

INSPECTION REPORT

PATHFIELD SCHOOL

Barnstaple, Devon

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113638

Headteacher: Rod Conway

Lead inspector: Jacque Cook

Dates of inspection: 18 - 22 October 2004

Inspection number: 268612

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 – 19 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 101 |
| School address: | Abbey Road Pilton Barnstaple Devon |
| Postcode: | EX31 1JU |
| Telephone number: | 01271 342423 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Miss V Billing |
| Date of previous inspection: | 21 June 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pathfield is a large, mixed community special school for 110 pupils aged 3 to 19 catering for a range of special needs including severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils' attainment on entry is very low. Of the one hundred and one pupils on roll there are just under half as many girls as boys, no pupils are from ethnic minorities or speak English as an additional language. Six pupils are in public care. Four children are of reception age, three of whom attend part time. The thirteen students in Years 12 to 14 are taught at the Town Station site which is about a mile from the school in the centre of Barnstaple. Only seven pupils joined the school other than at the beginning of the school year and two left. Since the last inspection, the needs of the pupils have become more complex and a new headteacher has been in post since January this year. Pupils attending the school are largely from North Devon. The number eligible for free school meals is high indicating a low socio-economic context.

The school has a range of awards including Investors in People and the Schools Curriculum Award in 2002, the Healthy Schools and the Drugs Initiative in 2003 and the Artsmark at gold level in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| 2351 | Jacque Cook | Lead inspector | French Religious education Personal, social and health education and citizenship |
| 19342 | Tom Heavey | Lay inspector | |
| 2512 | Brian Emery | Team inspector | Mathematics Art and design Design and technology |
| 22391 | Nick Smith | Team inspector | Science Physical education Post-16 |
| 22948 | Mary Vallis | Team inspector | English Geography History Special educational needs |
| 19386 | Trevor Watts | Team inspector | Information and communication technology Music Foundation Stage |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 11 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 17 |
| WORK RELATED LEARNING | 18 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 20 |
| AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE | |
| SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 to 4 and Post-16 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 33 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Pathfield is a good, effective and improving school which is very well led. The good management and excellent vision of the headteacher and the high quality of the teamwork of the staff, ensure pupils make good progress, have very positive attitudes and are taught well. Priorities for development are very well established and value for money is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils make very good progress in improving their communication skills.
- The curriculum is enriched through activities that promote the very good moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in art and design.
- Teaching assistants are very effective.
- The quality of assessment is very good.
- Pupils' progress and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.
- Though satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses in the provision made for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
- A whole afternoon is often too long to spend on one subject.

There are two issues which were identified at the last inspection that are yet to be fully resolved. These are ICT and the provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Despite this, improvement overall is satisfactory because there has been significant improvement made in other areas and because the needs of pupils have become more complex since the school was last inspected. Much has been accomplished recently through prioritising the areas for development and further work is underway. Improvement is particularly good in the procedures for assessment and the setting of targets on individual education plans. The role of the subject leader is now effective and there are very good schemes of work (plans of what is to be taught from year to year). Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are now taught with their peers throughout the school as are those with autistic spectrum disorders, except for a few in Years 7 to 9. Overall, pupils' achievement and progress has improved well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Pupils' achievement at the end of: | in relation to individual targets in: | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Subjects of the curriculum | personal and social education |
| Year 2 | Good | Good |
| Year 6 | Good | Good |
| Year 9 | Good | Good |
| Year 11 | Good | Good |
| Year 13 | Good | Good |

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

Pupils' achievement and progress are good throughout the school. Children of Reception age make good progress and achieve well overall. They make very good progress in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. The achievement and progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good in reading and mathematics and satisfactory in writing. In Years 3 to 6 and 7 to 11, pupils achieve well and make good progress in English, mathematics and science. All pupils make very good progress in improving their communication skills and in their work in art and design. The only area where they do not make

sufficient progress and their achievement is unsatisfactory is in ICT. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress and achieve well. Many staff do not have sufficient expertise in working with pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders and this means that progress for these pupils is satisfactory rather than good. Students in Years 12 to 14 make good progress. They leave with a good number of awards which are steadily being increased.

Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Their attitudes are very good and behaviour and attendance are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school including children of Reception age and students in Years 12 to 14. Communication skills are taught very well and pupils improve their speaking and listening skills effectively. Teachers plan lessons very well and make good use of teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils learn. Strong relationships between staff and pupils lead to all pupils working hard. In the best examples of teaching and learning, very clear expectations and structured routines help pupils to have the confidence to achieve. Pupils increase their knowledge and skill levels very well through practical activities. Most staff have a good and successful range of strategies for teaching pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties but are still gaining the expertise to help pupils with autistic spectrum disorders learn effectively. At times, the pace of teaching and as a result, pupils' learning slows because the afternoon lesson is too long for many subjects. Assessment procedures are being used very well.

The curriculum is good and is enriched very well by the provision for the arts and by the additional activities that are organised at lunchtimes. The curriculum for students in Years 12 to 14 has a good focus on developing life skills. Work-related learning is satisfactory. The care and welfare of pupils is very good and their support and guidance is good. Partnership with parents and links with the community are good and links with other schools and colleges are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The effectiveness of leadership is very good and management is good. Significant changes have been made and responsibilities successfully delegated to move the school forward as quickly as possible. The work of the governing body is good and apart from ensuring religious education is taught in Years 12 to 14, all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Virtually all parents have positive views of the school. They are very pleased about the quality of the teaching and feel that their children like school. They feel they are well informed about their children's progress and are happy about the open door policy which means they can talk easily with staff about any concerns. A number were unhappy about the lack of speech and language therapy. The inspection team agree with this concern and note that the school has bought additional hours of speech and language therapy and is seeking more direct working between therapists and pupils. Pupils are very happy about the school. They like the friends they make and feel they have to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' progress and achievement in ICT.
- Continue to improve the provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
- Take steps to use afternoon sessions more effectively.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure religious education is taught to pupils in Years 12 to 14.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Most pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school, but those with autistic spectrum disorders achieve satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication skills are developed very well.
- Children of reception age make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy.
- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in art and design.
- The number of awards gained by pupils and students is increasing.
- Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders do not do as well as their peers.
- Pupils' progress and achievement in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. The overall good improvement in pupils' progress and achievement since the last inspection is largely due to the high quality of planning. Teachers now plan from detailed, well ordered schemes of work (term by term outlines of what is to be taught) so pupils make progress systematically, building on their previous learning. Although there are not as many girls as boys, particularly in Years 2 to 6, there is no measurable difference in their progress and achievement. Work is selected to be of interest to all pupils and direct and well phrased questioning ensures both boys and girls are involved. Pupils that are looked after by the local authority have their progress carefully monitored to ensure they continue to do well. Good progress and achievement are made, on the whole, by pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. This is notable because they have only recently been taught with their peers. Very good teamwork of staff has ensured this is successful for the pupils. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make satisfactory progress and achievement overall. Many staff do not yet have the necessary skills for helping these pupils to learn well. However, this is not consistent throughout the school as they often make good progress in those classes where there is an established, very clear structure and routine.
2. Pupils and students gain awards in the Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL) and the National Skills Profile (NSP). All the four leavers last year, a pupil from Year 11, two students from Year 12 and one from Year 13, gained awards. The oldest student gained 12 ALL modules over two years. The introduction of the NSP has provided the more able pupils and students with a more appropriately challenging set of courses, so the number of awards is increasing. There are plans to increase the range further over the next year. Due to the very high quality of their art and design work, last year two pupils gained General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination passes through attending classes at the nearby secondary school.
3. The targets set for the school last year were very complex and difficult to measure using the data available. This year, there is clear information about pupils' current levels on which to base assessment of progress. Targets are due to be set by the end of the term.
4. Children of nursery and reception age make good progress and achieve well overall. They do very well in improving communication, language and literacy skills and in developing

appropriate behaviour and attitudes to their work because there is a strong emphasis on these areas. In every lesson children improve their understanding of signs, pictures and symbols and where possible their speech is developed. They learn to make choices, to sit with other children and to begin to become more independent. Children's knowledge of colours, shapes and space improves and they enjoy number songs. The broad range of experiences in school and on visits out of school increases their knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a physical activity every day and all children gain confidence in the hydrotherapy pool. Movement sessions help children to become more aware of their bodies and improve their co-ordination. They learn to make pictures and designs using a range of tools and materials, play instruments and act out stories.

