

# INSPECTION REPORT

## ROSEHILL SCHOOL

Nottingham

LEA area: City of Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122964

Headteacher: John K Pearson

Lead inspector: Jacque Cook

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 January 2005

Inspection number: 268621

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
Age range of pupils:	4 – 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	68
School address:	St Matthias Road Nottingham Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG3 2FE
Telephone number:	0115 9155815
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Louise Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	24 May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Rosehill is a mixed, community special school for 74 pupils aged 4 to 19 with autism. This is a change in designation from the time of the last inspection where although over 80 per cent of the pupils had autism as their prime special need, the school was for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Currently, there are 68 pupils on roll, only three of whom are girls. The youngest pupils are in Year 2 and the oldest, in Year 14. Almost all pupils are white British. Five pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. Three pupils are 'looked after' in public care. There are no specific additional special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the school is often very low. Last year no pupils joined or left the school other than at the usual time, which can vary in a special school. Pupils attending the school are largely from the City of Nottingham itself or from the county of Nottinghamshire. The socio-economic context of the school is slightly less favourable than average.

The school gained the Schools Achievement Award in 2003 and Investors in People in 1998 (most recently re-assessed successfully in 2004) and is described as a regional resource, owned by the City of Nottingham and used by surrounding local education authorities. A nationally accredited course in autism is run at the school and tutored by staff, as well as other courses for parents and professionals. A small number of pupils are involved in inclusion initiatives where they attend mainstream schools for a few lessons each week. The school is part of a Creative Partnership and has an artist and a musician in residence and significant links with a creative and visual arts group, Salamanda Tandem.

There are plans to move the school to a new site in 2006/7 and to expand the numbers to 100 places.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2351	Jacque Cook	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Modern foreign languages Music English as an Additional Language
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32925	Richard Hill	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education PSHE and citizenship Religious education Special educational needs
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Rosehill is a very good and very effective school** that has major strengths in improving the behaviour and the attitudes of pupils with autism to enable them to learn. The leadership and the management of the school are very good and the quality of teaching and learning is very good. As a result, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. The teamwork of the staff in each class and the planned improvements to the curriculum are particular aids to raising achievement further. Value for money is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils improve their communication skills very well.
- Individual curriculum plans are very good. They are detailed and provide a firm basis for each pupil's learning and the assessment of their progress.
- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- Staff have very high levels of expertise in successfully teaching pupils with autism and use excellent strategies to improve behaviour difficulties.
- There is excellent innovative work enriching the curriculum particularly in the arts.
- Links with parents and care and safety procedures are excellent and the strength of the relationships between the staff and the pupils ensures that the support and guidance is very good.
- Pupils' attendance is excellent: there is no unauthorised absence.

Even though, since the last inspection, there has been a change in designation from moderate learning difficulties to a school for pupils with autism, improvement has been very good. Where appropriate, following this change, key issues have been dealt with. A number of areas such as pupils' attitudes and values, their care and guidance, the links with parents and the community and the leadership and management of the school have maintained very high standards. There has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and in pupils' attendance. Overall the improvement in the curriculum is good.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 2	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 6	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 9	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 11	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Year 13	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>

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

**The achievement and progress of pupils in all year groups are very good.** They improve their speaking and listening, reading and writing very well, similarly in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, pupils' progress is very good. In religious education, pupils' progress slows to satisfactory because what is planned to be taught is, at times, repetitive. Older pupils and students gain a range of awards, largely from the Open College Network (OCN).

**Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because their spiritual, moral, social and personal qualities develop very well.** Pupils' attendance is excellent.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall.** It dips slightly to good in Years 7 to 9 where very occasionally learning slows because whole class sessions last too long and pupils' attention wanders or signing and symbols are not used sufficiently so pupils lack the security of knowing what is expected. The expertise of the teachers, the skills of the teaching assistants and the consistency established through the teamwork ensure that the right teaching strategies are used and pupils' behaviour does not impede their learning. Routines are established so pupils feel secure and very good planning ensures activities are very well matched to the levels of work for each pupil, which maximises their learning. As a result they increase their knowledge and understanding as well as their skills. Assessment of pupils' work and progress is very good and helps teachers in their planning.

The curriculum is very good. It is broad and very suitable for the pupils. The work with the Creative Partnership is excellent and has improved the quality of the work in the arts and had a very positive effect on other areas of the school. College courses broaden the experience of older pupils and students very well and provide accredited courses. Award bearing courses are now also being provided in school. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are excellent and support and guidance are very good. Links with parents are excellent and very good with the community, schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The effectiveness of leadership is very good and focussed on improving pupils' achievement. Time has recently been made available each week for subject leaders to carry out their role more effectively and this is developing very well. Management is very effective particularly in areas such as monitoring and staff training. Governance is very good offering support, commitment and challenge to the senior managers and also sharing the interest and excitement of innovations such as the Creative Partnership. They ensure that statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have very positive views about the school, there were very few disagreements on the questionnaire returned and the regular school questionnaire showed very high levels of satisfaction. Parents feel welcomed and that their views are taken seriously. They are pleased that their children are safe and their achievements recognised. There was particular comment about the effective help for transition at age 19. Those spoken with praised the home/school diary as a very effective means of communication.

Pupils are also very positive about their school. They like what they study, going to college and choosing time. Several commented that they liked music and art.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant improvements needed

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well overall.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make very good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Pupils throughout the school make very good progress and achieve very well in PSHE and citizenship.
- Opportunities for accreditation are improving and are good for the most able pupils.
- Pupils make extremely good progress in their work with the Creative Partnerships.
- Until this year, less able pupils studied for the ASDAN award. They will now have good opportunities to gain awards in a broad range of subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. The progress and achievement made by pupils represent a good improvement since the last inspection. This is because staff have further honed their skills in teaching pupils with autism and very effective assessment procedures mean that pupils' progress can be easily checked. Pupils with difficult behaviour are helped through staff consistently applying strategies. As a result, on the whole, they make similar very good progress except when a lack of clear communication leads to a deterioration in behaviour which impedes their learning.
2. There are very few girls in the school. However, there is no measurable difference in their progress and achievement in comparison with the boys. Work is planned to ensure progress is made against targets set for each pupil in every subject so any problems are quickly noticed and rectified. This also helps to ensure that pupils from homes where English is not the first language make similar progress to their peers. In one class, for example, where there are three of these pupils, words from a home language are used to support learning.
3. More able pupils gain examination successes in subjects where they excel. One pupil has gained General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination higher grades in English and art and Computer Literacy and Information Technology (New CLAIT) award and is currently studying for a diploma in information and communication technology (ICT). Last year six students gained between them 15 awards in eight subjects in the Open College Network (OCN) either at entry level or level one which they studied at college. Two gained an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) bronze award. One student already had a silver award. This year, the number of subjects being studied for the OCN award has been increased dramatically to 24 subjects through following accredited courses in school as well as at college. The number of awards attained by each pupil is planned to increase in the future as pupils are now starting OCN courses in Year 10. The number expected to be gained this year will total over 100. This is planned to ensure the less able pupils have more opportunities to gain awards in the same way as their peers.
4. Last year, whole school targets were challenging and very well met. This year a new system has been established and targets set that are both realistic and suitably challenging in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Because they are new, it is too early to comment on whether these whole school targets will be achieved. Pupils are making very good progress towards their detailed individual targets in their individual curriculum plans which form the basis of their work and the whole school targets. Currently there is no unauthorised absence, the attendance target of 100 per cent is very ambitious.



