

INSPECTION REPORT

COPPICE SCHOOL

Westlands, Newcastle

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124511

Headteacher: Mrs Sandra Baker

Lead inspector: Adrian Simm

Dates of inspection: 18th – 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 268552

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:	3 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	119
School address:	Abbots Way Westlands Newcastle Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST5 2EY
Telephone number:	01782 297490
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Buckley
Date of previous inspection:	18 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Coppice Special School educates 84 boys and 35 girls aged 3 to 16 years who have moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a growing number of pupils with autistic tendencies. Pupils have a broad range of attainment on entry but for those starting in the Reception, it is well below average. Ninety-eight per cent of pupils are of white British background: those who are not speak fluent English. All pupils from the Reception class to Year 11 have statements of special educational needs (SEN). Pupils come from Newcastle under Lyme and the surrounding area. Many pupils travel by local authority transport. Thirty-four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is high. The school is on two sites. Pupils in Reception to Year 9 are taught in the main building, whilst Years 10 and 11 pupils are in The Coppice Centre, which is around half a mile away. Year 11 pupils were out of school on work experience during the inspection. The school is subject to re-organisation by the local education authority. It is expected that from September 2006, the school will change to become a secondary generic special school. The school gained the Inclusion Quality Mark in 2003. In 2004, it gained both the Healthy Schools Award and the Football Association Charter Award. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher had been in post as acting headteacher for one week. She was appointed headteacher in the week following the inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21138	Adrian Simm	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Geography Work related learning
9039	Bernard Eyre	Lay inspector	
27409	Sue Hunt	Team inspector	English History Religious education Special educational needs
10782	Henry Moreton	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education
30559	Jenny Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology
10781	Bob Thompson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Personal, social, health and citizenship education

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4.	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Coppice School is a **good** school. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and learning. Effective leadership has ensured that the school has improved well since the last inspection. The care and support provided for pupils is very good and as a result, pupils' personal development is very effective. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are good and have moved the school on well since the last inspection. However, information that the school is collecting on how well the pupils are doing and what else they need to be taught is not analysed as effectively as it could be.
- Staff have very good relationships with pupils. This leads to very good attitudes and behaviour. As a result, pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- Overall, pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching and learning.
- In Years 10 and 11, whilst work related learning is very good and the Young Enterprise initiative is outstanding, pupils' opportunities to achieve in a broader range of subjects accredited nationally are restricted, especially for higher attaining pupils.
- Whilst school accommodation is satisfactory overall, access for pupils or adults with disabilities is inadequate.
- Very good links with other schools, colleges and the community enrich pupils' learning.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Overall effectiveness, achievement and the quality of teaching and learning have improved well. All development issues have been successfully addressed. This is most obvious in information and communication technology (ICT) and in the management of the behaviour of the small minority of pupils with behaviour difficulties.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is **good**. Overall, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school. All pupils achieve very well in personal and social development, which permeates the whole of school life. They achieve well in communication, reading and mathematics throughout the school. Achievement is also good in writing and science for all pupils apart from in Years 10 and 11, where it is satisfactory. Although pupils in Years 10 and 11 have very good opportunities to achieve on courses linked to the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), higher attaining pupils have insufficient opportunity to succeed in a broader and more challenging range of accredited courses. Pupils achieve well throughout the school in ICT, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), art and design and physical education. In religious education, pupils' achievement is satisfactory; it is not stronger, partly because of the shortage of time available for the subject. Boys and girls, pupils with different special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Their attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Overall, teaching is **good**. This results in pupils learning **well**. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work very closely together. For those pupils with behaviour or more complex

difficulties, the very good knowledge which staff have of how pupils are likely to react to situations means that difficulties are often pre-empted. This is part of the very good relationships staff have with pupils, which results in pupils working very hard for the full length of lessons. The curriculum offers very good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning. Pupils take part in a very good range of trips, vocational activities and residential experiences in which they learn practical life-skills. Despite some pupils visiting France each year, pupils are currently disapplied from learning French in lessons. The school is rightly considering introducing French to the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Links with other schools are very strong and ensure that pupils' learning opportunities are much broader than would otherwise be the case. Because of this, 32 pupils since the last inspection have moved successfully to primary and secondary schools ready to continue their education. School accommodation is satisfactory overall. Its strengths are in the new ICT suite, improved provision for science and design and technology and in the stimulating outdoor provision at the main building. The main weaknesses lie in access to the school buildings for pupils and adults with disabilities. There is also room for improvement in the tightness of space in the school library, in the small indoor accommodation for physical education and overall, for the number of Years 10 and 11 pupils at the Coppice Centre.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are **good**. A cohesive staff team is in place whose efforts are paying off in terms of raising standards. As a consequence, pupils' achievement is improving well. Regular and effective checks have started to be carried out on the school's performance in many ways although the analysis of information about pupils' achievement is not yet sharp enough. This results in the school not being as clear as it should be about whether all pupils are being sufficiently challenged. The roles of subject co-ordinators and senior managers are rightly about to become more formalised. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are committed to the school. They are keen to improve their effectiveness, which will be helped when more data is available to fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' achievement. One governor and her husband provide outstanding day-to-day support in school through their voluntary help. Governors ensure that the high majority of statutory requirements are met. However, they have not ensured that parents receive all of the information to which they are entitled in the governors' annual report to parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents are very satisfied with the school, especially with the quality of teaching and how staff ensure that pupils work hard and achieve their best. Pupils value highly what the school provides for them, especially the work related learning in Years 10 and 11. The good level of attendance reflects pupils' desire to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Analyse effectively all of the information about how well pupils are achieving so that staff, governors and parents are clear what is going well and what more needs to be done.
- Ensure the very good provision for work related learning in Years 10 and 11 is complemented by a broader and more challenging range of accredited subject courses, especially for higher attaining pupils.
- Overcome the deficiencies in access to the school buildings for pupils and adults with disabilities.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure the governors' annual report to parents contains all information to which parents are entitled.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Boys and girls, regardless of their differing special educational needs achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the Reception class make a good start to their school life in working towards the goals set for them.
- The school has a strong track record of pupils returning to mainstream schools ready to pursue their education.
- Achievement is very good in work related learning for pupils in Years 10 and 11. The business enterprise part of this is outstanding. However, opportunities for these pupils also to have their learning accredited in a broader range of subjects are underdeveloped.
- Overall, pupils' achievement shows an improving trend that is good since the last inspection. Improvement is very good in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The school's statutory targets lack real challenge.

