff team is testament to the good

induction programme for newly appointed staff. The staff, many of whom are unqualified, offer very strong and positive support to each other whether in classrooms or out of class, and provide pupils with many additional activities and good quality personal support.

35. There is a clear structure to the management of the school with all members of the senior management team allocated specific responsibilities. Staff have responsibilities for the management of different subject areas. There is not, though, a clear whole school approach to the leadership and management of each subject. This has resulted in the planning of work to be undertaken and subject development plans being of different levels of quality. For example, for personal, social and health education there is a very detailed and clear plan for how the subject will be developed. This, though, is not the case for mathematics where the subject file and development plan provide insufficient information to manage the subject and monitor pupils' achievements effectively.
36. Governors are only a small group and have found it difficult to recruit parent representatives. They have worked hard and made a significant contribution to the school's effectiveness. They have committees and review the different aspects of the work in the school. Governors champion the cause of the school with the LEA and have striven to ensure that the school has sufficient funds to carry out its work. This has also helped with improvements to the accommodation and additional funds to support the school's work in improving pupils' behaviour and attendance in school. (BIP)
37. The school has well established procedures to review the quality of its work. Very good support is provided by the local education authority special needs officer who provides written feedback on monitoring visits. An external consultant is also used to provide an overview of the school's performance. The school itself conducts an audit of its effectiveness through subject leaders annually completing proformas on the quality of provision. It is not clear, though, how the detail of this links with the school development plan.
38. The current development plan is a very detailed document and includes a clear emphasis on initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school. There are many developments proposed and it is difficult to see how each of these will be successfully developed within one year. A longer term strategic plan with a smaller number of priorities for the current year would be more helpful. In addition, the school is not linking its allocated budget to the areas that it wishes to develop. As a result, there isn't a system that ensures that money is being spent in the most effective way during each financial year. It is partly because of this, that an 'underspend' in the budget has been above the expected level in the last two years. Uncertainties in staffing costs have added to the difficulties in managing the budget. The school's administration officer, though, maintains very clear records and, as with other aspects of her work, provides very high quality administrative support.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 1,177,315 | Balance from previous year | 68,062 |
| Total expenditure | 1,095,443 | Balance carried forward to the next | 81,872 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 18,257 | | |

Work Related Learning

Provision for work related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for work experience are good and take good account of the individual interests of pupils.
- Enrichment activities contribute well to the development of pupils' interests and vocational experiences.
- Careers education is not as effective as it should be because pupils do not receive their entitlement to personal advice and support from the Connexions Service.
- The Citizenship programme makes a good contribution for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of work.
- Links with local colleges are limited.

Commentary

39. In Year 11, pupils have two week work experience placements. These are well planned and take good account of the pupils' interests, for example, one pupil worked as a groundsman at Fulham Football Club. The school has good links with Camden Education Business Development Centre to provide placements and pupils have worked in a variety of situations such as the National Union of Teachers dispatch department and reception area, and in a local supermarket. All of these experiences are monitored well by the school.
40. Enrichment opportunities are timetabled for all pupils to experience leisure and sporting activities, for example, in sailing and canoeing which, in turn, have led to work placements, coaching opportunities and gaining additional qualifications in sailing instruction. These provide good vocational opportunities for pupils to decide if they want to continue with the interests they develop on leaving school. For example, the photographic club that recently exhibited its pictures in a prestigious London Gallery received favourable reviews from a national newspaper. Pupils are developing their skills for enterprise and employment and one pupil aims to attend a college course in photography when he leaves school next year.
41. The school meets the new requirement to provide careers education and guidance from year 7. This aspect is well taught through the PSHE and Citizenship programme. It makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning about the world of work and the kinds of skills and qualities which are important in different kinds of employment. Currently, the school does not have a Personal Adviser from Connexions and, as a result, pupils do not receive their entitlement to personal advice and support. Staff do not have opportunities to receive information and guidance on the teaching of careers education from the Connexions Service and, as a result, the provision for careers education and guidance is unsatisfactory.
42. The subject leader responds well to individual requests for early College experiences. One pupil is due to start a plumbing course and another hopes to attend a mechanics course. However, links with local Colleges are not well developed and this limits pupils' opportunities to acquire work related skills in a range of vocational areas.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Modern Foreign Language

All pupils in the school have been disapplied from studying this subject. This decision has been made to give increased time to address pupils' literacy difficulties as well as having problems in recruiting a member of staff who could teach the subject. Senior staff and governors are reviewing this decision as part of the school's development plan.