5. In English, pupils make considerable gains in improving their communication skills. Many enter the school unable to make their needs known which contributes towards their behaviour difficulties. Regular and consistent use of signs and symbols in most classes supports their learning very well. Pupils have many opportunities to practise their reading or early reading skills. Younger pupils, in particular, enjoy stories and many older pupils read for information from books or the Internet. The increased emphasis on recording work has improved pupils' writing. From making marks on paper to writing their names and then words and sentences, or using symbols they build their skills effectively.
6. Science teaching is very well organised and planned which contributes towards the very good progress made throughout the school. Pupils increase their understanding of a broad range of aspects of science including forces, life cycles and habitats. Although overall pupils achieve very well in mathematics and ICT, by the end of Year 9, pupils' progress is good reflecting the quality of the teaching and learning. Pupils' progress improves from Year 10 onwards and continues to be very good.
7. Pupils' progress and achievement in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship are of a very high standard. This is because pupils are taught the subjects at every available opportunity as well as in very well planned lessons.
8. The work with the creative arts partnership has shown that the pupils at Rosehill have developed levels of creative and imaginative skills which are not often associated with their autistic needs. Projects where they produce three dimensional art work or make music together demonstrate how extremely successfully these skills have been developed.
9. The satisfactory progress and achievement made by pupils in religious education are the result of a curriculum which is repetitive at times and does not build sufficiently on previous learning.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are excellent throughout the school.
- Behaviour is very good: pupils who initially have behaviour difficulties learn to control their behaviour through staff using a range of excellent strategies.
- Pupils are focussed on their lessons, concentrate very well and take pride in their work.
- Pupils are willing to experience new things through the support they receive from staff.
- All staff are very good role models for the pupils.
- Procedures for improving attendance are excellent.

### **Commentary**

10. The very high standards established at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and the attendance levels have improved considerably. Last year, there was no unauthorised absence. The commendably high level of attendance and punctuality is due to excellent procedures to monitor attendance and the very positive support provided by parents.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0
National data	6.9	National data	0.8

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

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are happy and feel safe. The very positive ethos of the school is mainly due to the very strong relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Staff know the pupils very well and there are strong bonds of trust and respect. Adults have high expectations of all pupils and provide every opportunity for them to succeed.
12. There have been no exclusions. The school has very high expectations for conduct and works hard to achieve them. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. The complex special needs of many pupils sometimes result in very challenging behaviour. Individual strategies are developed to deal with each pupil's specific difficulties and these are written into comprehensive individual behaviour plans. The very good behaviour of pupils is developed further through clear rules, rewards and sanctions which are consistently applied. For example, pupils in several classes were seen discussing the points they would be awarded for previous sessions with their teachers. In one instance, in recognition that a session had not ended well, a pupil suggested no points. The teacher discussed what had gone well and eventually one point was agreed. The positive rules are consistently reinforced so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them in terms of behaviour around the school.
13. Pupils are keen to learn and do well. They persevere with activities even when they find them difficult, partly due to their own enthusiasm and partly due to the carefully selected tasks the teachers provide. Staff set a very good example to the pupils and as a result pupils follow this example by showing respect for each other and for everyone who works in the school.
14. Pupils' personal development is very good. The strong emphasis on structured learning encompasses daily routines so that pupils know what to expect and where activities take place. Any changes are introduced gradually. They are given many opportunities to co-operate when working in class or on visits out of school. For example, in class 1, pupils hold hands with either another pupil, or a member of staff, and move round in a circle during the greetings song. Older pupils who participate in sessions at mainstream schools work well with the other pupils. By the time students are in Years 12 to 14, their confidence and self-esteem have improved considerably. They enjoy going to college and participate enthusiastically in activities such as working on the allotment or experimenting with a digital camera. Pupils are proud of their achievements, for example, they have made mats to sell at the Christmas Fair. Pupils are helped to use public transport, when required.
15. The spiritual development of pupils is good. They have opportunities to reflect on a range of ideas and values in assemblies. For example, listening to a choral version of *The Lord is my Shepherd* sitting still and quietly throughout. In religious education lessons pupils find out about what is special to other people. Trips to local parks to see the wonders of nature at different times of the year enable them to widen their horizons and their view of the world.
16. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. In PSHE and citizenship they discuss the right and the wrong responses to situations. They become aware of world problems and support a range of charities. A car washing session to raise money for the Tsunami appeal has been organised by pupils. During their time at the school, pupils learn to work and

socialise together. Members of staff eat with the pupils at lunchtime, creating a family atmosphere. The residential and other visits to museums, parks and cafes help pupils to relate appropriately with members of the public. This was particularly apparent when students from Rosehill joined college students for lunch, coping very well with the cafeteria system, choosing their food, paying for it and locating a place to sit.

17. Cultural provision is good overall. In religious education, younger pupils celebrate festivals such as Diwali, The Chinese New Year, Halloween and Christmas. It is not until they are older that they learn about the broader aspects of a religion. For example, students are taught about the beliefs and practice of Buddhists. They are encouraged to respect and tolerate the beliefs of others and respect the differences between people. In one class, for example, words in a pupil's home language, Farsi, are used and understood by a number of the pupils. In art, pupils learn about the work of artists such as Monet, Klee and Lowry and they explored Aboriginal design where they made rainmakers. Work developed through the Creative Partnership is supporting pupils' cultural and multi-cultural development very well.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is very good. Steps to ensure pupils' care welfare, health and safety and links with parents are excellent.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Assessment is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Class management is very good and effective which gives the pupils the right conditions to learn effectively. Staff have very high levels of expertise in teaching pupils with autism.
- There is very good teamwork in classrooms. Teachers enable teaching assistants to make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils improve their vocabulary and understanding of language through the very effective teaching of key words in each subject.
- Pupils and staff use interactive whiteboards very well in many classrooms.
- Routine is very effective, gives security and enables pupils to learn effectively and make progress.
- There is very good planning to ensure work is tailored to individual pupils so they are fully involved in activities.
- There are very good opportunities developed for pupils to work independently.
- At times, pupils are taught together in a large group for too long.

### **Commentary**

18. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection reflecting the success of the monitoring and staff training. The percentage of lessons where teaching and learning are very good or excellent has almost doubled and there are now very few lessons where teaching and learning are merely satisfactory. This improvement is more remarkable because the number of classes and groups of pupils taken by teaching assistants has significantly increased. The quality of their work stems from:
- intensive training;
  - the very high quality of the overall planning, class organisation and management by the teachers;
  - and the very well established teamwork of the staff in each of the classes.

## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (11%)	19 (40%)	20 (43%)	3 (6%)	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.*

19. There is a very slight dip in the quality of teaching and learning to good overall in Years 7 to 9. Examples were seen of initially effective whole class sessions being sustained for too long so pupils' attention waned. Also signs and symbols are not used consistently to reinforce the spoken word for those with communication difficulties. As result there are difficulties with behaviour which could have been prevented. This has a particular impact on progress made in subjects such as mathematics and ICT for pupils in Years 8 and 9.
20. Staff work very well together and each team knows the pupils in their class very well. As a result, the right amount of support is given at the right time. This, with the extensive use of praise and encouragement enables pupils to rise to challenges. For instance, a teacher prompted a pupil to "try again" to get colour accurately on an image shown on a computer screen. The pupil persevered and completed the task. The teamwork also ensures that there is a consistency in using specific strategies to improve pupils' behaviour. Individual behaviour plans are followed very well and pupils improve their behaviour and have a minimum of disruption to their learning from those who have behaviour difficulties.
21. Teachers plan lessons very well. They take particular care to ensure that the few girls have work that will interest them and that they are included in lessons. On the whole, teachers make very good use of the different areas in the suite of rooms each class has. A range of activities is organised, using these spaces, that are very well matched to the pupils' level of learning. They are clear about what they expect pupils to learn. Often there is direct one-to-one teaching or small group work going on at the same time. A very useful tool for planning lessons identifies what all pupils are expected to achieve, what many will learn and the extension work for the more able.
22. Staff use their knowledge and skills of teaching pupils with autism very well to create routines that help pupils to feel secure. Symbol timetables are built up with pupils to ensure they know what to expect during the day and to give as much warning as possible should there be a change planned. The morning routine is particularly important in settling pupils in and also in using and developing their knowledge and understanding. Younger pupils sit together and sing songs of welcome and greeting. They discuss the weather, selecting appropriate symbols. Students have opportunities to choose their activity, which may be to make a cup of tea and a slice of toast, and to socialise with each other and staff if they wish.
23. Pupils learn to work independently. As soon as they start Rosehill, they are encouraged to stay sitting on a seat and to participate in an activity. By the time they are in the second or third class most will work on their own, for instance, while a member of staff works with another pupil in their group. Young pupils often work side-by-side, for example experimenting with water in the water tray. As they get older they learn to work together and, for example, form effective sports teams.
24. To ensure that pupils build up their communication skills very well, teachers select important words they plan to teach at the planning stage. These words are specifically taught and this is particularly helpful for pupils from homes where English is not spoken as the first language.
25. Most staff use ICT very well in their lessons, they are particularly developing the use of interactive whiteboards successfully. Pupils enjoy touching the screen and showing what they know. Young pupils match names with photographs of their peers and older pupils show they know the difference between columns and rows by adding one or the other to a rectangular

shape. Resources are used very well and, as with worksheets, often purpose-made for the pupils. Occasionally, work or materials are not age-appropriate.