Commentary

1. When children join the school in the Reception class, their attainment is varied but on the whole, is well below what would be expected nationally. Because the staff team gets to know the children and their needs closely, they achieve well in the goals expected of them. Reception children work in with pupils in Years 1 and 2 because of the small numbers in the school. However, all children mix very well. The broad range of activities is carefully chosen so that all pupils, regardless of ability or age, work alongside each other at their right level. As a result, children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. At the end of their time in the Reception class, pupils move to their next class well prepared for continuing their learning.
2. One example of a good inclusive approach to education, is the high number of pupils who achieve well and return to mainstream schools. Letters from partner schools confirm this strength. Records show that since the last inspection, 32 full time pupils have returned to a range of first, primary, middle and high schools as well as 15 pupils who attended part-time and were supported also in their mainstream school. This is impressive.
3. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have their levels of attainment assessed by ASDAN as well as in English Speaking Board examinations. Since the last inspection there has been an increasing number of pupils succeeding in these assessments and in the levels obtained. Improvement is good. The very good provision for work related learning contributes to pupils now gaining silver awards in ASDAN, including a broad range of units of work including, communication, number, world of work, making choices and industry and commerce. The 'Young Enterprise' group each year are very strongly motivated to learn. They take responsibility for different elements of their thriving 'business', which currently operates locally and nationally. However, work related learning is not outstanding overall because the pupils do not have the chance to capitalise on their learning in a broader range of qualifications across the curriculum. Also, pupils do not benefit from being taught for the same amount of time that is offered in other similar schools nationally. They are short by around five per cent, which includes the time lost in walking to and from the main building.
4. In nearly all subjects inspected, pupils throughout the school achieve well. This includes in communication, reading, mathematics, ICT, art and design, physical education and PSHCE. Achievement in writing and science is good by the end of Years 2, 6 and 9, and satisfactory by Year 11. It is not stronger here because of the lack of accredited courses to challenge pupils more, particularly the higher attainers. Overall, this is in line with the good quality of teaching

throughout the school. It shows a marked improvement in standards since the last inspection in ICT, with good progress in most other subjects. All pupils do very well in their personal and social development, because of the very good relationships staff develop with pupils and because pupil-choice is integral in most activities at a level that staff know is right for each pupil. The growing number of pupils with behaviour and more complex learning needs also do well. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education. Their knowledge of Christianity and some other major world faiths is developing appropriately. A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed to raise its profile again within the school. Achievement is affected detrimentally by the low amount of time devoted to the subject.

5. The school sets statutory targets for pupils by the end of Years 6, 9 and 11. In 2003, 2004 and 2005, the targets were very similar, and to some extent, lacking challenge. For pupils in Year 11, for example, targets were set for numbers of pupils accessing or passing basic levels rather than challenging them to achieve progressively more highly. Disappointingly, targets set for pupils in mathematics, at Year 6, science at Year 9 and the English Speaking Board at Year 11 were not met. However, in small year groups, the achievement of one pupil makes a huge difference to the success of the year-group as a whole. The school has now introduced a far more precise system for assessment, which should support a clearer target setting process, as information about pupils' precise levels of attainment becomes more readily available.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development including spiritual moral and social development are **very good**. Attendance is **good**. Punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond to the high expectations of all adults especially in respect of their moral and social development.
- The wide range of activities provided stimulates enterprise. Pupils undertake responsibilities readily and responsibly.
- Attendance is good and pupils arrive in good time in the mornings. However, during the day, lessons do not always commence promptly.

Commentary

6. All staff work together very well to encourage the pupils to succeed. There are numerous examples of good individual practice that enable pupils to overcome upsets and to succeed in their lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants work together tirelessly so that pupils, regardless of their ability make progress. Behaviour management, including support when emotions erupt is balanced with firmness, patience and understanding. Pupils explained that the guidance they received helps them to come to terms with feelings of anger and frustration. In some of the very good lessons seen, teachers used a 'traffic lights' system to encourage the pupils to record how they felt they had progressed in their learning. This encourages them to remain fully engaged in their lessons.
7. There were three temporary exclusions in the school year 2003/4, as shown in the table below. The decision to exclude happened after exhaustive efforts were made unsuccessfully to use the school's behaviour policy to calm emotions. There have been no exclusions in the current school year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions
White – British	117	3
Mixed – White and Asian	1	
Chinese	1	

8. The pupils have numerous opportunities to develop self-knowledge, to have respect for others and to develop a sense of belonging. They know it is important to be tolerant about other peoples' beliefs and it is wrong to deliberately cause hurt by words or actions. Assemblies are used to celebrate successes and a sense of belonging. The concept of healthy living and lifestyles is promoted through lessons. Also, food served at lunchtimes is presented attractively so that lunchtimes are happy family occasions. Consequently social skills are developed very well. Visitors to the school provide opportunities for cultural enrichment. Incidents of racial intolerance or insensitivity are not allowed to fester. Prompt guidance or intervention ensures that respect is established. Personal, social and healthy living topics include guidance to help pupils to assess their own behaviour and attitudes. This helps them to come to terms with their emotions. Personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons strengthen this process, for example, in pupils coming to understand what makes a democratic society.
9. Attendance is **good**, having been sustained since the previous inspection. Pupils arrive in very good time in the morning. When they are allowed to enter the school, they go to their tasks promptly. However, during the course of the day there are occasions when lessons do not commence promptly and valuable time is lost. Unauthorised absence has risen this year and whilst it is still below the national average for schools of this type, too many occasions occur when the whereabouts of a pupil is unclear.

Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.5	School data :	0.6
National data:	8.2	National data:	1.8

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning, curricular opportunities, support and guidance, which pupils receive and the partnership with parents are **good**. The impact of links with the community and other schools are **very good**. The standard of care and how well the school listens to and acts upon pupils' views are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships between staff and pupils enhances pupils' learning very effectively.
- Pupils are known and valued as individuals.
- Pupils are encouraged to work hard in lessons.
- Challenging behaviour is effectively managed.
- Most pupils' individual needs are met well.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to be challenged academically in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

Lessons seen during the inspection are summarised in the table below.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(3%)	10(25%)	23(57%)	6(15%)			

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.

