

INSPECTION REPORT

Marjorie McClure School

Chislehurst

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101697

Headteacher: Mrs Denise James-Mason

Lead inspector: John Byrne

Dates of inspection: 13th - 16th June 2005

Inspection number: 268590

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	3 to 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	84
School address:	Hawkwood Lane Chislehurst Kent
Postcode:	BR7 5PS
Telephone number:	020 846 70174
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Peter Knowles
Date of previous inspection:	07-Jun-1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Marjorie McClure is a special school for boys and girls, between the ages of 3 and 19, who have physical disabilities or medical conditions. In addition to these needs many pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties. All pupils attending the school have a statement of special educational need and their attainment on entry is mixed. Whilst a significant number of pupils are achieving at levels appropriate for their age others are well below average. Of the 84 pupils that currently attend the school only one five year old is of Foundation Stage age. Although the ethnic background of pupils is predominantly white British, there are four pupils who speak English as their second language. Just under one third of the school's pupils live outside the borough. The school is sited in the grounds of Coopers Technology College and many of its pupils are included in lessons at Coopers. In recent times the school has received a number of awards that include Activemark, Sportsmark, Artsmark (silver) Healthy Schools and Investors in People. Last year a teacher received the National Teaching Award for Special Educational Needs (SEN).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21137	John Byrne	Lead inspector	Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship Religious Education History Geography
268590	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
29452	Christine Emerson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English Art and Design Music Special Educational Needs English as an Additional Language
21081	Charles Hackett	Team inspector	Modern Foreign Language Mathematics Physical Education
14691	Jenny Hall	Team inspector	Post-16 Science Information and Communication Technology Design and Technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall Evaluation

Marjorie McClure is a **good** school; areas of its work are outstanding. Overall the quality of teaching and learning are **good** and this ensures pupils' achievement is **good**. For the very youngest pupils and students in post-16 the **very effective** teaching they receive results in **very good** learning and achievement. Leadership is **very good** and management is effective. The school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good leadership of the headteacher and the impact it has on school ethos is reflected in the excellent attitude and very good behaviour of all pupils.
- Teaching is excellent in physical education and very good in music and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Outstanding opportunities are provided for those pupils who would benefit from studying a range of subjects in the Technology College that shares the same site.
- The very good curriculum is very much enhanced by an excellent range of additional opportunities that support very well pupils' personal and social development.
- Although the assessment and planning for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is satisfactory it is not as good as it is for other pupils.
- The attention the school gives to the care and welfare of pupils is excellent.
- Although assessment overall is good the school is still developing the procedures necessary to make secure judgements on achievement over time.
- Links with local schools are of the highest quality largely because of the work done by the school's two advanced skills teachers (AST).
- Information available to subject leaders for English, mathematics and science does not provide them with a clear enough picture of pupils' achievement over time.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **good**. Overall the considerable strengths identified in 1999 have been maintained. In a number of subjects improvement in provision, including teaching, has been good or better. Specific areas identified for development have been addressed well, for example, the withdrawal of pupils from lessons for therapies is very closely monitored. Pupils' spiritual development is now provided for very well and the curriculum ensures pupils' multi-cultural awareness is enhanced. Given the confines of the car park there are safe procedures in place for the arrival and departure of pupils. However, despite the school's best efforts there are still safety issues regarding pedestrian access at the car park entrance

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 2	Very Good	Very Good
Year 6	Satisfactory	Very Good
Year 9	Good	Very Good
Year 11	Good	Very Good
Year 14	Very Good	Excellent

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

Pupils' achievement is **good**. Their achievement is excellent in physical education and very good in speaking and listening, music, ICT, religious education and personal, social, health education and citizenship (PSHCE). In all other subjects achievement is good. There are difficulties validating judgements made by teachers on progress over time because the evidence, in the form of carefully analysed pupils' work, is not yet consistent. Pupils' attitudes are **excellent** and they display **very good** behaviour. Their personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils very much enjoy coming to school and despite the medical conditions of some attendance is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good** overall. Teaching and learning are **good**. However, where the subject expertise of the teacher is very strong, for example in physical education, music and ICT, teaching is very effective and sometimes excellent. As a consequence pupils are highly motivated to succeed and learn very well. Teaching assistants, particularly in the classes for the youngest pupils and oldest students, make a very effective contribution to the quality of education provided. Teaching is less effective when pupils are not sufficiently challenged because work set is not carefully matched to their individual needs. The **excellent** range of additional opportunities and experiences that are provided for pupils supports very well the **very good** curriculum. The emphasis that all staff places on the care and safety of pupils means that this aspect of the school's provision is **excellent**. The support and guidance available to pupils is **good**; there is though scope to improve how the school monitors and supports pupils' academic achievement. Links with parents and the community are **very good**. Those that exist with local schools have been considerably enhanced by the support and training provided by the two ASTs and as a consequence are now **excellent**. Their work, together with the extremely close links that exist with Coopers Technology College ensures that inclusion and the role of the school within the borough are very highly developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **very good** and management is **good**. The headteacher and her deputy are committed to ensuring that Marjorie McClure becomes a very effective school and together have a very good understanding of what needs to be done to ensure this is achieved. There are inconsistencies in the quality of subject management across the school and this hinders the school's ability to evaluate successfully the effectiveness of provision in a number of subjects. Governance is very **effective** and governors, whilst offering very appropriate support, are not afraid to challenge senior staff when there is a need.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents feel the effort the school makes to involve and support them is **very good** and because of this nearly all view the school in a very positive way. The vast majority of pupils are **very proud** of their school and some express their feelings in a very passionate and articulate way. There are **very good** procedures in place to seek pupils' views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide older primary pupils with high quality teaching and learning opportunities that reflect more clearly their different educational needs and so enable them to achieve as well as other pupils.
- Ensure that judgements on where pupils are in their learning are effectively supported by robust evidence in the form of annotated pupil work samples.
- Implement and extend current procedures so that all subject leaders know how well pupils are doing year on year and understand the developments required to raise achievement further.

In addition to the above, the headteacher and governors must continue to work with all relevant partners, including the LEA, to resolve quickly the safety issues that still exist in the car park.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. It is **very good** for the youngest pupils and students in post-16.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening and this contributes to their very good personal and social skills.
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 do not make the same good progress as other pupils.
- Where subjects are taught by specialist teachers, pupils' achievement is very good or better.
- Current procedures designed to enable the school to track pupils' achievement over time are not extensive enough.
- Support provided through "access plans" ensure that the majority of pupils achieve equally well.

Commentary

1. Pupils in the two classes for the youngest pupils make very good progress. There is very good use of the digital camera to show, for example, how well the youngest pupils can work together on their investigations. Pupils make good use of a computer programme to record what they see in an investigation. In work on floating and sinking, for example, they write 'The feather floats', and 'The pen sinks'. Students at post-16 make similarly very good progress in all areas of the curriculum and they show by the quality of their relationships and the maturity of their responses the tremendous progress that they make in their personal and social skills. The wide range of accreditation available to students and the success they achieve reflects the very good achievement of students in this area of the school.
2. The achievement of pupils in English is good overall. It is very good in speaking and listening because of the opportunities that pupils are given to develop these important skills in all areas of the curriculum. This, together with the way pupils are encouraged to make choices, share, show respect and develop independence, ensures that they make very good progress in their personal and social skills and religious education. In mathematics and science pupils' achievement is also good overall. It is consistently good for pupils in the secondary age because planning is usually precise enough to cater for the range of abilities within groups. As

a consequence pupils achieve well in a variety of examinations suited to their particular needs. Higher achieving pupils benefit very much from the opportunity to study at Coopers. However, for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 progress is satisfactory because work does not always match closely where pupils are in their learning.