26. Systems for the assessment of pupils' work and progress have been very well developed. They are used consistently and as a result, staff have a very clear understanding of how to help each pupil to make progress. The overall assessment system has been changed recently and the new system provides a greater consistency of assessment between classes showing clearly the very small steps that many of the less able pupils make. Pupils are given a clear understanding of how they can improve their work and their behaviour.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is broad and is made particularly relevant to all pupils by very good planning. The provision of resources and accommodation is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is an excellent innovative approach to the arts inspired by the Creative Partnership.
- Individual curriculum planning is very good which takes account of individual needs.
- The local community and its resources enhance and support many areas of the curriculum.
- Provision for PSHE and citizenship and additional sporting activities is very good.
- Courses at local colleges help challenge pupils, broaden their experiences and provide very good opportunities for gaining awards.
- There are instances where topics are repeated too frequently or there is insufficient time for teaching subjects.

### **Commentary**

27. The curriculum is very good for pupils of all ages and is planned to ensure that it interests the few girls as well as the boys in the school. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in meeting the needs of all pupils through the drawing up and careful monitoring of individual curriculum plans. These meet the needs of pupils as identified on their statements and at annual reviews very well. The plans might indicate how individuals can make sense of the curriculum, for example through the use of signs or symbols. There may be calming activities such as gentle massage in the tranquillity room or attendance at a mainstream school to pursue subjects of interest at a higher level. The governing body has highly effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and provide support for subject co-ordinators.
28. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 9 is based largely on topics so that pupils find it easier to make connection between areas of learning. This means that at different times of the year some subjects have a stronger focus than at other times. However, care is taken to ensure that, by careful monitoring of each subject and the setting of individual targets within these subjects, all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. This system is proving highly effective except for the over repetition of some topics in religious education, notably the same 'festivals', and there are too few opportunities for pupils to study resistant materials in design and technology. Additionally, one group of Year 7 and 8 pupils at present have only one lesson of a modern foreign language a fortnight which limits their learning.
29. From Years 10 to 14, pupils increasingly make guided choices, for example, which of the wide range of college courses to select. Rosehill's very good links with colleges and agencies such as Connexions means that pupils can be guided into suitable courses or work experience opportunities which cater for their needs, interests and aspirations. College courses are now extensive and lead to very good accreditation opportunities, usually through OCN (Open College Network). Courses include bricklaying, embroidery, ICT, music and science. Changes have taken place this academic year with the introduction of OCN courses in school. This is a successful development because previously there were too few opportunities for

those not attending college to gain awards apart from ASDAN, or for the more able, GCSE examinations.

30. There are very good arrangements to ensure that more able students are able to study at an appropriate level. Courses and subjects are selected to capitalise on their interests and specialist teaching arranged where necessary. These include GCSE examinations in art and English and the New CLAIT ICT awards. One student has also completed the coursework part of an advanced subsidiary (AS) level art course.
31. The Creative Partnership initiative has been an outstanding success, inspiring and invigorating staff and pupils and contributing to the raising of achievement across many areas such as art, music, communication and personal development through multi-media activities. Central to this success has been the quality of the team involved and their determination to make it work. As a result, pupils have benefited considerably. Access to a skilled musician and artist in residence have opened up new areas of communication especially for pupils with little speech or where English is not their home language. The self-esteem and knowledge of pupils and staff have grown as creative expertise is shared and new skills learnt.
32. The school makes excellent use of the local area to enrich many aspects of the curriculum and help pupils meet personal targets, for example, for one student to travel on public transport with appropriate supervision. Local residents are used to seeing pupils from Rosehill out and about as they make their frequent visits to shops, cafes, parks or garden centres to practise their skills of numeracy, literacy or communication or learn about the environment at Wollaton Park. To support the arts, pupils make visits to theatres and galleries and parents join them, for example at special viewings in the local cinema.
33. Provision for PSHE and citizenship is very good and is very clearly linked to other aspects such as careers education. The curriculum is planned to help the youngest pupils focus on behaviour and interaction with others whilst highly detailed schemes of work show how older pupils learn about relationships and how to lead a healthy life style. Students in Years 12 to 14 have the benefit of a PSHE and citizenship curriculum designed specifically for them. Well chosen resources ensure they are taught appropriately about drug and alcohol misuse and sex and relationships.
34. The physical education curriculum is enriched by a number of innovative activities and additional opportunities. The school day starts for many pupils by regular sessions of running or other aerobic exercises. The youngest pupils make use of outdoor play equipment after long taxi rides. Teaching assistants lead yoga sessions and pupils take it in turns to attend riding for the disabled sessions. More physically able pupils compete against other special schools, for example in football or athletics, reinforcing social skills as well as putting sporting skills into practice. Residential opportunities at an outdoor activity centre challenge pupils and introduce them to new experiences such as abseiling.
35. The accommodation is good for the number of pupils and for meeting the demands of the curriculum for most subjects. Despite the age of the buildings, the school is clean and tidy and the entrance is welcoming. Teachers have very good qualifications and experience and the teaching assistants are very dedicated and skilled. Resources for learning are good on the whole, but the reading books are somewhat dilapidated and most are not appropriate for the older pupils

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school cares extremely well for its pupils' welfare, health and safety. Staff provide very good support, advice and guidance through effective monitoring of their personal development and progress. The way the school involves pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for a safe and secure environment are excellent.
- Staff are very caring and supportive and know the pupils and their learning needs very well, thus forming a secure basis for offering support and guidance.
- Students are very well prepared for when they leave school.
- Individual behaviour plans are detailed, followed well and are very effective.
- Individual curriculum plans are used very well.
- The lack of separation of vehicles from areas frequented by pupils is potentially hazardous, particularly at the beginning and the end of the school day.

### **Commentary**

36. The information from monitoring is used very well to review progress and set targets, particularly in conjunction with individual curriculum plans. These are detailed and easy to use as they demonstrate clearly what staff expect pupils to learn. Reviews show how well pupils have made progress towards the targets throughout the year. The understanding and knowledge of pupils evidenced by staff ensures that the personal development of each pupil is monitored well. The school liaises very well with other agencies to ensure a smooth transition into college, independent living, work experience and adult placements.
37. The very high standards from the last inspection have been maintained. The ethos of the school is conducive to very good behaviour. Parents confirm there are no incidents of bullying and oppressive behaviour. The pastoral care is very good. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure there is always an adult they can turn to for help and advice. Key workers are particularly knowledgeable about the pupils they are responsible for. When asked, pupils stated that they are happy at school and enjoy the opportunities offered. There are limited formal procedures to consult the pupils about their views on the school, but the questionnaires they completed for the inspection show that many are able to make their views known.
38. Procedures to promote and encourage positive behaviour and for improving regular and uninterrupted attendance are excellent and are followed by staff. Most pupils recognise and appreciate the system of rewards and sanctions and respond positively. The individual behaviour plans are detailed and help pupils to improve one step at a time, thus ensuring success. Very good procedures are adhered to in communicating with parents about any unexplained absences.
39. Procedures for ensuring child protection are very clear. The headteacher is the designated liaison person and is well trained and informed. Recent staff training has ensured that they are aware of their responsibilities and any incident is managed sensitively and efficiently. The school receives good support from other agencies and visiting professionals.
40. Despite the shortcomings in the appearance of the buildings, the classrooms and grounds are very well cared for and health and safety checks are regularly carried out and any shortcomings remedied. There are clearly defined procedures that are followed very well for health and safety such as for fire drills, arrangements for any medication and first aid treatment. Every pupil is handed over personally to escorts or parents at the end of the school day, by a member of staff because there is only one way for vehicles to arrive at and leave the school and this necessitates driving between classrooms and the main building. This is potentially very dangerous particularly at the beginning and the end of the school day when numerous taxis and minibuses drive through and park in the playground in order for the pupils to disembark or access their transport. Several members of staff, including the site manager, are involved in making this area as safe as possible for pupils.