10. Teaching and learning are good overall with nearly one in four lessons that are very good. This accounts for the overall good achievement and standards seen. Good or better teaching was seen in all subjects across the school. Teachers are skilled at classroom management and effective in adopting approaches recommended by national strategies.
11. Relationships with pupils are of high quality. This results in pupils working hard and wanting to learn. There is a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and pupils are happy. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to ensure that pupils gain the maximum benefit from the teaching. Generally, staff manage challenging behaviour calmly and effectively by consistently using agreed strategies. These place emphasis on the pupils recognising their own needs and learning how to control themselves. The teaching assistants understand the needs of the pupils they are supporting. They are well integrated in the life of the school. Teaching assistants provide the help and challenge required to enable pupils, including those with additional learning needs, to become more independent in their learning.
12. Teachers' good subject knowledge provides them with the confidence to use pupils' responses and to draw on their experiences. Effective questioning is at the heart of this. Questions are not used simply to check facts but throw the onus back on pupils to explain themselves. This was very evident in a Reception lesson on mini-beasts when the children were helped to work out why flies get caught in spiders' webs. There is emphasis on discussion enabling pupils the opportunity to consider their ideas, including in pairs and in small groups. Pupils' literacy is well developed and is reflected in the consistency of its application across the subjects. Pupils get through a lot of work and the National Curriculum is generally covered comprehensively. Homework is set appropriately.
13. Pupils' independence of learning is carefully supported and developed over time. Their confidence is nurtured through the development of support so that their confidence is boosted. Members of staff display a very genuine commitment to the pupils. They want them to succeed. Marking of written work is generally thorough and helpful in most subjects. In the main, the difference in quality between lessons was to do with the consistency of good behaviour management and the level of challenge linked to the effectiveness of encouraging pupils to think for themselves.
14. The school is improving in gathering information about how well pupils are progressing. Pupils have good quality Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that set appropriate targets for them to achieve. Pupils are assessed in a range of ways. These include National Curriculum tests, specific teacher assessment set against National Curriculum levels and a nationally recognised approach to assessment, known as 'P' scales, for those pupils working below National Curriculum levels. However, the assessment information that is amassed is not used fully in analysing what is going well and what else needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement even more in all subjects. In particular, higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently in a broad enough range of subjects in Years 10 and 11. Their progress is inadequately recognised through the acquisition of externally validated tests, awards and examinations.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** and meets the needs of all pupils. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits to places of interest and visitors to school enhance the curriculum very well.
- Work related learning for Years 10 and 11 prepares pupils very well for the future.
- Pupils have insufficient chance to follow nationally accredited courses in Years 10 and 11.
- The school building has not been adapted to allow access and provide facilities for disabled pupils and adults. Teaching space is limited at the Coppice Centre.
- The school is effective in providing for the broad range of special educational needs of the pupils.

Commentary

15. School makes very good provision for a wide range of activities planned outside of the classroom, which enrich and extend pupils' learning and experiences. These include residential visits to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world. They visit France and Anglesey as well as making shorter visits to places of local interest. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities including swimming and basketball, in addition to organised competitions with other local schools. A good range of clubs including conversational French, fishing and gardening complements these activities. The local Riding for the Disabled stables provides facilities to enable some pupils to horse ride regularly. There are a number of visitors to school including musicians and artists to strengthen pupils' understanding of art, drama and music, for example African drumming. Pupils take part in theatrical productions such as 'Oliver'. Visits and visitors make a strong contribution to personal and social education. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to subsequent stages of education. There is a strong commitment to integrate pupils into mainstream schools and this is successfully managed.
16. The curriculum for Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. This is a balance between strengths and weaknesses. Strengths are in the very strong emphasis on preparing pupils for further education, vocational training and employment. There are very effective links with the local colleges and close links with the Connexions service. Pupils participate in ASDAN, which encourages the development of the necessary skills to develop social and economic independence. Pupils take part in an Enterprise scheme, which is pivotal to their education for work. Staffing levels and expertise are adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum currently offered. However, weaknesses exist in the lack of provision for pupils to gain nationally recognised qualifications, such as GCSE, in the main subjects of the curriculum.
17. The school has done much to improve the accommodation since the last inspection. Notable improvements include the accommodation for science, design and technology and ICT and in outside facilities. These have had an impact on pupils' standards, particularly in ICT where their achievement has improved very well. Also, the school council was involved in ensuring that barriers around the playground protected pupils from vehicles on the neighbouring car park and vehicle 'turning circle'. Overall the accommodation and resources are good with the exception of the tightness of space at the Coppice Centre for pupils in Years 10 and 11, the school library and the indoor space for physical education, which are satisfactory. The main deficiency is the lack of access to buildings in general for pupils and adults with disabilities. A recent survey commissioned by the local education authority judged that there is much work to be done for this aspect to become satisfactory.
18. The school provides a good range of opportunities, which take into account the requirements of the National Curriculum and nationally accepted guidelines. Throughout the school pupils with behaviour difficulties and more complex learning needs have equal access to a similar

curriculum because it is adapted appropriately to ensure their needs are met. Pupils who need therapies receive a good level of input and this is enhanced by good liaison between therapists and teachers. Consequently these pupils achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Provision for the support, advice and guidance of pupils based on monitoring is **good**. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and using their views is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practices to ensure care and welfare have priority. Day-to-day issues are addressed promptly and very effectively.
- Pastoral support for pupils and families is of a high standard; it is effective because there are high levels of trust. Confidences are respected.
- Information about pupils' progress is not used as effectively as it might, to guide planning.
- Pupils' opinions are canvassed regularly. They are valued and used to make improvements.

Commentary

19. Care and guidance is very effective because everyone is committed to the wellbeing of the pupils. Members of staff who have designated responsibilities to ensure regulations and codes of practice are followed are diligent in their approach. Medication, child protection and other safety measures, including the assessment of risks on outings are in place. The correct training is undertaken.
20. Pastoral support and advice ensures that the needs of each pupil are met although some policies are due for review to ensure compliance with current guidelines. Settling in arrangements and arrangements for transfer back to main stream schooling work very well because extensive consultation takes place at all levels. First aid training ensures appropriate support when emergencies occur.
21. Pupils' progress in their lessons and personal development records are used to ensure that additional support is provided when needed, for example when abstract concepts are difficult to grasp. At present this information is not used consistently in the school development planning process, so that the best practice currently seen is not always shared. Staff who have designated responsibilities ensure that the full range of expertise is used from outside agencies, which includes psychological support and other support for vulnerable pupils.
22. The pupils are given numerous opportunities for them to express their opinions thoughtfully and openly. They know that their views are valued and this gives them confidence to make suggestions to improve school life. This can be seen in the pride the pupils have for 'their school' and this in turns links into good attendance and behaviour. Discussions with the school council confirmed the pride they feel that their suggestions are taken on board, for example, when the décor of the yellow room was selected and also that playground equipment and safety was improved after they identified shortcomings.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and **very good** links with other schools, colleges and work related learning providers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consultation arrangements with parents are well established, including regular review meetings.
- Parents do not receive all of the information to which they are entitled in the governors' annual report to parents. Some parents say that incidents of alleged bullying are not acted upon and that they do not understand the homework policy.
- Links with the community and other colleges ensure very good enrichment of the curriculum.