3. The achievement of pupils in physical education is excellent; it is very good in ICT, religious education and music. Subject specialists teach these subjects and because of this pupils receive a very effective grounding in the skills necessary to make very good progress. A feature of physical education is the way all pupils are involved and make very good progress at a level appropriate to their needs. The skills pupils develop in discrete ICT lessons are supported and extended by their consistent use in most lessons. In music the range of opportunities provided for pupils helps them to develop confidence in their own skills and their ability to perform for others.
4. Current arrangements make it difficult for the school and inspectors to make a very good judgement on achievement over time in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Although the school's "assessment sheet" reviews and predicts targets related to P and National Curriculum levels, it is only completed when pupils reach the end of Years 2, 6 and 9. These judgements are not reviewed and updated routinely on an annual basis in all subjects. The school has purchased a widely used commercial scheme to support the recording of pupils' progress in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and PSHE. However, as yet, there is insufficient evidence in terms of pupils' work to support the judgements that staff regularly record. There are, however, pockets of very good practice in use throughout the school which could serve as a model for other staff to follow. For example, the thorough on-going planning and recording that takes places on a daily basis in the class for the very youngest pupils.
5. The support provided for pupils through the very good "access plans," drawn up by the ICT subject leader, together with the very good provision available to cater for pupils with additional special needs means that all pupils achieve equally well. In individual cases pupils' medical conditions can impact on their learning and, as a consequence can prevent them reaching their predicted targets. Despite this their achievement can be judged to be good when absence rates are taken into account.
6. There has been good improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. At that time it was judged to be good. Although this judgement remains the same, pupils now achieve well in mathematics when previously achievement in this subject had been judged as satisfactory. In addition achievement in physical education was described as good whereas now it is excellent.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **excellent**. Behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' enjoyment of school is enhanced considerably by the quality of relationships evident in and out of lessons.
- The attention given by all staff to the development of personal and social skills supports pupils in becoming very confident learners.
- In many curriculum areas there are very well planned opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness.

- Religious education and assemblies make a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Commentary

8. A striking feature of the school is the feeling of calmness and harmony. In such an atmosphere pupils feel safe and secure and demonstrate clearly how much they enjoy the experiences that the school has to offer them. This enjoyment is very evident in lessons and in the very good daily assemblies. The tremendous enthusiasm shown for the school song demonstrates that pupils are very active and willing participants in their learning.
9. The excellent attitudes that pupils display are very much due to the quality of relationships that they have with each other and with staff. They understand that their contributions are valued and listened to and they have the self-confidence to speak up without fear of ridicule or rejection. This willingness to participate was evident in lessons, assemblies and during the inclusion opportunities at Coopers School. The assembly, where pupils spoke openly about changes to their family in such a large and public arena, was testimony to the confidence that they have in themselves, their peers and the staff that work with them.
10. The confidence pupils have is because of the deliberate emphasis by staff to ensure that they are provided with the skills necessary to express opinions, make choices and influence matters that affect them. These essential skills are developed from an early age and the success of this approach is very evident in the excellent way Years 10 and 11 pupils respond in a physical education lesson preparing for a football festival. As Junior Sports Leaders they clearly feel involved and are prepared to make choices about activities because they know these will be listened to and acted upon. As a consequence of involvement such as this pupils, in the majority of lessons, stay on task and behaviour is very good. This is the case even when teaching lacks pace and activities do not always engage pupils in an appropriate way. As a result exclusions are extremely rare; there were none in the last reporting year.
11. At the time of the previous inspection pupils' spiritual and cultural development was judged to be good. There have been improvements in this area and now these aspects are very good. The emphasis on extending cultural awareness is evident in subjects such as maths, art and music and in the displays around the school. For example, pupils and visitors on entry to the school are struck by a very imaginative display of shapes and patterns from other cultures. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very clear in subjects such as religious education and PSHE where pupils have the opportunity to explore religious beliefs and discuss issues such as rules at home, in school and the community. Their willingness to share and respect each other's views speaks volumes for their social development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	14.6%
National data:	10.5%

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.1%
National data:	0.4%

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

12. Many individual pupils have a very good attendance rate and whole school figures are good overall. Figures are affected by the medical and health needs of pupils that necessitate them going for hospital appointments or medical treatment during the term. Punctuality is generally good with minibuses often arriving early for the start of the day. Office staff monitor and record attendance data accurately and are efficient in their role. Registers meet requirements with any rare, unexplained absence recorded as unauthorised. Families only occasionally take holidays during the term.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** and the curriculum is **very good**. The standard of care is **excellent** and pupils receive **good** support and guidance. Links with parents and the community are **very effective**; they are **excellent** with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning overall are **good**. They are **very good** and sometimes **excellent** when specialist teachers teach subjects. Overall assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Where teachers' expectations of achievement are high pupils respond very well.
- Pupils' personal and social development is supported very well because adults ask for and respect pupils' responses.
- Although teachers know pupils well work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils' learning benefits very much from the very good support they receive from teaching assistants.
- The learning experiences of pupils are supported very well by the imaginative use of a range of resources including ICT.
- The use of assessment is inconsistent across the school

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8 (17%)	18 (37%)	14 (29%)	7 (15%)	1 (2%)		

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.

13. Teaching and learning are very good and sometimes excellent for the very youngest pupils, for students in post-16 and where subject specialists teach subjects. In all of these areas staff expect high achievement and because of this pupils are enthusiastic learners who respond well to the challenges set. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils to set work that is suited to where pupils are in their learning. In this way all pupils are fully involved and remain on task for impressive periods of time. This was clearly the case in an ICT lesson where a Year 10 pupil used a carefully structured prompt sheet that gave just the right amount of support to revise and extend his knowledge of databases.