English

Eight lessons were seen and discussions were held with pupils as well as a scrutiny of their written work in books and files, reports and records.

The provision for **English** is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well because of good teaching.
- Additional support for pupils with literacy difficulties is effective.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well because they are given a high priority in lessons.
- Pupils redraft their work and as a result their writing skills improve.
- Limited links between the English and literacy curriculum results in areas of work being repeated and opportunities lost to reinforce and develop pupils' literacy skills.
- Although resources are good, the lack of a library and limited use of ICT reduces pupils' opportunities to develop their skills in independent research.

Commentary

43. Given that pupils arrive with low levels of reading and writing skills, most make significant headway during their time at the school. This is an improvement on their achievements at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, in 2004, six pupils were entered for GCSE in English and gained passes which is a clear reflection of pupils' good achievement by the end of Year 11. The teaching of English is characterised by confident subject expertise, a brisk rate of work keeping all pupils actively involved, very interesting and imaginative subject matter and varied, resourceful methods of challenging pupils to develop their thinking and express themselves more precisely and effectively. Pupils are not allowed to settle for superficial answers, they are challenged to explore ideas and take their thinking further. All staff work hard to develop good relationships with pupils and this plays a positive part in the quality of learning in English. Every opportunity is taken to praise and encourage success.
44. Achievements in reading are good overall. A specialist literacy support assistant provides individual pupils who have additional special educational needs with very good focussed teaching of early literacy skills. Pupils are taught how to tackle unfamiliar words and to recognise and name letters and sound them out quickly and accurately. Pupils gain confidence in their reading and interpretation of text. Older pupils understand how language is used to create particular effects, for example, when they were asked to read the poem 'From A Railway Carriage' by Robert Louis Stevenson, pupils understood the intention for its rhythm to recreate the motion of a steam train.
45. Progress in speaking and listening is good because there is an important focus placed on the improvement of these skills in lessons. Pupils learn to develop their ideas, express them more precisely and to take part in discussion. Left to their own devices, younger pupils, though, are not good at taking part in discussions or listening properly to what others have to say. Their

work in English is helping them to improve in these areas, because teaching specifically addresses these weaknesses.

46. Pupils do well with their writing skills and show clear improvements in the quality of their work. In Year 7, pupils develop their writing skills through making a cartoon story board. They draft and redraft their work on computers, not simply to correct errors of spelling, grammar or punctuation, but to develop their own ideas. The progress made over time is evident in the work by pupils in Years 10 and 11 as they adjust their writing to suit different purposes and audiences and to express themselves with increasing sophistication. As part of their GCSE coursework, pupils produce writing that is imaginative and increasingly well organised. They use drafting and redrafting to produce work of a good standard as they write about the myth of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and on how Mercutio's character in the play Romeo and Juliet makes Act 3 scene 1 interesting and exciting for the audience. Opportunities to use computers to improve their creative writing skills, though, are not used frequently enough. In addition, teachers do not always make comments on pupils' work so that they know how to improve.
47. The subject is well led and managed. Staff work well with each other as a team and resources for learning are good. Plans for what pupils will learn in English lessons as they move through the school have been clearly identified to ensure that they continue to make progress. However, there is little joint planning between the separate literacy programme and English. As a result, there is duplication of content between these lessons and opportunities are lost to reinforce and develop pupils' literacy targets. The lack of a library not only reduces pupils' opportunities to develop their skills in independent research, but also restricts their knowledge of how to use a library appropriately. Nonetheless, the school makes good use of the Camden Library loan service and there is a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction texts in most classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Pupils' use of their language and literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory, although, there is not a strategy to ensure that pupils' skills are reinforced throughout the curriculum. In PSHCE, language skills are fostered and prioritised well. Pupils are encouraged to talk to adults and peers about their feelings and their work. This is reinforced in art where pupils are frequently expected to express opinions on their work and on paintings by famous artists. Key vocabulary in each subject area is displayed in most classrooms, although these are not often referred to during lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Five lessons were seen and discussions were held with pupils as well as a scrutiny of their written work in books and files, reports and records