41. Links with the Connexions service are effective. The Connexions adviser assists students through the transition from school to youth training, further education college courses and other post-school placements effectively. The transition from school to adult placements is also aided by an adviser from social services. The school is justifiably proud of the fact that no student leaves without a suitable place being available. The staff in Years 12 to 14 are extremely effective in ensuring appropriate independent living provision is arranged for students to encourage them to take as much responsibility for themselves as is possible.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

There are excellent links with parents and very good links with the local community, mainstream schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents express very positive opinions about the school.
- The local and the wider community are excellent and used very effectively to help pupils' learning.
- The Friends of Rosehill are very supportive.
- Home/school books are very effective indeed – a prime link between parents and the school.

### **Commentary**

42. Before their child starts at the school, the headteacher meets the parents, which contributes to a smooth transition and helps to develop the partnership between home and school. Many events during the year involve parents. These include review meetings, which are always attended by parents, open evenings, coffee mornings and social events. Parents consider staff to be approachable and welcoming and are generally confident in raising concerns informally with them. The school deals effectively and promptly with any concerns or complaints. Parents spoken with are delighted that their children attend the school.
43. The Friends of Rosehill School raises considerable sums of money for the school. For example, they raised money for the activity playground and large storage building for the younger pupils. Events are organised by them so that parents can meet up. This is particularly important as the school has such a wide geographical catchment area.
44. The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. There are regular informative newsletters, which the pupils help to produce. They consist of several informative articles about each class. The hard backed home/school books are clearly valued by staff and parents. They are read every day in school and there is often a two way conversation between the school and the home. This successfully enables parents to be involved with their children's learning, as they are aware of the current topics. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully comply with statutory requirements and are attractively formatted. Parents appreciate the very detailed school reports which accompany the annual review process. There is information on pupils' progress towards targets in all subjects as well as comprehensive behaviour plans. The session involving parents and other professionals is well used to the benefit of the pupils.
45. There are very good links with mainstream schools and both South Nottingham College and Nottingham Community College. The transfer of information on pupils with partner schools and colleges is highly productive and systematic. The school has developed an impressive range of formal and informal links to enable pupils to experience a wider curriculum. Where appropriate, younger pupils attend mainstream schools on an individual basis for particular sessions and students receive tuition in a broad range of courses. A particularly enthusiastic student has been taking bricklaying classes and is proud of the photographs featured in the school display. The physical education department forges links with other special schools for pupils to compete in matches, particularly in six- a- side football. The school runs a nationally



accredited course on autism which is attended by staff from other schools. Additionally, trainee teachers and teachers regularly visit the school to gain an understanding of meeting the needs of pupils with autism.

46. There are many links with the community. Through very effective use of community facilities and visits, pupils are taught how to behave in various settings. For example they use local shops, cafes, leisure centres, parks and the library regularly as part of their learning. They also go horse riding visit the fire station, the theatre and cinema and Chatsworth House and Ashby Fair. Residential stays are arranged to be flexible, the length of time the pupil spends away from home depends on the parents' and pupil's wishes. There is a summer play scheme at Rosehill for two separate weeks during the summer vacation, in conjunction with the Nottingham Regional Society for Adults and Children who have Autism. The school also has a link with Nottingham University, where class eight's work was displayed and a range of pupils' work was on show at the local supermarket. The school has forged a link with Salamanda Tandem, who in turn liaised with Architects of Air, to enable class five to experience a large *pod* at the university where pupils successfully explored colour, sound and texture.
47. Overall, the very high standards described at the last inspection have been maintained.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership qualities of the headteacher are excellent.
- There is a strong commitment to school improvement as a result of very good monitoring and evaluation. The school improvement plan is a very detailed and an ambitious document that focuses the school's development on pupils' learning and achievement.
- In-service training is a priority and has a marked effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The quality of teamwork is very good throughout the school.
- The subject leaders' role is developing very well but is yet to be fully effective in a few subjects.

### **Commentary**

48. The headteacher has an extremely clear vision for the school. His commitment to school improvement is strongly based on raising pupil achievement through the collection and interpretation of performance evidence coupled with very good in-service training that has improved teaching and learning. As a result, his leadership has a marked effect on staff motivation, recruitment and retention. Additionally, the headteacher involves all staff in substantial initiatives such as the Creative Partnership which is continuing to be, extremely successful.
49. The school improvement plan clearly communicates the headteacher's ambitions and aspirations for the school, which are shared by staff. Recent priorities for staff development have been very appropriately concentrated on equipping all staff with the skills needed to cater for the needs of pupils with autism within the context of the changing nature of the school's intake. As a result, all staff have had extensive and effective accredited training on the teaching and learning of pupils with autism as well as regular opportunities to develop positive techniques for the management of challenging behaviour. The training programme is very well managed by the deputy headteacher who ensures that training is an outcome of needs identified through the various audit and monitoring process employed by the school.

50. There is an innovative approach to achieving school improvement within a tight budget. Following an audit of the school's staffing arrangements a very clear career structure for the teaching assistants has been introduced. As a result, a number of lessons are now planned and taught effectively by teaching assistants, which enables teachers to have non-contact time to carry out their subject leadership roles. All staff are highly supportive of this arrangement and there has been a marked improvement on the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum in many subjects. Teaching assistants have risen to the challenge of their new roles extremely well and are making a major contribution to the work of the school.
51. Leadership roles are very clearly delegated. Teams of staff have been very successfully formed. For example, the senior management team (SMT) meets regularly to discuss and review progress in school improvement initiatives. The development of the role of subject leaders is a current focus and progressing well as non-contact time is beginning to be used to monitor subjects more closely. Performance management for teachers and teaching assistants is well established and used effectively to enable and ensure staff development improves the quality of teaching and learning. Administrative staff have regular opportunities for an informal discussion with the headteacher and relevant training is organised where needed. Induction of new staff is very good and achieved primarily through the team structure with designated mentors. All new members of staff are encouraged to undertake the school's accredited one year training programme related to autism. This is a major contribution to the very high quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
52. Outcomes of monitoring inform the review and evaluation process so that decisions on priorities for development are clearly evidence based. The school collects a range of data pertaining to pupil learning and achievement across several areas of the curriculum. There are very good systems for collating this data in order to enable an evaluation of for each year group's progress to be made. The process is very well managed by the deputy headteacher. A recent decision to extend the system by introducing smaller stepped assessment criteria enhances the effectiveness of this process further. However, not all subjects have been fully audited in order to establish a baseline for future development and pupils' achievement and progress in a few subjects are not yet formally measured.
53. The school benefits from a very effective and supportive governing body. The organisation of committees and task groups enables them to ensure that the governing body complies with statutory duties. The governing body is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular visits and discussions at meetings and most subject areas have a link governor. The headteacher provides a range of benchmarking data in order to encourage the governing body to challenge the SMT in relation to school improvement.
54. Strategic planning for the future is very good. The highly detailed school improvement plan communicates the significant ambition that the school has to improve.
55. Financial management of the school is very good. The day-to-day operation of the school budget is managed very effectively and regular monitoring reports are provided for the headteacher and governors. The school improvement plan is carefully costed and subject leaders are required to justify all spending requests in terms of impact on teaching and learning. The governing body give budget priority to maintaining a high staffing level in order to maximise the pupil to staff ratio. The principles of best value are a high priority for the governing body and they are beginning to use national benchmarking data to evaluate their performance against similar schools.
56. Although additional resources are given to the school each year from other local education authorities for additional staffing for individual pupils, this is outside of the formal formula and, as a result, the figures show an over-spend. The large deficit at the beginning of 2003 - 2004 was more than matched by income later in the year when these funds were passed to the school budget. Contingency funding is included in the figures. Taking into account the complexity of the pupils' needs and the very good outcomes, particularly in terms of pupils'

progress and achievement, attitudes and behaviour, it is clear that the school provides very good value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,213,583	Balance from previous year	-57,917
Total expenditure	1,162,608	Balance carried forward to the next	-6942
Expenditure per pupil	16,849		