14. However, in the upper primary area, where work is not always matched to individual need and pupils are expected to undertake the same activity, teaching is at best only satisfactory. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on money, although pupils enjoyed handling coins, there was no real challenge to the exercise and some of the follow up activities were not particularly relevant. As a result, by the end of the lesson, there was little evidence to indicate that pupils had been extended in their learning.
15. Pupils' very good progress in speaking and listening and the development of their personal and social skills is because of the teaching that they receive. The success of many lessons is due to the fact that all adults take the time to seek the views of pupils by pertinent open-ended questions. The value attached to their responses gives pupils the confidence to develop their ideas and even suggest changes to the ideas being suggested by the teacher!
16. Most teachers make very good use of resources, including ICT, to support and enhance pupils' learning opportunities. Pupils respond very well to the quality of resources they have access to and this impacts on the enjoyment and success they experience in lessons. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 were engrossed by the imaginative use of a toy car accelerating down a ramp to demonstrate the importance of wearing safety belts. They demonstrated by their answers that they understood the significance of the experiment. The range of resources available in music are very impressive and are used very effectively by the teacher to develop pupils' skills in, for example, working with tuned and untuned instruments. In many activities and lessons ICT features very strongly and its carefully planned use supports the subject focus and extends pupils' skills in the use of ICT. During such activities pupils often receive high quality input from teaching assistants who offer just the right level of support needed for pupils to access resources but at the same time develop independence.
17. The quality of assessment in the class for the youngest pupils is very good. However, it is more variable across the remainder of the school. It is good or better in those subjects taught by specialist teachers. For example, the use of the interactive whiteboard, while pupils are changing for physical education, to recap on what they did in the previous lesson is excellent. Although all teachers make effective use of the opening part of the lesson to recap on what pupils understand, this good practice is not always developed through the lesson by, for example, adults making a written note of pupils' worthwhile responses. In addition, the work samples kept on which judgements are made on how well pupils are doing in subjects such as English and mathematics are insufficient and not always adequately marked.
18. At the time of the previous inspection teaching was judged to be good and this continues to be the case.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good** with **excellent** opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An excellent range of interesting and motivating activities adds to the work taught in lessons.
- The curriculum covers a good variety of subjects and courses and is very well adapted to the age and interests of the pupils.

- There is a very good range of accreditation for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Provision for pupils with severe physical disability, and those with additional special educational needs are very good.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to work with pupils from mainstream schools.

Commentary

19. An undoubted strength of the curriculum is in the excellent variety and quality of stimulating activities that add to the learning opportunities provided in lessons. For example, a lunchtime 'Activity Club' is run by a specialist dance teacher for pupils with co-ordination difficulties. This makes an excellent contribution to the development of the pupils' motor skills. In addition to the availability of such clubs there are frequent opportunities for visits that extend pupils' cultural understanding, for example to The National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Modern. Pupils have also attended concerts and performances of dance and drama at venues including the Barbican and the Royal Festival Hall. These activities are matched with an excellent curriculum for sport in school and a very good programme of music and singing. The school has recently been awarded the silver Arts Mark and Sports Mark awards in recognition of the high quality of provision in these areas. The good accommodation is significantly enhanced by the access that the school has to a residential independence centre. This is an excellent facility that supports very effectively pupils' independence training.
20. The curriculum for the youngest pupils, including the one child in the Foundation Stage, is particularly strong. The pupils participate in a rich variety of activities into which the teacher very skilfully weaves opportunities to practise and develop skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Excellent use is made of the morning 'snack time' to promote pupils' communication, personal development and knowledge and understanding of the world. As pupils progress through the school the focus on developing key skills continues with a very good emphasis on promoting communication skills. There is a very good programme to develop their personal, social, health and citizenship skills. The school has been awarded the 'Healthy Schools' award because of its very good work to promote healthy living. There is a good programme to prepare pupils for the world of work although the school recognises that opportunities for work experience need extending.
21. A very good variety of courses available for pupils in Years 10 and 11, including GCSE, Entry Level and ASDAN, challenge higher attaining pupils well and ensure that all pupils gain qualifications at a level appropriate to their ability. The programme to promote the inclusion of secondary aged pupils at Coopers School is excellent. The pupils are fully assimilated into lessons at the school and follow a variety of GCSE courses. They are very proud of their achievements at Coopers and the placement has an extremely positive effect on raising their self-confidence and self-esteem. Although the school's careful analysis has shown some imbalance in these pupils' timetables, plans are in place to resolve the problem.
22. The needs of those pupils who have severe physical disabilities or additional special educational needs such as visual impairment, autistic spectrum disorder or emotional and behavioural difficulties are very well met. This is because the school is very effective in implementing the advice of specialists such as the teacher for visual impairment. The detailed 'Access Plans', which are drawn up for each pupil, are an excellent innovation to the curriculum as they ensure that ICT is used to maximise pupils' access to all subjects taught.

23. The curriculum is effectively monitored by the deputy headteacher to ensure that pupils' learning is not impeded by withdrawal for therapies and that they have a very good range and balance of activities. The curriculum was reported to be very good in the previous inspection. The school has maintained these high standards and continues to develop it further.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **excellent** support and care for all pupils. Systems to monitor and track academic achievement are less well developed than those for personal development and are **good** overall. There are **very good** arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has further developed the range of excellent arrangements for care and well being which support all pupils equally.
- Many professionals work very effectively together to guide and support pupils.
- The school council is very well established and meetings have a clear purpose and are very well managed by senior pupils.
- Assessment of pupils' personal and medical needs is very good but there is scope to further develop arrangements for their academic assessment.
- Despite the school's best efforts there are still safety issues surrounding the school car park.

Commentary

24. Parents are right to recognise the very high standards of care and support now evident in the school. In the last three years, because many policies have been reviewed and staff training needs have been audited, excellent procedures have been established that ensure pupils work and play in a healthy and safe environment. For example, the safe moving and manual handling policy is carefully implemented and overseen by a very well qualified "advanced skills" support assistant who pays great attention to detail to make sure that everyone knows what is best for each pupil. Child protection is very well covered to the extent that a named governor has been trained. Training in this important area has recently been extended to escorts, drivers and to parents. Risk assessments in many areas are excellent, for example in the way risks are identified within science lessons.
25. Pupils' care plans are very clear and carefully followed. Staff treat pupils with a great deal of dignity and respect and pupils always have an adult to trust and turn to when they need individual attention and help. In addition, a school counsellor works every week in the school alongside pupils, offering very sensitive support to individuals at times of crisis or to small groups facing change at transition. Multi agency working is a great strength and therapists work alongside pupils and get closely involved on a daily basis in individual programmes. The quality of this extra support is very good overall. Staff will make home visits if necessary to support pupils and their families. On-site nurses administer medication but the school in addition has very well qualified and experienced members of staff who oversee first aid.
26. The personal needs of pupils are thoroughly understood and shared among staff so that individual and sometimes very complex needs can be supported. An excellent development in recent years has been the writing of 'access plans' for every pupil that involves the ICT

subject leader and, where appropriate, speech and language therapists. These are highly effective in ensuring that each pupil has the most appropriate electronic aids to access and communicate their learning in all subjects. Although this is an innovative way of identifying and monitoring personal needs there is scope to develop further systems to identify, support and monitor the academic achievement of pupils.

27. There has been a school council for several years and during the inspection a brief meeting was held which demonstrated very well each pupil's involvement. A senior student, who made sure that everyone contributed and that all options were discussed, chaired this meeting very well. Current topics include the purchasing of a "punch bag" to help alleviate stress and tension during exam times! It is very appropriate that a member of this council represents the school on the nearby secondary school council, which helps pupils on the same campus share thoughts and ideas.
28. The previous report highlighted some serious risks in the school car park. Since then many meetings and much discussion has taken place to try and resolve the conflict of use between pedestrians at Coopers and vehicle access at the entrance as well as the shortage of car parking space. Two points to note are that Marjorie McClure pupils are always closely supervised and their safety and welfare vigilantly overseen by staff. Secondly, things have moved forward to resolve the situation but it has been at a slow pace. Governors understand the need to continue their efforts so that the existing risks can be eliminated once and for all.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links and partnerships with parents and the community are **very good**. They are **excellent** with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are strong and purposeful links formed with parents from the time they are first invited into the school.
- Advanced skills teachers (ASTs) are extremely effective in the work they do with other schools.
- Links with Coopers School contribute greatly to the opportunities and range of experiences provided for pupils.
- The support offered to the school by the community is very good.

