

INSPECTION REPORT

Goldwyn Community Special School

Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 119042

Headteacher: Mr. Bob Law

Lead inspector: Charles Hackett

Dates of inspection: 27th June to 30th June 2005

Inspection number: 268569

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: Voluntary special
Age range of pupils: 11-16
Gender of pupils: Male
Number on roll: 62

School address: Godinton Lane
Great Chart
Ashford
Kent

Postcode: TN23 3BT

Telephone number: 01233 622958

Fax number: 01233 662177

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of Mr. Tim O'Connor
governors:

Date of previous 07 October 1996
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Goldwyn is a day school for boys of secondary age who have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of boys have been previously excluded from mainstream education and all have statements of special educational need. Their attainment levels on entry are below those expected nationally. Pupils' home circumstances vary, but the majority come from lower than normal socio economic backgrounds. Of the current population, nine boys are in the care of social services (looked after children). All but one pupil are of white English ethnic origin. The school has received a number of awards in recognition of its work experience programme.

The school opened as it is now in April 2003. Prior to this, it was a residential school under a different name, although with the same DfES registered number. Due to this change of status, it is inappropriate to make comparisons with judgements made in the previous Ofsted report of 1996. However, reference will be made to how the key issues have been addressed.

In the previous school in 1998, a lengthy investigation began because of complaints made by parents about inappropriate practices. Staff, including the then headteacher and deputy, were suspended and eventually a number of staff were dismissed. During this time, the

school was managed by senior staff seconded from other posts in the authority. It was not until 2003 that the investigation was concluded. This led to the school being renamed and the provision changed from residential to day.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21081	Charles Hackett	Lead inspector	Religious education, modern foreign language and physical education
19693	Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
29452	Christine Emerson	Team inspector	English, personal, social and health education, citizenship and work related learning
21822	Helen Maskew	Team inspector	Science, art, design and technology and music
20912	Gordon Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history and information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Goldwyn is a **satisfactory** and improving school. Following a very difficult period of uncertainty, the school has now established a solid platform to develop its effectiveness further. Teaching is satisfactory overall and, as a result, pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Governance and the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. However, because the school cannot demonstrate that its budget is being spent in an effective and efficient manner, value for money is unsatisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- The good work of senior staff in establishing the school in the face of significant staffing difficulties.
- Pupils are given very good experiences to help them prepare for leaving school, including the chance to pass GCSEs.
- The good links that exist with parents, the community and schools and colleges are being used well to support the quality of education being provided.
- Although pupils make some improvement with their behaviour, procedures to address their behavioural difficulties are unsatisfactory.
- Teaching time is short and the curriculum is unbalanced and gives insufficient support to developing pupils' skills in English and personal, social, health and citizenship education.
- Systems in place for the school to judge its effectiveness are weak.

In relation to the key issues of the previous report of 1996, the school has improved the involvement of governors, but still has inadequate accommodation for physical education. This, though, is shortly to be resolved through a major rebuilding project. Pupils continue to receive limited support from external professionals, such as speech and language advisers.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' overall achievements are **satisfactory**. They make very good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and good progress in science, mathematics and in developing work related skills. Progress is satisfactory overall in English; pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills, but progress in developing their writing skills is limited. The progress of pupils in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons is unsatisfactory. Pupils are also now making satisfactory progress in religious education following the appointment of a new teacher at the start of the current academic year. The personal development of pupils including their moral, social and spiritual development is **satisfactory**, but their cultural development, including multi-cultural awareness, is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to education are good, particularly in those lessons where they are involved as active learners.

Their behaviour overall is satisfactory, particularly in relation to the difficulties they experienced in their previous schools. Overall attendance rates of pupils are unsatisfactory; although attendance figures are undoubtedly affected by the long term absences of a small number of pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education including teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. In ICT, teaching is very good and good in science, mathematics and the teaching of English for the youngest pupils. The teaching of PSHCE is unsatisfactory because too much time is spent cooking. Teaching support staff are effective in helping pupils with their behaviour difficulties, but they are not always used well to help pupils' learning. Additionally, not all teachers are effective in managing the behaviour of pupils. The quality of assessment is satisfactory, although not all teachers make effective use of this information in planning work for pupils. The curriculum offers pupils good opportunities for enrichment activities and also provides older pupils with very good opportunities for work experience and college links. However, overall it is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient emphasis given to the core subjects and the length of teaching time is shorter than that recommended for pupils of this age. The general care, welfare and health and safety provided for pupils are good. Should they have the need to do so, pupils are confident they can speak to adults for help. Advice, support and guidance given to pupils are satisfactory overall. The school correctly gives importance to monitoring pupils' performance in lessons, but the system in use does not give pupils sufficient support to identify their behaviour difficulties, help them understand how they can improve and is inconsistently applied by staff. The school has developed good links with parents, particularly in relation to the regular information given via the telephone. Links with the community are also effective as are links with schools and colleges. At present, the accommodation is unsatisfactory, however, a new building project is very imminent. Resources, particularly in relation to ICT, design and technology and the school library are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher and his senior colleagues have managed the school well during the lengthy period of uncertainty. However, there is now an imbalance in the allocation of senior responsibilities and, as a consequence, there are too many responsibilities related to teaching and learning and pupils' achievements which are thrust upon the assistant head. There is an inadequate link between the schools' evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, priorities for development and the school budget. A decision has been made to maintain staffing levels that existed within the residential school, but the school is not clear how its staffing is being used effectively. Together, these weaknesses mean that the school is not able to demonstrate that it is providing satisfactory value for money. Governance is **satisfactory**. Governors are very supportive of the school. However, their annual report to parents is not currently providing parents with the information that is required.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A significant number of parents and pupils have concerns about behaviour. Parents, however, are pleased with the progress their children are making and feel that staff are very approachable. Pupils, likewise, feel that they have good relationships with many of the staff team.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Governors and senior staff need to address the following issues to improve the quality of education and value for money provided by the school:

- Ensure that there is more effective use of all staff and a better link between priorities identified for development and the school budget.
- Improve and extend the timetabled curriculum, ensuring that sufficient time is available for English and personal, social, health and citizenship education.
- Establish more effective systems to monitor pupils' behaviour and bring about improvements.
- Increase the planned opportunities to improve pupils' cultural development, including their awareness of the multi-cultural society in which they live.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in GCSEs in comparison with similar schools.
- Pupils make very good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) because of the very high quality of teaching and the prominence given to the subject.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, science and work related learning.
- Progress in English and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is satisfactory, but insufficient attention is given to these subjects.
- Pupils with additional special needs make similar progress to their peers.