Commentary

23. Parents and carers live over a wide area so that telephone messages and information passed to school via school transport escorts is used extensively and effectively. There are good arrangements for parents and carers to visit the school to discuss their child's progress and other issues, and the mid-year reports contain helpful information. However end of year reports are less useful. They do not adequately cover if teachers' expectations have been reached or what future targets for learning have been established.
24. Parents who attended the meeting with the inspectors said that they did not understand some essential school procedures, for example, the homework policy and how the school deals with behaviour difficulties. Whilst the school prospectus contains the full range of information usually found, because its contents are not restated in periodical reminders, for example in newsletters, parents tend to forget. Governors issue an annual report to parents but some significant information is missing. The most important items missing are a statement about the school's finances, information about the success of the implementation of the school's special educational needs policy and the identification of how teachers' professional development has impacted on teaching and learning. Whilst a small number of parents expressed the opinion that behaviour management in the school is poor, during the inspection no evidence was seen to support this. In fact, behaviour management was a very strong feature of most lessons and supervision of pupils' free time.
25. The school makes very good use of the local network of schools to ensure that expertise and best practice is shared. This network of contacts is effective in enriching the educational provision and also to make it possible for pupils to transfer back into mainstream education. Older pupils have good work related learning experiences about which they speak highly. Sporting activities, including team games and athletic events both in the locality and beyond. These enhance significantly the range of learning experiences, so pupils with 'sporting' or 'athletic' prowess are immersed into the life of the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is **effective**. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior staff provide good role models for staff and pupils. They ensure staff work effectively as a team for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school is an inclusive school where all pupils, irrespective of their special educational needs, are supported effectively.
- Subject co-ordinators check on teachers' planning but have only limited opportunities to formally monitor and evaluate the quality of work in their subjects.
- The school takes staff training seriously and ensures it matches the needs of the pupils.
- There are limited procedures to formally evaluate data collected on pupils' achievements and to compare provision with other similar schools. The governors' role in this particular aspect is underdeveloped.
- A barrier to further improvement is the unsatisfactory access to the buildings for disabled pupils, were any to be enrolled, and to disabled adults.

Commentary

26. The school is well led and managed. As a result, provision has improved well since the last inspection. The leadership and vision of the headteacher are good. She fully understands the need to continue to move the school forward to achieve higher standards. She inspires confidence and loyalty in both staff and pupils. Staff share her determination that all pupils will make as much progress as they can both academically and in broader areas of personal achievement. Staff appreciate this and take their responsibilities seriously. As a result, they are working hard and to good effect. High morale and a very good ethos in school have been key factors in this improvement and the raising of standards.
27. The school is inclusive in ensuring that all pupils are treated equally. Pupils have equal access to all school activities. The number of pupils being successfully integrated into mainstream school has grown since the last inspection. Pupils are returned to mainstream school on a regular basis, but only when both schools are confident of a successful placement. Overall, this works very well. Whilst not an issue for pupils currently on roll, a barrier to further improvement is the unsatisfactory access to the buildings for disabled pupils and adults. The school and local education authority are aware of this deficiency.
28. The quality of subject co-ordination is generally good. Subject leaders are successful in promoting learning and higher standards in their subjects through formal and informal meetings. They are gaining in their understanding of the success of their subjects through scrutinising teachers' planning and increasingly, pupils' achievements. Although teachers have time during the week when they do not teach, this has not yet resulted in some of the time being used to check on the quality of lessons in the subject for which they have responsibility. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have carried out lesson observations, but insufficient information is fed back to co-ordinators for them to make fully informed judgements about whole school standards in their subjects.
29. Performance management for teachers is fully in place and contributes effectively to school improvement. This is linked closely to staff training, which has resulted in two teachers completing a nationally recognised course for teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. This is very important as the number of pupils in the school with autistic disorders is increasing. Teaching assistants have annual appraisal interviews with the headteacher where professional and personal development is discussed. As a result of these discussions the school has had training from the authority's autistic outreach team.
30. Governance is satisfactory. Their strengths outweigh their weaknesses. The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously. Governors are committed to the school and have considerable empathy with the pupils and their special educational needs. One governor and her husband work voluntarily in the school most days of the week, which is an outstanding commitment. Governors meet regularly to carry out their duties. Whilst the governing body has ensured that all major statutory requirements are in place and are keen to support the school with the expertise and experience they bring, they have omitted some requirements in their annual report to parents. The chair of the governing body is a regular visitor to school and as a result has good knowledge of many of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Individual governors have close links with particular subject co-ordinators. This is good practice, appreciated by governors and teachers alike and is beginning to work well. Once the school's improving assessment procedures provide increased detail, which can be analysed more fully, staff, governors and parents will be clearer about just how well pupils are achieving and what needs to be done to move individual pupils and the school as a whole on further.
31. Governors work hard to get best value from the relatively low school budget they receive. However, by the end of the financial year 2003/2004, governors had amassed £166,200, which was very high at around 15 per cent of their budget. Since then, £30,000 planned expenditure has been spent on updating the school's ICT provision. Around £48,000 was intended towards meeting the costs of a new art/drama/dance studio, which has been recently deferred pending local re-organisation of special schools. This means that suddenly, school finances are again

very buoyant. Governors are carefully targeting this underspend taking into account the expectations of re-organisation. In terms of meeting the principles of best value, governors are not as clear as they should be about how to compare the school with similar schools. However, they have consulted effectively staff, parents and pupils about their views of the school, which is good practice. For example, school council views have been acted upon, such as the installation of water fountains and the naming of the 'Golden Room'. This shows pupils that the governors are prepared to listen to them and take into account their views.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,058,270	Balance from previous year	163,240
Total expenditure	1,055,310	Balance carried forward to the next	166,200
Expenditure per pupil	7,817		

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

Throughout the following commentary, overall judgements about provision relate to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and any other significant aspects that reflect the standards achieved by pupils.

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Five lessons were seen involving Reception age children. A variety of other activities were also observed and contributed to the judgements made.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned to meet the individual needs of the children.
- Behaviour is very well managed. Children understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- There is good achievement by the children overall.
- Good teamwork between the teacher and support staff, who have detailed knowledge of the children, results in staff's anticipation of their needs.