Commentary

29. Parents spoke in very positive terms about the strengths of the school stressing how much they appreciate the open communication the school has established with them. They receive good quality and plentiful information at regular intervals. In particular they feel that annual review meetings are very well managed and helpful. Many go to the half termly "Drop Ins" with the headteacher and also telephone the school or call in, sometimes on a daily basis, when staff can always be approached for any extra information. The teacher of the very youngest class makes home visits and therapists too work closely with many families. Parents show their support for the school by getting involved in the parent-school association or by standing as governors. The headteacher consults very frequently with parents and always responds to their views. Parents have confidence in the school and trust all staff. Overall the school works very effectively with parents to support pupils' learning.

30. Pupils in the borough benefit enormously from the input and support provided by the school's advanced skills teachers. One teacher works with schools advising and supporting on the correct equipment for pupils with physical difficulties and a second provides training and advice for other schools in physical education. Staff, whose schools they work in, talk in glowing terms of their contribution to the achievement of pupils that they are involved with. Through their knowledge and skills, links with many schools within the area have been either further strengthened, or begun in some cases. Together they have raised the profile of the school as well as promoting a much better understanding of special educational needs particularly for pupils with physical difficulties.
31. Links with Coopers Technology College are excellent. The school has worked closely with this school for many years and because of this a number of pupils from Marjorie McClure benefit enormously from working alongside their mainstream peers for the majority of the week. This individual and flexible programme for inclusion is overseen and managed very carefully so that each student makes the best of what is available. This year new pupils to Coopers in Year 7 all made a visit around Marjorie McClure, which gave them an important insight into life in a very different school from what they were used to. In addition many opportunities exist for younger pupils to visit primary schools when for example sporting and music lessons are shared and enjoyed.
32. Members of the Riding for Disabled Group work very closely with younger pupils and have done so for many years. Facilities adjoining the school are excellent. Members of this group also volunteer as governors and have a particularly good knowledge of how to support individuals alongside physiotherapists and classroom staff. Volunteers from within the community also help with swimming and on visits or specific events and activities. Artists and performers from within the community visit on special occasions. Pupils enter and win local competitions supported by businesses and organisations that also sponsor or donate generously from time to time. On balance, links within the community are very good and the school is active in seeking to develop them even more.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **very good** and its management is **good**. Governors are **very effective**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and her deputy have very high aspirations for the school to be successful.
- Governors carry out their duties very effectively, offering both support and challenge to senior staff.
- Not all subject leaders know how well pupils are achieving or how their subjects can be further developed.
- Systems for the school to evaluate its effectiveness in terms of pupils' achievement are not as effective as they could be.
- Financial control is very secure and available for scrutiny in a well-presented format.

Commentary

33. The headteacher leads by example and is determined to make Marjorie McClure a highly effective school. She has a clear overview of what needs to be done to improve the school. In particular, she is determined that pupils will receive the best possible

support and this is reflected in the excellent levels of care and the calm, welcoming atmosphere that is apparent to any visitor as soon as they enter the school. Together with her deputy, she has worked tirelessly in her efforts to secure the best she can for pupils.

34. Minutes of meetings show how the senior team are constantly reviewing their practices and seeking to bring about improvements. The school improvement plan identifies not only national initiatives but also seeks to extend resources and provision that are currently available. For example, a clear emphasis has been placed on the further development of ICT to ensure that it is being used effectively to support improvements in both teaching and learning. The comprehensive plan, though, would benefit from a closer link to an analysis of the achievements of pupils and a clearer idea of how money spent impacts on overall standards.
35. The school benefits from a very knowledgeable governing body. Governors are very active and, by meeting twice a term, they are in a position to monitor and challenge the school's work very effectively. Regular governor visits take place; these are all well documented and show that many aspects of the school's work are being examined. For example, documents and letters show they have appropriately put considerable pressure on the local authority to improve the poor car parking facilities. This was an area identified at the time of the previous inspection as an area in need of improvement. It still remains an issue despite the best efforts of the governing body who are obviously very frustrated by their lack of success in solving the problems that exist.
36. The deputy head's leadership of the curriculum as a whole is very good. She has a clear overview of what is being offered to pupils. However, not all subject leaders fully understand their role in monitoring pupils' achievements, observing the teaching of colleagues and producing a subject development plan, aimed at raising standards based on an analysis of these areas. All, though, have developed the resources for the teaching of their subject and have ensured that colleagues have good training opportunities.
37. The daily organisation of the school is very good but management, as a whole would benefit from further systems to evaluate the school's effectiveness. There is good evidence available but no overall clear picture that shows how the school knows the rate of progress pupils are making in all subjects. Senior staff, as yet do not have sufficient data that can be analysed to reveal trends, showing possible strengths and weaknesses. Such information would prove very useful in helping senior staff and governors identify short and medium term priorities that would move the school forward.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,526,947
Total expenditure	1,504,141
Expenditure per pupil	17,696

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	112,648
Balance carried forward to the next	135,454

38. Financial control is very good. The school's finance officer has a very effective set of procedures to manage expenditure and provide senior staff and governors with

accurate information on expenditure. Although a significant proportion of last year's budget was not spent, records show that much of this under-spend is related to delayed building projects, including the much-needed improvements to the car park.

Work Related Learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The annual work-related learning week develops pupils' understanding of the world of work very well.
- Careers education is effective in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not have sufficient opportunities for work experience or work shadowing.

Commentary

39. All pupils participate in a 'work-related learning week', which takes place annually. This gives them very good opportunities to develop skills and understanding related to the world of work. During the week, morning lessons have a focus on work related activities and in the afternoons, the pupils take part in mini-enterprise projects where they work together to make products to sell. For example, this year, pupils made and packaged cakes or Easter eggs whilst others planted up small plants for a plant stall. 'Work-related learning week' culminates in a whole school assembly and a sale of the goods which the pupils have made. The school keeps photographic records to celebrate the pupils' achievements during the week. These show the high quality of the work produced and how much pupils enjoyed the activities.
40. Careers education is promoted well through the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. For example, primary aged pupils are given opportunities to talk to familiar adults, such as the school dentist about their roles. They also visit places of work such as Christmas Tree Farm. As they get older, pupils are encouraged to carry out research to find out what people do. Year 5 pupils contact 'Common Wardens' and find out about the work of doctors, nurses and the Emergency Services. In Years 7 – 11, pupils are prepared for making personal choices about learning and work. This is supported by good links with the Connexions Personal Adviser. She arranges individual meetings and works with groups of pupils to help them to consider options beyond school.
41. Arrangements are currently being made for two Year 10 pupils to participate in work experience programmes. However, at the present time there are no plans in place for the other pupils in Years 10 and 11 to experience the world of work directly. The school is aware that, in order to improve provision for work related learning further, opportunities for work experience and work shadowing need extending.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 TO 4 and Post-16

*Throughout this section of the report, overall judgements about **provision** relate to pupils' achievements, the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and management and any other significant aspects*

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Seven lessons were seen in English. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, observation of a range of activities and discussions with staff. Only one lesson was observed in French and as such insufficient evidence was gained to judge the overall quality of provision.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff are very effective in extending pupils' communication skills.
- The youngest pupils make a very good start in developing literacy skills.
- Very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are highly motivated and try very hard in lessons.
- ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' communication skills.
- It is difficult to make valid judgements on progress for older primary aged pupils.
- Information gained from assessment is not collated or analysed sufficiently by the subject leader to show how much progress pupils make over time.