Commentary

1. The head teacher places considerable emphasis on providing pupils with opportunities to pass examinations, particularly GCSEs. As a consequence, there has been an increase in successes in recent years and pupils being able to take GCSE in more subjects. This has resulted in pupils, last year, achieving above the national average number of GCSE passes recorded for similar types of schools and, thus, the school achieved the targets it set itself. Pupils have also achieved well in Entry Level examinations, again in a wide range of subjects.
2. GCSE results and data showing pupils' progress confirm that they achieve very well in ICT. Pupils are keen to learn skills in ICT lessons and they make good use of these whilst studying other subjects. This is particularly so in science where pupils and the teacher makes excellent use of ICT. A scrutiny of pupils' work in science and mathematics shows the good progress that pupils make. In science, pupils are able to understand how to set out investigations and how to analyse the results. In mathematics, pupils are developing skills in a good range of aspects of the subject. Good progress is also made in developing their work related skills, particularly through the very good work experience opportunities that pupils undertake.
3. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English, the best progress is made by pupils in Years 7 and 8 and a scrutiny of their work shows that these pupils are now making good progress. Additionally, all pupils in the school are developing good speaking and listening skills. This is mainly because of the emphasis staff have put on encouraging pupils to engage in discussions. However, because of the overuse of worksheets, pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11, during English lessons, have limited opportunities to extend their writing skills. Progress in personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons is unsatisfactory because of the inadequate course being offered to pupils. However, as a result of the school's effort to support pupils' personal development, their overall progress in these areas is satisfactory.
4. Overall, pupils with additional special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. This is mainly because of the individual attention given to them, which is facilitated by the small numbers in each classroom. However, there are a number of

pupils with specific difficulties in relation to reading and these pupils are given insufficient support to develop their skills further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

- Pupils' attitudes are **good** and their behaviour is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attendance is **unsatisfactory** and their punctuality is **satisfactory**. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is **satisfactory**, but the cultural development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance levels are below those found in similar schools and information about attendance is not always recorded correctly.
- Pupils respond well when teachers make lessons interesting and exciting.
- The pastoral unit staff offer pupils good opportunities to develop their social skills.
- In lessons, and around the school, pupils are rarely encouraged to take responsibility or allowed to use their initiative.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about living in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	11.4	School data :	4.2
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.

*Care needs to be taken with the above figures because of the concerns reported in the text below

- Although the school's calculation of attendance levels for the previous year shows a satisfactory picture, closer examination of the records indicates that actual attendance is below that found in similar schools. The school now recognises that a few pupils who rarely or never attend school should be marked as absent, and not as 'educated elsewhere'. For example, attendance rates were checked on one day during the inspection and were actually only 74 per cent, compared with the school's calculation of 80 per cent. Pupils are sometimes absent for all or part of lessons because of their behaviour. These absences from school and lessons have a negative impact on pupils' learning. Pastoral staff follow up unexplained absences and the school works closely with the educational welfare officer when attendance is a cause for concern. Pupils normally arrive at school on time; any lateness is usually due to problems with school transport.
- Nearly all pupils say that they like school and many are clearly very enthusiastic about their work. This is particularly when teachers make learning exciting. For example, in a history lesson pupils quickly learnt key facts about World War 2 because the teacher captured the pupils' imagination when he presented pictures, sounds and written information on the interactive whiteboard. Pupils enjoy practical activities, for example, in a science lesson for Year 9 group, a few were so keen to complete their experiment that they wanted to continue to work after the bell had gone. However, in a number of lessons, pupils are very reluctant learners, especially when the tasks involve reading and writing.
- The time the pupils spend in the pastoral units makes a positive contribution to developing their social skills. Unit staff are good role models and pupils learn to interact with adults, develop a sense of working in a group and undertake duties such as clearing away after meals. Pupils are usually courteous, polite and display good manners in the units. Members of the school council are keen to improve school life and take their responsibilities very seriously. Residential visits,

also, raise pupils' self esteem and confidence. However, in lessons there are very few chances for pupils to work collaboratively, make decisions about their work, or use their initiative.

- There are inconsistencies in the way staff expect pupils to behave. Behaviour in the pastoral units is usually very good. In lessons, pupils can respond well when staff have high expectations of good behaviour and hard work. However, parents and pupils are concerned that behaviour is not good enough and the inspection team share these concerns. A minority of teachers struggle to control pupils' disruptive behaviour, mainly when there are no agreed strategies to manage individual pupil's unacceptable behaviour. Pupils enjoy receiving awards for good behaviour, but these are not linked to the targets on their individual educational plan or their personal support plan. Occasionally, pupils are violent or refuse to co-operate. Usually, staff successfully defuse the situation, often by removing the pupil from room. However, there is often no clear guidance to help these pupils in managing their outbursts of misbehaviour. Incidents of bullying are treated seriously and the school council is promoting an anti-bullying campaign. The number of temporary exclusions is higher than in similar schools, but the sanction is used appropriately, for example, when pupils are violent or disruptive.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	61	140	

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

- In the daily assemblies, pupils are offered opportunities for prayer and worship, and 'grace' is said at lunchtime. However, there are few times when pupils can reflect on their life and its meaning. Through modern foreign language lessons and the residential visit to Switzerland, pupils gain insights into other European cultures. Pupils learn about their own culture, for example, by occasional visits to the theatre. In religious education, pupils study the major world faiths. Nevertheless, there are unsatisfactory opportunities for pupils to consider the issues which face young people living in a multi-cultural society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

- The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education and teaching. However, the curriculum is unsatisfactory despite good extra activities being available for pupils. The quality of assessment is satisfactory and this contributes to the guidance and support provided for pupils being satisfactory. The care of pupils, including procedures for their welfare and health and safety matters is good. Good links have been established with parents, other schools and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment is also **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and often use this well to make lessons interesting.
- ICT is used very well by most teachers.

