

# INSPECTION REPORT

HARFORD MANOR

**Norwich**

**LEA area: Norfolk**

**Unique reference number: 121264**

**Headteacher: Mr Geoff Kitchen**

**Lead inspector: Alastair Younger**

**Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

**Inspection number: 268571**

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

<b>Type of school:</b>	<b>Special</b>
<b>School category:</b>	<b>Community</b>
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	<b>3 to 19 years</b>
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>Number on roll:</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>School address:</b>	<b>43 Ipswich Road Norwich</b>
<b>Postcode:</b>	<b>NR2 2LN</b>
<b>Telephone number:</b>	<b>01603 451809</b>
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<b>Appropriate authority:</b>	<b>The governing body</b>
<b>Name of chair of governors:</b>	<b>Mr Rodney Becket</b>
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> May 1999</b>

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

**This is a school for pupils whose overriding special educational need is one of severe learning difficulty. In addition to this, many pupils also exhibit characteristics of autism and the proportion of these pupils is growing. Pupils often have associated difficulties, such as hearing impairment and speech and language difficulties. A small minority of pupils have more profound and multiple learning difficulties, some of them degenerative. On entry, nearly all pupils are at a very early stage of learning and development. All pupils have a statement of special educational need. It is rare for pupils to be admitted to the Foundation Stage; at present there is one pupil. There are 12 students on roll who are over the statutory school leaving age. These are educated in the school's further education department. Boys outnumber girls by about three to one – not uncommon in this type of school. Nearly all pupils are white and English is the main language of all pupils. There are no refugees, asylum seekers or traveller children on roll. Just over one tenth of pupils are in public care; this is considerably higher than is usually found in similar schools. The school is involved in several national initiatives and in recent years has received a good number of nationally recognised awards.**

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
<b>2358</b> <b>7</b>	<b>Alastair Younger</b>	<b>Lead inspector</b>	<b>Science; history; French.</b>
<b>1961</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Bob Folks</b>	<b>Lay inspector</b>	
<b>3024</b> <b>3</b>	<b>Anne Heakin</b>	<b>Team inspector</b>	<b>Art; geography, music; religious education; special educational needs.</b>
<b>2217</b> <b>8</b>	<b>Kate Robinson</b>	<b>Team inspector</b>	<b>English; Information and communication technology; design and technology.</b>
<b>3055</b>	<b>Clive Tombs</b>	<b>Team inspector</b>	<b>Mathematics; personal, social, health and citizenship education; physical education.</b>

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school, where the well being of all pupils assumes the greatest priority. A fine balance is maintained between ensuring that pupils achieve well academically whilst ensuring that their personal development remains very good. As a result, achievement is very good overall. Teaching is of a very high quality. Strong and gifted leadership and informed management have led to the development of a highly motivated and very effective staff team. The school has received many prestigious awards for its work and gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- When pupils leave the school they are very well prepared for adult life.
- The leadership is visionary, clearly focussed upon pursuing the best possible outcomes for pupils.
- Virtually all teaching is good or better, anything less than good is a rarity.
- The very good curriculum is exceptionally well enriched by a wide range of clubs, visits and out of school activities.
- Excellent links with other schools have been established and with the local community

In recent years the school has gone from strength to strength. Weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have nearly all been addressed. Those that have not relate to accommodation, but the school has turned this to the advantage of pupils by strengthening links with other schools and the community to compensate. This has brought huge benefits to pupils by their increasing involvement in mainstream schools and community facilities. The school relentlessly seeks self-improvement, seeking and taking good account of outside views in order to provide as well as possible for all pupils.

### 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	Very good
Year 6	Good	Very good
Year 9	Good	Very good
Year 11	Good	Very good
Year 13	Very good	Very good

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

Achievement is very good. Pupils are meeting personal targets with a very high rate of success. Achievement is especially good for pupils over the age of 16. These pupils are achieving particularly well in a wide range of relevant subjects and activities. As a result, they are as well prepared as possible to cope with life

when they leave school. Achievement is good overall in all of the most important subjects, including English, mathematics and science, and also in a very wide range of other subjects. All pupils are achieving very well in personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils in care, those with more profound or complex learning difficulties, and the rapidly growing number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, are achieving equally with other pupils because their individual needs are well recognised by teachers. There has been progress and improvement since the previous inspection.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very well promoted and developed. **Pupils are delightful, being very well behaved, coping with their problems admirably and loving school. To the visitor they are friendly, polite and welcoming, and people from outside the school look forward to working with them. Many mainstream students, who have been involved with the school as part of their own studies, have chosen to follow a career in special education as a result of their experiences in the school, and because they have been impressed by the personal qualities of the pupils. Pupils attend whenever their health permits, and punctuality is very good.**

#### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good overall. **Parents' confidence in the high quality of teaching is well justified. Anything less than good teaching is a rarity and well over a third of that observed was very good. This represents teaching of very high quality, and it is the main reason why pupils are making such good progress. Teachers of the Foundation stage and primary-aged pupils are very good at identifying precise learning objectives for individual pupils, and organising their work to give a clear indication of progress. In further education, teachers, instructors and teaching assistants work together with such ease and efficiency that they bring out the best in pupils. There is slightly less very good teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11 because planning is less precise and individual learning objectives less clearly stated. The contribution of teaching assistants is very good, and in further education it is excellent. The way that teachers balance pupils' personal needs with the desire to promote academic learning, and the way that staff manage the frequently challenging behaviour of autistic spectrum disorder pupils, are further strengths. Assessment procedures are good in that they enable teachers to set appropriate targets for pupils, but they fall slightly short of being sharp enough to provide a few parents with the reassurance that their children are making progress. The very good curriculum provides pupils with the learning and developmental opportunities that are most relevant to their lives. A huge range of activities takes learning well beyond the classroom and makes it exciting and memorable for pupils. The school is a happy place where pupils' views are carefully listened to and acted upon. Pupils are very well cared for and offered high quality support and guidance. Outstandingly good links with other schools and the local community open up many valuable opportunities for pupils and staff from both sides.**

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all very good. **The headteacher's leadership is inspirational. He has led the school to a position where all those concerned with its progress hold it in the highest esteem, including parents, pupils and the local community. The leadership shown by other key staff is also very good with responsibilities becoming ever more clearly defined, and executed with a very high level of professionalism. The major strength of management is its success in developing appropriate staffing skills. As a result, the school is a place where people want to work. The question 'why' or 'to what purpose' is always asked to ensure that staff are not overloaded with unnecessary administration and paperwork, allowing them to concentrate on the teaching and care of pupils.**

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**An overwhelming majority of parents and carers wax lyrical about the school, only criticising the fact that it is not open seven days a week and 52 weeks a year. Most parents feel that communication is excellent; a very small minority would appreciate improvements. Inspectors feel that there is little more that the school could do, but the school is always searching for ways to improve its relationship with parents. Nearly all pupils say they like the school. They feel they are learning a great deal and that lessons are interesting and fun.**



## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

**The inspection identified no major issues that the school needs to address. The school's self- evaluation is very good, and management has a keen eye for identifying features that need some improvement, with the result that standards are never allowed to slip to a point where they cause concern.**

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

**Achievement is very good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Pupils achieve a very good number of the challenging individual targets they are set.**
- **Achievement is very good in PSHE.**
- **The achievement of students in further education is very good.**
- **Achievement in all of the main subjects of the National Curriculum is good; it is very good in art and design, music, physical education and work related learning.**

Commentary

1. **Pupils are set individual targets for literacy, numeracy, ICT, PSHE and individual learning skills. As of this term, targets for inclusion are also being set. These targets are agreed at annual reviews of progress, with the full involvement of staff, parents, carers and other professionals involved with the individuals concerned. The targets are challenging and a close check is kept of pupils' successes. The school pays particularly close attention to partially achieved targets. They recognise that if too many targets are achieved, there is a real possibility that they may not be sufficiently challenging. If not enough are achieved, they may be unrealistic. In terms of targets achieved, there are no significant differences in the achievements of any particular group of pupils, either by gender, age or disability. In all year groups, pupils with additional special needs, such as autism and complex learning difficulties, achieve very well. They spend much of their time in separate classes where specialist teachers understand and meet their needs very well. A structured approach, and the use of signs and symbols, helps pupils extend and consolidate their communication skills. When it is in their interests, pupils are included in other classes, and they continue to achieve very well because of the dedicated care and guidance given by the learning support assistants. On an average, about 70 per cent of targets are achieved, 25 per cent partially achieved and 5 per cent not achieved.**

2. **Pupils' very good achievement in PSHE is the result of a very well organised curriculum, strong teaching and the generous amount of time allocated to the subject. The school recognises that, for its pupils and students, this is the most important subject in the curriculum, and this is reflected in the main aims of the school. In addition, staff waste no opportunity to promote personal development at lunch and breaktimes or before and after school. This focus extends into all lessons, irrespective of the main subject being taught. Occasionally this slightly lowers achievement in those other subjects, but a very**

good balance is kept and pupils' main needs are being very well met, allowing pupils to fulfil their potential and being equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to strengthen and enrich their lives.

3. Students in further education achieve very well. They continue to study many of the subjects of the National Curriculum, but their timetable broadens to include many activities to help prepare them for the time when they leave. The focus of PSHE moves steadily to preparing them for more independent living and for transfer to college, and many take advantage of opportunities to gain experience in the workplace. By the time they leave, at the end of further education, most pupils have gained a good range of qualifications, usually *Accreditation for Life and Living* or *National Skills Profile*. Most of last year's leavers gained qualifications in communication, numeracy, home management and World of Work. Several also gained qualifications in leisure, environment, ICT and performing arts.

4. Achievement in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education is good. In science, the achievement of pupils of primary school age is very good. Standards are measured using 'p' levels (small subdivisions of understanding and development for pupils who are performing below Level 1 of the National Curriculum). Most pupils enter the school at the lowest level of understanding and development, and nearly all make steady progress until the time they leave. Occasionally, degenerative conditions prevent this.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and punctuality are very good. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress in working towards becoming more independent; they grow in confidence and become more mature.
- There are very good systems in place to teach pupils how to behave well.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

5. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show remarkably positive attitudes to learning and school life. Absence is nearly all accounted for by illness. Punctuality is very good because the transport is efficient and brings pupils to school in good time. Pupils waste no time in getting to lessons and settle quickly to work. Pupils are enthusiastic about many features of school life, including annual productions and club activities.

*Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence	
School data	92
National data	N/A

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0
National data	N/A

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

6. Despite the complexity of their special needs, pupils' behaviour in and around school is very good. This is because all staff have a very good understanding of each pupil's personality. They work very effectively to minimise potential problems and provide pupils with very good guidance and support. Visits to places of interest are an essential part of the school routine; the visits extend pupils knowledge of the locality, but also reinforce the expected behaviours in the wider community very well. At all times staff provide very good models for behaviour. Their very good relationships with pupils are influential in developing pupils' personal qualities. Through the good examples of adults, pupils form strong friendships, learn to be sensible, good humoured and to help each other. The school is free from any form of harassment, which allows pupils to grow in confidence and self-esteem. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

7. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Religious education lessons make a very good contribution to developing understanding and tolerance of others. Awareness of the major world faiths enables pupils to develop a respect for the beliefs and traditions of others. Similarly, acts of worship make a useful contribution, allowing very good opportunities for pupils to pause for reflection. The very good provision for art and music encourages pupils to express their thoughts and ideas creatively, and to appreciate the efforts of others. An awareness of the world, of each other and of themselves, is strongly fostered. Pupils become increasingly independent. A particularly strong feature is the capacity of staff to judge the right amount of support to give pupils, without doing too much for them. In this way, independence is strongly fostered.

8. Moral and social values are very strongly promoted. Pupils clearly understand what is and is not acceptable, and appreciate the responsibilities of living in a school community. The school council takes its responsibilities very seriously. Routinely, pupils do jobs around school and learn to help their classmates. Many pupils are able to work independently and at other times to co-operate in pairs or small groups. Social development is further extended by very good links with other schools and the joint activities they undertake. For the older pupils, understanding of good citizenship is developed well through fund-raising for charities: the present project is to help a local animal sanctuary. The strong emphasis on caring for the local environment is a further example of moral and social awareness. Through art, music, history and geography pupils gain an understanding of other cultures. A wide range of live musical experiences is organised, and a very good stock of tapes and CDs includes music from other countries. In food technology, pupils sample food associated with other countries; in art they make Divali lamps and pots in the style of the Ancient Greeks. World Cup day was used effectively to extend pupils' knowledge of the participating countries.

#### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Pupils receive a very good quality of education. Teaching, the curriculum, the support and guidance pupils are offered, are all very good overall. Links with other schools and the community greatly enhance opportunities for pupils to learn and develop.

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good overall. They are slightly stronger for pupils of primary age and for those in further education than for those pupils of secondary school age.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and instructors are especially good at balancing the promotion of personal development with learning about the subjects of the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
- Staff use a wide range of resources to make learning interesting.

#### Commentary

9. It is the sheer regularity of good and better teaching, with the virtual absence of any that is less than good, that informs the view that teaching overall is very good and significantly improved since the previous inspection. Teaching is good overall in all of the most important subjects. The way in which teachers and instructors promote pupils' personal and social development at every opportunity gives greatly added value to the quality of their teaching. The separate teaching of PSHE is also very good. Wherever possible, teachers and instructors encourage pupils to do as much as they can for themselves. They

plan and organise lessons with this in mind as a matter of course. This occasionally slows learning in individual subjects, but it strongly promotes personal development, to the overall benefit of pupils. Assessment is good overall, but the main reason why teaching is slightly stronger for pupils of primary school age is that their teachers identify precise individual learning objectives for each lesson. They also take more care to compile portfolios of pupils' work, with careful assessments to show pupils' work to best advantage and to demonstrate the progress they are making.

*Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	20 (40%)	29 (58%)	1 (2%)	0	0	0

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

10. There is an exceptionally strong team of teaching assistants and classroom helpers. Several teaching assistants are currently registered as instructors and are undergoing training to become teachers. The newly qualified teacher on the staff was previously a teaching assistant in the school. Lessons taught by instructors are almost always comparable to the high quality teaching observed elsewhere. Teaching assistants are very carefully deployed to help individuals and small groups. All the assistants have a very good understanding of pupils and their needs and contribute equally well to teaching and learning as they do to care and guidance. In groups for autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) pupils the assistants are particularly adept at managing the extreme behaviour that is occasionally encountered. The quality of teamwork is especially strong in further education groups where young, energetic and cheerful teaching assistants are well in tune with the students, providing them with just the right banter and stimulus that these students need to prepare them for leaving school.

11. Nearly all lessons are characterised by a wide range of activities that involve pupils in actively doing things as well as listening to staff. This is aided by the judicious use of good resources to make learning memorable and to encourage pupils to make choices. In a Year 9 English lesson, for instance, a good range of pictures identifying characters from *Toy Story* was used to encourage pupils to select their favourite characters. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson for ASD pupils, they were kept motivated by the wide range of colourful, good quality, resources to help reinforce their counting and sorting skills. The youngest pupils, often with very short attention spans, were captivated by masses of cuddly toys as they listened to the story *My Dog*. There is a strong commitment to use technological aids in a wide variety of ways to support pupils' communication and their learning.

The curriculum

The very good curriculum is exceptionally well enriched by a wide range of activities outside the classroom. There are many good resources and the accommodation is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Enrichment of the curriculum is exceptional.**

- The curriculum is made relevant to the lives of pupils.
- Resources are good.
- Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but it is best suited to pupils of primary school age.

#### Commentary

12. The curriculum takes careful account of guidance offered in the National Curriculum guidelines and in the national strategies for pupils in Years 1 to 11. Statutory requirements are fully met. All pupils benefit from the full range of the curriculum. A strength of the school is the way that staff plan and work very effectively to ensure that all pupils, including those with the most complex needs, are fully engaged in a wide range of learning experiences that are relevant to their all-round development. This is not just focused on the activities inside the school, since there is a deliberate, very effective attempt to give pupils as many chances as possible to extend and transfer their learning into 'real life' situations. A vast range of visits and visitors are incorporated into planning. For example, through trips to the fairground and local parks, pupils are enabled to think about designs for their own recreation area in addition to making models of fairground rides.

13. The local community is used as an extension of the classroom, and pupils are steered towards very effective involvement through carefully planned activities. They understand that they are valued members of the community and make their contribution, learning how to behave and respond to others through these practical experiences. An extensive range of very well planned lunchtime and after-school activities, such as the gardening, ECO (ecology) and drum clubs, provide valuable additional motivating experiences. The recent Princess Diana Memorial Award for the outstanding Drum Club and the Quality in Study Support (QISS) Award, accredited at just one level below advanced, is testimony to the hard work and dedication of the staff and enthusiasm of the pupils. All of these experiences make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development. An extensive programme of links with the local community and schools allows pupils to learn alongside pupils in local primary and secondary schools and colleges.

14. Well-qualified teachers are very effectively supported throughout the school by equally skilled and experienced support staff. This combination, together with good quality resources, allows the curriculum to be taught very imaginatively and effectively. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there are no specialist subject rooms for pupils beyond Year 7. The school compensates very well for this by imaginatively using its many partnerships and links within the community to ensure that pupils of secondary age are not disadvantaged. For instance, pupils use local leisure and recreational facilities to compensate for the inadequacies of the school hall. The school provides an equally broad curriculum for pupils who have additional special needs. Emphasis is appropriately placed on the development of communication skills and to the physical care needed by these pupils.

## Care, guidance and support

**Pupils' care, their welfare, health and safety are all very good. Careful monitoring ensures that the pupils are supported, advised and guided very well. Pupils' views are regularly sought and, through the very good Student Council, are always taken into account.**

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Each pupil has many adults who they implicitly trust and who they can approach in times of difficulty.**
- **Great care is taken to ensure the health, safety and well being of the pupils.**
- **Pupils' personal and academic progress is very closely monitored and pupils are very well prepared for leaving school.**
- **Pupils' views are frequently sought and listened to; they are valued and taken into account in improving the school.**

## Commentary

15. **Members of staff understand pupils very well. This is apparent at all levels and all staff care for and look after the pupils very well. Pupils have a number of very caring adults to approach if they need help or have difficulties. These people are always available during the school day. This is one of the great strengths of the school and the feeling of "family" support is very evident. Outside agencies are also extremely supportive with many multi-agency links, including connections with organisations representing pupils with autism. Sensory support teachers, school nurses, the dentist and physiotherapists attend regularly. The level of support given by speech and language therapists is extremely good, deserving special mention for the way in which it contributes to pupils being able to improve their communication skills.**

16. **Governors have been fully involved in ensuring that very good health and safety procedures are in place. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken. There are sound procedures for child protection and these are very sensitively and effectively applied. There are eight pupils who are in care, and there is close and effective communication between the different parties involved. First aid procedures are efficient. All of these features ensure that the pupils are provided with a very safe and secure environment.**

17. **Careful, comprehensive monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that they are given good advice and guidance. Their personal and academic development is nurtured and very effectively looked after. Careers and future learning advice is particularly good and the link with Connexions is excellent. There are very good procedures for welcoming new pupils to school.**



18. The school seeks pupils' views on a regular day-to-day basis and also through the very effective School Council, which meets termly. The council has conducted a series of surveys with pupils on a wide range of important aspects of school life. These include design and use of the gardens and playground, pupils' behaviour, playground activities and help given to pupils. The results of these surveys have been very well presented using charts, and the views have been taken fully into account by the school. Parents are full of praise for the work of the school, and feel that their children are looked after extremely well. The high standards observed at the previous inspection have been maintained and have been improved in many areas.

Partnership with parents (including carers), other schools and the community

**The school has very close links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are excellent.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Parents are kept exceptionally well informed about their children's progress and are involved as fully as possible in their children's education.**
- **Extensive links with the community open up many valuable opportunities for pupils.**
- **The school has close and very productive relationships with other schools and local colleges; this opens up many opportunities for pupils and staff, and is beneficial for all those involved.**

Commentary

19. Parents are strongly supportive of the school. The prospectus is informative and well presented; it is supplemented by the governors' annual report to parents. The termly newsletter keeps parents well informed about events in the school. Pupils' annual reports, which form part of annual reviews of progress, are of a very high standard. They are presented with other information available at reviews, and give a very comprehensive picture of the pupils to the people attending the review. Good quality information is sent to parents each term to tell them about curriculum themes for the term, and to give ideas for continuing learning at home. Parents are consulted regularly through the school's own questionnaire; the comments received are promptly acted upon.