Commentary

32. The school is subject to re-organisation by the local education authority. It is expected that from September 2006, the school will change to become a secondary generic special school. The numbers of children in the Foundation Stage has fallen over the last few years. Currently, there are too few children and insufficient evidence to make a separate judgement in each area of learning. Children attend the school full time. Because of the very small numbers, they are taught with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Good leadership and management of the class ensures that despite the range of age of the pupils, the curriculum is effective. Although there has been a spread of ability on entry to the Reception class, overall, attainment is well below expectations. Staff make children's school experience one where the children learn with enjoyment. All children achieve well because learning experiences and lessons are planned carefully for all pupils regardless of ability. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Strengths in knowledge and understanding have been retained and all other areas of learning have improved well. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is now more appropriate than it was at the last inspection, with resources accessible to the children independently, which adds to the improvements in their personal development. Children have access to a good range of outdoor equipment, the lack of which was criticised at the last inspection. Those children who begin school in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their school life.
33. In **personal, social and emotional development**, children settle quickly to activities in lessons. They work together individually or in small groups as required. Staff supervise sessions carefully and ensure a constant build-up of children's understanding about what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Where children are taught by other staff, such as in physical education, any inappropriate behaviour is immediately discussed upon their return to class. This ensures that the children are very clear about what is right and wrong. They are encouraged effectively to recognise this for themselves. Throughout activities, children interact with each other very well. When required, such as in whole class discussions or in group-work, children sit in their own place and respond very well to the staff leading the session. Good staffing levels mean that children receive the support they need.

34. In **communication, language and literacy**, children develop well their understanding of words that rhyme. They are prepared to take turns in their group-work and are keen to answer when it is their turn. They enjoy looking at books. With adult support, they look closely at words and pictures to identify those that rhyme. Because staff know the children's levels of understanding well, they target those children who need extra help. By the end of Reception, a clear build-up in skills is evident from children's writing, for example, from tracing over adult's writing to copying underneath legibly, with good spacing and reasonable accuracy. Children try hard to speak clearly and many have the confidence to speak in front of the group.
35. In **mathematical development**, children are introduced to number activities well, through practical activities and games. Every activity is well supported with language to enhance children's growing awareness of number. For example, when observing liquid in beakers, they understand the terms 'more than', 'less than', 'full' and 'empty'. When the teacher introduced the term 'half full', whilst repeating the expression clearly, children's understanding of this proved more work was needed. This was recognised by staff. By the end of Reception, children respond with adult support to the idea of addition and subtraction, generally recognise the name and shape of most coins and some simple two and three-dimensional shapes.
36. In **knowledge and understanding** of the world, children have opportunities to explore and investigate objects. They have a good range of puzzles and toys to encourage the matching of shapes. They enjoy making marks with crayons, often in a vigorous way. They show interest in the computer and know how to operate simple equipment. In an exciting lesson about minibeasts, they investigated how flies get caught in a spider's web although the spider can walk across the web without difficulty. They built a very good understanding of the 'stickiness' of the web, which caught their model flies but not their spiders because of their 'oily-covered' feet. By the end of Reception, children clearly show curiosity in a broad range of activities. Some pupils use a computer mouse to access picture-stories on the computer, which they recognise.
37. In **physical development**, children are very excited and need much adult support to succeed in activities. They still need help with changing quickly into their 'lesson kit'. Once underway, whilst they are mostly clear about why they need to warm up, developing the skills to do this still needs careful adult support. There are good opportunities for outdoor play that help children to develop physical skills and confidence. They show good signs of developing accuracy in holding brushes, crayons and other equipment. For example, the most co-ordinated children use scissors effectively whilst the least co-ordinated glue and stick shapes cut out by staff.
38. Whilst a lesson in **creative development** was not seen, it is clear that from other activities seen, children learn to sing and join in with songs and rhymes. They paint boldly, using colour, and their paintings show that they are learning good brush control. Work kept by the staff shows that children's control over their use of pencils, crayons and paint is improving well.
39. Teaching and learning are good because lessons allow children to achieve well. There are good records kept and children's achievement is monitored well in all areas. There is good leadership and management of the Reception class, which ensures that staff have a detailed knowledge of the children's needs. For children ready to move back to mainstream school, this is readily available and an effective measure of early success by the school.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 AND 4.

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Despite the school offering some pupils the opportunity to experience conversational French in a lunchtime club and the chance to visit France with the school, pupils have historically been disapplied from learning the language in lessons. As such, no judgement can be made about the quality of provision in the subject. However, the current headteacher rightly has plans to introduce the subject fully in the near future to pupils in Years 7 to 9, in line with the school's aim 'to allow pupils maximum opportunity to develop'.

English

Twelve lessons were observed covering Years 1 to 10. Accreditation data and examples of pupils' work were provided for Year 11.

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good speech and language support, which promotes communication effectively throughout the school.
- Suitable accreditation for high achieving pupils in Years 10 and 11 is not in place.
- Achievement in speaking and listening and reading is good throughout the school.
- The assessment of pupils' achievements is inconsistent.
- There has been good overall improvement in English since the last inspection as a result of good leadership and management.

Commentary

40. There has been good improvement in pupils' achievement in reading since the last inspection; good achievement in speaking and listening for all pupils has been maintained. Writing skills have improved for Years 1 to 9 pupils. However, achievement by the end of Year 11 remains only satisfactory. This is hampered by the lack of subject accreditation offered and therefore there is a distinct lack of challenge for a large number pupils, particularly those who are higher attainers.
41. The improvement since the last inspection in reading and writing for Years 1 to 9 pupils is largely due to the literacy co-ordinator who worked hard to secure improvement. All teachers have focused on developing pupils' reading skills and younger pupils' writing skills with considerable success. Staff have all been trained to structure lessons to follow the recommendations of the National Literacy strategy. The quality of teaching and planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and the strengths and weaknesses of the subject are well known. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, literacy is taught through ASDAN modules rather than in a more academic way for those able to cope with more advanced work.
42. Good progress and achievement are made overall by pupils in speaking and listening. Older pupils take part in English Speaking Board accreditation at Year 11. Eighty-three per cent of pupils were successful in this examination in 2004. Teachers throughout the school make good use of questioning and giving clear explanations involving the pupils well in discussions. Pupils listen carefully and answer questions with good levels of understanding. For example, in a Year 6 class, pupils listened and talked at great length about 'Milo' and his capture. There was much conversation about the 'stepping stones' puzzle relating to 'Milo's quest for the stolen crown'. For pupils with extra speech and language needs, the speech and language therapist and her assistant regularly come into school to work effectively with the pupils.