5. Good progress and achievement is made by pupils in Years 1 to 11 in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils do very well in speaking and listening and make good progress in reading. The use of total communication (speaking, signing, pictures and symbols) is effective and gradually pupils develop their repertoire of signs and symbols. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is being introduced and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are beginning to use the symbols to make their needs known effectively. All pupils enjoy listening to stories and many use symbols to help them read. Pupils' skills in writing are satisfactory. After a good beginning, their progress slows as opportunities are missed for them to write. Pupils learn to count, to recognise shapes and to make comparisons in size and volume in mathematics. More able pupils understand the value of coins and pay for their purchases when they go shopping. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties learn the difference between full and empty. They enjoy practical activities that help them experience numbers and shapes. As part of their work on time, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders respond to instructions "ready, steady, go!" to start their work and the timer. One pupil tenders the exact money when shopping showing a good application of their learning about money. In science, pupils learn from practical experiences and develop their skills in predicting the outcomes of their work. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with autistic spectrum disorders are helped by teaching assistants to participate fully.
6. The very high achievement of pupils in art and design has led to the award of the gold Artsmark. Skilled teaching and excellent subject leadership ensure that pupils learn to use a broad range of techniques and media. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. The lack of sufficient progress in information and communication technology (ICT) is because pupils are not specifically and regularly taught new skills and knowledge. Many use switches effectively for communication and for showing cause and effect but few use the computer as a matter of course for research or to write.
7. The progress and achievement of students in Years 12 to 14 is good. They do well in the courses they study including communication and numeracy. At the Town Centre site they improve their skills well in looking after themselves, notably in shopping and cooking meals. Students' knowledge of facilities in the community is broadened, and includes sampling activities at local leisure facilities. They also develop their independence and sense of personal responsibility.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. Other aspects of their personal development including their moral, social and cultural development are very good and their spiritual development is good. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop strong relationships with the staff that work with them.
- Staff provide very good role models.
- Pupils are confident.
- Students at the Town Station develop skills to help them live in the community very effectively.
- Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders improve their social skills very well.
- There are effective procedures that promote good attendance.
- A good working partnership between home and school ensures parental support.
- The school has a successful determination to teach its pupils to give as well as to receive.

Attendance

The level of attendance has improved since the last inspection, which reflects the school's clear procedures, and the parental co-operation it has secured. Parents are familiar with the attendance procedures, and ensure that their children attend school each day. Punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.6 | School data | 0.3 |
| National data | N/A | National data | N/A |

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

8. The strength of the relationships between the pupils and the staff can be seen when pupils are greeted in the morning. It is very clear that the pupils are pleased to be in school. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties usually smile and respond to staff, particularly those they know well. Most pupils are keen to work and settle to their activities quickly. Many work very well together. One group of pupils, without staff support, held conversations pretending to be characters in a dolls' house going through their morning routine. At the Town Station, students discuss their experiences at a recent residential centre together. They listen well to each other and respect views. Pupils develop their concentration spans very well. Children of reception age become engrossed in listening to the story of *Sleepy Sam* and thoroughly enjoy the part where they enact the sheep trampling the farmer's vegetables.
9. There continue to be no exclusions and pupils' behaviour improves, particularly those with very difficult behaviour. Records show that since last year, incidents are not so frequent. However, while overall behaviour is good and many pupils behave very well, there are a few pupils who have been in the school for some time and have persistent and entrenched difficulties that are only now beginning to be tackled effectively. These and other pupils, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorders, thrive in lessons where order and routine give them boundaries that they understand. For example, in one class an excellent and very visual system which uses symbols to represent a chosen activity for each pupil is very successful. Every time a pupil does something particularly well, they are able to move their symbol along a square. When they have gone through all the squares, they know they will be able to do that activity in 'choosing time' later in the day. Parents and pupils agree that incidents of bullying are very rare and are dealt with quickly and effectively. Older pupils entered a competition as part of the National Anti-bullying Campaign. They thoroughly debated different aspects of bullying and created a series of striking posters.
10. Children of Reception age make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They feel secure with staff they trust and concentrate very well in their activities, listening to adults and responding to them, as well as joining in with actions and

signing whenever they can. They love many of the physical activities, whether they are relaxing and peaceful, or exciting and stimulating and participate very willingly. Their enjoyment of all their activities is very clear, whether finding out about different places and things, or when taking part in a new experience.

11. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed through regular opportunities to listen to and take part in prayers during assemblies and at lunch time. Religious education lessons are effective in giving pupils an insight into the beliefs of a range of faiths and festivals which are celebrated, such as Harvest, Diwali and Hanukah. Visits to local places of worship help pupils to understand the concept of a special place. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of others and to appreciate beautiful things, such as parts of the sensory garden and the work of artists.
12. Very good teaching in PSHE and citizenship develops pupils' understanding of the need for rules in school, at home and in the community. They have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong which is reinforced well through various reward systems in the school. Staff provide very good role models and reinforce politeness and good manners. At snack time, for example, pupils are expected to stay in their chairs and to request which drink they would like. Pupils' social development is enhanced through learning to relate to an increasing number of people both in school and in the community. For example, they meet and talk with representatives from the police or fire service and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Membership of the community beyond the school, and concern for the disadvantaged in society is demonstrated by pupils raising considerable sums of money for local and national charities. Students work on a recycling programme and pupils learn about the danger of litter to animals. Their confidence and self esteem grow as they learn to shop in the supermarket. Students learn skills to look after themselves through being shown what the community has to offer. They explore leisure opportunities, learn new activities and make decisions about what they would like to do. Staff use a broad range of strategies to encourage pupils with autistic spectrum disorders to participate in activities during lessons. This has been very successful and many of these pupils will now sit and work with class groups showing how well their social skills have developed.
13. Cultural development is promoted particularly well, for example, pupils study the work of artists, visit galleries, listen to and play a range of music, learn French and explore the past. Positive steps are taken to prepare pupils very well for taking their place in a multi-cultural society. Books are chosen to celebrate different cultures such as *Handra's Surprise* and also to have characters from ethnic minorities. Many displays throughout the school show the influence of art and design which includes African patterns and masks, Asian prints and samples of batik work. Pupils have opportunities to wear national costumes such as Indian dress and to sample food from many countries. During a recent highly successful African week visiting African performers introduced pupils to a broad experience of their country. Pupils participated in dance, made musical instruments and performed with them, used many techniques and media in their art and design work both two and three dimensional and made and sampled African fruit and dishes such as sweet potato cakes and banana bread.
14. Overall the very high standards noted at the last inspection have been sustained.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning from detailed schemes of work is very good.
- The teaching and learning of art and design is very good and pupils have high levels of skills.
- Teaching assistants are very effective.
- Staff use augmentative communication (signing, symbols and pictures) very well.
- Staff are very good at encouraging pupils to learn.
- Not all staff have the expertise to teach pupils with autistic spectrum disorders well.
- A new assessment procedure is being used consistently.
- Pupils find it hard to maintain their concentration in a number of the long afternoon lessons.

Commentary

15. Since the last inspection, despite the more complex nature of pupils' special educational needs, there has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The number of lessons where teaching and learning are at least good has increased significantly, although there are not quite so many where teaching and learning are very good or excellent. This reflects the monitoring and subsequent support and training provided to help teachers meet the demands of the changing school population. As a result, most teachers have good subject expertise and are meeting the needs of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties well. However, many staff do not yet have the skills to get the best from pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. The learning of these pupils, while satisfactory overall, falls behind their peers. Key staff have recently attended training using the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communications Handicapped Children (TEACCH) approach and strategies such as vertical timetables (schedules) are in use in many classrooms. However, at present, there are few specific areas which are distraction free to help pupils focus on their work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| 2 (3%) | 16 (26 %) | 37 (60 %) | 7 (11 %) | 0 (0 %) | 0 (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.