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 pass GCSEs and entry level examinations.
- Very positive encouragement and relationships help pupils settle to work in lessons.
- The planning of work to be covered follows national guidelines, but there is insufficient detail of what pupils will learn in individual lessons.
- The methods to assess pupils' achievements are limited and fail to help teachers plan what they need to teach.
- Most pupils develop skills to work independently through the teaching approaches used.
- The subject development plan is weak and fails to show how teaching and learning will be improved.

Commentary

49. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory which is similar to that recorded in the previous inspection. Records show that pupils have the opportunity to undertake GCSE and entry level certificates. Results have been similar each year and compare favourably with those achieved by pupils in similar type schools. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is based around pupils working through the type of questions that will be part of the tests. For example, Year 11 pupils are currently looking at drawing graphs to plot points and co-ordinates and a few have understood how to draw conversion graphs. Year 10 pupils are studying angles and shapes. These pupils, though, are not confident in answering questions on these topics and for example, are unsure about the difference between acute and obtuse angles. Most are able to estimate the degrees of angles when using a computer software programme.
50. Records and observations show that pupils find mathematics difficult. The approach of staff, though, is non-confrontational and the very good relationships they have with pupils are used well to encourage pupils to work in lessons. This is the situation in Year 7, where the learning support assistant has a very good relationship with pupils new to the school. She encourages them to settle and try problems that they find difficult.
51. Teaching is satisfactory, mainly because of the insistence that pupils undertake work independently and behave in an appropriate manner. Much of the work in Years 10 and 11 is based around pupils working independently through text books. This approach is clear in the planning of work in mathematics. There are limited opportunities for pupils to work together or be involved in investigative type work. The national guidelines for what should be covered in each aspect of mathematics are included in the school planning document and records show pupils cover a good range of topics. However, these are not broken down into how the aspects will be covered at different times of a pupil's school career.
52. Methods used within the department to record pupils' achievements are very limited. As a result, there are few links between the setting of tasks in lessons and the knowledge staff have of pupils' achievements. It is because of this that there are occasions when pupils of a higher ability are frustrated by not being challenged by the work. This appeared to be the situation in a Year 7 lesson where at least one pupil found the task of adding the distances around a perimeter less than challenging. This, consequently, led to pupils responding poorly and the learning of others being affected.
53. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The subject leader meets with other teachers who have been asked to teach mathematics and seeks to ensure that there is a uniform approach to teaching throughout the school. New initiatives are considered and records show improvements have been made following advice given. There is, though, an inadequate subject development plan and no link to what resources will be needed to develop the teaching and learning in the subject further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. In the past, staff have considered how mathematics can be included in the teaching of other subjects, but there has been no formal monitoring of how this is being implemented. There are a few links in subjects such as design and technology and art, but, overall, insufficient attention is being given to how mathematics can be linked to the teaching of other subjects.

SCIENCE

Four lessons were seen in science. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work in all year groups and held discussions with pupils about their work.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well in their understanding of a good range of scientific topics.
- Teachers create a positive and effective learning environment in science lessons.
- Teachers question pupils well to ensure that they understand their work, but the marking of work does not give enough information to help pupils improve.
- Teachers make lessons interesting, but there is insufficient use of ICT and limited opportunities for independent writing from pupils.