- Teaching assistants and care staff offer good support in managing pupils' behaviour, but are not sufficiently involved in supporting their learning.
- In many subjects, pupils become effective learners because expectations are high and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well.
- In several lessons insufficient attention is given to planning work to match pupils' different ability levels.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	8	5	9	1	0	0

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

12. Many subjects are led by teachers who have very good subject knowledge. They use this well to plan lessons, demonstrate specific techniques and answer pupils' queries. Science is an example of this. Here the teacher uses his knowledge well to motivate pupils to take an active part in lessons, including conducting investigations. ICT, physical education, music and design and technology are other subjects where the expertise of staff is used to good effect to generate pupils' interest in the subject.
13. The school has prioritised the development of ICT. This has proved beneficial not only in the teaching of the subject in discrete lessons but also in the use many teachers make of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Presentations on the interactive whiteboards, such as one seen in a Year 9 lesson in design and technology, helps pupils understand how to measure 3D drawings. The overall quality of teaching and learning in ICT subject is very good. Teaching is good in mathematics and science and, overall, teaching is satisfactory in English. There is, however, too much emphasis put on the use of worksheets in the teaching of pupils in Year 9, 10 and 11 and here the quality of marking is often weak. Similar weaknesses in relation to marking are found in other subjects.
14. In religious education, teaching is satisfactory and improving because of the enthusiastic committed approach of the new teacher responsible for the subject. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory for personal, social, health and citizenship education, mainly because too much emphasis is placed in lessons on cooking rather than covering more appropriate topics. In religious education, as in many other subjects, the teacher uses good questioning techniques to check what pupils' have remembered.
15. The school benefits from having a large number of staff to support the teaching day. Whilst these staff are very helpful to pupils with their behaviour, they are often less effective in supporting their learning. In many subjects, support staff act more as minders of children, often being very passive during lessons. Exceptions to this, though, include ICT and physical education, where the support staff are more involved in the planning and the activities that take place in lessons. However, in art, through their desire to help pupils, support staff do too much of the work for them.
16. Most teachers plan their lessons well and include the opportunity for an interesting starter activity as well as a review of what has been learnt at the end of the lesson. However, in most lessons, there is insufficient attention given to the different ability levels of pupils, which means that work set is not always appropriate for all pupils. The management and expectations of pupils' behaviour varies and evidence shows that where these are high, pupils behave and achieve best. In subjects such as physical education, design and technology and science, pupils are active learners with high expectations placed upon them. Pupils react much better in these situations,

particularly in comparison to the lessons where teachers' behaviour management skills are weak.

17. The school makes very effective use of electronic systems to collate, record and analyse data. However, the data is not used effectively in all subjects to show pupils' progress and assist staff in setting appropriate targets for pupils' future work. The initial assessments used to check pupils' literacy skills are useful in identifying those pupils who need additional support for reading, but the information from these baseline assessments are not linked to suitable remediation programmes. There is a lack of consistent and systematic use of the school's marking policy. In too many subjects, pupils are left in doubt as to the progress they have made and what they need to do to improve their work.

The curriculum

Although there are good opportunities for enrichment, the curriculum, overall, is **unsatisfactory**. The accommodation is **unsatisfactory**, but a major rebuilding programme is due to start very shortly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The timetable does not give an appropriate balance of time to the different subjects of the curriculum.
- There is insufficient taught time and the school day includes too many sessions of activities that are not properly planned or evaluated.
- Work set in personal, social, health and citizenship lessons is not sufficiently linked to a suitable overall plan of what pupils will learn.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of additional activities and very good residential visits.
- Provision for work-related learning is good with very good opportunities for work experience.
- There is an above average number of staff and a good level of resources.

Commentary

18. The school provides a suitable range of learning opportunities that cover all the relevant areas of the National Curriculum. However, there is not an appropriate amount of time allocated to the different subjects. For example, twice as much time is allocated to physical education (including outward bound activities) as is timetabled for English or mathematics. This has an impact on pupils' achievements in these important areas. For example, it restricts the time for older pupils to develop their skills in producing pieces of extended writing. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have access to a good range of GCSE and Entry Level courses so that all pupils leave school with qualifications. The school has recently introduced the ASDAN award for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. This extends the range of activities which are offered to pupils. However, not all staff are clear that the activities timetabled as ASDAN contribute to timetabled lessons and should, therefore, be properly planned and evaluated.
19. There is not sufficient taught time. Currently, the school week finishes at Friday lunchtime. This means that pupils do not benefit from being at school for five full days and teaching time is lost. A few pupils miss further time. For example, presently, there are two Year 10 pupils who do not wish to attend college and, as a consequence, are sent home with work to complete. Consequently, they miss another full afternoon of school each week. Pupils' time spent in the units supports their personal and social

development as they are able to build trusting relationships with adults. However, there is no planned programme and the activities which take place are informal with no clear planning or evaluation. As a result, the amount of focussed teaching during the school day is further reduced.

20. The curriculum for information and communication technology and physical education is very good and good in mathematics, science and ICT. The good curriculum for work-related learning prepares pupils well for the transition into adult life. However, the overall curriculum in lessons for personal, social, health and citizenship education is unsatisfactory because a considerable amount of time is spent cooking. The school is planning to address this issue by re-organising the teaching of the subject next term. There is, though, a suitable programme of sex and relationships education which is well supported by the school nurse.
21. The afternoon ASDAN sessions provide pupils with a good range of additional activities and pupils benefit from very stimulating and well planned residential experiences. A particular strength is the very good outreach programme which has been developed with the army. This has resulted in a residential trip to Snowdonia where pupils engage in exciting experiences such as whitewater rafting and climbing Snowdonia. These experiences have a good impact on developing pupils' confidence and self esteem. There are a variety of trips to the theatre and the pupils make use of facilities in the local community such as Ashford Park. All trips are carefully risk assessed following Kent guidelines. The school offers several after school activities such as the art and music clubs which add to learning in lessons. However, transport difficulties result in these clubs not being well attended.
22. The accommodation of the school is unsatisfactory. This is recognised by both the school and the Local Authority and major refurbishments are due to start imminently. The hall is inadequate for the needs of the school and there is no sports hall or indoor physical activities facilities. Many of the classrooms, including the art and music rooms, are too small. There are three 'mobile' classrooms which are in very poor condition and no longer suitable for teaching and learning. However, there are ICT suites in several areas of the school which enable ICT to be delivered across the curriculum and accessed in most subjects. English is taught in two large, pleasant rooms and there is an attractive library which includes a literacy withdrawal room.
23. Resources are good. There are very good ICT resources across most of the school with access to the internet and many classrooms having Interactive Whiteboards. The design and technology room is very well equipped with very good quality machines and the music room is also very well equipped. The school is staffed by well qualified specialist teachers and there are a large number of teaching assistants and eight care staff remain from when the school offered residential provision.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for the pupils' care, welfare, healthy and safety is **good**. Pupils' receive **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from having trusting relationships with staff.
- Lunchtime arrangements help pupils develop their personal and social skills.