16. Lesson plans have a good structure, with clear aims for each activity. Whatever the central aim of a lesson, there are often targets for other areas of development. So, for instance, in the Reception and Year 1 and 2 class, a guided walk around the school is centred on learning about different directions, names of places and the different uses of parts of the school. Also, staff will also be aiming to improve children's and pupils' understanding of speech and signing and the use of symbols to represent different activities. The use of signs, symbols and pictures is a feature of all lessons. This reinforces speech and helps pupils to understand and develop their own communication skills. As a result, pupils develop their communication skills very well.
17. Teaching assistants work as part of a team in each classroom and have a variety of roles which they carry out effectively. A number with high levels of expertise have specific roles including working in the special base room with pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, teaching small groups and classes and a recent appointment, running the library. In classes, teaching assistants work with individuals or groups as well as supporting whole class activities. This helps all pupils to learn. For example, in a Year 10 and 11 lesson, a teaching assistant worked with a pupil, role playing a telephone conversation. Good use of prompts such as "What time and where?" ensured the pupil understood the necessary information required and was able to remember this on the next occasion. Teaching assistants also help pupils to work together, for example, when playing a board game or independently such as when sorting phrases into order. They supply the right amount of prompts so pupils succeed.
18. Pupils learn very well from practical activities. They make visits, such as to the local fair and base drama on what they see. In the light room, pupils experience winter colours and track objects. Year 6 pupils walk round the school looking for taller and shorter items while others in the group order items of different lengths. Children feel how cold the pond water is and count how many different rooms they go in. Practical activities are a feature in art and design where teachers ensure pupils have opportunities to work with different materials and techniques. For example, they gain skills in making stained glass windows

using transparencies and when working with fabric and techniques including Scaffito and Batik. Art lessons are interesting, informative and grab the attention of the pupils. Pupils sustain their concentration and work hard because the teacher ensures the pace is brisk. No time is wasted and pupils are justifiably proud of their work. There are, however, a number of afternoon lessons in other subjects, where the pace slows even though teachers change activities and give pupils an afternoon break. Time is lost because lessons tend to finish early as pupils' attention has wandered.

19. Staff have strong relationships with the pupils and create a very positive atmosphere in classrooms. They praise pupils for every step forward they make in their learning and when they behave well, which helps pupils to understand very clearly that they are making progress. Assessment procedures used throughout the school are very effective. Staff have a clear picture of the levels each pupil is working at in the subjects of the curriculum. This ensures work is pitched at the right level.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good for pupils of all ages. It is broad and balanced and enriched by exciting additional activities both within and outside the school. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The inclusion of signing and symbols in the curriculum is very good.
- Provision for the arts is very good.
- The multi-sensory curriculum is very effective.
- The curriculum for teaching ICT skills is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders needs further development.
- Afternoon lessons are too long for many subjects.
- Very good accommodation helps to ensure that pupils have ready access to all areas of the school.

Commentary

20. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection and this is contributing positively to pupils' standards of achievement. Planning to ensure pupils make progress from one year to the next is now good, so that the needs of pupils in mixed age classes are met well. Teachers use the good termly curriculum plans to prepare clear daily lessons. Planning to include all pupils in all activities through aids to communication such as signing or the use of symbols is particularly good. Pupils are increasingly able to participate in lessons. This has been improved with the introduction of the PECS which is proving particularly effective for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. At times, the learning of pupils of all ages and abilities slows towards the end of the afternoon sessions, even when an afternoon break is added. This is because only one subject is timetabled. In the morning lessons are only an hour long and pupils are able to maintain their interest. For example, Year 7 pupils are keen and interested in talking about ways they can help others in a PSHE and citizenship lesson. This was a completely different topic and way of teaching from their previous lesson, which was mathematics.
21. Children of reception age are taught from a good long term plan which is often organised in termly topics such as 'animals', 'all about me' and 'in town'. All areas of learning are included effectively. Much of the curriculum, for other younger pupils, is also topic based so that pupils make links between areas of learning. For example, a shared class book used in literacy relates to activities in science or a walk in the local area includes elements of geography,

history and social development. The curriculum for pupils in Years 9 to 14 is good and is enhanced by opportunities to gain national accreditation and by attendance at college. Work related vocational courses are sampled at college in the summer term and help prepare pupils for the next stage of education. Work related learning is satisfactory overall and is planned to be developed further. There are satisfactory links with the Connexions service, enabling pupils to make choices and consider options for their futures. All pupils complete work experience either within school or in the community.

22. Provision for a multi-sensory curriculum enables pupils to learn very well by exploration and is especially important for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. For example, pupils in Years 10 and 11 experienced changes in the seasons as their classroom and the sensory room were adapted over two days so they could experience spring and winter using their senses. Specific lessons such as Sherborne movement, hydrotherapy and those using the sensory room enhance the learning of these pupils. The use of the Tactile Approach to Communication (TAC PAC) materials is effective for many pupils with additional special educational needs. Provision for the increasing number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is satisfactory and improving. Training is continuing to ensure that staff are providing a highly structured curriculum that best meets pupils' needs. Recently, several staff attended a TEACCH course and are using the approach to provide a firm basis for their work with pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
23. Throughout the school, ICT is not sufficiently developed and this is recognised and improvements are part of the school improvement plan. There are no separate ICT lessons and the planning for other lessons does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to learn and practise the skills of ICT that would encourage more independence and aid communication further.
24. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. Sex education and education in drug and alcohol misuse are good and pupils are increasingly aware of what it means to be a good citizen. The arts contribute very strongly to raising pupils' confidence and self esteem and developing cultural and multi-cultural awareness. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in music and listen to live musicians. The provision for dance is enhanced by joint projects with a local school culminating in public performances in Exeter and Barnstaple. Topic weeks, such as Africa week held last term, are very successful and enlivened by visits of musicians, dancers and theatre groups. Outstanding art work is recognised by the gold Artsmark award and visiting professionals bring further expertise and enrichment. Students from the local college provide additional opportunities for singing and dance.
25. The curriculum is planned to ensure there is good participation in sport. In addition to very good opportunities within school, pupils also take part in extensive outdoor and adventurous activities during residential visits to Churchtown. The highly challenging Ten Tors walk is organised in conjunction with the army and the school's position means that 'Beach Days' can be enjoyed by all. A small number of more physically able pupils attend physical education sessions at the local secondary school. This is a good example of increased collaboration between the schools which is providing good opportunities for pupils to integrate part time into local schools and for mainstream pupils to join lessons at Pathfield.
26. The very good number of lunchtime clubs attended by all pupils provides additional enrichment to the curriculum. These include sports activities, music, board games, signing and a 'Harry Potter' club.
27. The accommodation has been improved radically. The award winning secondary part of the school supports teaching pupils in Years 7 to 11 very well indeed. There are spacious specialist classrooms as well as class bases and a dedicated room for special care. Very

recently the entrance and administration areas have been extended and improved and two primary classrooms decorated. Further plans to redevelop the remaining part of the school are scheduled. A new library is scheduled to replace the unsatisfactory provision in a temporary building. Provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is being developed using strategies from the TEACCH approach. At present, there are too few areas where these pupils may work with distractions cut to a minimum. The provision at the Town Station is good for the current population of students. However, personal care facilities are not suitable for the future increase in the number of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. There is a good range of resources throughout the school. There are a good number of experienced teachers in the school and a very good match of teaching assistants to the needs of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school's very good provision for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils is one of its strengths. Adults in the school provide good levels of support, advice and guidance for those in their care. Arrangements to seek, value and act upon pupils' views are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are detailed and careful arrangements for pupils' health and safety, especially when arriving and departing from the school.
- The staff have very detailed knowledge of the pupils supported by very good relationships.
- There is a high quality of personal care devoted to pupils which is further enhanced by the good staffing ratios including the full time presence of a nurse.
- Individual education plans have improved very well.