Commentary

55. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils achieve well. This is the same for all pupils throughout the school including those with additional special needs. By the end of Year 11, many pupils make sufficient progress that they are able to obtain good results in GCSE. This reflects good improvement since the previous inspection when provision and achievement were judged to be satisfactory. Learning is planned well so that pupils have appropriate opportunities to build on past learning and cover many aspects of the national curriculum. Learning support assistants give good support and help the pupils improve their work and maintain their concentration. For example, in a Year 11 lesson looking at the functions of the heart, the learning support assistant joined in effectively with the questioning and answering session which encouraged pupils to take part.
56. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and this, together with a good understanding of the needs of pupils, help staff set work that will interest them. The subject leader has very skilled behaviour management strategies and this ensures that behaviour in the science lessons for Years 10 and 11 is good. Good use is made of questioning to check how much pupils have understood, and lessons end with a good review of what has been learned. Interesting activities, such as a Year 7 lesson looking at the planets of the solar system, encourage pupils to ask questions and develop their understanding further.
57. There is a good emphasis in lessons on providing pupils with opportunities to take part in practical tasks. These are enjoyed by pupils. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, pupils enthusiastically participated in an experiment to separate substances. There is, though, insufficient use of ICT in the teaching and this reduces the opportunities pupils have to find information for themselves elsewhere and consider scientific investigations which they are unable to cover in the school. At times pupils are not given sufficient encouragement to record their work. Pupils are asked to complete worksheets, but these are the same for all pupils and for more able pupils these are not challenging.
58. The subject is well led and managed. There is an appropriate programme of work which is carefully linked to the National Curriculum and the requirements of the examination syllabus. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress are good. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always indicate how pupils can improve. Resources are satisfactory although the science room is small and this restricts the opportunities for experiments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Three lessons were seen and inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work in all year groups and held discussions with pupils and staff about their work.

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning during this term has improved and is now good.
- There is good use now being made of an interactive whiteboard and lessons are very well prepared.

- Pupils have achieved examination successes in short course GCSEs and entry level certificates.
- Previously planning for the teaching of ICT has been unsatisfactory, but it has recently been improved.

Commentary

59. School records and an examination of pupils' work shows that the school has benefited from the appointment of a new subject leader at the start of this term. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning in ICT lessons is now good. This was demonstrated during the inspection by lessons observed and confirmed by pupils' recent achievements in ICT. The newly appointed teacher is very enthusiastic and ensures that there is detailed planning for what she wants pupils to learn. Lessons are characterised by well presented starter activities using the interactive whiteboard which is very effective at capturing the imagination of pupils. Resources are then well prepared for pupils to be able to work independently on computers. Classroom assistants offer positive encouragement, although many do not have high levels of skill in using computers.
60. A few pupils have achieved examination successes in short course GCSE and entry level certificates. However, these results are below the standards of other subjects in the school and do not demonstrate that, in the past, pupils have achieved as well in ICT as in other subjects. This represents a deterioration in achievement since the previous inspection. Pupils are now though showing good progress in the development of their computing skills. For example, Year 8 pupils are importing both pictures and text in their efforts to create posters as part of their work in a 'using images for a purpose' topic. Year 10 pupils are not as confident and find it difficult to complete tasks, such as setting instructions to manoeuvre a 'turtle' around the screen.
61. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is now good. The newly appointed subject leader has rewritten the planning for how and what will be taught. There are now detailed plans for each year group and clear expectations of the skills that pupils will develop. There is clear information as to how pupils' skills will be developed as they move through the school. Work is also being planned based on the initial assessments the teacher has made of the skills that pupils have already gained.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Insufficient use is made of ICT in the teaching of other subjects. In English, pupils use computers to draft and re-draft their work and in mathematics a few software programmes are used to help pupils practice skills being developed. Little use is made of other technological aids such as digital cameras or videos.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in history and geography and no judgements can be made about the overall provision in the subjects because insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection.

62. Planning in both subjects is more structured and more detailed in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7, 8 and 9. There is good evidence that staff grade pupils' work and have high expectations for their achievements. The subject policy and planning shows pupils cover a satisfactory range of topics in geography. Topics include the changing nature and location of manufacturing and service industries, and the common geographical features that make up the British Isles. In history, an interesting and varied range of topics are covered which span the period of the Luddites and the Peterloo Massacre to the life of Nelson Mandela.

Religious Education

Two lessons were seen in religious education. The co-ordinator was interviewed and planning was examined.