57. The quality of leadership and management has been maintained at the very high standards established at the last inspection. The commitment to developing all aspects of the school and the very positive role models presented by the headteacher and senior staff are key factors in this.

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### Work-related learning

The effectiveness of work-related learning (WRL) is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work.
- The careers education programme contributes effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils develop skills well through a range of activities.
- Suitable work experience opportunities in the community are few.

### Commentary

58. Throughout the school pupils regularly come into contact with people from the world of work, who either visit or are met in the community. They learn well about the roles of members of the public services such as the fire service and observe elements of the retail trade when shopping. During the school year mini-enterprises, such as T- shirt design, manufacture and retail and making table mats for sale at the Christmas Fayre, help pupils develop a sound basis for understanding the skills required for the workplace and the processes required for production. An ongoing allotment project helps pupils appreciate land based work. Recently a music technology link gave good insight into the music industry. Pupils worked in a recording studio composed, played and recorded their own CD.
59. College courses contribute very well to pupils' WRL. This gives pupils opportunities to learn about specific jobs such as bricklaying and painting and decorating. Photographs show they enjoy wearing the protective clothing necessary for these occupations.
60. The careers education programme is very closely linked with pupils' WRL. Sections on self-development, career exploration and career management help pupils develop their skills and knowledge of work effectively. The Connexions service makes a positive contribution to WRL, for example, in helping to find work placements.
61. Appropriate arrangements for pupils to learn through work are developing well. This may be within school, for example, working alongside the site manager or helping with the youngest pupils, or in the community such as in a local nursery, a supermarket or a café. Each activity has to be organised extremely carefully so the pupil will be able to manage. The pupil

attending the café, for example, goes every week, and is taken by a teaching assistant. Now, through intensive support and careful supervision, he returns independently on a bus at lunchtime. This is a further skill in the process of being mastered of travelling to and from the workplace. At present these suitable opportunities are few but new ways are actively being sought. For example, it is being arranged for one pupil to help with table settings for dinner at a lunch club to give experience in a sheltered café type environment.

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

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

#### Modern foreign language

62. Two lessons of **French** were seen during the inspection. The subject is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9 in classes 4 and 5. It is planned that the few pupils in Year 7 in class 3 will begin to learn the subject next year; currently they are working with younger pupils.
63. At present, there is no subject leader and one result is that the two classes are taught differently which leads to an unevenness in the quality of learning. The pupils in one class are taught French once a fortnight. This is not sufficient and even though the teaching is of high quality, pupils' progress is slow because there is too long between lessons and insufficient time spent on the subject. In the other class, the more able pupils are doing well, particularly in increasing their knowledge of French words, but the gains of the less able are very limited. Whole class teaching is not always successful because of the range of ability and the limited concentration span of a few pupils. Good use is made of video and taped material to gain pupils' interest. At present, there is not a clear policy on the teaching and learning of a modern language and too little attention is paid to optimising opportunities to support pupils' cultural development.

#### English

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication skills are improved very well.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in reading and writing because they have many opportunities to practise these skills.
- Teaching and learning are very good, supported by very good leadership and management.
- There are incidents when resources are not age-appropriate.

#### Commentary

64. Achievement and progress in English are very good for boys and girls of all ages. This is good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' writing has improved particularly well because of an increased focus on recording work. Communication is a strength in spite of the considerable difficulties experienced by many pupils with autism to make sense of their world. This is because staff, guided very well by the subject leader, have extensive knowledge about helping pupils overcome their difficulties. Clear targets are set in all areas of English and the results are monitored closely. The school's broad curriculum gives pupils many opportunities to consolidate their skills and learn fresh ones, including the skills of social interaction during frequent visits out. The expertise of speech and language therapists, an artist and a musician helps staff focus on the needs of individual pupils, including those from homes where English is not the first language.
65. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 enjoy books and stories. They showed pleasure and anticipation as they followed the story of *Spot*. Signing and the interactive whiteboard were used very well to help pupils to take turns to match and spell words related to the story. "He's tired of all these games," said one pupil as he put away one of the animals used to reinforce communication during this lively lesson. Well made resources, including those to support the newly established spelling system, and very careful assessment of individual targets contribute positively to the learning of pupils in Years 4 to 6. Pupils' behaviour is managed particularly effectively ensuring that those who are not able to join in cause no disruption to others.

During reading sessions, more able pupils follow the class story in their own books whilst others identify objects related to the story in 'feely bags.'

66. In Years 7 to 9, pupils continue to achieve very well because of very good teaching and learning. Staff plan very well so that pupils of differing abilities and needs can succeed equally. More able pupils read, then re-write simple stories such as *Sleeping Beauty*, using pictures and text. Other pupils join in songs and action games. Those whose home language is not English are beginning to use signs or symbols to make their needs known and show their learning. However, additional aids such as these are not used consistently to encourage even better communication, although the school is ensuring very good training for staff to extend their skills.
67. The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 take turns in conversation, accepting prompts and repeating words if necessary. Many pupils have sufficient skills to take a message, or to interact with peers at college or in mainstream schools. Pupils compile *social story* books about aspects of their lives to help develop their social and life skills. More able pupils read well enough to make use of reference books whilst those who require additional support re-tell stories using pictures. The school has recently acquired some good quality reference books, of special importance to pupils who understand fact rather than fiction. However, the quality of reading books is unsatisfactory. They are not in good condition and are often not age appropriate. They do not contribute sufficiently to stimulating imagination which is being so very successfully developed through the work of the Creative Partnership.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is enhanced through the very good teamwork of the staff. Teachers make very good use of the skills, knowledge and patience of teaching assistants. Joint planning and training ensure there is a consistency in most lessons. For example, while the teacher was the questioner in a session along the lines of *The Weakest Link*, teaching assistants used humour to encourage students and support them to play their role and successfully answer their questions. Teaching assistants have also learned the skills of gentle massage to aid communication with anxious students. In Years 12 to 14, students apply their skills in a number of age-appropriate ways, such as completing work experience journals, contributing to annual reviews or writing shopping lists.
69. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader leads by example through excellent teaching and considerable knowledge of autism. She shares her expertise with enthusiasm and monitors the subject well. She has ensured that very good assessment procedures are used consistently.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

70. The contribution made to language and literacy by many areas of the curriculum is very good. Pupils enjoy listening to a story about a fish sharing his scales which was very well illustrated through very good use of the interactive whiteboard during an assembly. They learn new vocabulary as they study a wide range of topics such as transport in geography and medicines in PSHE and citizenship. Pupils encounter a range of experiences provoking responses in the sensory room, including the stimuli of music and massage. 'Am I going to be scared?' asked one pupil with a smile as he was prepared for thunder. The Creative Partnership has been extremely successful in opening up new channels of communication, especially through the imaginative use of music and art, to reach some pupils previously locked in their own world. The social use of language is encouraged by numerous interactions with the public and by functions such as the Christmas Fayre. Reading and writing skills are reinforced, for example as pupils follow the text in religious education or match pictures and words in geography. More able pupils label diagrams of body parts during an ICT lesson whilst less able pupils sequence a series of images. Skills needed to ride a bicycle are listed in science, one of the many ways work is recorded in this and other subjects.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good in mathematics overall and reflects the quality of the teaching and learning.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 make good progress.
- The grouping of pupils within classes for teaching is effective.
- Work is planned very well.
- Students in Years 12 to 14 learn a great deal from investigation
- Most staff use ICT effectively to support their teaching and pupils' learning.