Commentary

42. The curriculum and teaching for the youngest pupils are very good. Consequently, pupils in the reception year and in Years 1, 2 and 3 make very good progress and achieve very well in establishing early skills in reading, writing and communication. Their teachers have very high expectations and set challenging literacy targets that are carefully woven into activities throughout the school day. An example of this was in an excellent 'snack time' for pupils in reception and Year 1 where there was a focused emphasis on developing communication skills. The pupils' response was excellent and they spontaneously used sophisticated vocabulary such as 'opaque' and 'sphere'. Because the teachers and support assistants keep very detailed and specific records of exactly what the pupils can do, work set is very well matched to their individual needs. This is evident when the pupils make their own high quality laminated books about the topics they are working on. Higher attaining pupils are challenged very well and write in sentences with correct use of capital letters and full stops. Meanwhile, pupils who find learning more difficult are given very good support to tell the story through cutting and pasting pictures into their books.
43. In Years 4 to 6 teachers do not always use effective strategies to promote achievement in reading and writing. For example, in a 'big book' session, the teacher missed opportunities to check pupils' understanding of the text and held the book too far away for pupils to see the words properly. Work in pupils' files is often messy and some work is unfinished. Written work is not consistently marked and is not always

annotated to show the level of support pupils received. Assessments using a commercial scheme are not always up-to-date. Consequently it is difficult to get a clear picture of the progress that pupils make.

44. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 11 are good and pupils achieve well. In 2004, three pupils achieved GCSE English at grades D-G, two pupils achieved Entry Level 2 and two pupils achieved Entry Level 1. Pupils also produce work that is assessed as part of the ASDAN Transition Challenge. Higher attaining pupils follow GCSE courses at Coopers School. They are extremely well integrated into lessons at Coopers and make a full contribution to class discussions. This promotes their speaking and listening skills and self-confidence very well. However, at the present time there are not sufficient links between the English subject leader and staff at Coopers Technology College.
45. Pupils have good opportunities to develop skills in writing for different purposes, such as imaginative writing and letter writing. Although pupils are given good verbal feedback in lessons, their written work is not always regularly marked to show them how they can improve their performance. Pupils develop skills in reading and analysing text through studying interesting books such as 'Anne Frank's Diary'. Drama is used to extend the pupils' speaking and listening skills and develop their confidence. For example pupils in Years 10 and 11 will shortly be performing 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' at the Ashcroft Theatre in Croydon as part of the 'Shakespeare Schools Festival'.
46. Pupils' attitudes in English lessons are always at least very good and frequently excellent. They try extremely hard, express their opinions clearly and respond enthusiastically to questions. Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong and the learning support assistants provide very good support for individual pupils. Consequently, all pupils, including those with severe physical disabilities are fully included in lessons. Adapted resources such as Braille and symbols are used to facilitate pupils' learning where necessary. There is very effective joint working between the speech therapist and the advanced skills teacher for ICT to develop pupils' access plans. Consequently, ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' communication. Pupils have good opportunities to record their work using computers. There is a good variety of fiction and non-fiction books and a satisfactory library. However, there are no ICT facilities for research.
47. Leadership and management in English are satisfactory. The leader has developed resources and observed some teaching. However, because there is no monitoring of assessment or analysis of pupils' progress, she does not have a sufficient overview of standards and achievement across the school. Improvement in English since the last inspection is satisfactory as the good provision has been maintained.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. All teachers place a major emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills. Consequently, throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. As a result, they show great confidence in speaking in front of others in assemblies. Reading and writing are promoted well in the different subject areas and pupils' achievements are good. For example, in an ICT lesson on databases, pupils in Years 8 and 9 can read questions like "how many of the insects have wings?" and use the database to find the answer and type the answer in.

Modern Foreign Language (French)

49. Pupils follow a satisfactory course throughout their time in the secondary department. The course gives pupils an awareness of basic French vocabulary. During the inspection a good lesson, for Year 10 pupils, showed what they had remembered and that they were keen to say the words for items of clothing. Work in pupils' books shows they complete worksheets, however, those seen had not been marked and their presentation varied in quality. Pupils' work and the planning for lessons show that through following the course pupils' awareness of other cultures is increased.

MATHEMATICS

Eight lessons were seen in mathematics. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, planning scrutiny and discussion with staff

Overall provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils are achieving well in all aspects of mathematics and older pupils successfully pass examinations.
- Pupils are usually very industrious in lessons and enjoy the practical tasks that are set.
- Teaching is less effective for pupils in Years 4 to 6 and their progress is satisfactory rather than good as a result.
- There is insufficient evidence available to enable teachers to know how well pupils are achieving in mathematics.
- The planning of what pupils will learn as they move through the school and how the subject will be developed lacks detail.

Commentary

50. Pupils in most areas of the school make good progress in mathematics. This is good improvement since the last inspection. The youngest pupils are developing a basic understanding of number and during the inspection those in Year 2 showed they could recognise simple shapes such as a square, circle and triangle; a higher ability pupil knew the names of a few 3D shapes. The progress made by pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is difficult to judge because of an absence of clear and comprehensive evidence. However, based on the quality of work seen in lessons it is no more than satisfactory. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve well as demonstrated by their success in understanding multiplication. Consistently good progress is made by pupils in these years and by those in Years 10 and 11 who study mathematics at the local secondary school. Reports of their progress show that a few will be successful in passing GCSE.
51. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well to establish a consistent structure to their lessons. Good, lively starter activities very effectively motivate pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils enjoyed and benefited from the use of a short programme on the interactive

whiteboard where they had to touch a recognised shape that was then 'swallowed' by the animated image of a boy. Lesson planning also shows that at the end of lessons there are good opportunities to review what pupils have learnt. There are, however, times when planning doesn't show clearly what it is pupils are expected to learn in the lesson and planning is merely a description of the tasks pupils will complete. In the classes for pupils in Years 4 to 6 insufficient attention is given to planning lessons based on a clear understanding of what pupils have achieved previously and what their short and medium targets are.

52. Teaching throughout the school usually involves pupils learning through taking part in practical activities. For example, in a Year 8 lesson the lower ability pupils physically shared items in 3s and 4s and linked this well to developing their understanding of division. Similarly in another lower ability Year 8 lesson pupils were improving their recognition of coins through setting up a tuck shop to buy small items, such as drinks.
53. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has ensured that staff have the opportunity to attend further training, which has had an impact on them acquiring knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, there is a lack of data available that shows the rate of progress of pupils. The planning for the subject is weak, and although national guidelines for the curriculum pupils should follow have been used, there has been insufficient adaptations made to these to show what pupils will learn as they move through the school. Long term planning is not evident and there is limited monitoring of the work of all staff who teach mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematics skills as they learn other subjects. This is particularly so in physical education, where pupils frequently have to count and record numbers either for the resources needed for the activity or for the scores of pupils, for example when playing table cricket. Mini-enterprise activities help pupils to develop numeracy skills in a practical context and younger pupils are able to develop an understanding of mathematical language through their work with the 'Roamer' in ICT lessons. The displays in classrooms and around the school show very clearly how mathematics is very appropriately linked to subjects such as geography and history in a way that not only extends pupils' skills but also develops their awareness of other cultures.