- Staff do not give pupils sufficient advice and guidance on how to manage and improve their behaviour.
- The school listens carefully to the views of pupils.

Commentary

24. Staff know the pupils well and understand many of their needs. The induction arrangements for pupils are good; families are encouraged to attend open days before the pupils start school and 'buddies' help new pupils to settle in. Staff are good role models and show pupils how to interact with others, for example by playing games together and taking turns in serving and clearing away at meal times during the lunch breaks. Staff work hard to build up trusting relationships with the pupils and the results of the Ofsted questionnaires clearly show that pupils feel that they are able to talk with staff if they have any problems. Careers advice is good and has resulted in pupils taking up training, college placements or employment when they leave school.
25. Staff judge pupils' behaviour in each lesson, but the systems in use do not give sufficient information on the specific behaviour problems pupils have. Staff keep detailed records of incidents, but, again, these are not being used effectively to manage and improve pupils' behaviour. Pupils' targets for improvement are not linked to the reward system and teachers rarely remind pupils of their targets. Although staff review incidents of poor behaviour on a daily basis, there is a limited review of strategies which either teachers or pupils could use to improve behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to work hard in lessons, but guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work is given inconsistently.
26. Pupils' health and safety is carefully considered, for example, there are detailed risk assessments for visits. However, fire drills have not been logged for a year and there is no evidence of formal risk assessments of the premises. Supervision at lunchtime, breaks and after school is good. The deputy head teacher, as the co-ordinator for child protection, carries out her duties effectively and ensures that staff are aware of the school's procedures. The arrangements for children in the care of the local authority are good. Beginning with their induction arrangements, their progress is closely tracked during their time in school and prior to leaving, their care arrangements are well checked. Arrangements for first aid are good. There are two qualified first aiders and detailed records of treatment are kept.
27. Support for pupils with additional special educational needs is satisfactory. A full programme for pupils identified as needing extra support for literacy skills is in development, and, at present, pupils are withdrawn for individual support for reading with teaching assistants. However, currently, there is no external speech and language support for pupils identified with speech and language difficulties. Teaching assistants support individual pupils identified on the autistic spectrum disorder spectrum, both in and out of the classroom, but there has been a limited programme of staff training on how best to support these pupils.
28. In lessons, and in the units, staff value pupils' views. Before their annual review, pupils also have satisfactory opportunities to comment on their achievements. Members of school council are an effective pupil voice and the minutes of their meetings show they are listened to and are keen to enhance school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Day-to-day telephone communication between home and school is good.

- The school is successful in encouraging parents to attend their child's annual review meeting.
- The school has established beneficial partnerships with local employers to enable pupils to undertake work experiences.
- The good links with a local college give pupils increased opportunities to follow vocational courses.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to work alongside their mainstream peers.

Commentary

29. The school works hard to reach out to parents and carers and make them feel welcome in school. New families are encouraged to visit the school on open days and talk with staff about their hopes and concerns. As many parents live considerable distances from the school and public transport to the school is limited, staff and parents mainly communicate by telephone. Unit staff frequently contact parents to celebrate successes as well as discuss concerns. When there are serious problems, the school very appropriately brings parents into school or staff make home visits.
30. Parents and carers receive satisfactory written information about how their children are getting on through the annual report, which forms part of pupils' annual review of their statement. The school does all it can to ensure that parents and carers attend these reviews even if this means arranging the meeting at the child's home. Parents are given good opportunities to voice their opinions and suggestions at the review. Newsletters give parents relevant and timely information about future events and celebrate the school's successes. Although the school produces a combined prospectus and annual governors' report, it not does include all the necessary information to ensure that statutory requirements are being met.
31. The school's good partnership with the community enriches the curriculum and has a positive impact on pupils' social and personal development. The close relationship with employers means that older pupils can benefit from well-planned work experience. The residential trips and involvement in activities with the Cadet Corps encourage teamwork and confidence. There are occasional visits to the theatre and pupils raise money for charity. However, there are not enough community links, which would enhance pupils' understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society.
32. The head teacher is an active member of the local schools' cluster group and other headteachers value his advice and guidance on dealing with behavioural difficulties. However, transport difficulties contribute to there being few opportunities for pupils to visit mainstream schools, although, a few pupils have been able to reintegrate back to a mainstream school. The school has forged valuable links with a local college and those pupils who chose to attend gain useful skills in vocational courses such as construction and vehicle maintenance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Governance is also **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and his senior colleagues have stabilised the school after a lengthy period of uncertainty.

- A good emphasis has been put on improving the quality of teaching and enabling pupils to pass GCSEs.
- There is an imbalance in the roles of responsibilities of senior staff, which is resulting in insufficient attention being given to monitoring and supporting the quality of education being provided.
- The link between school self evaluation procedures, the school improvement plan and the budget is weak.
- Governors give the school considerable support, but have not ensured that a suitable curriculum is being offered and all statutory requirements are being met.