### Commentary

71. There has been good improvement in the achievement and progress of pupils since the last inspection. This is due to the improved quality of teaching and learning and to the increased effectiveness of the leadership of the subject. The excellent organisation of the Year 2 and 3 classes ensures that these pupils achieve very well and often make excellent progress in their lessons. Work is very well prepared for example, so that pupils working on a one-to-one basis with a teacher have their resources for matching direction and colour of a picture of a card to hand, while the other two pupils in the group work with inset jigsaws or place three dimensional objects into appropriately shaped slots. By the end of Year 6, many pupils have improved their understanding of matching words with pictures which they demonstrate through moving objects and words on the interactive whiteboard. Work is very well selected by the teacher and uses objects which are described by colour and size and photographs of classmates. More able pupils recognise number patterns and make comparisons between objects using mathematical language, which is emphasised very well each session, such as 'shorter and longer', 'full and empty' and 'thick and thin'.
72. During Years 7 and 8, skilled use of the interactive whiteboard helps pupils identify two dimensional shapes and establish their properties. They are keen to name the shape and select it from the display additionally identifying colour and size. By Year 9, pupils' progress and achievement have slowed to good overall. Although work is prepared carefully at the appropriate level of difficulty for each pupil, communication is not always supported by effective signing to make meaning clear. Pupils with language difficulties at times lack the understanding they need and there are instances where their behaviour deteriorates. The practical links made with work for pupils in Year 11 are very effective: The use of carpet marked into squares demonstrates the application of calculating area. Clear, well thought out worksheets help pupils to practise their skills in working out the area of rectangular shapes. Pupils rise to the challenge of establishing units of measure, for the classroom carpet and then the "trickier" units for the area of Nottingham.
73. Students in Years 12 to 14 learn much of their mathematics through activities such as shopping or investigating times of television programmes. They also practise their key skills through carefully planned and supported activities which are made suitable for their age and their ability, such as the following example:



### Example of outstanding practice

**A group of Year 12 to 14 students with generally low levels of ability made predictions, investigated a problem and through skilful questioning came to conclusions.**

Tubes of a well known brand of coloured sweets may not seem age-appropriate but the teacher made them so by relating a problem she had as a parent in purchasing the sweets for her own child. Were the contents of the tubes likely to be the same? Although a few were undecided, most thought they would not be the same. "Why do you think this?" This was a harder question and they just thought so. "Let's have a look." A tube was opened and the number of each colour counted. They were not the same. In fact, students discovered that there were many more of two colours than others. By this time they were really interested and in small groups, supported by a member of staff, they counted out the number of sweets of each colour in their tube, and then totalled them. Staff praised, encouraged and questioned, getting the students to make decisions. More able students drew graphs showing their findings. The numbers **were** different for most of their colours. The teacher collected the results which were compared and found to be very different. Even more interesting was the difference in the number of sweets in each tube!

So, the predictions many made were accurate and then the sweets were swiftly shared.

74. The quality of teaching and learning reflects the progress and achievement that the pupils make and overall it is very good. Lessons are planned to make very good use of teaching assistants to group pupils appropriately. Particular care is taken to ensure the needs of all pupils are met through working on individual targets. Relevant examples are used to ensure the few girls do not feel left out, such as suitable hats and scarves for counting and pairing. Opportunities are made to use ICT including specific programs that interest the pupils and spur them on to complete them and in a number of instances, score well. The use of singing to gain attention of pupils and cue them into mathematics is very effective. On the whole, pupils from homes where English is not the first language learn effectively because staff explain mathematical language as a matter of course and then check with individuals to make sure they understand.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are developing very well. There is an effective assessment process that ensures all strands of learning are taught and this is monitored effectively. More direct monitoring of teaching and learning by the subject leader is scheduled shortly as time has been made available. The introduction of two award bearing courses this academic year and the prospect of further opportunities is a very good, if somewhat belated, development.

### Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Mathematics is taught well through other subjects. For example, pupils are encouraged to measure, count and identify properties of objects and classify them. Younger pupils count the number in the class, the oranges at the end of a literacy session and weigh the ingredients for their cooking. They also work out how many cakes they will each get from a baking tray with spaces for 12 cakes. Older pupils count in French and students are adept at solving simple number problems devised by the teaching assistant concerning what they have ordered for lunch.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good quality of teaching and learning ensures pupils do very well in science.
- A detailed plan of what is to be taught (scheme of work) ensures pupils' learning is thorough and builds from year to year.
- Opportunities are used very well in other subjects to support teaching and learning in science.
- The very knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader has used extensive audit and monitoring data effectively to develop an ambitious action plan for developing the subject.
- There are very good assessment arrangements up to Year 9 but there is a need to develop an appropriate system for tracking pupil achievement in science in Years 10 to 14.

## Commentary

77. Pupils' achievement in science for all year groups is very good. There is a wide range of ability in all classes and year groups and all pupils make very good progress. Pupils develop their understanding and knowledge through a wide range of practical activities that enable them to explore and experiment with scientific concepts. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, pupils used a variety of colanders to separate materials – such as tins of vegetables (water and potatoes/peas/carrots); dried pasta and peas; and flour mixed with grains. The pupils were encouraged to make choices about which colander to use in order to develop and demonstrate their understanding of materials and their properties.
78. Teaching and learning in science are very good overall and, at times, excellent. Most teachers use signing, symbols and ICT effectively to support learning. They use their expertise very well to select interesting and practical activities that are appropriately matched to the levels of ability in each class. Lesson planning is very good and teachers make very effective use of carefully selected resources to support individual pupils. This helps pupils learn very well. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the pupils developed their understanding of forces by running a toy car down a piece of drainpipe. They were able to make the car run fast or slow by altering the inclination of the pipe. The skilful use of key vocabulary by the teaching assistant helped the pupils to establish what was happening. In a Year 7 lesson, the teacher used symbol cards and objects of reference – such as an egg and models of a chick and a chicken – to help the pupils develop their understanding of life cycles. The pupils were able to use the resources to demonstrate their learning. Less able pupils in Year 9, were helped to develop their understanding of habitats through studying a fish tank with clockwork fishes.
79. The comprehensive scheme of work gives very clear assessment points for each level for every topic covered. This caters for all ability levels appropriately. In Years 10 and 11 and 12 to 14, science is taught as part of OCN accredited courses rather than as a separate subject. The subject leader has carried out an audit of these courses in order to identify where science is taking place and has correctly identified the need to develop a process to support this.
80. In all year groups, topics and themes are well supported by a range of links with other subjects and enrichment activities such as visits to local parks. For example, in a Year 11 ICT lesson, the pupils were able to use the Internet to find pictures and information about planets. Students in Years 11 to 14 experimented with materials and their properties by making paper. Throughout the school, the displays show that pupils have developed their scientific understanding very well through activities such as weather surveys and making models of bodies. Teachers effectively use early learning activities to develop the scientific understanding of the less able pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teaching assistant skilfully extended pupils' understanding of facial features through modelling them in a sand tray. The sensory room is used well to support and extend the understanding of physical processes. In classes where there are girls, the work is selected so that it interests them as well as the boys.