SCIENCE

Four lessons or part lessons were seen. Pupils' work, assessment records, and annual reports were analysed. There was discussion with the current and previous science co-ordinators and subject documents were read.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well in science, although progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 is satisfactory.
- Very good quality resources are used very effectively to give pupils many opportunities to learn through practical work.
- In Years 10 and 11, examination courses are very well matched to pupils' learning needs.

- There is insufficient analysis and evaluation by the subject leader of pupils' achievement in science from year to year.

Commentary

55. Pupils learn a good range of knowledge and skills and work is adapted effectively from published guidance on planning National Curriculum science. The youngest pupils learn well about forces, materials, and about animals and how they grow. Achievement in Years 4 to 6 is satisfactory. Interesting experiments capture pupils' interest, for example, when pupils in Years 4 and 5 investigate why pond skaters don't sink. For these pupils, however, planning is not specifically matched to individual learning needs. The result is that the ideas presented, and the scientific language used, can be far too difficult for pupils with more severe learning difficulties, and not challenging enough for pupils who have more moderate learning needs.
56. In the secondary years, pupils achieve a good understanding of science through frequent opportunities to use equipment and do investigations for themselves. In Year 7, pupils independently persevered to make a buzzer work in an electrical circuit. In an excellent Year 10 lesson, pupils could explain the properties of solids and liquids because the planning of activities, and the use of resources, were very effective. In Years 10 and 11 a small number of pupils progress to GCSE double science standard. They are taught at a local secondary school and make good progress developing investigative skills in a variety of scientific contexts. Most of the pupils in Years 10 and 11 learn science at Marjorie McClure School and successfully gain passes at Entry Level.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 4 to 6. In the most effective teaching, for example in Year 10, day to day assessment procedures are good, pupils have individual targets that are reinforced throughout the lesson, questioning is well matched to individual needs, and assessment records are thorough and up to date. In most lessons, imaginative use of resources motivates pupils to learn. Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are excellent; and pupils enjoy science and are extremely well behaved. The team of teaching assistants provide good support to enable pupils to access practical tasks. Good access to specialist accommodation for secondary pupils ensures that examination coursework can be successfully completed.
58. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The current subject leader, in post for a year, does not have an overview of how well pupils, including those studying on the inclusion programme at a secondary school, perform in science. This is because assessment records are not presented effectively for tracking the progress of individual pupils from year to year. These are key areas for development to ensure, for example, that all primary pupils make equally good progress. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Much of the high standard of the last inspection has been maintained but the quality of subject leadership and management is not as effective, and pupils in Years 4 to 6 are not progressing as well as reported last time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Four lessons were seen in this subject. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work in other subjects, analysis of records, teachers' planning and discussions.

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve a very good range of skills in ICT lessons.

- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities provided to use ICT and work with great confidence and perseverance.
- In most classes teaching, and the support provided by teaching assistants, is of a very high standard
- The work of the subject leader has ensured that the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and developed very well.

Commentary

59. Pupils make very good progress in the development and application of their ICT skills. The youngest primary pupils develop ICT skills as an integral part of learning in lessons. In Years 2 and 3, through very patient individual teaching, pupils learn to programme the 'Roamer' equipment to make journeys across the table to pupils sitting at the other sides. There are 'whoops' of delight when the toy makes a right-angled turn and stops just before the table's edge. By Years 8 and 9, pupils begin to use the special vocabulary of databases; they know how to access computer programmes, save and print their work. By Year 11 a small number of pupils progress to Entry level in ICT. In further work on databases, for example, they learn to edit records, perform more complex searches, and use subject appropriate language. Other Year 11 pupils learn ICT as part of the ASDAN Transition Challenge. They can, for example, design bright, colourful and attractive invitations to a birthday party, changing colour, type face and font size. In addition, where appropriate pupils study GNVQ ICT at Coopers Technology College.
60. Teaching in specific ICT lessons is very good overall. In Year 2, as part of a topic on 'Journeys', there is very good use of resources to develop pupils' skills in controlling the movement and direction of electronic toys. Teachers are very patient, helping one boy with severe learning difficulties, for example, to overcome his fear of the equipment. Tasks are very well matched to individual learning needs. This enables pupils to then apply their newly developed control skills very effectively to plan journeys of differing levels of difficulty using the computer. Where teaching is less effective, in Years 4 and 5, pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to use ICT, they can find a relevant computer programme, and staff ensure that pupils make good use of their electronic communication aids. Lesson planning, however, does not take enough account of individual needs. This has the result that appropriate challenges are not always provided to ensure that every pupil extends their range of ICT skills.
61. In Year 6 and beyond, brisk and knowledgeable teaching by the subject specialist is consistently very effective. Planning builds very well on what pupils know. The interactive whiteboard is used very effectively to introduce lessons and bring them to a close. High quality learning support at the computer succeeds in developing pupils' capacity to use the resources independently. Throughout the school assessment of pupils' ICT skills is good to enable pupils to progress towards their individual targets.
62. Leadership and management are very good because all aspects of planning and the professional development of staff are very effective. In addition, there are plans to improve the quality of record keeping and evaluation of pupils' achievement. The subject leader has created a very effective team and has established very good links with companies to customise switches to enable pupils to communicate using, for example, a 'Tellus' computer. Further developments have built on the very high standard reported at the last inspection and consequently improvements since then have been very good

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Pupils make very good use of their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects. The use of ICT with the youngest pupils is exemplary because the class teacher and teaching assistants, particularly a very skilful specialist assistant, are adept at supporting the use of ICT throughout the day. Across the school, pupils regularly use computer programmes to support their reading, writing and number work. Secondary pupils know how to use the interactive

whiteboard in science to practise their drawings of electrical circuits and in physical education, the interactive whiteboard is used frequently to encourage pupils to review their past performances. Pupils learn how to send 'e-mails' and how to find information on the Internet. In an after school computer club they are learning to design web pages.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was seen in geography and none was seen in history. Therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on provision in these subjects. Comments are based mainly on a scrutiny of planning. One lesson was seen in religious education.