20. The Harford Manor Friends' Association is very active and organises a wide range of social and fund-raising activities. Their most recent project was to fund a new mini-bus and the targeted amount has now been achieved. Their efforts are invaluable in helping the school to buy equipment and resources they would not otherwise be able to have. The school has excellent links with, and is highly regarded by, the community. Pupils visit local parks, shops, local churches and museums, make full use of local sporting facilities and, through work experience, have many links with local businesses. There are excellent links with other organisations connected with disabilities, and a very good

multi-agency approach to them has been formed. A wide range of local organisations use the school premises for events, parties and meetings.

21. Links with other schools and colleges are excellent. The school has developed an extremely effective network with local schools and colleges, which benefits the pupils considerably. There are many inclusions of pupils into mainstream schools with full and expert support. The great strength of links with other schools is that they form a two-way process, with the receiving schools benefiting equally, not only from expert advice and support from the visiting staff, but the pupils themselves benefit by being made aware, not only of their neighbours' disabilities, but of their achievements in overcoming them. Many students from local schools spend time at Harford Manor, helping pupils whilst furthering their own development; for instance, as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award. This link has had a profound effect on many of these students, resulting in several of them seeking full time work at Harford Manor on their leaving school. There are especially close links with Notre Dame Language College, the Hewett Schools, Tuckswood and Parkside Schools. Links with colleges are particularly beneficial to the older pupils who attend courses at the colleges and, in some cases, enrol at them after they leave school. Productive links with the University of East Anglia open up very good opportunities for pupils to make good use of its excellent facilities.

#### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all very good. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The leadership of other key staff is very good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher displays excellent qualities of leadership and is the main driving force behind the success of the school.
- Hugely improved governance is now a very strong factor in the management of the school.
- Effective staff development is a particular strength of the school.
- Financial management is very good.

#### Commentary

22. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. He has a clear vision for the continuing development of the school, allied to an unremitting concern for raising standards. He leads by the example of commitment and hard work. He inspires staff and pupils to give of their best. He sees obstacles, such as the limiting accommodation, as challenges to be overcome. Through a process of continual review and evaluation, he has led the school to a position where all those concerned, including parents, pupils and the local community, hold it in the highest esteem. A team player himself, he has surrounded himself with team leaders of talent and energy. He delegates responsibility very well and provides appropriate support, confidence and encouragement to empower staff. The effectiveness of his leadership is confirmed by the improvements he has made, based on the findings and recommendations of the previous inspection. The school's commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity is amply

confirmed by the content, relevance, and enrichment of the curriculum. Full access is promoted through the highly effective teaching, the rich inclusion programme and links with other schools and the community. The school has received many influential awards, including Investors in People, Artsmark and QISS, in recognition of its work.

23. The governing body has made significant improvements since the last inspection. It now has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensures it fulfils its statutory duties. Governors are well trained and, as a sign of their commitment, have completed a full audit of their work and drawn up a governors' development plan. In addition, the governors have set up a Quality Assurance Committee, which has taken ownership of the annual staff and parent questionnaires. Governors take a very active role in monitoring the work of the school, including classroom observations, termly subject evaluations and presentations by subject co-ordinators. One governor makes a focused visit each week and reports back to the full governing body. The chair of governors provides excellent support to the headteacher, meeting him every other week in term time.

24. A major strength of management is its success in staff development. The school attaches great importance to the appointment, induction and development of all new staff. Recently appointed teachers and support staff speak highly of the procedures to help them quickly to become established and effective. The performance management of staff, including support staff, is very thorough and effective and contributes to the very good improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, the deputy headteacher leads a very extensive professional development programme. This provides a range of training opportunities closely linked to the needs of the school, particularly that of meeting the challenge of a changing population.

As a result, staff enjoy high morale and are proud of their newly acquired skills and knowledge. The school is far ahead of others in implementing a review of workloads, and in identifying the most effective deployment of staff in line with the National Agreement on workforce reform. This is another reason why staff want to work here.

25. The headteacher and finance officer manage the school's finances very effectively and efficiently. The governor's finance sub-committee receives regular reports to help monitor progress against the budget. The school was last audited in 2000, and the minor recommendations arising have been acted upon. The above average carry forward figures are accounted for because of an increase in funding from the LEA and because £24,000 is earmarked for building improvements. The headteacher and governors make well informed spending decisions to ensure priorities identified in the School improvement Plan are met. The principles of Best Practice are embedded in the school's practice. The school provides very good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,235,991.0	Balance from previous year	76,341.00

	<b>0</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,219,441.0</b>
	<b>0</b>
<b>Expenditure per pupil</b>	<b>16,048.00</b>

<b>Balance carried forward to the next</b>	<b>72,000.00</b>

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Individual learning needs are well met because the conscientious approach to assessing children's skills provides very good quality information.**
- **The team approach to behaviour management is highly successful.**
- **The development of children's communication skills is given high priority.**

Commentary

26. **Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning. The teacher very effectively leads and manages the team of teaching assistants. The result is a collaborative approach from all adults focusing very specifically on children's individual learning needs. Teaching is consistently of high quality. Constant observation of children's responses and detailed records of children's progress form the bedrock of this provision. The quality of care is very good. Throughout the day staff conscientiously maintain firm and consistent expectations of behaviour and are alert to children's physical needs. Children are happy; they enjoy the interactions with adults and try very hard to please. At the time of the last inspection there were no reception-aged children so there was no report on the provision.**

27. **It is appropriate that the school should place a very high emphasis on the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills. Staff are flexible, using signing, symbolic and verbal communication to suit children's needs. Particularly effective is the frequent use of song to give children cues for counting, snack-time or change of activity. This appeals to the class and reinforces the happy atmosphere prevalent at all times. In personal, social and emotional development, due to adult example and support, children make very good progress in becoming aware of others, taking turns and increasing their levels of concentration when they listen to known stories or join in with clapping and singing activities. Creative development is good. Children's experiences in painting and collage are planned to help them express feelings and communicate ideas. Classroom display reflects the wide range of creative opportunities linked with number and literacy activities. With adult support children achieve well, increasing their ability to manipulate materials with increasing independence. Music and song is used well to support mathematical development. The concept of 'in and out', though difficult for children to understand, was well taught through the use of action songs and taped music, providing repetition that is essential for the children. Records and photographs indicate children achieve equally well in physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. The varied menu of activities, combined with**

the happy atmosphere, encourages the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

28. The school provides a very good induction programme that reflects the care and respect for individuals that typifies the classroom activities. The accommodation for children in the Foundation stage is adequate, but the size of the room limits movement for adults as they move children from one activity to another.