43. Achievement in reading is good throughout the school. Although the library is small, all classrooms are well resourced with a range of reading materials, both fiction and non-fiction, matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. There are many opportunities given to pupils for them to read. For example, in a Year 5 lesson all pupils answered questions put to them about the book they were reading. In a Year 7 lesson, pupils were eager to read out poems written by a number of well-known poets as well as reading out their own. A good emphasis is given to the comprehension of what they read through questioning and analyses of their texts.
44. Pupils' progress in writing is a focus for development particularly with pupils in Years 10 and 11. It is good for younger pupils but as pupils move into the Coppice Centre, it is satisfactory. Samples of work show an emphasis on using a wide range of worksheets mainly dealing with the grammatical structure of English. These are used well for homework but with a number of pupils, such as those in Years 10 and 11, teachers use them too frequently which does not encourage extended writing. There are not always opportunities provided for pupils to use ICT to record and redraft their work particularly in Years 10 and 11.
45. Overall teaching and learning are good with some very good lessons seen. Lessons are usually well planned and relevant to the pupils' age and interests. A good range and quality of resources are available. As a result, pupils try their best and display very good attitudes to their learning. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not given the opportunity to show fully what they can achieve on more challenging courses with subject accreditation. Very good relationships with teachers and the good use of support assistants enable the pupils to contribute well in class. Some teachers are starting to develop targets that are shared with pupils. However, this is not consistently applied and is still underdeveloped. Whilst the use of assessment informing pupils and their parents how they can improve is satisfactory overall, a very good example is in use with Year 8 pupils, with the 'traffic light' system. Overall, this is an area for improvement, which is recognised by the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing skills are well promoted in many subjects. Teachers place great emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills in lessons other than in English. For example in science and PSHCE, many opportunities are given for pupils to express their opinions clearly. During a Year 5 and 6 lesson in PSHCE, pupils discussed the feelings of a girl whose parents had separated and when considering the effects of vandalism, they talked about boys in a video using spray cans, describing it as graffiti. In addition, pupils show good use of technical vocabulary in science describing experiments and a mature awareness of the rules of conversation. This contributes to their good achievement.

MATHEMATICS

Five lessons were observed covering most key stages. No lesson was seen in Year 10 because of timetable changes during the inspection. Accreditation data and examples of pupils' work were provided for Year 11.

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well because teachers have good knowledge of the subject and of the pupils' needs. However, lessons do not always start promptly.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- Because the subject is led and managed effectively, standards have improved well since the last inspection.
- Improved assessment procedures are beginning to produce data, which can be more clearly analysed so that staff and pupils are clearer what else needs to be done to achieve even more.

- Nationally recognised subject accreditation such as GCSE, is not in place in Years 10 and 11 to challenge the higher attainers more.

Commentary

47. The quality of teaching and learning is good, which has resulted in improved achievement since the last inspection. Pupils now achieve well. Teachers share clearly with pupils the learning objectives of lessons so that everyone knows what is expected. Teachers are enthusiastic and exude confidence about their subject knowledge. Where pupils have individual targets for numeracy included on their individual education plans, these are addressed by presenting challenges and tasks adapted to match the needs the pupils. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. Consequently pupils try their best and achieve as well as they can. This is no difference in achievement for those pupils with behaviour difficulties or those with autistic tendencies. Teaching assistants are deployed very well and make a consistent and valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They are very good role models and provide valuable additional support to enable pupils to keep on task and achieve well. Time is used well in lessons and the pace is appropriate to the needs of the pupils. However not all lessons begin promptly which can, at times, diminish the impact of the introduction of the topic from the outset.
48. Pupils' high standard of behaviour and willingness to learn contribute to the good standards they achieve. They are interested in their work and are eager to reply to challenging questions. Work is presented well although most recording is done using published work sheets rather than pupils choosing what they consider to be the most appropriate way.
49. The subject is led and managed well by a knowledgeable co-ordinator recently appointed to the post. A good start has been made in identifying areas of the subject, which require further development. For example introducing the opportunity for higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 to gain the GCSE Foundation Level and developing planning for more structured cross-curricular links. The range, quality and use of resources are good.
50. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work. At the end of most lessons pupils are involved in reviewing their work to assess what they have learnt. This is particularly effective in Year 8, where a 'traffic light' system is being tried to make self-assessment more rigorous and fun. Informal and formal assessments are continuous. However the data accumulated from formal assessment is not analysed and used sufficiently to plan for subsequent stages of learning. Although it is anticipated that a number of pupils in Year 9 may achieve Level 4 against national curriculum targets, currently there are no firm plans to enable these pupils to build on this in gaining nationally recognised accreditation in mathematics by the end of Year 11.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Numeracy skills are included well in other areas of the curriculum, for example in ICT. Older pupils are taught how to use spreadsheets, combined with the recognition of coins and the addition and subtraction of money. In art and design, pupils recognise and use a variety of geometric shapes to create symmetrical patterns. They identify the lines of symmetry of individual shapes. Teachers encourage pupils to use mathematical skills and language in different contexts whenever possible.

SCIENCE

Four lessons were observed covering all of the key stages.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils cover all aspects of science comprehensively.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy.
- Pupils enjoy science and are interested in lessons. Pupils of all abilities work hard.
- The higher attainers in Year 11 do not gain enough formal qualifications.
- The specialist accommodation is not used well enough.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are good. As a result pupils achieve well by the end of Years 2, 6 and 9. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 11. It is not better because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils, especially higher attainers, to gain externally validated accreditation. This represents sound improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory.
53. Lessons are well planned and prepared with clear learning objectives identified. Pupils know what they will be learning and what they will have achieved by the end of the lesson. Planning, support and resources take account of the varying needs of individual pupils so that all are fully included. Through effective questioning, pupils are encouraged successfully to think for themselves in order to improve their investigational skills. Literacy, communication and numeracy skills are regularly reinforced in science lessons. The use and application of ICT is satisfactory.
54. Pupils enjoy their science lessons because they are interesting. There are good opportunities for pupils to carry out tests and experiments. Pupils show commitment to their work. Consequently they behave very well. They work together successfully to carry out tests because of the good organisation and management of the teachers and the teaching assistants. Pupils are industrious. Over time they achieve well in all aspects of the subject, producing good quality written work. By the end of Year 9 many pupils successfully take the national assessment tests, with several attaining the appropriate levels.
55. Whilst pupils continue to work hard in Years 10 and 11, they do not gain the external accreditation of which they are capable. This affects their achievement detrimentally. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory, but no better, because of this. Considerable efforts have been made to secure very good accommodation for the teaching of science in the main building and good resources. The specialist laboratory is well used by pupils in Years 7, 8, 9 and 11 but opportunities to raise the profile of the subject by its use by pupils in other year groups are missed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Three lessons were seen in Key Stages 2 and 3 and inspectors noted where ICT was used in other subjects.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are good and as a result, there is a strong commitment of all staff to improve their competency.
- Resources are very good and have much improved, enhancing pupil' achievement.