Commentary

33. There is no doubt that for five years the school went through a very difficult period. Staffing issues have been very prominent and these have demanded considerable attention from the headteacher and his senior colleagues. It is to their credit that they have been able to enable the school to function satisfactorily during that period of time. The headteacher, both in his role as an interim head and when appointed to the substantive post, has shown considerable commitment in his support of both staff and pupils. Much has been achieved for the school to have reached its present position where it has a solid platform to improve further.
34. Evidence shows that these improvements have started. For example, following an LEA mini review last year, weaknesses in the teaching of two subjects were noted. Action has been taken to address these. Additionally, in English, physical education and religious education, the present quality of provision has improved following recent appointments and the support given to these staff. The headteacher is committed to ensuring that pupils can pass examinations, particularly GCSEs. As a result of this, records show that both the range of subjects and the number of passes have increased over recent years. Further examination options are being considered for the future.
35. Given the need to tackle staffing issues it is understandable that they have been given a high priority, however, this has now resulted in both the headteacher and deputy not having significant roles in the teaching day. This has left the assistant headteacher with responsibility for the curriculum and assessment as well as taking over responsibility for English and having a 50 percent teaching commitment. Despite her enthusiasm and best efforts, these arrangements are not effective and fail to give the head and deputy sufficient opportunity to influence the quality of education being provided, such as ensuring that the behaviour support system is consistently applied by staff or that there is greater involvement of teaching assistants in support of pupils' learning.
36. Senior staff are beginning to understand the need for the school to have in place rigorous systems to check the school's effectiveness. A good start has been made by collecting data on pupils' achievement and the number of behaviour incidents experienced by pupils. However, there are not effective systems to analyse this data or to use it to set up priorities for improvement. The present school improvement plan is weak. It contains too many priorities and does not give precedence about what can be done with the money the school is allocated. Additionally, there are no systems in place to check how effective staffing levels are and how well staff are being deployed. An interim payment made to the school to help it move from being a residential school to becoming a day school is being used to maintain eight care staff and give teachers reduced teaching commitments without a clear review of how effective these arrangements are. These concerns in relation to the effective use of the school budget have contributed to the school currently providing unsatisfactory value for money.

37. Members of the governing body show through their meetings and the evidence of correspondence to the LEA that they have provided senior staff with considerable support. They have championed the school's cause and recognised the importance of their roles. Currently, though, they still rely too much on staff reports rather than explore other ways of knowing the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not ensured that the school's prospectus and their annual report to parents meets statutory requirements. Despite these weaknesses, the governors are more involved than at the time of the previous inspection when it was reported that they needed to take on greater responsibility for the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,218,621	Balance from previous year	8,466
Total expenditure	1,214,111	Balance carried forward to the next	12,976
Expenditure per pupil	19,272		

Work-Related Learning

Provision for work-related learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 11 have very good opportunities for work experience.
- Very good links with a local college of further education enable pupils in Years 10 and 11 to benefit from attending vocational and work-related courses.
- Careers education time is limited and pupils do not develop skills in how to run a business.

Commentary

38. The subject leader for personal, social, health and citizenship education has been effective in creating links with local businesses and work settings. Consequently, pupils in Year 11 access a good variety of work experience placements, which are well matched to their skills and interests. The school has achieved a number of awards which recognise the quality of the work experience programme. Wherever possible, the placements are carefully linked to college courses. This means that pupils are able to gain qualifications which support the work experience. For example, one Year 11 pupil who has done a work placement in a garage will be studying motor mechanics next year. Another pupil, having gained experience in a hotel, will be attending a catering course. There is good liaison between school staff and work supervisors to ensure that placements are successful. The positive impact of the scheme is demonstrated by the fact that a few pupils have gone on to work permanently in settings where they were placed on work experience.

39. All Year 10 and 11 pupils have the opportunity to spend one afternoon a week at South Kent College attending a variety of vocational courses. Those pupils who attend are highly motivated and demonstrate very good attitudes and behaviour as they work

alongside other pupils from mainstream schools. However, if pupils do not want to attend college they are sent home with work to complete. This means that a few pupils miss a session of lesson time on a regular basis.

40. Careers education is taught through personal, social, health and citizenship lessons. However, there is insufficient time allocated in lessons for this work. The Connexions advisor becomes involved with pupils in Year 9 through attending the pupil's annual review. The school is hoping to develop this further so that pupils meet with the advisor in Year 8. Although, pupils are involved in fund raising, for example, baking cakes to sell on 'Red Nose Day', the school does not use these activities to give pupils experience in running a small business. The school is aware of the benefits of involving pupils in projects such as mini-enterprise schemes and sees this as an area for further development

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Four lessons were seen in English. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, observation of a range of activities and discussion with staff. Part of one modern foreign language lesson was seen, but insufficient evidence was gained to make a judgement on the quality of provision.

Modern Foreign Language

41. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their basic skills in French and Spanish. Before they leave, almost all pupils take French entry level examination and most have been successful in passing. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and makes learning very lively. Pupils follow a suitable course where there is a key emphasis on developing basic vocabulary in relation to every day life in France. Resources are relevant, for example, part of the work involves pupils following a programme where they learn French through a course based on football. The teacher organises regular day trips to France, which are very effective in giving pupils first hand experience of using the language. A basic Spanish course is offered in Year 9 with the emphasis on developing pupils' basic vocabulary should they go to Spain on holiday. In the lesson seen, a very enthusiastic approach from the teacher successfully engaged pupils who initially were reluctant to join in. The use of songs to help pupils recognise letter sounds was very effective. This encouraged pupils to be active learners who understand that taking part is enjoyable. The classroom used for modern foreign language is very well organised with good displays that feature pupils' work.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 7 and 8 achieve well in lessons because they are given a good variety of carefully planned activities.
- The development of speaking and listening skills is promoted effectively throughout the school.
- Pupils in Years 9 to 11 do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in extended writing.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always show pupils how well they have done and how they can improve.
- The subject leader is very committed to raising standards and manages the subject well.

Commentary

42. The overall progress of pupils in English is satisfactory. There is a good emphasis in all English lessons on encouraging pupils to extend their vocabulary and promoting language through discussion and good questioning. This means that pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 achieve well in lessons because teaching is good and they are given

carefully planned and stimulating activities. However, progress over time is only satisfactory because there is not enough time allocated to English on the timetable.