Commentary

28. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good. The physical structure and layout of the school is of high quality, enabling pupils to circulate freely and safely. Fire doors in the main circulation areas, for example, are linked to the fire alarm so that they only close when triggered by the alarm. At other times they remain open to allow free passage to pupils with mobility difficulties. The high regard for safety is epitomised by the scrupulous arrangements for the movement of pupils in and out of school at the start and end of the school day, to ensure that their safety and security is not compromised. These arrangements are very well supported by the termly fire drills, risk assessments of the premises, alarm tests, and comprehensive first aid arrangements that make pupils feel safe and cared for. The school nurse makes a very positive contribution dealing with medical needs and also participating in aspects of PSHE and citizenship. Child protection procedures are properly managed by the designated person, and pupils in public care are carefully monitored. All these arrangements are well supported by proper records. The resultant climate of wellbeing and security makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
29. The staff gather information about the pupils very well. The process starts with the carefully planned and tailor-made induction procedures, whether from home or from a mainstream school and culminates in their successful placement in either mainstream secondary education, a college of further education, or the world of work. Procedures are particularly good for Reception aged children. There is good contact with a nursery that children often attend prior to joining the school. Children have a good introduction to the class. Parents come into school, and staff visit homes, so everyone knows each other well from the start. When children are ready to leave the class, they have good preparation for their entry into the main school. They also have visits to the higher classes, and share many activities together, including snack times, meals, playtime, as well as some lessons. Pupils' work experience placements are carefully chosen to include businesses that have actively supported the school's initiatives. The school is well supported by the Connexions service when planning such placements, and choices are made available to all pupils in Year 12.
30. Objectives from statements of special educational needs and thorough assessments are translated into individual education plans. These now have clear targets that are subject to regular review and are monitored very well. Much improved annual reports now include what pupils know, understand and can do rather than simply what they have been taught, so as to help parents to support their children's learning. The provision of pupil 'passports' for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties is very good and helps the various people involved in their care to cater for their special needs in an appropriate fashion. Lesson plans are tailored to individual needs, and pupils are positively motivated

through a well-managed awards system geared to individual targets. These arrangements are very well supported by the exceptionally warm relationships that drive adults to offer sensitive care to their charges. Lunch, for example is made into a social event for all pupils. Staff engaged in feeding these children sit in front of them, at their level, feeding them at their pace, and talking to them as friends would. As a result the pupils are relaxed and enjoy an eating experience that also helps their social development. The high quality of relationships was highlighted by parents as a major reason for their supporting the school. They know that their children are safe, secure and well cared for, especially since the deficiencies in some therapies identified by parents were acknowledged and steps taken to rectify them.

31. Pupils are confident that staff listen to them and an increasing number are contributing to their own annual reviews. A new school council has yet to be formed as the previous members have moved on to the Town Station site. Thought is being given to broaden the membership so experience is gained over more than one year.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's good links with parents and the community, along with the very effective partnerships with other schools and colleges make a good contribution to pupils' educational experience and social development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is able to take advantage of having partner schools almost on the same campus.
- Parents have very positive views of the school which translate into good levels of support.
- There is a good two-way communication between school and home which benefits pupils.
- The prospectus is unattractive and is not easy to read.

Commentary

32. Parents' very positive views of the school drive them to enlist the support of the business community in the fundraising activities of the Parents Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA). In consequence, the school is attracting support across its thirty-five mile catchment area from organisations as diverse as the Rotary Club and a local fruit shop. Monies thus raised support the purchase of essential equipment as well as a varied programme of extra-curricular activities that includes educational visits in the community. For their part, pupils demonstrate their membership of the community beyond the school by raising considerable sums of money for local and national charities.
33. The good communications between home and school, which are a high priority for the school's managers, ease the problems associated with the distance that so many parents have to travel to get to the school. The home/school book is particularly highly valued as an instrument of two-way communication. A teaching assistant was seen busily writing in a pupil's book at the end of the school day. When asked what she was doing she replied that as a parent she would be very eager to know all that had happened at school so that she might better support the school in helping her child's educational and social development. Other parents at their meeting with the inspector strongly supported that enlightened view.
34. Other information that the school provides for parents is of generally good quality. The governors' report to parents complies with legal requirements and is informative, while the weekly news bulletin keeps parents in touch with daily activities and events. The school consults parents formally on major matters, such as the proposal to integrate pupils into age appropriate groups across the school. One year later the school followed up this consultation

with a survey of parental opinion on the success of those changes, to test their level of satisfaction. This strategy not only offers parents a stake in the school's future plans, it also promotes their greater involvement in its day to day life, such as attendance at reviews and other events, for the benefit of their children. The current prospectus is urgently in need of review both to make it a more parent-friendly document and also to accurately reflect changes that have been made over the past year.

35. The school has recently begun to explore the advantages of its location within a few paces of mainstream infant, junior and secondary schools, as well as the shared facility of Town Station for Year 12 to 14 provision. Formal discussions about 'federation' are being pursued, but already each of the schools involved have enriched the lives of their pupils and staff through the many placements and exchanges, not only of pupils but also of staff in the respective schools. Assistance with the curriculum, shared training and expertise, and jointly funded projects are just a few of the developments that are fast becoming a strength of Pathfield School. Its pupils benefit greatly from their introduction into new communities of learning, work and play that cushion their introduction into a wider society. These achievements constitute satisfactory progress since the previous inspection, maintaining the high standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the school is very good and the management is good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership qualities displayed by the headteacher are very good.
- The headteacher has created a very effective senior management team and management structure.
- Day-to-day management of finances and administration is very good.
- Planning for the development of the school is very good.
- Provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is weaker than other provision in the school.

Commentary

36. The newly appointed headteacher's vision and total commitment to moving the school forward to achieve higher standards is excellent and inspires all staff. The senior management team shares his determination that all pupils will make improvement both academically and in broader areas of their personal development. The headteacher delegates responsibility very effectively to the senior management team and subject leaders. Staff appreciate this, take their responsibilities seriously and work hard to raise standards. This is very evident in the recent significant change to teach all pupils, as far as possible, with their peer groups. New arrangements have worked well for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, who are making good progress. The leadership and management of key staff are good. The newly formed management team work well together. They undertake an effective monitoring and evaluation role within a well defined framework so that all staff are aware of the processes involved. Subject leaders are effective in the promotion of learning in their subjects and accept responsibility for standards achieved by pupils within their area of responsibility.
37. The school benefits from an effective and very supportive chair of governors who is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and leads a committed governing body. Governors are involved and dedicated to the well-being of the school. They challenge and support the senior management team and carry out their role as 'critical friend' very well. They ensure there is compliance with statutory requirements, including those concerning racial discrimination, but have not made certain that religious education is taught in Years 12 to 14.

38. Since the last inspection, the school has had two changes of headteacher and periods when there has been an acting headteacher. Additionally, during this time, the needs of the new pupils have become more complex. Nevertheless, due to careful prioritising, good management has ensured there have been significant improvements, most notably in the overall progress and achievement of the pupils, and also to the curriculum they are taught. Additionally the quality of care, guidance and support has improved to ensure pupils are able to learn as well as they can. Much has been done to ensure that the pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are taught with their peers. This has improved their social development considerably and further staff training is scheduled shortly to continue to improve pupils' progress and achievement from the overall satisfactory. Even though the provision for ICT remains unsatisfactory, this area now has a high priority and is being tackled systematically. Staff have been trained, resources increased, a technician appointed and steps have been taken to ensure the weakness in leadership and management are remedied.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 1,300,150 | Balance from previous year | 42,387 |
| Total expenditure | 1,306,699 | Balance carried forward to the next | 35,838 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 11,879 | | |

39. Strategic planning for the future is very good. There are now, with the introduction of the new assessment procedures, comprehensive procedures for keeping track of progress in all areas of the school's work. The resulting information is used well to inform school improvement planning and staff development. The use of data on pupils' progress is satisfactory, but there is more work to be done. For example, moderation exercises are planned shortly to ensure that pupils' achievement is measured accurately by all staff. The school improvement plan is a very good working document. It contains clear priorities and has successfully identified areas in need of development or improvement, for example the provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and work related learning. Action planning in response to areas identified is very thorough and effective. Clear links are established between the school's priorities and its financial planning. The headteacher and the governing body thoroughly weigh up the cost effectiveness of their plans for improvement and the impact on the school's budget. The administrative staff are efficient and effective. Good practice is followed in the purchase of resources and careful consideration is given to the outcomes of spending decisions. The principles of best value are applied well.
40. Staff performance management is effective. Individual targets have been identified which support improvements in teaching and learning through lesson observations and supportive feedback. Teachers and teaching assistants form very effective teams and this has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. All staff have excellent opportunities to take part in a wide range of appropriate training. The induction of new staff is good. It is extremely well structured and ensures that all new staff understand the school's practice and procedures and the needs of the pupils as quickly as possible.
41. Leadership and management of the school have improved well since the last inspection. The most significant aids to raising standards further are the leadership of the headteacher and his and other key staff's commitment to continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

The effectiveness of work related learning (WRL) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of experiences and opportunities for students is being developed to meet the needs of pupils in Year 9 as well as of older students.
- The work experience programme is well managed, organised and supervised.
- Links with the community and schools are beginning to further develop WRL.
- The approach to business and enterprise is new and does not yet form part of each individual plan.