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

*Lessons in English were seen in each year group. There were discussions with pupils and teachers and samples of pupils' past work and teachers' records were analysed. One French lesson was seen, pupils' work was checked and there was a discussion with the subject leader.*

English

**Provision in English is good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **The teaching and learning of English are good throughout the school.**
- **A good curriculum is further strengthened by a very good programme of visits, of visitors, outings and the use of drama and role-play.**
- **Pupils achieve very well from their different starting points, particularly in communicating, speaking and listening.**
- **Assessment does not give a clear enough picture of pupils' progress.**

Commentary

29. **The teaching of English observed during the inspection was never less than good. It was often very good in the primary and further education departments. It was characterised by good subject knowledge, excellent teamwork between teacher and teaching assistants, and appropriate motivational activities, particularly with regard to communication. In primary classes and further education it is strongest because work is targeted particularly well to meet the differing needs of individual pupils.**

30. **The school's use of all forms of augmentative and additional communication strategies and devices is particularly impressive. The use of sensory resources, signing and symbols, to promote communication for all pupils is very good throughout the school. Speaking and listening, reading and writing are all supported by the use of sign and symbol where appropriate. In addition, notices, labels, and captions around school are all in word and symbol. The use of new technology by staff and pupils is good, and the provision of a range of electronic communication aids enables pupils with additional learning difficulties to make very good progress. For instance 'talking books' created by staff, using photos of recent events is meaningful to pupils and brings learning to life. The many relevant and diverse visits into the community ensure that they are learning to use their communication skills in 'real' situations. They make very good progress in developing their interest in and communication with others.**

31. **Children's communicative and early literacy skills are inevitably delayed on entry to the school. They are quickly settled into daily routines that foster their involvement in school life and in their understanding of other's communications**

and what is happening to them. All pupils make very good progress in developing their communication skills because signing and symbols are used systematically to ensure that they know what is required of them in order to reinforce key vocabulary and to support their reading and writing. Very good programmes, devised in conjunction with speech and language therapist for pupils with additional needs, are used to develop their use of language so that they are better able to relate to adults and peers and to improve their access to all subjects of the curriculum.

32. Although there is a wide range of ability in each year group, pupils make good progress in reading. Pupils' reading skills, at whatever level, are methodically developed throughout the school, and there is very good use of symbol systems and teacher-made resources to support this. They follow simple versions of classics such as *Frankenstein* for older students and texts like *Funnybones* for younger ones. Drama and role-play are used very effectively to strengthen pupils' involvement and understanding. For instance, autistic students in the Post 16 group's re-in-action of a scene from a ghost story triggered an excited response in addition to a greater grasp of the plot. In all lessons the management of pupils' behaviour is very good. Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is seamless and makes a significant contribution to pupil's progress.

33. Leadership and management are good. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear vision for the development of the subject. She recognises that assessment is good, but a more precise breakdown of 'p' levels would show more clearly how much progress they are making. She is also aware that pupils' progress files are not always consistently organised. For pupils in the primary and further education departments work is clearly presented and shows the progress they are making. When less care is taken, such as in the secondary classes, it is more difficult to judge progress.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

There is very strong support for literacy and for communicating, speaking and listening in all aspects of the school's life and within other subjects. Staff rarely miss any opportunity to reinforce pupils' communication and are highly sensitive to this in all lessons.

French

34. The lesson seen was well taught. The instructor ensured that all pupils were purposefully involved as they matched pictures of farm animals to their names to create an *animal wheel*. Teaching methods were well matched to the nature of pupils in the class who all have autistic spectrum disorders. Teaching assistants were well briefed and gave valuable individual support to those pupils who needed it most. A helper from a local school was well included in a support role and made a good contribution to the lesson through her knowledge of French. Pupils' past work shows that they are building up a sufficient understanding of useful French words and phrases, allowing the most able to introduce themselves and ask simple questions using the French language. The



subject is well led by another instructor who has worked very closely with a mainstream school with *Language School* status. The fruits of this liaison are to be seen in the generous funding it has donated for the purchase of good resources and the offer of further funding for a possible residential visit to France. Further benefits are seen in the training and workshops that the language school offers and the involvement of partnership students in a European Project being started by pupils.

## MATHEMATICS

*Seven lessons were seen covering all year groups and further education. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' work and records and met with the mathematics co-ordinator.*

**Provision in mathematics is good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Teaching of mathematics is of a consistently good quality; as a result pupils achieve well and make good progress.**
- **Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning contribute to their good achievements.**
- **The subject is well led and managed.**
- **Numeracy across other subjects is an area for further development.**

35. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is consistently good, and for pupils in further education it is very good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Short unambiguous language, signing and symbols make certain that everyone knows what is expected of them. Pupils make consistently good progress because questioning and group work are closely matched to challenge them at an appropriate level. Teachers make very good use of resources focusing on practical investigative approaches so that pupils are motivated to succeed. High quality support from teacher assistants ensures everyone is engaged and included. Assessment is good, and the close monitoring of pupils' progress is used well to plan for the next stage of learning. Literacy is very well promoted in mathematics lessons to develop pupils' understanding and use of the language of mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to reinforce number bonds. Occasionally, the use of final summing up sessions is rushed and does not allow sufficient time to properly review progress, share work and celebrate achievement. There is no significant difference in the progress of girls and boys or between that of pupils with different special educational needs.

36. Pupils try hard and achieve well in lessons because teachers maintain positive and very good relationships with them. The idiosyncratic behaviour of a few pupils is particularly well managed, ensuring that the learning of others is not disturbed. The very youngest pupils match objects to pictures and join in familiar number rhymes, songs and stories. Pupils in Year 6 recognise and order numbers to 20, and higher attaining pupils add the random numbers of three large sponge dice. Pupils in Year 9, using a hundred number board, count and recognise numbers before and after. Higher attaining pupils identify missing numbers in two's in ascending and descending order. Pupils in Year 10 play a relevant game of bingo involving number calculation to 20. In this age group two higher attaining pupils follow a course in a local secondary school leading to Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) Entry Level accreditation. Their learning is reinforced by follow up lessons in school. Students over the age of 16 use and apply their number skills in the community. For example, they learn to shop, recognise icons of banks, use cashpoints and monitor their savings. Pupils' personal development is very well promoted in lessons, as pupils get older. Teachers provide very good opportunities for them to work in pairs and small groups. Consequently, they collaborate well, share equipment, learn to take turns, value one another's ideas and join in one another's success.

37. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There has been improvement and progress since the previous inspection. There has been effective training for all staff to improve their practice. The scheme of work has been reviewed and improved and assessment systems have been refined. There is now clarity with parents on the issue of homework. The co-ordinator works more closely with the numeracy governor to evaluate the subject, including monitoring teaching and learning through lesson observation and through the scrutiny of planning. In this way priorities for the further development of the subject are identified. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors noticed a variation in the quality and uniformity of the work on show. Teachers can learn

**much from sharing the best practice of their colleagues as seen in the work and assessment display of the youngest pupils and that of further education students.**

Mathematics across the curriculum

**During the inspection, there were only occasional examples of mathematical skills being promoted in other subjects. Most arose incidentally and were not routinely part of all teachers' planning.**

## SCIENCE

*Seven science lessons were seen. Samples of pupils' work were analysed. Teachers' records were looked at and there was a discussion with the subject leader.*

Provision in science is good; it is very good for pupils of primary school age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work of primary aged pupils is well organised and presented and gives clear evidence of very good achievement.
- There is a good emphasis on practical work.
- The subject is developing well.
- The work of pupils in Years 7 to 11 needs closer monitoring.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' files contain many examples of very good work. This is very carefully presented to give a clear record of their very good achievement. Many very good teaching skills are evident. Individual pieces of work are usually carefully marked and accompanied by teachers' notes, which describe what the work is about and what the individual has achieved by completing it. Extensive use is made of digital cameras to record pupils working and the results of their labours. This is most important for those pupils who are unable to record work for themselves. Pieces of work in pupils' files are frequently assessed using 'p' levels to help gauge what stage of understanding the pupil is at and what progress is being made. Good achievement and teaching are seen throughout the rest of the school, but records are less precise and teachers slightly less confident about what they are teaching. This results, occasionally, in opportunities being lost to stress the 'scienceness' of practical work by encouraging closer observation and making better comparisons.

39. For all age groups, nearly every lesson involves some practical work. Pupils contribute to this to different degrees, but each is encouraged to participate to the full, often with the help of skilled, carefully deployed teaching assistants. For the youngest pupils, experiments often involve observation and sorting, for instance of leaves and flowers. By Year 6, the higher attaining pupils are venturing their opinions of what they think might happen in an experiment; for instance, when a toy car is rolled down a slope. This is a good introduction to the importance of predicting in scientific experiments. In a lesson for further education students a very well organised group, led by an instructor, conducted three separate experiments to show how materials such as jelly and chocolate change from solid to liquid when they are heated, then change back to solids as they cool. At every stage, students were encouraged to predict what would happen next and to record their predictions. Because all pupils were so involved they paid great attention and their behaviour was very good. Less effective was a lesson with a Year 8 group who were constructing a hot air balloon from tissue paper. This got off to a slow start and there was not enough pupil involvement, with the result that several quickly lost interest.

40. The subject has a new leader this year. She has quickly evaluated the current schemes of work and made small adjustments to remedy slight imbalances in the curriculum, which was leaning rather too strongly towards life processes at the expense of physical and chemical processes. Good steps have been taken to approach local schools with a view to using their laboratories to compensate for the lack of a science laboratory in the school. This is particularly aimed at making better provision for higher attaining secondary aged pupils. The quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work is regularly checked, but there is currently no monitoring of teaching, a situation that the subject leader is keen to remedy as soon as possible. Provision in science, especially for secondary aged pupils, was identified as an area of weakness by the last inspection. There has been substantial improvement since then.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

*Five ICT lessons were seen and the use of computers and other aids to communication was noted in many other lessons. Pupils' work was looked at and there was a discussion with the subject leader.*

Provision for ICT is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ICT curriculum is broad, balanced and very relevant to pupils' needs.
- The subject is used very well to facilitate pupils' communication.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- There is a good commitment to use ICT in a wide variety of ways to support pupils' communication and their learning.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning in ICT is good. During the inspection there were many instances of pupils throughout different year groups using new technology across different subjects of the curriculum. Teachers are confident about using new technology, having completed their national training, and they are very well supported by a variety of high quality resources. These include an internet-linked computer in every classroom, as well as equipment such as digital cameras. The provision of special access devices ensures equality of opportunity as all pupils can access computers.

42. As pupils get many opportunities to refine their skills, they achieve well at levels appropriate to their capabilities. Pupils with more complex needs make choices and give responses through using a touch screen or switches and from a range of activities in the very well equipped sensory room. Higher attaining pupils access information from the Internet, retrieve pictures to use in a project, and retell a story using symbol software on the computer. Further education students use computers to learn social signs. Some have basic word processing skills and use symbolised instruction sheets to search websites. They know how to use a range of equipment, including digital cameras, TV and video, photocopier, and camcorder, and are aware of how information technology affects everyday life.

43. Communication throughout the school is supported very well by the use of information technology. Staff use it frequently to produce learning aids such as communication boards, labels, resources for word recognition, sentence building, reading support, and resources for the PECS. The widespread use of 'talking books' created by staff incorporates photos of pupils with recordings, building on their experience and understanding. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also used to produce on-screen word or symbol banks to facilitate writing. A number of skilled learning support assistants provide support to further develop these skills.

44. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that, over time, all aspects of information technology are covered. Medium and short term planning is relevant to the needs and abilities of individual pupils, combining challenge with achievable targets. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to ensure that ICT is fully embedded in the school's practice. The subject provision is organised well and the co-ordinator is very aware of its strengths and weaknesses.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

45. Teachers are very good at planning opportunities for pupils to develop ICT skills in different subjects of the curriculum. In English higher attaining students in further education use symbol communication programs to produce, for example, instructions for making tea and washing up.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used both for research purposes and to extend the range and creativity of pupils' work. For instance, in art and design pupils produce animations of simple drawings with help. Digital cameras are used well throughout the school to record and enhance pupils' work in all subjects.

## HUMANITIES

*No lessons were seen in geography and only one in history. In both subjects, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' past work and talked to teachers responsible for the subjects. Four lessons were seen in religious education, pupils past work was analysed and a discussion was held with the subject leader.*

Geography

46. The previous report stated that progress was satisfactory and very good use was made of the local community for first hand experiences. Teachers' records and photographic evidence suggest that this strength has been maintained. The school continues to make frequent visits, including residential trips that provide very good opportunities for exploration and investigation of the environment. The school grounds, including the pond, are used well for pupils to study the local natural environment, and students aged 16 or over are able to gain accreditation in practical work based on improving the local environment and recycling. The lunchtime Eco Club makes a good contribution to school life by considering practical ways of improving the school environment through economising with electricity and reorganising the school garden.

History

47. Pupils learn about the passage of time by comparing old and new artefacts and events. History lessons often incorporate visits, such as those to Norwich Cathedral and the Castle Museum, where pupils see at first hand that times are changing. These visits often tie in with the study of older civilisations, such as the Roman and Greek empires, where learning is made more memorable by

involving pupils in role-play. For instance, many pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made a copy of a Roman helmet, then dressed up in togas, made of sheets, before re-enacting situations from ancient times. Good links are made with geography and science; for instance, when pupils study the Norfolk Broads and look at their origins and natural history. Pupils' work is often incorporated into good wall displays and good use is made of digital cameras to record examples of individual achievement. The work of primary aged pupils is better organised and presented than that of secondary aged pupils. As a result, it makes it easier for teachers to demonstrate the progress that individuals are making.