43. Planning of what will be taught in English is good, with a suitable emphasis on writing for different purposes and studying poetry. In Years 7 and 8, there is a good focus on supporting pupils so that they have the confidence to attempt extended and creative writing. This is having a positive impact on pupils' writing. For example, pupils in Year 7 have used good descriptive and imaginative language in the 'spells' which they have recently composed. Many pupils are reluctant readers when they come to the school because they have experienced failure in learning to read in previous settings. However, the school has introduced a new reading scheme using books which the pupils enjoy. It has also designated one of the four English lessons a week as a reading session for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. This is beginning to have an impact on raising pupils' achievement in reading.
44. In Years 9, 10 and 11, pupils only make satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Opportunities for these pupils to develop skills in producing pieces of extended writing are limited by the fact that there is an over reliance on using worksheets for recording answers. Some of the pupils are reluctant to read in front of the class because they have weak reading skills. This was evident in a lesson for Year 9 pupils, where only one of the three pupils present was prepared to read aloud. The Entry Level results for Year 11 pupils demonstrate the variable progress which older pupils make in the different areas of English. Their marks for speaking and listening are better than for reading and writing. Last year four pupils achieved Entry Level at Level 3 and four pupils achieved Level 2. Six pupils also gained passes in GCSE.
45. The subject leader has introduced good assessment procedures, including an annual reading and spelling test to measure pupils' progress. However, although a significant number of pupils are described as having specific learning difficulties, the school has no support or guidance systems for these pupils. Marking in Years 7 and 8 is very good with useful feedback to pupils celebrating their achievements and helping them know how they can improve. Marking in Years 9 to 11 is not consistent. Although some marking gives suitable feedback to pupils, other work is not marked or is marked very minimally.
46. The subject leader is developing the subject well and has been effective in identifying weaknesses and working with the LEA advisor to address them. However, there needs to be closer links between the two teachers who teach English to develop opportunities for extended and creative writing and ensure that there is consistency in the marking of pupils' work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. The development of pupils' language and literacy skills in the teaching of other subjects is given satisfactory consideration. Speaking and listening skills are well supported in all subjects taught. Often, key words are written on interactive white boards at the start of lessons and are included in lesson plans. This supports pupils well in gaining confidence in using correct vocabulary in different subject areas. In the best lessons, teachers are skilled at asking open-ended questions which help pupils to think carefully about their responses and give extended answers. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop skills in extended writing. The subject leader is in the process of conducting an audit to check how literacy is promoted across the school. This will provide a secure basis from which to develop strategies further.

MATHEMATICS

Two mathematics lessons were seen, in addition mathematics was observed in other subjects, an interview was conducted with the mathematics co-ordinator and a scrutiny of written work in books and records was undertaken.

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Examination results are good and indicate the good progress of pupils.
- Clear assessment procedures inform a progress tracking system and are linked well to setting targets for pupils.
- There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching and accommodation for the subject across the subject.
- The enthusiastic and well qualified mathematics' co-ordinator has ensured that resources are plentiful and appropriate for the pupils.
- ICT is used very well both for administration and to make learning interesting.

Commentary

48. Achievements in mathematics have improved over the past three years. Results in examinations in recent years support this judgement. In 2002, six pupils were entered for the Entry Level examination, five getting the highest pass and in 2003, nine pupil were entered, seven attaining the highest pass. Since 2003, pupils have also been entered for GCSE and although the results have remained consistent between grades E and G, there is now a firm expectation that, at the end of Year 11, all pupils will be entered for GCSE.
49. Recording of pupil progress is good; data collected enables progress to be measured against National Curriculum levels for individual pupils and for comparisons to be made within a year group. On entry, pupils' knowledge and confidence in mathematics is generally poor. The clear assessment and recording procedures enable a baseline assessment to be made of the pupils' mathematical knowledge and progress tracked over time. Data collected indicates trends in achievement and is used well as the basis for setting targets for pupils and to inform lesson planning. However, pupils only have 4 lessons each week and clearly their progress could be enhanced further with more teaching time.
50. Teaching in mathematics is good in most areas and satisfactory in others. Planning is based on the National Curriculum and requirements of the examinations syllabuses. Plans for individual lessons take account of the needs of individual pupils. Where the teaching is good, there are clearly understood expectations of both appropriate behaviour and performance. The teacher makes a well-defined start to the lesson and is motivational in both the presentation of the subject matter and the encouragement given to pupils. For example, a Year 9 lesson, on the calculation of surface area, opened with a review of pupils' understanding before moving on to the introduction of new knowledge, with the teacher making excellent use of the interactive whiteboard. Teaching observed that was only satisfactory took place in a 'mobile' classroom which is in very poor repair and unsuitable for teaching and learning. Behaviour during this lesson was not managed well and there is a lack of resources available for the teacher.
51. The quality of leadership and management of mathematics is good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and well qualified and seeks to ensure that pupils can achieve well in the subject. Support for the other teacher who has recently started to teach the subject is not yet effective. There is a mathematics policy in place and appropriate resources. There is a comprehensive subject development plan, but this is not linked to a budget for the department. The use of ICT

as both an administrative tool and for teaching and learning is very good; exemplary use being made of the interactive whiteboard available in the maths room.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Mathematics across the curriculum is good. There is a whole school numeracy policy in place and there has been teacher training events dedicated to this aspect of school development. Examples of good practice occur in design and technology, science, history and information and communication technology lessons.

SCIENCE

Five lessons were observed, pupils' work was sampled and analysed, and discussions held with pupils and staff responsible for teaching and planning the science curriculum.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well because of the depth of teachers' knowledge and their enthusiasm for the subject.
- Teachers have clear understanding of how to match their teaching styles to the learning needs of pupils.
- Very good use is made of ICT to manage the department and for pupils to record their work.
- Management of pupils' behaviour is not always effective in years 7 and 10.
- Marking of work is limited and does not provide enough detailed information to enable pupils' to assess their work and make improvements.

Commentary

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils achieve well. This is because pupils have confidence in teachers' knowledge of the subject and the very practical nature of lessons often keeps them interested and engaged. Consequently, by the end of Year 11 many pupils are confident to enter GCSE examinations and achieve well. A major strength of teaching is the teachers' understanding of the learning needs of pupils. For example, it is recognised that many pupils have difficulty in preparing and organising independent investigations, which constitutes a significant part of their course work for GCSE. In response, the subject leader has introduced topics for independent investigation with the younger pupils. The impact of this has resulted in well-researched investigations. For example, Year 9 pupils conducted an investigation looking at the claims for the absorption qualities of disposable nappies made by three companies, tested their claims and made valid conclusions. These were well-presented and the findings passed on to the companies concerned.