Commentary

42. Pupils are preparing throughout their schooling for the world of work. They have opportunities, often as part of the PSHE and citizenship programme to learn about what people do and the skills they need. Pupils have visits from organisations such as the police. The community is used well, for example, visiting the local shops and seeing artists at work. In Year 10 pupils are introduced to the Connexions service and they are aware of the need to look at the world of work and college. Pupils continue to have opportunities to gain a valuable insight into the world of work. For example, by the time that they are in Year 12, dance activities have shown students how auditions and workshops develop. They also learn well from their challenging work with the Army on outdoor pursuits about personal attributes such as perseverance and physical stamina. Last year, three students gained modules in the ALL World of Work course. Additionally, students have opportunities to try out vocational courses at college.
43. Students in Years 12 to 14 are introduced to work experience; they gain confidence and some independence and responsibility. Strong links have been forged with local employers. Thorough, joint planning ensures placements are appropriate. Students are well supported and guided and the programmes are suitably varied according to the needs of the students. For example the range includes helping to water plants, shopping for those who cannot and working in a shop or big store.
44. The school has not yet fully adopted the principles and vision of the enterprise education programmes. The concept does not yet underpin all that goes on, however, as part of a mini enterprise students are making articles such as trinket boxes to sell. Parents are involved and there are plans to market the items.
45. The management of work related learning is underdeveloped. New structures are already planned to take the topics forward. There is a range of contacts and links in schools and colleges already, on which to build.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

46. As at the time of the previous inspection, there are very few children of Reception age, and they are still taught alongside children in Years 1 and 2. When they start school, their skills are generally very poor in all areas of development. Previously, the organisation, planning, teaching and learning were satisfactory, and the assessment unsatisfactory. There has been a very good improvement since then, and all aspects of the Foundation Stage are now at least good, with, at times, very good aspects in the provision and teaching.
47. The very good leadership and management are by the very capable and dedicated teacher, with valuable help from the teacher who was formerly in charge. Staff assess children's progress frequently, and adjust their planning and teaching to best meet the needs of each child. The teacher and teaching assistants work very well together. The assistants are very effective, whether leading groups themselves or when helping individual children, or signing to the whole group as the teacher talks and shows symbol cards.
48. The accommodation is very good and enables the children and pupils to be taught together successfully. It is spacious, well maintained and very well organised in different areas for different activities. Children also use other areas of the school such as the light room, hydrotherapy pool and the new hall for games and physical activities. Staff have a very good range of resources to enliven activities, and they use them well in many lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning are very good.
- Assessment and planning are very well focussed.
- This area is treated as a priority that is central to the other areas of learning.

Commentary

49. Children achieve very well and make good progress because staff consistently plan to include learning in this area in all lessons. They see these skills as vital to all other learning, and so they have high expectations, for example, that children with profound and multiple learning difficulties will develop some curiosity about their surroundings, and want to learn and will begin to make choices. They establish who is around them and helping them and accept close contact from staff. All children are taught to take turns. The more able learn to sit together and are encouraged to share things with each other. They are helped to become as independent as possible in their daily lives – such as washing their hands, eating and drinking properly and knowing where to find their coats and bags. Children are encouraged to be helpful, to get paints, crayons and toys, put things back and do little jobs in class. They have many activities in which they work alongside each other, have lunch and snacks together, and play together. The days start with greetings, introductions and weather reports, and often end with a shared time together, perhaps

focussing on a lit candle as children think about a classmate or adult who isn't with them today.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress because the teaching is very good.
- Many extremely good activities make up the whole learning experience.
- This is the second priority aspect that is central to the other areas of learning.

Commentary

50. Children achieve very well because staff create many opportunities for children to listen and respond. As well as the focussed lessons that are very well based on the National Literacy Strategy, staff create many opportunities each day for children to practise listening, looking at signs and symbols, and making their wants known. Staff use signing very well to make themselves more easily understood by children, and they also use cards with pictures and symbols to help children's understanding. The teacher and teaching assistants give very good encouragement and plenty of time for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties to respond with facial expressions, pointing or reaching, notably in movement sessions, snack times or during counting activities. The children sit and pay attention for short periods, and need a lot of adult help to increase their concentration. The more able children make sounds that are the beginnings of speech, and can express their wants and opinions more clearly and readily. They indicate what they have been doing and they enjoy looking at books, handling toys properly. Children are beginning to make 'writing' and 'drawing' marks on paper.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress and achieve well.
- The teaching is good, and is often reinforced well in other activities.
- Good use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy.

Commentary

51. Children make good progress because number skills are reinforced in many lessons besides those that are primarily aimed at mathematics. The separate lessons are well taught, following the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy which are suitably adapted. The activities have clear aims, and staff use a range of good equipment to help children's counting and other mathematical skills. Children are well taught to recognise different colours and shapes when handling toys and building blocks. They begin to understand ideas such as "big" and "small"; "inside" and "on top", or "near" and "far away". When using the sand tray they learn about things being "full" and "empty". Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties begin to learn the concept of more. They hear the numbers to five as part of songs and rhymes that they like. Many lessons include opportunities to sing number songs to practise counting, such as *Five Little Monkeys* or *Five Speckled Frogs*.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, and make good progress in developing their knowledge of the wider world.
- The teaching is good, and it includes visits into the community.

Commentary

52. Children make good progress and achieve well. When they first join the school, many children have very little awareness of anything beyond their own home. The teaching, however, is well planned and organised to increase their knowledge of, for instance, different areas of the school being for different purposes – such as the school garden, the outside play area, the light room and the hydrotherapy pool. Children also learn that there are interesting places and people outside the school, as well as inside it. They visit shops, the church, the local park and a theme park with adventure activities. Each visit or visitor to the class adds greatly to the children's wider experiences, such as when an African group came, performing music and dance activities. Children listen to stories about Jesus, as well as to stories from other cultures. Their understanding of the passage of time develops well, as staff use visual timetables effectively. All children learn that there are differences in the way materials feel. For example, they play with sand and water and feel rough, smooth and silky fabrics.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress and achieve well.
- The teaching is good, varied and imaginative.
- Staff work well with therapists.

Commentary

53. Children achieve well because staff, including therapy staff, organise a good range of activities to help them to develop their physical skills. All children become more confident, many improving their co-ordination skills well. Activities take place every day, whether it is games and gymnastics in the new hall for the more mobile children, or stretching and changing position for the children with profound and multiple learning difficulties. With help and guidance from the therapy staff, the teacher and assistants make very good efforts to help children to be in a comfortable seating position, to sit up to pay attention, stand up, or move to the next activity. Very often, children have poor physical skills, and may be in wheelchairs, but staff plan for them to do exercises. Children participate in Sherborne movement activities with music very well and have frequent hydrotherapy sessions in the pool. More able children play actively indoors in the ball pool or on the soft play equipment, and outside with the large equipment and balls.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and make good progress in a wide range of creative and play activities.
- The good teaching provides some very good opportunities to develop children's wider skills.