81. Leadership and management of science are very good and improvement since the last inspection is very good. The subject leader has a very clear grasp of the strengths and development needs for the subject, following a detailed audit, and has high aspirations for extending the provision. Achievement data is collected and analysed each year in order to ensure that the very good achievement is maintained. There is a link governor assigned to the subject who visits the school in order to monitor developments and achievement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' confidence contributes to their very good progress.
- Overall, teaching and learning are very good.
- The recent introduction of interactive whiteboards has been very successful.
- Clear targets are set for pupils' progress.
- The leadership and management of ICT are very good.
- Computers in the suite are not at the right height for a number of the pupils that use them.

### **Commentary**

82. Overall, pupils achieve very well in ICT. They make very good progress in Years 2 to 6 and in Years 10 to 14. In Years 7 to 9, pupils' progress and achievement are good. Younger pupils quickly grasp the elements of control from using a touch screen and develop agility in operating a mouse accurately. Teachers plan their lessons very well using a detailed scheme of work which ensures that they teach the earlier stages of developing ICT skills very effectively. As a result, pupils understand that commands and signals have an effect on everyday objects such as tape recorders and television sets. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are self-assured and use a range of programs independently. They load and change what they are doing without needing help, selecting programs and using a printer to make copies of their work. The very good classroom organisation, where pupils are often grouped to work, allows staff to work with each pupil and new skills are taught when individuals are ready to move to the next stage.
83. Very good teamwork between staff helps overcome any gaps in their knowledge of ICT. For example, colleagues helped each other to change formats on screens when the set up caused difficulties for pupils. In Years 7 to 9, pupils are well prepared when they go to the computer suite. They take with them the work they need to transfer to the computer so no time is lost once they get there. This helps to focus their interest on the activity and they copy type accurately. However, opportunities are missed, for example, to extend knowledge to include how to change fonts, centre work and enlarge the page on the screen. Less able pupils focus well on programs where they select favourite food items and with assistance, label body parts using click and drag. Pupils' learning is consolidated and developed in Years 10 and 11. They use drawing packages very well to make patterns and operate cassette recorders to collect and retrieve sounds. With varying degrees of assistance and timely intervention, the complex task of producing a folded Christmas card with all the elements the correct way up is accomplished very well. More able pupils make simple presentations and use a digital camera to produce images to use in their work on the computer. They know how to access search engines to gain information from the Internet.
84. Students in Years 12 to 14 continue to build on their previous learning very well in the work they do at college. They gain OCN awards in a range of ICT courses. Very well prepared activities, often lasting for a series of lessons, continue to improve their skills in school. Work is presented very effectively in booklet form which gives the students a pride in their completed work. They use images from a digital camera creatively and illustrate their work through importing images from the Internet. More able students gain New CLAIT awards and

a diploma for ICT users. One girl regularly uses a dedicated word processor to present work, often studying independently and accessing information from the Internet appropriately. Students learn about data bases and improve their presentation skills using graphics as part of their work.

85. The quality of teaching is reflected in the progress and achievement made by the pupils. Although there is a range of skill level amongst the staff, it is clear that many are very competent and all have developed their abilities to use ICT very well through focussed training. The targets set for pupils' progress are selected to ensure all areas of ICT are taught each year. They are used well in the very good lesson planning so that pupils build their skills systematically.
86. The leadership and management of ICT are very good which has made a major contribution to the very good progress made since the last inspection. The audit from the Key Stage 3 Strategy has been used very well leading to a well founded action plan. Hardware and software are regularly updated so that pupils have the best equipment possible. However, a few pupils have difficulties using the screens and keyboards in the computer suite, because they are not at an appropriate height, and this slows their learning.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

87. Teachers plan and use ICT in their lessons very effectively. Pupils use the electronic whiteboards as a matter of course in most subjects. Relevant programs enable pupils to improve their skills, for example in mathematics, particularly in number and shape. More advanced skills are used in art and design where pupils develop their abilities to use drawing programs to manipulating digital images, for example, cutting and pasting their head into a lion's mouth and creating work in the style of Picasso. Research skills using the Internet are practised in subjects such as science where, for instance, pupils seek knowledge about the planets

### **HUMANITIES**

88. During the inspection it was only possible to observe three geography lessons but no history lessons due to timetabling arrangements for the term. Pupils' work and teachers' planning were scrutinised and a discussion was held with the humanities subject leader. History, geography and religious education are taught through topics based on real life experiences such as visits to relevant local places of interest.
89. In the **geography** lessons seen, teaching and learning were very good as a result of detailed lesson planning, effective matching of work to pupils' ability and controlled use of vocabulary. Staff used signing and symbols well and appropriate resources that enabled the pupils to develop their understanding through practical activities.
90. The scrutiny of work for **history** shows that it is planned from the topic that is selected, for example, transport. Records indicate that pupils are making satisfactory progress overall.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall with a range of activities appropriately matched to the pupils' abilities and age.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 2 to 6 lacks breadth. Consequently, opportunities to learn more about different faiths and cultures are missed.
- The planned audit of religious education across the school has been delayed. As a result, assessment and the tracking of achievement do not yet form a firm basis for teaching and learning.
- A scheme of work that ensures breadth, balance and progress from one year to the next is not complete.

## Commentary

91. Pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory overall. There are instances where pupils make very good progress in their lessons. This is a result of skilful teaching, appropriate matching of work to pupils' ability and needs and sensitive support for the needs of individual pupils. Most religious education experiences, particularly for the younger pupils, are taught through the PSHE and citizenship themes of self-awareness, friendship and social understanding. Activities are used well to help pupils develop their understanding. For example, at Christmas the pupils visited Chatsworth House in order to take part in a re-enactment of the Nativity. However, learning about religions, is taught largely through spending too much time on the same festivals each year, which is repetitive and gives a very narrow perspective on major world religions.
92. Older pupils, and particularly students in Years 12 to 14, begin to build their knowledge and understanding satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 9 learn about the impact of natural disasters on communities. A video is used well to capture their interest and simple necessities such as a blanket, water and bread help them appreciate the impact of what has happened. Students, in Years 12 to 14, clearly know that there are symbols connected with religions. Yet another good choice of resources including statues of the Buddha and a series of photographs and pictures shown on the interactive board helps their understanding of how the life of Buddhists is affected by what they believe.
93. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is good overall. Detailed lesson plans enable the teachers to provide for individual needs. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to teaching and learning. For example, in one lesson the assistant effectively used signing and symbol cue cards to support a pupil with behaviour difficulties. The pupil was then able to wait for his turn and share resources with the other pupils. All pupils now participate in visits to local places of worship which contributes to their spiritual and cultural development well.
94. Leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. Plans to develop the scheme of work and to introduce a system for tracking pupil achievement have been delayed as a result of the decision to postpone the auditing of the subject. A subject leader has been appointed in order to maintain an overview across the school. Improvement since last inspection is satisfactory.

## TECHNOLOGY

95. Two lessons were seen of **design and technology**. The teaching and learning were good and pupils did well. Pupils in Years 4 to 7 reinforced their skills of numeracy and literacy as they followed the recipe to make chocolate crispies. They co-operated well, waited for their turn and followed instructions cheerfully. In a lesson where design and technology was linked to mathematics, several pupils in Years 2 and 3 assembled a model water tower whilst others used tools to cut dough in the shape of triangles.
96. Older pupils and students have good areas for food preparation within the classroom but there is no area for resistant materials and provision for this element of the curriculum is limited. Overall the curriculum is satisfactory with good opportunities for students to practise life skills including planning menus, shopping and preparing meals. Pupils have opportunities to join materials with techniques such as gluing or split pins, for example when making puppets from card.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

97. Three lessons were seen of art and design, two of music and no drama.
98. The involvement with the Creative Partnerships is an exciting and highly successful initiative which has been embraced whole-heartedly by Rosehill. It has been driven by the deputy head teacher and supported by the governors' and head teacher's determination for it to succeed. There is excellent collaboration with providers. This well funded project has given staff the resources, confidence and, through excellent training, the expertise to raise achievement significantly.