54. Overall, pupils respond best to the practically based lessons, which are strongly supported by very good use of ICT. Pupils have access to a wide range of software, including CD-Roms through which they can pursue topics which interest them. Very effective use is made of the interactive white-board which is used to demonstrate experiments clearly and in a stimulating way. However, in years 7 and 10, poor behaviour from pupils is not always managed appropriately and teaching and learning time is lost. Additionally, the short teaching week reduces pupils' time to study science.

55. The subject is well led and managed. There is good liaison between teachers in the department and planning is based on sound evaluation of pupils' needs. The work covered is well linked to the National Curriculum and the quality of individual lesson planning is good. The quality of assessment data is very good and the information collated put to good use. There is an effective tracking system and pupils' overall progress can be analysed precisely. However, the marking of individual pieces of work lacks detail and aspects of individual work which require improvement are not highlighted and made sufficiently clear. There are also inconsistent opportunities for pupils to evaluate their learning at the end of lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

ICT lessons were observed in Years 7, 8, 10,, an interview held with the mathematics co-ordinator and a scrutiny of written work in books, files, reports and records undertaken.

The provision of ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy working with ICT and this is reflected in the quality of their achievements.
- There are very good systems in place to assess and track pupil progress.
- The subject is led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is well supported by an experienced ICT technician.
- High quality computers are available in virtually all areas of the school, enabling a 1:1 ratio of computers to pupils.
- There is a strong commitment from most staff to use ICT across the curriculum, including the regular use of interactive whiteboards.

Commentary

56. Pupils' achievements in ICT are very good. The majority of pupils are meeting their achievement targets which are specifically designed to meet their individual needs. Pupils are highly motivated to use computer technology and this is reflected in their achievement. In Year 9, there is evidence of high standards of work relating to the development of a Web page and examination results show very good achievements for older pupils. Since 2003, pupils have been entered for GCSE and, although the results have remained consistent between grades E and G, there is now a firm expectation that, at the end of Year 11, all pupils will be entered for GCSE.

57. The quality of ICT teaching is very good. Lesson planning is based on the National Curriculum, modified to suit individual needs, and the syllabus for externally marked and moderated examinations. The ICT teacher is very enthusiastic and is able to pass this enthusiasm onto the pupils and motivate them to achieve complicated tasks as part of their work. For example, a Year 8 group have inserted a table into a web page using a commercial package. In doing so, they showed they had a good working knowledge of this piece of software and are able to discover new procedures they were keen to share with the teacher and their peers. In all lessons, pupils are very clear about what is expected of them and are well motivated to do well. The ICT teaching technician provides invaluable support, not only to the teaching and learning in the classroom, but also in ensuring that the technological resource is kept working at an optimal level.

58. The quality of leadership and management of ICT is very good. There is a clear policy in place and a subject improvement plan which drives developments in the subject. The

computer based programme enables progress to be measured against National Curriculum levels for individual pupils and comparisons made within a year group. Data collected is presented as a good range of graphs which indicate trends in achievement. This data is also used well as the basis for setting targets for pupils and to inform lesson planning.

59. ICT resources are excellent. There are computer suites in many teaching areas, for example, in history, French, science, design and technology, mathematics and, in addition, excellent use is made of interactive whiteboards. There are sufficient computers in the school to enable a computer for each pupil and internet access is available in most areas of the school. This is appropriately filtered and parents have been informed of the safety aspects of its use. There are plans to further enhance the ICT facilities in the school when the planned refurbishment of the building is completed.

ICT across the curriculum

60. ICT influences teaching and learning in almost all subjects and there is a commitment from almost all staff to the development of ICT across the curriculum. The ICT co-ordinator has identified the ICT elements from all the National Curriculum subjects; these are very effectively recorded as a whole curriculum map and for individual subjects. Other subject teachers are encouraged to develop the ICT elements of their subjects and training has been provided to facilitate this.

HUMANITIES

One history and one geography lesson were observed. Neither subject was a focus of the inspection.

Geography

61. Geography is taught to all classes and at the end of Year 11 pupils are entered for the Entry Level examination. Planning based on the National Curriculum and the syllabus for the examination indicates that pupils cover a satisfactory range of topics. These topics include the geography of Kent, settlements, world population and population distribution, farming in India and urbanisation of Europe. However, much of this work is heavily based on duplicated worksheets which are then 'stuck and pasted' into books. Planning shows lessons are structured with clear expectations of work to be completed. In the good lesson observed, valuable use was made of an interactive whiteboard to show pupils how to draw a graph to record the temperatures and rainfall of India compared with those in England.

History

62. History is taught in years 7, 8 and 9. Planning is based on the National Curriculum and progress sheets in pupils' books indicate that a good range of topics are covered. Topics include the growth of the Roman empire, the Norman conquest, populations between 1750 and 1900, soldiers in World War 1 and 'Were the years 1939 to 1945 Britain's finest hour?' Much of this work is delivered using ICT which proves to be highly motivational for pupils. Lesson planning is good and includes key questions, learning objectives, activities, resources and criteria for assessment.

63. The history lesson observed covered the Battle of Britain. The teacher made exceptional use of an interactive whiteboard to give a multimedia presentation and the information given in the presentation became the basis for pupils to conduct data analysis on the computers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Although it was possible to see only one lesson, information was gained from interviewing the subject leader and a scrutiny of pupils' work and records to form a judgement on provision.

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' previous work indicates unsatisfactory progress, but they are now beginning to show an interest in the subject and gain an awareness of different religions.
- Teaching of the subject is now enthusiastic and the teacher's developing skills in managing pupils' behaviour are being supported well.
- A good emphasis has been placed on making learning interesting and the curriculum includes taking pupils on trips to religious places.
- The new subject leader is making effective use of a wide range of resources.