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take an examination in the subject.
- Good plans are in place to develop the subject further

Commentary

63. Pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching are satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made of the previous report. Through role play pupils in Year 8 learn to value the importance of being honest and how dishonest acts affects the lives of others, including those closest to them. Pupils are given good encouragement to voice their opinions and identify important messages from each other's performances. Through skilled questioning from the teacher and learning support assistants, pupils develop their respect for the values and beliefs of others.
64. In Year 11 the parable of the Good Samaritan is linked well with conflicts between groups of people who live on different council estates. Pupils learn about prejudice and how to treat people with respect no matter whether they belong to other groups or appear to be different from themselves. Relationships are positive in all lessons, though pupils' opinions are not always challenged enough and this limits the progress they make.
65. Leadership of religious education is satisfactory. The time allocation for religious education has increased since the previous inspection and there is now adequate time for pupils to study for the Certificate of Achievement examination. The newly appointed co-ordinator has good plans to improve opportunities to visit places of worship and invite speakers from different faiths to meet with pupils. His links with the Maori community in London and the significance of the Haka dance in religious ceremonies have been used well, in a visit from the dance group, to develop the spiritual awareness of pupils and enhance the spiritual dimension of school assemblies. There are suitable resources, including videos and religious artefacts, though these are limited in the range of religions they cover.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

MUSIC

There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the provision for music.

66. A music specialist offers individual music lessons to pupils. There are, though, insufficient records to show which pupils have benefited from these and what aspects of music they have covered. These arrangements fail to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement of the national curriculum for the teaching of music.

ART and DESIGN

Three lessons were observed, pupils' portfolios and displays of work were scrutinised, planning and other documents were examined and a discussion was held with the art co-ordinator

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils find the activities interesting and they are motivated to work.
- Pupils' work is very well displayed around the school.
- Very effective teaching ensures that pupils achieve very well and produce high quality work in a range of media.
- The work of other artists is used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and ideas.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

67. Pupils' achievements are very good. Pupils in Year 7 participate in lessons with enthusiasm and, by Year 11, pupils have the skills to achieve good GCSE results. Art was identified as a strength of the school in the last report and its high profile has been maintained and developed. The importance given to this subject is reflected by the way in which pupils' art work is celebrated in high quality displays throughout the school.
68. Pupils are taught very well. They are developing good painting techniques, show a good understanding of colour and can select appropriate brushes. For example, in a very good Year 11 lesson, pupils developed ideas from an original scene using a wide range of materials, pastels, pencils and paint. They experimented with shading and colour to produce high quality coursework. Younger pupils make clay pots and learn how to apply texture and reproduce a pattern. Sketchbooks are used very well and demonstrate pupils' abilities to build up designs and ideas.
69. Pupils show a good understanding of the work of many famous artists and demonstrate this by creating pictures in their individual styles. For example, pupils have produced a range of paintings, drawings and displays in the style of Andy Warhol and Pablo Picasso. Planning is very good and identifies individual targets in lessons. Pupils can therefore achieve at their own level and, as a result, they enjoy being in the art room. Most come in and settle quickly to their work; however, due to the unsatisfactory punctuality of many pupils, lessons do not always begin promptly.
70. The co-ordinator is the only teacher of art and leads and manages her department very well. Planning clearly identifies areas for development and systems are in place for monitoring progress. Pupils are fully involved in assessing how well they are doing and in identifying how they can improve. Art makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development through their studies of art from different cultures. The excellent work of pupils in photography adds an extra dimension to their art experiences.

The "Photo Club" runs as part of the Vocational Training Programme, which takes place on a Friday afternoon and also forms part of the Behaviour Improvement Project.

"To try and give pupils a chance to experience another side of themselves in a fun and creative way" was the stated aim of the photography tutor in setting up the school Photography Club. Under his guidance and with determined support from a school governor, pupils were encouraged to look at "their city" and explore the "London Experience". They pretended to be tourists and took photos of what caught their attention. This process created a structure for pupils outside of the classroom and enabled them to explore their hidden talents. The school has been very successful in using the course as a way for pupils to explore and develop new skills in a creative field. As their tutor observed, "For every roll of film exposed, their confidence was raised a notch". One Year 11 pupil has developed his skills in this area so successfully that he is now being entered for a GCSE in photography. Another pupil has taken part in the Prince's Trust Youth Programme as a photographer for a community magazine. The end result of all their hard work was "Chalcot's Eyes", a concept show at a prestigious London Gallery and a write up in the Times newspapers' Arts section.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision for design and technology was sampled. No overall judgement on the provision in this subject was made.