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and as a result, pupils learn well.
- Appropriate accreditation for higher attaining pupils is not in place.

Commentary

56. The subject has developed very well since the last inspection. This is because of the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator and staff and the priority given to ICT by the school. This has resulted in better resourcing and technical support for teachers. The co-ordinator and technician informally support staff across the school. All teachers have completed their New Opportunities Fund (NOF) ICT training, and teaching assistants have good quality informal training 'in-house'. Staff are keen to improve their own knowledge and skill and this positively enhances pupils' achievement across the school. The assessment of pupils' achievement is in transition to a new assessment scheme. This is at an early stage of development and cannot yet be used to track and analyse pupils' achievement.
57. Resources have dramatically improved with the establishment of a well-equipped ICT suite. Two classrooms have interactive whiteboards installed and are being used effectively. Staff have access to laptop computers for their work. All classes have computer stations in their rooms and all have access to the Internet. These factors have helped to improve pupils' standards of work. Staff proficiency has impacted positively on pupils' achievement.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good: occasionally better. In a Year 8 class, pupils used spreadsheets to record and calculate amounts of money. The lesson was planned to ensure pupils of all abilities and special educational needs were fully involved. This was an outstanding lesson. Pupils were fully engaged, enthusiastic and keen to learn. The only dissent from pupils was at the end of the lesson when they were told to complete their work and close down the computers. There were groans of disappointment, as they wanted to continue their work. Excellent relationships resulted in excellent behaviour and attitudes from pupils.
59. The co-ordinator is checking-out accreditation which will challenge higher attainers more. All Year 10 and 11 pupils follow an ICT module within the ASDAN programme, but this is not a sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. Pupils have good opportunities to practice and apply their ICT skills in other subjects. For example they use spreadsheets in mathematics to calculate amounts of money. In history, pupils investigate information on the 'Tudors', particularly Henry VIII and his six wives using the Internet. In physical education, good use is made of the video camera and digital camera to record performances. Older pupils use word processing in English to enhance the presentation of their work. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning to ensure ICT opportunities are not missed.

HUMANITIES

Separate judgements on the subjects of geography and history were not made because they were not part of the main focus of the inspection. The subjects are taught to all pupils up to the end of Year 9. Teaching alternates with each subject taught every half term. Statutory requirements are met. There is planning each year but insufficient records of pupils' achievements are kept. Other subjects such as art and food technology contribute successfully to pupils' learning in history. Frequent visits to historical sites also add effectively to pupils' understanding of history.

Religious education

Religious education is taught in rotation with PSHCE. Only one lesson was available for observation during the inspection together with a small amount of pupils' work and other evidence.

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a new co-ordinator who is keen to develop the subject.
- There are now satisfactory resources within the school to support learning in religious education.
- There is no formal assessment in place.
- Taught time is low in comparison with many other subjects.

Commentary

61. Lessons are based suitably for pupils up to Year 9 on the locally agreed programme for religious education. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, it is taught as a module in ASDAN. Much of pupils' learning is associated with the celebrations and festivals of the Christian faith and other world religions. Whilst teaching, learning and pupils' achievement are satisfactory overall, the shortage of time devoted to the subject is in need of review for achievement to improve. During the week of the inspection, the one lesson timetabled in Year 5 was taught well. The baptism ceremony within Christianity was explained. Pupils appreciated how important the 'welcoming process' is.
62. The newly appointed co-ordinator has been in post for two weeks. There are no formal assessment procedures in place, and there was little evidence of written work, owing to the fact that the subject is mainly taught through role-play. Resources are satisfactory and the subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection when the curriculum was deemed to be too narrow.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology and music were not part of the inspection focus. One lesson was seen in design and technology that was good. No judgements were made about these subjects.

Art and design

Four lessons were seen across Key Stages 2 and 3. Pupils' work was sampled.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching engages the interest of pupils and enables them all to achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and are very well behaved in lessons.
- Assessment has been insufficiently developed to help staff check fully on the quality of provision and pupils' achievement.
- Accreditation is lacking in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

63. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm for the subject encourages pupils to do their best. Teaching assistants support lessons well so pupils achieve good levels of success. Planning for lessons is based on nationally recognised guidelines but the assessment process has not yet been adopted. Pupils' achievement is assessed informally but there is little commentary to help pupils understand what they must do to improve.
64. Displays of pupils' work show that they achieve good standards across a broad range of different styles of work, including paint, pastels, pencils and textiles. Displays of work by

renowned artists feature alongside pupils' work emulating their style, for example, paintings in the style of Matisse and Henri Lecchtenstein.

65. Pupils enjoy their learning. They take great care to follow the teachers' instructions and respond well to the direction and encouragement of adults within the class. Their attitudes are very positive and their behaviour is very good. Pupils by the end of Year 9, have learned to look carefully at the work of artists from other cultures including Aboriginal art and work by Kandinsky. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use the computer as a medium for making art. The subject contributes well to pupils' cultural and multi-cultural understanding as well as their social and moral development.
66. Art and design is led and managed well. The co-ordinator enthuses and inspires adults and pupils. Teachers attend courses to strengthen their subject knowledge and confidence. A structured assessment process has not been introduced to support the informal ways of checking on pupils' achievement. This restricts what the school identifies about the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in the subject. Provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11, does not challenge pupils to gain formal accreditation for their achievements.

Physical Education

Three lessons were observed: an inter-school cross-country event and other evidence of achievement.

Provision in physical education is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy physical education and it contributes very effectively to their understanding of healthy living.
- Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports.
- Paired and group work and team games contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.
- Enthusiastic leadership and management of the subject benefit all pupils. This is recognised by parents.
- The one weakness is the quality of indoor accommodation for physical education.