### Example of outstanding practice

**It is often said that pupils with autism are not able to use imagination successfully. This is being disproved by innovative work through the Creative Partnership.**

An outstanding feature of this partnership is the sharing of skills between partners and school staff. This means that the excitement generated by the project and new avenues of communication opened to pupils through multi-media activities are expected to continue well beyond this initial phase. Teachers and partners have shared their expertise of autism and the arts wisely and very openly, especially during an extremely well planned day allowing staff to explore **their** creativity. However, it is the response of teaching assistants, described by partners as 'fantastic,' that has been crucial in maintaining such high levels of success. They have been encouraged and enabled to develop personal skills, interests and autonomy to facilitate communication in ever increasing ways. These include, for example, the use of singing, instruments, movement or digital imagery. Initially this meant working with individual pupils but now it has advanced to building up group relationships, a very difficult concept for pupils with autism. As a result, unprecedented interaction has been observed with individual pupils. Creative techniques, used with individuals, are spilling over into whole class activities.

99. Dance, film, yoga, movement and art are all elements of the arts which have enriched the curriculum and contributed so significantly to personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. New channels of communication have been opened up. For example, singing the sounds made by individuals has engaged pupils' interests including those whose home language is not English. Pupils, previously isolated, have been motivated to observe each other and join in group activities.
100. The evidence of displays, discussion with staff and partners, photographs and planning, that pupils' achievements in **art and design** are at least very good. They say they like art and this is confirmed by their attitudes and behaviour in lessons and by the quality of their work. In an excellent 'Big Art' lesson taught by the artist in residence to pupils in Years 7 and 8, pupils named primary colours and predicted which needed to be mixed to make other colours. Working independently as far as possible, they mixed nine shades of one colour and, with precision, transformed the paint to a large 3 by 3 square on paper. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 made excellent progress in learning to apply paint to a stencil to make a car pattern. They selected colours to reinforce their mathematics lesson, reinforcing their learning of colour as part of mathematics. A lesson for pupils in Years 10 to 12, linked to the topic on the solar system, was less successful, although satisfactory, because the tasks, recognising shapes and colours, did not sustain the attention of the pupils.
101. The excellent curriculum allows pupils to experience a wide range of media in a range of settings and complete work influenced by the style of a wide range of artists. One talented pupil joins peers in a mainstream school; others make use of the large space available at Rosehill to create Aboriginal wall hangings or rainmakers. Cartoon workshops motivate pupils and ICT skills are enhanced through digital imaging techniques. Pupils have won prizes for

computer generated Christmas cards. Parents joined staff in training and are justifiably proud of their children's achievements. Older pupils have opportunities to gain OCN awards and two pupils have gained GCSE examination higher grades in recent years.

102. Through the expertise gained from the school's involvement with the excellent Creative Partnership Project and particularly from the work with the musician in residence, the quality of pupils' **music** education has improved considerably since the last inspection. Staff training through specialists working with teaching and support staff is very effective in transferring skills and techniques. Students, for example, have learned to drum. In a lesson where the teaching and learning were excellent, they worked individually and listened to each other attentively as they repeated drumming patterns. They paid attention to a conductor and followed instructions accurately to stop and start and play fast and slow. Many students in Years 12 to 14 attend a local college for music sessions each week. A more able group of students are doing well studying music appreciation. Less able students make very good progress in improving their communication through music.
103. The musician in residence works with different classes each half term. A very effective aspect of this work is with individuals or small groups of pupils who have severe communication difficulties. Methods used enable pupils to respond to actions and sounds and begin to vocalise. As yet, links have not been forged with speech and language therapists to explore where learning may be on similar lines.
104. From looking at planning documents and discussions with staff teaching **drama** it is clear that pupils have good opportunities to experience drama. For example, they watch live theatre performances either at school or in the community. Younger pupils re-enact the Nativity story at Chatsworth House and pupils take part in drama sessions during additional out of school activities.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

105. It was only possible to observe one lesson in **physical education** and one session of running. Examination of photographs and displays provide evidence of a very wide range of opportunities for all pupils and extension activities for the most able. In addition to one hour of physical education every week, all pupils are encouraged to join in with a morning running and stretching session. Most pupils participate in a swimming session once a week. Physical education is taught through a modular system where all pupils participate in a range of activities – including trampoline skills and gymnastics – every lesson. Lessons are often taught by very skilled teaching assistants. All pupils are able to gain accreditation of their achievements in trampolining and swimming through national certificated schemes. A prominent display in the main reception indicates pupils' success and contributes to the school's ethos of celebrating individual achievement.
106. The most able pupils in Years 7 to 14 participate in a very wide range of activities at local sporting facilities. These pupils also join in with pupils from several other special schools at sporting festivals. The most able pupils attend a local mainstream school for physical education which significantly improves their learning. Coaches from local sporting associations such as Notts County and Nottingham Forest football clubs work with pupils to develop key skills.
107. Subject leadership is very good. There is a very effective scheme of work and a detailed planning and assessment system ensures that all pupils are challenged appropriately.

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

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



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good subject leadership has a very positive effect on the very good quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- There is a very effective scheme of work and assessment procedures which ensure that all pupils achieve very well.
- Very good use is made of registration and assemblies to develop key skills and celebrate achievement.
- Very good enrichment opportunities in the local community enable pupils to develop social and independence skills.

### **Commentary**

108. Pupils' progress and achievement are very good overall which maintains the very high standards established at the last inspection. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 learn to participate in small group and class activities. They develop their ability to take turns and to share resources or activities. As they get older, pupils increasingly take responsibility for a task, for example, delivering a message to another room, and they improve their social and independence skills very well. They learn to manage and then to participate in larger groups such as the school assembly. In all classes and year groups pupils are developing their ability to make and communicate choices and to solve problems appropriately. Pupils respond well to praise and to the school's ethos of celebrating achievement. Students in Years 12 to 14 develop their ability to recognise and react to the needs and feelings of others. For instance, when a student found it very difficult to perform on his own in front of the rest of the group, another pupil was very supportive and coaxed him into playing the drums to the others. As a result, of the empathy shown by the second student, the player achieved very well.
109. Pupils' achievement is very well supported by an extensive range of activities. For example, registration and assemblies are used very effectively and there are regular and frequent visits into the local community. Pupils practise and extend their personal and social understanding in a wide variety of settings which helps them to generalise their learning. They are helped to make choices about their future and to understand the impact of issues such as discrimination.
110. Teachers, on the whole, skilfully use a combination of signing and symbols to communicate effectively with the pupils. This is supported by very good use of resources, including ICT, which has a marked impact on the quality of teaching and learning. For example, in a Year 10 and 11 lesson on growing up, the teacher used spoken language, signing and symbols to communicate clear objectives for each of the ability groups. Pupils knew what they had to do and focussed firstly on the age-appropriate video and then on the interactive whiteboard. They demonstrated their learning through using the whiteboard with digital photographs of themselves now and as babies.
111. The very detailed curriculum integrates PSHE and citizenship into a holistic scheme of work with key aims for both areas at all stages. Planning is detailed and appropriate to all ability levels and ages. This leads to a coherence and enables pupils to make progress as they move from one year group to another. Some aspects of the curriculum are taught through a variety of OCN accredited courses
112. Throughout the school, teachers capitalise on the opportunities to extend learning in PSHE and citizenship through cross-curricular themes. Health related themes such as food and diet, drugs and medication, sex and relationship education, for example, are supported through the teaching of science as appropriate to the age of the pupils. Healthy life styles are reinforced through physical education and swimming. Social interaction and citizenship are extended through geography and religious education. The subject leader ensures that there are

appropriate materials to meet the specific needs of the few girls which are used by staff when needed and also borrowed by parents.

113. Leadership in PSHE and citizenship is very good because of the subject leader's high level of knowledge and enthusiasm. Staff appreciate the in-service training provided by the subject leader and this has contributed to the very high quality of teaching and learning and to the maintenance of the very high standards established at the last inspection. The detailed assessment system for PSHE and citizenship ensures that all learning can be recorded, enabling pupils' achievement to be tracked effectively.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

*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.