71. Pupils have opportunities to learn relevant skills and knowledge. Work on display around the school shows that pupils have developed good skills in designing and assembling different materials to make good quality products. The school has a recently built resistant materials room, and a specialist room for food technology, both of which are used regularly by pupils of all ages.
72. Pupils, in their work with resistant materials, have made a good variety of wooden tables, stands and boxes to a high standard and they take care with measuring, cutting, sawing, joining, sanding and finishing their work. Skills learned in previous lessons are recalled through good use of questions. The teacher and technician have a very good rapport with pupils and this has a very positive effect on pupils' willingness to learn and make good progress. In food technology lessons, pupils are expected to read a recipe and to sort out ingredients and identify the utensils needed. Good use of praise and encouragement keeps pupils interested and involved with the tasks set.

Physical Education

There is insufficient information to make a full judgement on the provision of physical education.

73. The teaching of physical education is very severely limited by the lack of a suitable large indoor area in the school. The room that is available is only of sufficient size for pupils to be able to play table-tennis. There are no changing facilities or showers. Pupils do make good use of an artificial-turf playground area which is fully enclosed by netting. Pupils play games such as football and cricket here and receive a good standard of coaching from two enthusiastic, but unqualified, members of staff. Lunchtime games of football are also well organised and pupils show a considerable level of ability to play as part of a team, as well as displaying individual ball skills. Records show that, in the past, a few pupils have achieved success in GCSE short course physical education. Pupils also make use of local sports facilities. For example, during the inspection a group of Year 8 and 9 pupils were seen taking part in football training in a local gym. However, this was an unsatisfactory lesson because of the response of pupils whilst walking to the gym and the behaviour of many once they were there. Pupils do not change for physical activities and, although most wear tracksuits as part of their every day clothes, this is a missed opportunity to set appropriate expectations for engaging in physical activities. Records show that pupils have taken part in sports days and the school football team has been successful in competitions in the past.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Four lessons were seen and discussions were held with pupils and staff as well as a scrutiny of work in books and files, reports and records.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and well matched to the needs of pupils.
- The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal and social development.
- There is a clear curriculum policy and programme, which ensures that a wide range of topics are covered.
- The subject leader has clear expectations for pupils to benefit from the lessons.

Commentary

74. The content of lessons is very well thought out and includes a wide range of different topics relevant to the needs of different year groups. These include important issues such as the dangers of drugs, smoking and alcohol, and how to live a healthy lifestyle. The very good programme of work enables pupils to build on their knowledge and skills systematically as they move through school. Citizenship is taught separately from personal, social and health education, but topics are integrated well to establish an effective overall programme. Pupils learn about the importance of behaving responsibly and of respecting themselves and each other in PSHCE as well as in other activities, such as tutor time for pupils in Years 7 to 9. As a result of all these programmes pupils progress in PSHCE is very good.
75. One of the strongest features of lessons is the way in which pupils are encouraged to think through concepts, to offer opinions and, through very skilful questioning, develop their understanding and response to moral and social issues. Pupils are given good opportunities to assess how they perform in lessons and to identify what they have learned. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' learning to make decisions based on good information. This was the case in a Year 8 lesson on Citizenship when pupils discussed issues around human rights and the restrictions of prison life. Through very good management of discussions by the teacher, and the use of multiple choice questionnaires, pupils' learned a lot and became more reflective in their attitudes and responses.
76. Elements of PSHCE are taught very effectively by the school's educational psychologist. Issues on how pupils can help each other and resolve conflicts are sensitively handled so that pupils feel confident to share experiences and recognise their strengths. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator's expertise and commitment to the personal, social and health educational needs of pupils has contributed strongly to the improvements made since the previous inspection. The range of resources used is good and well matched to pupils' ages and interest.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 4 |
| Attitudes | 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 | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 4 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 4 |
| 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 | 3 |

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

* In a special school such as this, 'standards achieved' are judged in relation to pupils' individual targets and not in relation to national standards.