Commentary

54. Teachers plan a good variety of imaginative activities. Children paint with their fingers and with brushes; they are helped to stick textured paper, glitter, wool, cloth and other materials onto paper to make patterns. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties listen to songs, and are helped with holding and playing instruments. Children play percussion instruments such as tambourines, rattles and hand bells. They are developing real enjoyment, and have several favourites which staff are skilled in getting them to request when it comes to choosing the next song. Children enjoy pretending they are characters in a story which they act out. In each activity, such as cooking once a week, or using a computer, they are gaining skills in handling things, improving their understanding, and learning to get along together. Staff plan celebrations and special events, such as the harvest festival, a wonderful classroom party, or celebrations such as Diwali, from other cultures.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1- 4 and Post-16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Modern foreign language

55. Two lessons of **French** were observed, one with a class of predominately Year 8 pupils and another with Year 10 and 11 pupils. In both instances many pupils were successfully helped to remember key words in French. The younger pupils worked on vocabulary for weather and due to the clear instructions and the good use of symbols made good progress. The older pupils played a series of games including bingo and noughts and crosses using French words and symbols, which they enjoyed, and this reinforced their learning. In both instances, the lessons were over long to sustain pupils' interest.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching helps pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in speaking and listening, but make only satisfactory progress in writing.
- Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make satisfactory progress in English.
- Consistent use of signing and symbols is a strength.
- Library provision is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

56. Pupils' achievement in English is good overall. Particularly good assessment by teachers helps them plan effectively for the particular needs of pupils and set individual targets for

- improvement. Teachers, together with very able teaching assistants, enthuse pupils by engaging them in a wide range of interesting activities that capture their imagination.
57. Signing and symbols are used consistently by all staff to reinforce the spoken word. This emphasis on communication lessens pupils' frustration and contributes very positively to their progress. In Years 4 and 5, more able pupils recited the good morning song independently while lively adults encouraged other pupils to copy their signing. Several pupils activated a switch enabling them to hear the days of the week whilst others selected named weather symbols. Drama is used well to help pupils communicate ideas, events and feelings. Boys and girls in Year 7, still excited by their visit to the local fair, followed taped instructions as they danced to fairground music. Pupils, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, were helped to dress in character as they acted out a lively poem based on a fair. Gesture and facial expression were used to good effect by more able pupils. The sensory room is used well to enable pupils who learn best by sensory experience to encounter a range of events linked to activities in the classroom. Skills are much enhanced for the students in Years 12 to 14 by good opportunities to meet members of the public in a wide range of situations such as shops, college and work experience placements. Parents have understandably been concerned about the shortage of speech and language therapy. The situation has been eased somewhat by the school's funding for some extra provision. This shows the commitment to improving provision for all pupils but especially to meet the needs of those with autistic spectrum disorders.
58. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in their reading. Effective teaching methods are used to help pupils to look at, read and enjoy books. Teachers read expressively, big books are shared well and an increasing number of story sacks help pupils experience stories through the senses. Pupils in Year 1 explored vegetables, comparing their size and colour after acting out a scene from the class book. By Year 5 and 6 more able pupils use phonics as well as their recognition of some common words to read good quality books. Pupils from a local mainstream school proved to be highly effective 'teachers' as they shared reading with these pupils. Their sensitivity and feeling of responsibility were obvious and contributed significantly to the social development of pupils from both schools. Although pupils continue to enjoy reading and are given good opportunities to read for a wide range of purposes, greater progress for older pupils is inhibited by a lack of age appropriate books. Reference books are also in short supply and library provision is unsatisfactory. A teaching assistant, with new responsibilities for the library, is already improving provision and there are realistic plans to site the library more centrally. Taped stories are used well as could be seen when a number of Year 10 and 11 pupils enjoyed listening to a *Harry Potter* episode together one lunchtime.
59. Achievement in writing is satisfactory. Although many pupils develop the motor skills necessary to hold a pencil or operate a keyboard, they have insufficient opportunities to practise these skills as they move through the school. A cursive style of handwriting is taught too late to be effective and is not closely linked with teaching of spelling. Pupils have good opportunities to write symbol sentences but skills in ICT are not usually sufficient to enable pupils to write sentences using a word processor independently. One good exception is that more able students in Years 12 and 13 use e-mail to keep in touch with friends. Pupils are taught from Year 1 to follow a line and trace over letters. More able pupils in Years 5 and 6 write their name and choose words to complete short sentences. By Year 9 a small number of pupils write a sequence of sentences, for example when writing about their weekend. A good degree of challenge motivates pupils in Years 10 and 11 to produce a newspaper. They interview school staff, decide the content of their paper and use symbol sentences.
60. The progress of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is beginning to improve from satisfactory since the introduction of PECS. Through providing a means to communicate effectively, this has also reduced the levels of difficult behaviour. In Years 7 to 9, pupils are able to place a picture to complete a sentence "I want...." Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2

listen well to a taped story for a relatively long period. Good, clear instructions by staff using important words are clearly understood. At times, pupils in Years 3 to 6 work on a one-to-one basis with staff who help them complete tasks. However, in a number of instances, staff did not use sufficiently well structured teaching methods and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders had difficulties in settling to work.

61. Leadership and management of English are good. The two leaders responsible for primary and secondary provision liaise well to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress from year to year. Communication skills are rightly at the heart of these plans. Monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' learning are good although opportunities for observing teaching are limited. They have correctly identified writing and resources as areas for improvement. Good cultural and social development are ensured by visits from poets and theatre groups and through pupils' study of classical literature including Shakespeare. Pupils and students in Years 11 and 12 gain nationally accredited certificates in communication skills. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. The development of language and literacy skills across the curriculum is good. All staff provide opportunities to develop pupils' communication skills very well including the use of vocabulary specific to different areas of learning. For example, in science, one pupil with autistic spectrum disorders explained why a motor changed direction and in music pupils broke up words into syllables when creating a tune. Registration sessions and assemblies provide particularly good opportunities to develop language and understanding. There are good opportunities to read from the board, books or worksheets in a number of subjects and good displays in many rooms encourage reading. There are a few opportunities for writing and recording work, such as dictating the text for a history story, but this is an area identified for development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils of all ages is good.
- The achievement of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the special class is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good.
- Teachers plan their lessons very well.
- Assessment arrangements are very thorough and effective.

Commentary

63. Young pupils up to and including Year 2 have many opportunities to learn and practise early number work and gain understanding in some basic mathematical concepts. For example they join in simple counting and recognise shapes. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties benefit from using as many of their senses as possible to learn mathematics which gives them some understanding of space and movement. As pupils move through the school they improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in mathematics. Good, well chosen, practical activities help them learn effectively. Pupils in Year 4 worked on capacity; by blowing up balloons they were able to demonstrate the concept of 'full' and then, by the baking of cakes when the pupils had the opportunity to see the bowl 'full' of mixture and 'empty' when the cake cases were filled. 'Splash maths' continued the work on capacity with pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties in the hydrotherapy pool. They filled and emptied big and small containers and splashed around in doing so. By Year 6, pupils sort a range of

objects into big/small and the most able pupils used the terms 'bigger' and 'smaller;' One boy when presented with three different sized boxes exclaimed "there is a middle sized one!"

64. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 improve their understanding of money. Through careful prompting by staff, pupils rise to the challenge of indicating whether a particular amount is more or less than 50p. By Year 9, many pupils are tendering the right coins to make purchases in their 'shop'. Strong relationships with staff help pupils in Years 7 to 9 with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with autistic spectrum disorders to enjoy their work. They improve their number skills through playing games with adults, for example skittles, lotto and bowls. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the special class, make satisfactory progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. They learn best from practical activities, such as using a timer or when shopping. Areas for working without distraction are not yet established which contributes to pupils' difficulties in concentrating on activities.
65. In Years 10 and 11 pupils consolidate their learning to ensure that by Year 11, they have a basic understanding of using mathematics in practical and social settings. They successfully work towards gaining awards. Students in Years 12 to 14 also work towards awards. They further increase their knowledge and understanding through practical activities. For example, due to good teaching, they were able to calculate how much they had spent on purchasing their lunch and how much the meal would cost per student.
66. Strong features of all mathematics lessons are the high quality of teacher's planning and the very good assessment. Teachers' plans are thorough and include individual learning targets, expected outcomes and the use of support. Work in lessons is well founded on good National Numeracy Strategy practice and assessment arrangements are very detailed. The cycles of planning and assessment are very rigorous, as are assessment arrangements. These clearly indicate where pupils are achieving and where further work is required. Teachers use this information well to ensure that pupils make good progress.
67. The subject is well led and managed by the two leaders with good subject expertise who take responsibility for the primary and secondary stages of the school. They work well together to ensure that there is consistency of approach and that progress is assured in pupils' learning. They have produced good documentation to inform all staff of how these objectives will be addressed. Resources for the subject are good and ICT is used to reinforce learning in a number of lessons. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Mathematics is used well in other subjects. For example, in PSHE and citizenship pupils learn about different values such as tallest and longest, in food technology pupils weigh and estimate and in art they consider length, width, depth and geometric shapes. During physical education lessons, pupils measure performance and on shopping trips they make purchases using real money. In registration sessions, pupils are asked to count how many children there are, sequence the days of the week and match photographs to faces.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well except for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, who, overall, make satisfactory progress and achievement.