Commentary

67. Very good relationships ensure that most pupils of all abilities try hard and behave very well. Teachers' planning and detailed assessment records show that the pupils are given very good opportunities to experience the range of activities that are required by National Curriculum. Great care is taken with pupils who have difficulties of balance and co-ordination. Pupils improve their game skills and team play very well. They play to the rules, work well as individuals and in game situations. Good attention is given to raising pupils' awareness of a healthy lifestyle. Assessment opportunities are good, with some older pupils benefiting from the opportunity to gain the 'Junior Sports Leader Award', which is a nationally recognised qualification. Overall, good teaching and learning results in pupils achieving well; very well in games situations. Good provision at the last inspection has been extended well.
68. The strength of the subject lies in the abundant opportunities for many pupils to participate in a wide range of competitive sports. The school places great emphasis on this aspect of its provision. Whilst many pupils excel at the highest levels locally in football, and nationally at basketball, the school is committed to ensuring that pupils of all abilities benefit at the appropriate levels of challenge. There are several significant features of provision in physical education. The development of pupils' swimming skills is good. Time spent on swimming is effective and pupils' achievement is good. Careful planning ensures pupils of all levels of ability benefit from skilful coaching. Teachers, teaching assistants and adult volunteers very carefully

supervise lessons. Overall provision is also enhanced by the use of a specialist teacher of dance for pupils up to and including Year 7, although it was not possible to observe this during the inspection.

69. The quality of leadership and management is very good. It has a high profile within the school. Extensive links are established with other schools. Considerable attention is given to the development of pupils' social and personal skills through their participation in sport. The one outstanding weakness is the indoor accommodation, which is small and particularly unsuitable for older pupils. It is a multipurpose hall and a thoroughfare to other parts of the building, and impacts detrimentally on pupils' achievement. Because of poor weather, lessons seen during the inspection were all in the hall. This highlighted the deficiencies of the small space. These lessons were only satisfactory. To counter this, the subject gains significantly from a broad range of activities that take place in the school's grounds and off site.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Six lessons were seen across all key stages.

Provision in Personal, social, health and citizenship education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A broad and relevant programme enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well in their personal and social development and understanding of citizenship.
- There are many good opportunities throughout each day to extend and reinforce the development of pupils' personal and social skills.
- Pupils' progress is effectively assessed and recorded although the co-ordinator does not have an overall view of this.
- Time allocated to PSHE is minimal.

Commentary

70. All pupils achieve equally well. This is because the quality of teaching and support is consistently good, with work well planned to meet pupils' needs as they move up through the school. For example, in citizenship education, pupils in Years 1 to 6 learn how to make and follow class rules. Circle time is used well to promote discussions, pupils sit and listen attentively to the teacher and peers, and talk about their feelings. In Years 5 and 6 pupils consider the implications of their actions and the consequences of such actions when discussing vandalism and the community at large. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 learn that they can influence decisions about issues that affect them at school. A good example is the development of the school council whose work has influenced decisions in school, such as the installation of water fountains for pupils. They have elections for council membership and also vote for house captains and vice captains. The PSHCE programme ensures pupils are taught well about sex and relationships education and drugs and alcohol abuse as they progress through the school. The school ensures parents are fully involved and aware of these programmes and seeks parental permission before teaching takes place. Good use is made of the school nurses to sensitively teach these subjects.
71. Pupils learn personal hygiene and social skills such as how to use cutlery at lunchtime while having a lunch with their friends. Over time they become more socially aware, behaviour improves, they learn to take turns, and become more responsible for their actions. Pupils reinforce their social skills through assemblies, lunchtime events and visits into the community. Inclusion programmes enable pupils to work and socialise with pupils from other schools. The school ensures all pupils have opportunities to participate in residential experiences. There are residential trips to Wales and France, which offer pupils opportunities to extend their personal and social skills. All pupils have PSHCE targets as part of their IEPs. For example, in Year 8

pupils have targets displayed on their desks, which staff constantly refer to, such as, 'remember your target is to remain on task and not interrupt'. This is very good practice.

72. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. Pupils' progress is assessed using 'P' levels. All classes use this system which is good. The co-ordinator supports all teachers through formal and informal meetings. However, historically each class has reported progress to the headteacher. This data has not been communicated fully to the co-ordinator, which means that she has not had an accurate overview of pupils' progress. The school recognises this and intends to change the system to ensure the co-ordinator has a full picture of pupils' achievement. The subject was not reported separately at the time of the last inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make a judgement about improvement.
73. Teaching time allocated to PSHCE is one hour per week. This is taught on a half term rota with religious education, which means that each subject only receives one and half terms of teaching per year. This works out at about 30 minutes per week. Although staff work hard to cover the full programme, time is insufficient to do justice to a good programme. The school recognises this problem and is planning to increase teaching time.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

Provision in work related learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an outstanding record of 'Young Enterprise' schemes preparing pupils for their future lives.
- Pupils' have improved their achievement very well on units of ASDAN focused on work related learning.
- The broad range of vocational opportunities, which are used very well to build key skills, enriches pupils' learning. This success is not fully capitalised upon in courses leading to subject accreditation across the curriculum.
- Work related learning supports pupils' personal development very well.

Commentary

74. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. The 'Young Enterprise' scheme is excellent. The Company Directors meet regularly with a clear focus for meetings. Very good business advice is always readily available from staff and a local solicitor who support the initiative. Each year, the Year 11 pupils involved choose a company name and the main thrust of the business. The current N.I.C.E Company (Nice Interesting Coppice Enterprise) is heavily into producing and selling badges, T-shirts, postcards and pens for events on behalf of other schools, clubs and groups both locally and nationally. Discussion with pupils confirms that they value very highly the opportunities they have in developing their vocational skills.
75. By Years 10 and 11, pupils work well on their accredited work for their ASDAN awards. This includes units of work on information handling, number, 'world of work', making choices, industry and commerce, and problem solving and key skills. Over the five years from 2001, a strong trend in improvement in standards and achievement is evident with the proportion of pupils growing who attain the silver level. Over time, the school's previous Connexions (careers) adviser supported lessons very well. Support is currently not as strong although provision overall still gives pupils very good opportunities to build on their understanding of different jobs and courses, which are available to them.
76. In addition to the 'Young Enterprise' initiative, college courses and work experience provide a very good package that builds through Years 10 and 11. Skills of communication, number handling, problem solving, working with others and improving their own performance feature

strongly and link all activities. These skills are constantly stressed by staff, which results in pupils being very clear about their own competencies and what they need to do to improve. This means that any difficulties are faced in a cohesive way by staff and pupils so that they are overcome and become an experience from which lessons are learnt. Most pupils are enterprising in outlook and very keen to take on responsibility. Whilst the school has a good history of pupils being involved successfully in English Speaking Board assessments and other accreditation in literacy and numeracy, pupils, particularly those who are higher attainers, are insufficiently stretched and do not fully capitalise on work related learning in accredited subject courses across the curriculum.

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
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Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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