History and Geography

Commentary

64. History and geography are taught as part of the termly topic in Years 1 to 6. In Years 7, 8 and 9 they are taught as discrete subjects. Scrutiny of the comprehensive planning available shows clearly that the content of both subjects is based on National Curriculum programmes suitably adapted to the needs of pupils. A feature of the curriculum offered is the quality and range of visits organised to support pupils' work across the school. The way in which these visits, to places such as the National Art Gallery and The London Museum, are evaluated for impact on learning indicates the very good way in which the subjects are led and managed.
65. In the one geography lesson seen for pupils in Years 8 and 9 the quality of teaching was very good. Planning was of a high quality and very carefully catered for the differing learning needs and styles of the pupils. This resulted in higher attaining pupils making excellent use of the Internet to explore tourist information relating to St Lucia. Lower attaining pupils made equally good progress in examining pictures of the same islands whilst receiving good levels of support. Pupils clearly enjoyed the lesson, benefiting from the "learning break" where they enjoyed a tropical drink.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' personal qualities.
- The quality of the curriculum is such that it has a strong impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Provision is enhanced by an impressive range of visitors and visits out for pupils
- The subject leader maintains a very good overview of the subject and is clear about areas that need to be developed.

Commentary

66. The importance of pupils' personal development is very evident in the planning documents for religious education. The very youngest pupils are introduced to religion through preparing for, celebrating and sharing festivals from their own and other religions. The introduction of Judaism, for example through the celebration of Purim, is evident in the class display for very young children and demonstrates clearly how

story and role play is an important element of religious education. Through such activities pupils' personal qualities are developed very well as they begin to understand the importance of respecting the beliefs and customs of others.

67. This notion of encouraging respect underpins work in the subject and was very evident in the good lesson seen for pupils in Years 7 to 9. The teacher, in developing work aimed at extending pupils' understanding and respect for another culture introduced practical activities that enabled the pupils to gain a clearer understanding of the importance of "Puja" to Hindus. Pupils responded positively to the opportunity to use the artefacts provided by the teacher to produce their own shrines. In their responses they showed respect for the resources provided and demonstrated a good understanding of the gods that Hindus worship. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow the ASDAN scheme, which is closely linked to the theme of citizenship. Through such modules they have the opportunity to extend their knowledge by studying, in-depth one of the major world religions.
68. The recently revised subject policy statement shows the importance of the subject in contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Through following closely the LEA's agreed syllabus pupils are encouraged to explore in age appropriate ways and in varying degrees of difficulty their own beliefs and those of others. In addition the content of the programmes of work encourages pupils to share ideas and listen whilst considering issues such as the importance of following rules at home, at school and in the wider community. The quality of cultural experiences provided by the subject is significantly enhanced by the use teachers make of outside visits and visitors particularly parents. The impact on pupils of attending a Hindu funeral or listening to and watching parents, who follow the teaching of Islam, dress up cannot be underestimated.
69. The current subject co-ordinator carries out her role in a very effective manner and has ensured that religious education has developed well since the last inspection. She has a very good understanding of areas in need of development and, as such, has plans to revise the curriculum for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. In addition, it is very appropriate that she has recently introduced a recording system to monitor pupils' achievement using P and National Curriculum levels.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology

As only one lesson was seen in design and technology no judgements on provision are made.

70. In this lesson teaching was very effective and pupils progressed very well towards their individual targets. They learned how to create a design brief to make a controllable vehicle. In addition pupils considered the purpose of the vehicle, designing it using the computer. The very good range of resources enabled pupils to make independent choices and so contributed to the development of personal and social skills. Accommodation is shared with art and because of this the noise level is distracting when two classes are present in the area at the same time. The school has plans to improve this arrangement. The recent success of the school in winning a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) competition to design, make and evaluate a

model building is the result of excellent commitment and organisation by the subject leader and outstanding effort by the pupils.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

As only one lesson was seen in art no judgements on provision are made. In music three lessons were seen. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.

Art and design

71. The subject is taught in a large, specialist room that is shared with design and technology. High quality displays of pupils' work show that they have good opportunities to work in the style of famous artists. For example, pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have looked at the paintings of Kandinsky and produced lively and colourful work. In the lesson observed, well-organised and carefully chosen resources were used very effectively with pupils in Year 10. The teacher was very skilled at drawing the pupils' attention to pointers to develop their work, such as the shape of the petals in the flowers they were drawing. The teaching assistants who gave the pupils very good individual support then developed this. Consequently, the pupils made very good progress in developing skills in producing detailed pencil drawings of flowers through close observation.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist music teacher makes lessons extremely stimulating so that pupils really enjoy them and learn very well.
- All pupils participate fully in lessons because they are given very good individual support.
- The curriculum is enriched by the quality of resources and the opportunities pupils have to attend performances and play with professional musicians.
- Very good links with mainstream schools support pupils' learning and personal development very well.

Commentary

72. A specialist music teacher who has very good subject knowledge and leads lessons with great enthusiasm teaches all music lessons. Consequently lessons are great fun and pupils are highly motivated to sing together and have a go at playing a variety of instruments. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 where they made excellent progress in copying rhythms using their voices and instruments. By the end of the lesson, all pupils, including those with complex physical disabilities, learned to compose and perform a simple musical pattern to represent their name. This was because the task was broken down very carefully into small steps and the learning support assistants gave pupils very good support. ICT is used very well to enable those pupils with the most severe physical difficulties to participate in lessons. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 successfully complete music modules as part of their ASDAN awards. The school challenges more able pupils through offering the Entry Level course in music.

73. The school benefits from a large music room, which is very well equipped. Media equipment such as a soundbeam and mixing decks are used well to enhance the curriculum. For example, there is an integrated music project planned for next term where pupils from the school and from Coopers School will work with disc jockeys and music producers to mix music. The music teacher has worked hard to develop links with other schools and pupils from a local infants' school and a primary school join in music lessons on a regular basis. This supports pupils' personal and social development and their confidence to perform with others very well.
74. Pupils have outstanding opportunities to work with professional musicians to compose and perform music. For example, they wrote and performed their own opera, 'The Chocolate Dream' with support from the Royal Opera House. Following the performance, a member of the opera wrote to the school to congratulate staff and pupils on the excellent standard of their work. Pupils also benefit from listening to performances of professional musicians, both at school and at venues such as the Festival Hall. This has the very beneficial outcome of helping them to appreciate and enjoy a variety of musical styles. This was evident in the comments of pupils in Years 7 to 9 following a concert of classical music linked to the theme of 'War and Peace.' One pupil felt that it was 'cool and relaxing' whilst another commented that 'it was sad because it was about the war.'
75. The school day is enhanced through an effective use of music in lessons and other activities. For example, in a geography lesson about St. Lucia, the atmosphere was set by pupils arriving to the lesson to the sound of Caribbean music. Pupils respond very positively to well-chosen music and good opportunities to sing together in assemblies. Music is used effectively in lessons such as physical education to create a calm and pleasant ambience. A small number of pupils benefit from individual piano lessons from a visiting specialist. The leadership and management shown by the music specialist are very good. She has worked hard to develop the subject, particularly in relation to achieving the criteria for the school to be awarded the Silver Arts Mark. Music was judged to be a strength of the school in the previous inspection. However, there has been further good improvement in teaching and learning and in the variety and quality of resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Six lessons were seen in physical education. Evidence of pupils' achievements was analysed and discussions took place with staff and pupils.

Provision for physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader is an outstanding teacher with an infectious enthusiasm for ensuring that all pupils benefit from taking part in physical education.
- Excellent resources, many being adaptations of conventional equipment, and ICT are used very effectively to support teaching.
- The curriculum and the many other physical activities available give pupils exceptional opportunities to be involved.
- Pupils' personal development is greatly enhanced by the strategies employed by the teacher to involve all purposefully.