- The accommodation is very good.
- Pupils are able to use a good range of resources to help them understand.
- Pupils learn to look carefully and make predictions during experiments.

Commentary

69. Teachers use their expertise well to plan interesting lessons that include practical activities which are suitably difficult. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 learn about the properties of materials through exploring a range of textures in their topic on me and people. Lessons begin with discussion and explanations of what is expected. Instructions are clear and all pupils know what they have to do. For example, pupils in Year 6, take part in practical activities using magnets. They follow the guidelines and manage to make model boats move and model planes fly. They are encouraged to make predictions about the end results and are delighted to be right. As a result, pupils' confidence increases and they develop good skills in watching and using information from previous lessons. At times, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are distracted and unwilling to join in with activities. Teaching assistants work well with these pupils helping them to participate and make satisfactory progress overall.
70. During Years 7 to 9, pupils have made electrical circuits with switches and bulbs. They use the space available well and have plenty of materials. They experiment; changing components until they have all experienced making things light up, rotate or, best of all, make a loud noise. Because most lessons are interesting, pupils enjoy what they do. In a Year 7 lesson, a pupil with profound and multiple learning difficulties used skills with switches to complete his work with the help of a teaching assistant. By Year 11, pupils have learned about energy and storing it for use later. They are able to discuss a wide range of energy sources from their own experiences providing a good practical application of basic science. These pupils work towards a satisfactory range of awards which are currently being increased. Staff share their expertise. For example, the technical help with circuits means that every pupil is able to finish. Teaching assistants are extremely important. They understand pupils and use well established routines to ensure that pupils with autistic spectrum disorders participate in a range of practical activities. They make sure that pupils have their signs and symbols when taking part in experiments. Pupils are encouraged to communicate and they use good scientific words when considering their work.
71. The specialist, very well designed science room enables pupils to participate fully in experimental work. There is sufficient space for all pupils as part of classes. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are able to easily take part in lessons. Links with mainstream schools are just beginning to be realised. At present, science is being led and managed well by a team of senior staff who are working closely to provide detailed plans and advice to enable the subject to develop. There is clarity about what has to be taught and how learning is recorded. As a result, improvement since the previous inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

72. No separate lessons of ICT were seen during the inspection. It is not taught as a separate subject in Years 1 to 6 and was not scheduled to be taught as a half termly block in Years 7 to 11. Although there is a good plan of what should be taught in the long term, teachers do not teach the necessary skills actively or consistently through their lessons. Pupils therefore do not gain knowledge and skills in information technology at a satisfactory rate, and they do not achieve as well as they could.
73. Little has changed since the previous inspection, when the provision for ICT was a key issue, except the increased training that teachers and teaching assistants have had, and the improvement in the amount and quality of equipment and software in school. These are now good. There is also now a very capable technician who is able to keep much of the

equipment working and usable. In other ways, however, the improvement has been unsatisfactory which represents unsatisfactory leadership and management. There are intentions to begin teaching this subject separately and in a more systematic way in the future. There are also plans to create a computer suite to teach skills more effectively.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. In many lessons throughout the school, teachers use high technology equipment satisfactorily and sometimes well, particularly to support pupils' learning of communication skills. Teachers use electronic whiteboards to enliven their lessons, and sometimes encourage pupils to press or point to parts of the screen to change the display. They use digital cameras effectively to record what pupils are doing in different activities and visits and they record pupils' progress well on the computers for several subjects. Pupils frequently use ICT equipment to aid their learning. For instance, in one English lesson, several pupils pressed a switch to say "hello" at the start of the session and they later pressed a different switch that spoke each of the days of the week in turn. In group sessions, one pupil used a *Language Master* machine that spoke a sentence when the pupil pressed a switch and another pupil pressed a switch to make a screen display change. These were all appropriate uses of the technology in developing the pupils' communication and understanding skills, but did not teach the pupils new skills. In other lessons, pupils have used the same simple switches to operate many different things, from air fans to televisions. There is little teaching of higher skills in most instances. A few pupils learn to enter text, with a lot of help, and to change the size of print. They may learn how to make a simple picture or pattern and will watch a screen display such as a talking book. The electronic light room is well used for stimulating pupils, giving opportunities for relaxation, and for reinforcing pupils' understanding of cause and effect through the use of switches.

HUMANITIES

75. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one history, one religious education and three geography lessons. Pupils' work and teachers' planning were scrutinised.
76. A discussion was held with the well qualified and enthusiastic geography and history leader who has ensured that good planning from a suitably broad and balanced curriculum is provided in both subjects. Sufficient resources are made available and particularly good use is made of the school grounds and surrounding area to enhance learning.
77. In a Year 4 and 5 **geography** lesson, pupils recalled their visit to the garden as they created a collage from autumn leaves. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties choose leaves and where they will be placed. However, this afternoon session proved too long and the teacher had to work hard to sustain pupils' interest. Stimulating activities help all pupils to make good progress in their lessons. For example, in one Year 9 lesson, pupils followed routes that ended in the discovery of "treasure" at the school pond. This proved very popular. In another Year 10 and 11 lesson, very good use was made of the interactive whiteboard to help pupils compare Barnstaple with a seaside town in the north.
78. Good use of technology in a **history** lesson ensured all pupils could see clearly an animated version of the struggles of Hercules and this helped their concentration. All adults, including a student from the local college, worked well as a team and this contributed positively to teaching and learning.
79. Only one lesson of **religious education** was observed and the Harvest Festival service, however teacher's planning, records and evidence of pupils' work show that pupils make at least satisfactory progress, and at times good progress, in their lessons. The very good curriculum planning based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and other national documents

ensures pupils build on their learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are helped to respond to religious experiences. They and pupils in Years 3 to 6 participated well in the Harvest Festival. Each class performed a part of the harvesting cycle showing an understanding of the celebration. Good questioning by the teacher ensures that pupils in Year 9 learn about pilgrimage. This is reinforced well through each pupil identifying a "special place" in the sensory garden and making their own pilgrimages. However, due to the way in which the curriculum is organised, lessons of religious education are, for a number of classes, timetabled for the whole afternoon. Even if there are changes of activity and a break for the pupils the lesson is too long and pupils' learning is not as effective later in the session. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders responded well to the candle and the incense that is used to set the scene for a lesson for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