Religious education

**Provision in religious education is good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **Consistently good teaching of RE leads to pupils achieving well.**
- **Very good subject management has resulted in considerable improvement since the last inspection.**
- **Good opportunities are provided for pupils' personal reflection and spiritual development.**

Commentary

48. **There has been considerable improvement in provision since the last inspection. The headteacher has taken on the management of the subject and, as part of his own self-development, has successfully applied for funding to allow him to be involved in national developments in the**



subject. The school has benefited because time has been made available to develop the school curriculum and make it challenging and appropriate for pupils' learning needs. As a consequence, the curriculum is very good, assemblies are linked to the curriculum and the subject has high status within the whole school curriculum.

49. Pupils achieve well in lessons and make good progress over time. This is because teaching and learning are of high quality, especially for further education students, where very well prepared lessons and very good adult teamwork prove to be highly motivating. Lessons contain many features of good teaching; work is accessible to everyone and adults encourage pupils to be as independent as possible. Strong links are made between topics and issues that pupils can understand, and teaching builds successfully on their responses to the teacher's questions. A good range of artefacts, organised and managed by one of the support staff, enhances the teaching about many different faiths, including Christianity.

50. A particular feature of religious education lessons is the way in which all pupils are successfully involved, including those with autism and complex learning difficulties. The theme at the time of inspection was 'celebration', and teachers were progressing from the previous work on harvest to preparation for Christmas. In a particularly sensitively planned lesson the teacher had prepared perfumed candles, conkers, holly and music to provide a delightful sensory experience for the pupils and help them understand the transition to colder weather and a new festival. Similarly, when pupils in the primary autistic class moved into their quiet room, dimmed lights, joss sticks, comfy cushions and music created a delightful atmosphere where pupils reflected on the day's events, especially on how helpful and caring they had been to each other. Adults worked well as a team, ensuring all pupils were able to contribute to the best of their ability. Throughout the school pupils show very positive attitudes to the subject, which contributes very well to their personal and spiritual development.

## CREATIVE AND AESTHETIC SUBJECTS

*Five art lessons were observed and a broad sample of pupils' work was analysed. Two design and technology lessons were seen, a discussion was held with the subject leader and examples of pupils' past work were analysed. Two music lessons were observed, singing was listened to in assembly and the lunchtime drum club was observed. Photographs of pupils playing instruments were looked at and reports of pupils' progress were analysed. There were several discussions with pupils, teachers and visitors.*

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other subjects enliven the whole curriculum.
- Very good teaching of pupils in Years 1 to 6 results in their very good achievement.
- Art provision makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

#### Commentary

51. Pupils achieve very well in this subject. The scheme of work is of good quality, reflecting national guidance and adapted well for pupils with special educational needs. Since the last inspection the subject leader has reviewed the curriculum, looking specifically at skills and progression. This development, along with the very good links teachers make between art and other subjects, shows the school has made good progress since the last inspection. A further development is the very good opportunity provided for pupils to join art-based activities after school

that enhance the taught curriculum. Pupils who have more complex difficulties regularly join their peers and enjoy art lessons. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader monitors pupils' progress in the subject and ensures visiting artists feature regularly in the school curriculum.

52. Throughout the school pupils are given good opportunities to appreciate the work of known artists such as Van Gogh, Goya and Picasso and to emulate their styles. Pupils build on their existing skills, the youngest daubing paint, cutting and sticking junk materials for collage. Older pupils use their improving control to sketch and paint self-portraits, comparing the effects of different media such as pen and charcoal. Teachers make good use of resources such as chalks, pastels, fluorescent and pearlised paints, helping pupils to gain in confidence and communicate their ideas creatively.

53. The very good achievement of pupils, especially in Years 1 to 6 is based on teachers' very sound planning, teaching assistants being very well informed about lesson expectations and pupils' learning needs, plus well managed interesting lessons that pupils enjoy. Very good links with other subjects serve to reinforce understanding of those subjects. For example, Years 3 and 4 were absorbed in making illuminated versions of their names just like the special books from Anglo-Saxon times. The recent Harvest Festival had been used very effectively for all classes to work collaboratively to express through art their understanding of the religious and geographical aspects of harvest time. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well; their interest is caught by the very good use of ICT to support learning. This module of work focusing on animation is clearly enjoyable, pupils make their own models, take a series of photographs and learn to use computer skills to produce their own animation. Pupils' sense of achievement and self-esteem is considerably enhanced by their successful efforts. Recently, pupils designed and made their own uniform T-shirts, worn with pride at a local music festival. The school places high emphasis on visiting local places of interest, samples of work show pupils draw from observation of nature and of architecture, providing a record of the visit and improving their observational skills. The varied and interesting experiences provided in art and design contribute very well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

## Design and technology

54. The observed teaching and learning was good. A scrutiny of photographic evidence of pupils' completed work and displays around the school indicates that achievement and the progress pupils are making is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 responded well to making a moving object, sticking beads and decorations onto their penguins with help. The final song in this session provided good opportunities to experience movement combined with the motivating use of a story sack.

55. Currently, the headteacher oversees the subject. Schemes of work are in place and visits are used very well to put learning into context and build on pupils' communication skills. Although there is satisfactory accommodation for food technology, there is no specialist room for design and technology for pupils beyond Year 7. This limits the range of work that pupils can undertake.

## Music

**Provision for music is** very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to listen to a varied range of music.
- The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
- The music curriculum is enriched by the opportunities for pupils to perform in after-school clubs and around the community.

56. Pupils throughout the school achieve very well in music. The good provision noted at the time of the previous inspection has been successfully extended. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Management and the development of the subject are both good. One reason for the very good achievement is that music forms an integral part of most activities. The school has a very extensive stock of CDs and tapes and teachers use these to maximum effect, matching music to class topics or using it to create atmosphere. A wide range of jazz, pop and classical music encourages pupils to appreciate different styles and to communicate preferences or dislikes verbally or through the use of augmented communication. The school is well stocked with instruments, and photographs show pupils of all ages choosing instruments, learning to maintain beat and rhythm and exploring the range of effects that can be created. Assemblies are used very well for the whole school to enjoy singing together, and this is further developed in music lessons. In many lessons musical cues are given as a sign of change to a new activity, pupils respond very well, recognising familiar tunes and following adult prompts to comply with teachers' requests.

57. Teaching is strong. During the inspection, pupils in further education enjoyed a very effective lesson where birthday, Christmas and wedding music were identified. Through prompted recall of their own experiences, pupils associated the music with parties and celebration and were able to state musical preferences. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 were very positive in responding to notation cue cards to participate in *Noises in the Night*, a performance that required the whole class to sing and play instruments. Thoughtful planning ensured that *Big Mac* technical aids were available for those who needed them.