Commentary

64. Records indicate that, prior to this year, pupils found religious education a difficult subject to study and they were not achieving well. This was confirmed by the observations made by a local education review conducted last year. However, since the appointment of a new teacher for the present academic year, pupils' work indicates that they are now making better progress. They are developing a good awareness of different major religions. For example, they are able to compare how different religions use prayer. Following a visit to a local cathedral, pupils are also able to remember the names of key features such as 'font' and 'alter'. In the Year 8 lesson seen, a pupil was very clear that candles were used to help people remember key facts. This same group were able to link stain glass windows with stories from the bible. Pupils' understanding of religious beliefs is further supported through assemblies, where pupils pray and join together to sing a hymn.

65. The quality of the teaching is developed well. The teacher is enthusiastic and makes full use of a wide range of activities to maintain pupils' interest. Evidence suggests she has experienced difficulties in managing pupils' behaviour, but, through the support of her colleagues, her skills in achieving better control of poor conduct are being developed well. In lessons, there is a very good emphasis on seeking to make learning interesting. The teacher makes good use of resources such as artefacts and of short video clips to demonstrate aspects being discussed. However, the next stage of the development of her teaching is to make more effective use of teaching assistants in relation to supporting pupils' learning.

66. The curriculum has been well developed and enables pupils to learn about a number of religions. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to make comparisons between how different religions approach different aspects. For example, the different types of places in which worship of religion takes place. The subject leader has made a very good start and her leadership and management is good. She is linking well with

specialists from mainstream schools and seeking to extend both the range of resources and the number of visits that pupils can undertake.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

The provision for design and technology was sampled and although one lesson was observed no overall judgement on the provision can be made.

67. There is clear evidence in the excellent lesson seen that pupils respond very well to the teaching style of the head of department. They appreciate his excellent planning and the insistence on high standards, as well as the very good support they receive from the teaching assistants. Excellent use is made of ICT and practical resources are very good. The design and technology curriculum is well linked to the National Curriculum, and topics are effectively tailored to the specific needs of the pupils. For example, very good use is made of visual teaching methods, an emphasis on practical work and ensuring that pupils' final products are of a high quality. Consequently, pupils see value in what they are being taught and rise to the high expectations of the teacher.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Although one art and music lesson were observed, there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the provision for art and music.

Art and design

68. The curriculum for art and design is linked to the National Curriculum and pupils have good opportunities to take GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11. Work scrutinised shows that pupils have the opportunity to work in a variety of media which many use confidently. Examples of collages and pattern and texture work, as well as painted and drawn self-portraits on display around the school, show that many pupils have a talent for drawing and painting and use their imaginations creatively. Art is incorporated into the range of optional activities after school and pupils are given good encouragement to use their skills for relaxation and recreation. In the lesson observed, pupils had good opportunities to experiment with creating a design similar to original paintings shown to them. However, the activity went on too long and staff did too much for pupils.

Music

69. Facilities and resources for pupils to make and enjoy music are good. They are well supported by enthusiastic members of staff who encourage pupils to improve their playing and compositional skills. Pupils participate in music in recreational activities and show through their responses how much they enjoy doing so. Two pupils have recently been very successful in attaining local community achievement awards for their musical performances.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Although two cricket lessons were sampled, there is insufficient information to make a full judgement on the provision of physical education.

70. The provision for physical education is severely limited by the poor indoor facilities available. This was pointed out at the time of the previous inspection and improvements have not been made. However, there are plans for a much needed new indoor sports area in the rebuilding project. The new teacher responsible for the subject makes good use of the outside area available and of the facilities in other schools when these are available. The curriculum offered to pupils is very good and enables them to experience a wide range of activities, including outdoor education. These include well organised programmes in kite flying and mountain bike riding. Records and photographs in both of these pursuits indicate pupils achieve well. In addition, in the last two years, a few pupils have been able to take part in successful skiing trips to Switzerland.
71. In the two cricket lessons sampled, a number of strong features in relation to teaching were observed. These included the changing into appropriate kit of all staff and pupils, very good opportunities for a warm-up, prior to engaging in the main activity, high quality coaching leading to pupils making good progress in developing their batting techniques and good opportunities for pupils to engage in a competitive game. Standards of behaviour and expectations in both lessons were very high. Another strong feature of teaching is the regular assessment of pupils' progress with a good emphasis being put on pupils themselves making an assessment of their own or their peers' performances. Physical education and sport is a key strength of the work of the school and participation is clearly enjoyed by pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PHSCE)

Three lessons were seen and evidence was also gathered from observing a variety of other activities, looking at pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The course pupils follow in lessons is unsatisfactory as often the main activity in lessons is cooking.
- Procedures for marking pupils' work and assessing how well they achieve are limited.
- Time spent in the units and outside of lessons makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

Commentary

72. Pupils' achievement in lessons is unsatisfactory because pupils are not taught sufficient personal, social, health and citizenship education. However, opportunities provided in other activities and in the units ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress so that their achievement overall is satisfactory. Lessons take place in a food technology room and a small attached classroom. Although the Kent scheme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is used in a few lessons, the main activity in many lessons is cooking. For example, during the inspection, a Year 8 class had one lesson in which they learned about solvent abuse and two lessons in which they made spaghetti bolognese. Pupils' work files confirm that in some year groups, most lessons are spent cooking. An example of this is a Year 7 class who have undertaken a cookery activity in nine out of the last twelve PSHE lessons.
73. The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because the emphasis in lessons is on developing cooking skills. Consequently, evaluations of pupils' progress often focus on

skills such as working with pastry. Where pupils do study relevant topics, such as substance abuse and what happens during puberty, there is an over reliance on using worksheets for pupils to record their ideas. Pupils' work is often messy and incomplete and the marking of it does not give a clear idea as to how pupils can improve. Although pupils' have individual targets for lessons, they are often not sufficiently specific for the teacher to assess accurately whether they have been achieved. Assessment is at an early stage of development and the subject leader accepts that it is an area which needs developing further. There are no opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation.

74. Leadership and management has not been effective in improving strategies to raise pupils' achievements through other activities. A variety of activities in the units, such as the 'family style' meal times, and the opportunities to build trusting relationships with staff, promote pupils' personal and social development. However, the subject leader does not have a brief to develop and promote a planned programme for personal and social education in the units. Consequently, time in the units is not always fully utilised to teach personal and social skills. A variety of specialists, such as the school nurse, support the teaching of the health education programme well, particularly in relation to sex and drugs education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

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