80. Religious education helps pupils with their moral and cultural development particularly well. They are taught about several world religions including Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. The leaders organise and manage the subject well. They look at work and talk with staff on a regular basis. At present, statutory requirements to teach religious education to students in Years 12 to 14 are not met.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. Two lessons of design and technology, three in music and one in physical education were observed.
82. **Design and technology** is led by the art and design subject leader and taught in a joint teaching area with art and design. Whilst pupils receive many opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in design and technology through the excellent art and design programme, the range studied is narrow and there is insufficient work with resistant materials. A strong feature of the subject is food technology which is well-managed by a grade 3 teaching assistant. The good specialist area containing very good resources helps pupils to make good progress. The techniques of cookery and food preparation reinforce pupils' work in PSHE and citizenship through an emphasis on healthy diet and hygiene.
83. There was insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of provision for **music**, especially as there have been several changes to the planning and teaching responsibilities recently. However, lessons were observed with pupils in Years 8, 10 and 11. These were well taught, with particularly good use of a range of instruments such as electronic keyboards, ethnic and percussion instruments and home-made "junk" instruments. Pupils found the lessons challenging and enjoyable, and they learned well while creating tunes and accompaniments. Music makes a particularly good contribution to pupils' awareness of other cultures, such as through the music and dance of famous composers and performers. There have also been special days when guest performers have been into school, including an African group recently.
84. It was only possible to observe one lesson of **physical education**. Examination of photographs and displays provides evidence of a very wide range of opportunities for all pupils and students. Dance and movement are clearly very important and records show that all pupils make good progress. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties enjoy the Sherborne movement sessions. Their movements are supported and where necessary, assisted and strong bonds are built with staff that work with them. Hydrotherapy sessions are effective in helping pupils to exercise supported by water. In the lesson seen, pupils made very good progress in performing to a variety of music including Queen's *We are the Champions* and the theme music from *Titanic*. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with autistic spectrum disorders are very involved because they are well supported by staff.
85. There are many choices for pupils. The outdoor pursuits programme is particularly challenging and includes the Ten Tors experience and the Churchtown residential. Every effort is made to ensure that high quality, exciting and enjoyable activities are provided for every pupil. The students, for example, use leisure centres as part of their fitness and health programmes and were seen preparing to go and play golf. Staff are good role models and their support and encouragement enables students to take part and enjoy sessions. This provides a good experience for leisure time and encourages a healthy lifestyle when they leave school.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership is excellent.
- Pupils' achievement is very high, particularly in Years 7 to 11.
- The quality of pupils' art work often approaches national standards.
- Teaching and learning are at least very good in all art and design lessons.
- The high standards in the subject have a positive effect on the ethos of the whole school.

Commentary

86. Pupils' high achievements are due to the inspirational quality of the teaching they receive. Much of the work seen in lessons and on display throughout the school would not be out of place in a mainstream school. Last year, two pupils gained C and D grades respectively in the GCSE examination. They joined classes at the local secondary school and produced work at similar levels to their peers. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection is very good.
87. In Years 1 to 6, pupils work on collages, for example, using autumn colours and work with pastels and water colour and a range of media which gives them an introduction to art. Discussion with these younger pupils indicate that as a result of good teaching they enjoy their art and design lessons and have a good understanding of the techniques they use. Pupils' good art and design experience in their younger years means that from Year 7 onwards, when they are taught by a subject specialist and more time is dedicated to the subject, their achievements are very high. Pupils study the work of famous artists. For example pupils in Year 7 produced very high quality work influenced by Mondrian which clearly demonstrated their understanding of the importance of colour, choice and accuracy when reflecting the artist's work. In a Year 8 class, very skilled teaching demonstrated to the pupils the difference between abstract art and fine art using the work of Matisse and Durer as reference points. Pupils' work influenced by the two artists, demonstrated good understanding of the differences. During Year 9 pupils reproduced stained glass work making representations using transparencies and coloured paper. Their efforts showed very good understanding of the techniques used and excellent teaching enabled them to choose appropriate colours and cut shapes with the assurance required. By Year 10, the confidence and skills of pupils are very high. The more able can work from still life using a bowl of fruit as a model. They created the beginnings of some very high quality work using pastels. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties demonstrate their skills by making three dimensional sculptures using a range of different textured materials exploring the colour white. Sensitive and skilled teaching and support enabled these pupils to confidently approach the tasks and produce work they were pleased with.
88. A significant feature of the subject is the wide range of media that pupils have the opportunity to work with. Observation of pupils' work and displays around the school and in the art room shows work that includes textiles, oils, water colour, pastels, collage, tie dying, screen printing, pottery and stained glass. Much of this work often celebrates other cultures, religions and life styles. This, and the high quality of the displays around the school, contributes very strongly to the positive atmosphere in the school. Art and design clearly makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. A further significant feature is the field work where pupils visit galleries and work with a local visiting artist.

89. Subject leadership is excellent and clearly promotes the high quality of the pupils' work and the pleasure they obtain from art and design. The subject leader is very skilled and pupils show great enjoyment in lessons. Resources and the specialist accommodation are very good and there is now a scheme of work which provides direction and enables the subject to be planned at a whole school level. Assessment is good and pupils are regularly encouraged to assess their own work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- The curriculum is planned well and supports the development of pupils' moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Support staff are very effective in helping pupils learn.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Personal, social and health education and citizenship are successfully taught throughout the school day.
- Afternoon lessons are too long.

Commentary

90. Pupils in all year groups do well in PSHE and citizenship because they build their knowledge and understanding systematically. Teachers use the tight and well-sequenced plans to ensure their lessons are interesting and well focussed. Additionally, pupils learn from other activities such as the registration session where, for example, they are taught to take turns, listen to others and make choices. In Years 1 and 2, pupils respond to the encouragement by staff to join in during the registration session. One after the other they place their photographs on a board and sign "good morning" or "hello". This builds their social development very well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their understanding of different cultures through listening to stories about children in other countries. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties turn towards lights. They build relationships with adults, recognise familiar voices and learn to co-operate during activities. Staff develop routines which help pupils with autistic spectrum disorders to understand what is expected. They become more able to sit with a group and join in activities including greeting each other in the morning.
91. During Years 7 to 9, pupils explore the role of the police and develop their own rules for conduct at school and in their homes. Teachers use resources well, for example, pupils' understanding of what foods are good for them is enhanced through looking at fruit and vegetables at the local market. Keeping clean and healthy is developed further in Years 10 and 11. Pupils visit local shops to purchase items of personal hygiene such as deodorants. Good opportunities are made for pupils to learn about the variety of jobs in the school. They develop their work related learning skills effectively through talking with staff including the nurse and the secretaries. Pupils begin to gain awards in either the NSP or the ALL courses. Good modelling of skills, for example, a teacher pretending to telephone a teaching assistant, enables pupils to make and receive similar calls ensuring the appropriate information is given. Students in Years 12 to 14 continue work on the environment in a recycling project. They gain a number of awards including one in home management where they learn to prepare meals such as cheese and potato pie.
92. Support staff are, on the whole, well deployed by teachers. They help pupils maintain their concentration and ensure aids, such as switches, are able to be used effectively. Very occasionally, teachers' planning does not include appropriate activities to involve pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties adequately in a lesson and as a result they do not make the progress they should. In the best lessons, teachers maintain a good pace, changing

activities regularly. However, where lessons are timetabled for a whole afternoon, the last part of the session is not as productive as the first part.

93. The experienced leader leads and manages the subject well. Resources have been collected and collated over the years and are used to help class teachers plan their work well. A clear subject plan shows the school's intention to carry out an audit of where citizenship is taught in other subjects in the future. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Vocational courses for students at the Town Station

The provision for vocational courses is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- College and community links prepare students for their responsibilities after school.
- Accreditation has improved, allowing students' efforts to be recognised more easily.
- Relationships are very good. This means that the whole team works well together.
- Good use of accommodation enables students to follow an appropriate range of activities.
- Students learn about personal responsibility in the community very well.

Commentary

94. Students follow well organised programmes preparing them for leaving school and beginning new placements in colleges, at work or in other provision. These programmes that are part of the Year 10 to Year 14 curriculum are based on the needs of pupils through their own personal plans. They introduce them to the world of work and to greater independence as part of WRL. For example, the students discuss the local communities and consider which they prefer. They look at records of visits and make decisions about return visits. Students learn to consider, to discuss and to make choices. Each day they visit the community and follow programmes leading to nationally recognised awards including the NSP, where last year students gained awards in numeracy and communication. Students also gain ALL awards, which last year as well as communication and numeracy, included, world of work, environment, leisure, home management and community. These courses provide them with skills they need. The work is carefully broken down so that students can work at the most appropriate rates and succeed for example, through experiencing the work of others in the community.
95. Experiences and activities are carefully planned to include students in decisions. The provision has not been running for very long and links are not yet well established to include the fullest possible opportunities. Lessons are designed to enable students take responsibility for example, for planning meals, for arranging visits and meeting new people. Attendance at college is also important and a range of vocational courses are sampled.
96. The strong relationships that are built between the staff and the students are replicated in the way in which students behave towards each other. As a result they learn well together.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| 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 | 2 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| 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).

In a special school such as this, **standards achieved** are judged against individual targets and not against national standards.