Commentary

76. The quality of physical education is outstanding and as such makes a significant contribution to the overall effectiveness of the school. The teacher responsible for the subject is committed to ensuring that all pupils can participate in the full range of activities and gain maximum benefit from doing so. His leadership and management of the subject are outstanding because of this desire to include all pupils and in doing so build up their self-esteem. For example, pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities for organising activities through the Sports Leader programme and this results in even the most severely disabled pupil being fully involved in either taking part in the activity or organising it for others taking part.
77. The quality of teaching is excellent. The teacher, who teaches the subject to all year groups, has outstanding talents and because of this the achievement of pupils is excellent. As a consequence pupils have gained national recognition in a number of sports. For example, a senior girl has represented Great Britain in gymnastics and an older boy has played for the England cerebral palsy football team. Additionally, this year the school table cricket team has won the regional final and is due to play in a final at Lords.
78. The use of resources, many of which have been adapted very appropriately is of the highest quality. Considerable attention to detail is given when setting out equipment to ensure that lesson proceeds at pace with a very smooth transition between activities. A feature of many lessons is a slide or video presentation at the start to remind pupils of what they have achieved previously. This is often set up for pupils to view, as they are getting ready for the lesson. ICT is used in almost all lessons, not only to record achievements but also as a very effective way of supporting pupils' involvement. For example, a portable microphone and amplifier is used to enable pupils to encourage others to participate in activities.
79. Pupils' lives are enriched by their experiences in physical education and sports. Their personal development is enhanced considerably and all gain a sense of worth through their efforts. This occurred in a swimming session for Year 4 when at the end of the lesson a pupil who has independently swum across the pool remarked, 'I am proud of myself'. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

As well as the five lessons seen in discrete lessons, evidence was also gained from other lessons and activities across the school.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal and social skills are very well developed in all curriculum areas.
- There is a very good curriculum for PSHCE that is very effectively taught by teachers across the school.
- There is a range of very good activities that supports very well the citizenship aspect of the subject.
- The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well, understanding the importance of developing pupils' life skills.

80. The very good progress that pupils make in PSHCE is because this area of the curriculum underpins work in most subjects. Adults rarely miss an opportunity to develop pupils' personal and social skills in a planned and focused way. In many lessons the emphasis is on encouraging discussion and developing pupils' ability to communicate confidently and effectively. The great success of this approach is very evident in the confident way young people in Years 10 and 11 display their skills to good effect in subjects such as English and physical education. Planned links with other subjects are strong, for example, healthy life styles and drugs education is supported in science and issues surrounding behaviour and the impact it has on other people is explored in religious education. Spontaneous moments also make a very powerful contribution to pupils' development. For example in an ICT lesson for Year 2 pupils one individual overcomes his real fear of the "Roamer" and touches the buttons! This demonstrated very good progress in his personal development.
81. The curriculum delivered through PSHCE lessons is very appropriate and covers a wide range of topics which ensures that the school is fully meeting statutory requirements in relation to topics such as sex, drugs and careers education. Pupils up to Year 2 have the opportunity to develop important skills through topics that enable them to begin to understand the importance of caring for the environment and things that are special to them. In the lesson observed, linked to the topic of travel, the teacher explored very well the importance of travelling safely. The use of a practical demonstration, using models, to explore the dangers of not wearing a seat belt had a powerful impact on pupils. Up to Year 6 pupils are introduced to topics that support citizenship, for example safe and unsafe drugs, and aid their understanding of the important role the family plays in their development. Between Years 7 and 11 pupils explore in greater depth topics such as personal hygiene, relationships and citizenship. The fact that Year 8 pupils were prepared to voice their opinions about boyfriends/girlfriends spoke volumes for the confidence that they had in the teacher and support staff.
82. Activities such as the School Council, The Sports Leadership programme, Healthy Schools and recycling initiatives ensure that pupils have the opportunity to practise the skills required of good citizens. They take involvement in these activities very seriously demonstrating that many have developed to a very high level the personal and social skills that they will require in the wider community beyond school. This was very effectively demonstrated in an assembly on families where pupils were prepared to speak on changes that had impacted on them. They did so spontaneously and without fear, articulating their thoughts in a very clear manner. This same confidence was evident in the citizenship lesson observed in Coopers. Both the pupils involved were very much at home and showed a willingness to answer questions posed by the teacher.
83. The subject is led and managed very well. An audit of provision in PSHCE has been completed and has been used to produce a subject development plan, which has a strong and appropriate emphasis on the development of life skills and citizenship. The PSHCE curriculum is very well supported by outside agencies such as community police and a community drugs project. As the subject was not reported on at the time of the last inspection it is not possible to make a judgement on improvement.

POST-16

Seven lessons or part lessons were seen. Students' work, assessment records and progress files were seen. There were discussions with the post-16 co-ordinator, other staff

and students. The accommodation and resources were seen, including an independence centre some distance from the school.

Post-16 provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students make excellent progress in their personal and social skills, and achievement overall in the post-16 unit is very good.
- The ethos in the post-16 unit is outstanding, and exceptional relationships promote an excellent response from students.
- The quality of teaching is consistently very high.
- The post-16 programme is very well matched to individual learning needs, and very good arrangements are in place for the development of students' independence as preparation for leaving the school.
- Post-16 provision is very well led and managed by a very committed and enthusiastic co-ordinator.

Commentary

84. The programme for students post-16 is very relevant, and prepares them very well for leaving school. They follow a very good range of accredited courses. Work related learning is well planned and although relatively few students are able to attend placements in the community there is a very good Young Enterprise programme. This gives all students a good experience of work. Students have access to a very good range of high quality resources and their accommodation is good. The number, qualifications and experiences of teachers and teaching assistants to meet students' learning and care needs are all of a very high quality. As a consequence the quality of relationships both in and out of lessons is excellent and this contributes very well to the ethos evident in post-16.
85. Students achieve very well during their time in the post-16 unit. Their achievement in personal and social skills is excellent. The Independence Centre, a flat off-site for residential experiences, makes an excellent contribution to students' personal and social development. There is very good, and at times outstanding, achievement in information and communication technology (ICT), art, music, physical education, work related learning, life skills, current affairs, and the core skills of literacy and numeracy. In an outstanding information and communication technology lesson, students, who have extreme difficulty accessing a computer, have appropriately adapted equipment to enable them to change fonts, choose background colours, and enter text.
86. Students receive very high quality support for their learning and their daily care needs from a team of highly committed teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching is very effective, often outstanding, with staff carefully matching work to individual learning needs in order that students can progress towards their individual targets. There is frequently excellent support from teaching assistants who have the skill to provide just the right level of support to maintain students' independence. Students learn very well how to think about and write their own targets, for example, in developing the skill of working together as a team. Procedures to assess students' progress, including opportunities for students to write and assess their own targets in communication, number, ICT, and personal and social skills, are very good.
87. Post-16 provision is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has created a highly effective team of teaching and support staff and is an excellent role model in her commitment to the students. The very good management of the post-16 provision ensures that assessments for the various accredited courses are well established, and that assessments are used very effectively to match courses to students' capabilities. There is no judgement on improvement because post-16 was not reported separately in 1999.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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