58. The school is rightly proud of the Performing Arts and Drum Club initiatives, resulting from the school investment in supported learning. Year 13 students, from a nearby college, volunteer to work in the school and help with these lunchtime activities. The value for pupils in socialising with the students and working with them is inestimable. Very good relationships have developed and above all a group has formed that enjoys performing their drum music in school and for the public. The school is fortunate that a number of staff have specialist music skills that they are happy to share in the school; this contributes to pupils' very good achievement in music. The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

Physical education

*Four lessons of physical education were observed. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' assessments and Record of Achievement files and met with the physical education co-ordinator.*

**Provision for physical education is very good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching physical education is almost always by specialists who bring quality and high expectations to the subject.
- Pupils make very good progress across a wide range of activities.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

#### Commentary

59. The quality of teaching is of a very high standard, and this results in effective learning. Lessons are well planned and prepared and pitched at an appropriately challenging level so that all pupils can make progress. Girls and boys alike enjoy physical activities and observe closely teachers' demonstrations. They behave co-operatively and respond quickly to instructions or advice on how to improve their performance. Their positive attitude to the subject contributes to their very good progress. Over time they develop an understanding of fitness and health because the teachers give consistent attention to preparation and recovery and to relevant health and safety issues. Teaching assistants, some particularly skilled in physical education, provide sensitive support, joining in enthusiastically and modelling appropriate skills and behaviour for pupils to copy. Appropriate attention is paid to personal care and hygiene issues such as changing and showering.

60. In hydrotherapy, PMLD pupils relax and enjoy the freedom that warm water and buoyancy provide. They show total trust in the staff who support them and who carry out the varied passive and active movement experiences recommended by the physiotherapist. In other swimming lessons, in a wide range of different schools and community pools, pupils make very good progress in acquiring basic water skills. They improve their confidence, stamina and technique because of very good coaching and encouragement. In gymnastics Year 10 pupils improve their control, posture, balance and co-ordination and learn to hold a 'still' balance position on various parts of the body. Pupils over the age of 16 use community leisure facilities in preparation for life after school and choose activities themselves that they would like to follow. Part of this activity includes checking to see they have the required kit, towel and shampoo and that they have the requisite money to open a locker. They improve their knowledge, skills and understanding of short tennis and basketball because of the expert demonstration and knowledgeable instruction of staff. They learn to respect the rules of the game and to observe the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour. In this way the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, moral, social development.

61. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and supported by good assessment procedures. Improvements since the last inspection include a greater use of community amenities and the facilities of other schools, and a greater range of activities. This more than compensates for a multipurpose hall that is barely satisfactory for physical activities with senior pupils. In addition, pupils benefit from the coaching skills of other agencies, including Norwich City football club and a local Golf Club. Information and communication technology ICT is used appropriately to enhance the subject; for example, to check pulse rates and body fat for older pupils following a fitness course at a local leisure centre. The co-ordinator, in

tandem with a governor, monitors teaching and learning, continually evaluates provision and identifies priorities for the future that will sustain these high standards.

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

*Five lessons were seen in PSHE and one lesson in citizenship. In addition, a variety of other activities were observed and contributed to the judgements made. An inspector met with the citizenship/PSHE co-ordinator*

**Provision for PSHE and citizenship is very good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong emphasis is placed on pupils' personal and social development throughout the school.
- Excellent links with schools and the community provide many opportunities for pupils to take part in citizenship activities.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Informal aspects of PSHE permeate every area of the curriculum.

Commentary

62. A large amount of curriculum time is devoted to PSHE and this is fully justified by pupils' very good personal development. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) includes taught lessons and activities such as snack times and lunch times. Achievement is high and pupils make very good progress because teaching is imaginative and planning is very good. From the very youngest class pupils are encouraged to be independent, make choices, express preferences and wait their turn. This is particularly noticeable during snack time when there is a choice of biscuits and drink. Teachers are particularly skilled at presenting social situations at a level that pupils understand. For example, in a Year 8 class with pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, the teacher becomes a doctor and brings in a pupil covered in red spots. Through the use of signing, symbols and pictures, the teacher asks a simple question, "What's wrong with him?" This cues pupils into the concept of illness. After further role-play with a stethoscope, pupils are able to show where it hurts when you have a headache or stomach ache and know what to do when they feel unwell. Pupils have quite specific targets for their personal, social and health development, which are well matched to their individual needs. On a trip into Norwich with Year 9 pupils, some are expected to notice the social signs such as 'Ladies/Gents', while others are expected to observe how to look for traffic when crossing the road or to ask a shop assistant for help when buying an item.

63. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn about the world outside of school. They develop personal, social and independence because of the very good links with other schools and the community, and the extensive residential trips to Paris and Holland. Visitors to the school include an annual party of Egyptian teachers, members of the Salvation Army and students from local

secondary schools and college. As a result of these interactions pupils learn to behave in an appropriate manner with confidence, take and share responsibility and develop personal autonomy. Pupils' participate in a school council, which has been recognised at national level, and this encourages responsibility and involvement in decision-making. As part of their citizenship programme, pupils over the age of 16 take part in charitable fund-raising for an animal sanctuary. In the lesson seen, they were watching a video of their visit to the sanctuary and writing a letter of thanks. In this way they are developing their skills of participation and responsible action. They also contribute to the running of the school, for example, by recycling school rubbish. Pupils are valued for their uniqueness, the consistent high quality of care, and the constant and positive interactions of staff with all pupils. Very good relationships permeate the whole curriculum, embrace every aspect of the school and fully endorse the aims of the school.

64. Leadership and management of the subject by a new co-ordinator are very good. The curriculum plans include sex education, relationships and drugs education. Resources and assessment are good. The subject is well placed to benefit from the thorough subject evaluation currently taking place as part of a planned programme of subject review. This involves, among other things, a themed day, a presentation to governors, training, and the focus governor and subject leader observing lessons. Last year the school was awarded the Healthy Schools Award in recognition of its work in this area. The subject was not reported in detail in the last inspection.

Work related learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **A range of visits supports the curriculum very well.**
- **Links with the Connexions personal adviser are very good.**

Commentary

65. There is a comprehensive work experience programme and very good use is made of the local community to give pupils first-hand experiences. Accreditation modules very appropriately extend students basic skills, building well on experiences in Years 10 and 11, but providing more work and life related experiences. For example, students are given the opportunity to collect recycling boxes and take registers to the office, and have the opportunity to work in a variety of local placements, such as the nearby garden centre. College links are well established and links with the Connexions personal adviser are particularly strong. The local community is also utilised through visits; for instance, shopping and leisure activities, enabling students to acquire literacy and numeracy skills in a social context. The curriculum provided for students allows them to become as independent as possible, with the social skills and knowledge for them to function in the community.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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