

INSPECTION REPORT

THE FORELAND SCHOOL

Broadstairs

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 119041

Headteacher: Pam Ashworth

Lead inspector: George Derby

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th December 2004

Inspection number: 268656

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community special
Age range of pupils: 2 – 19
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 144

School address: Lanthorne Road
Broadstairs
Kent

Postcode: CT10 3NX

Telephone number: 01843 863891

Fax number: 01843 860710

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Mr G Underhill
governors:

Date of previous June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Foreland School is a mixed maintained day special school, approved for up to 107 pupils. At the time of the last inspection it had 127 pupils and was over subscribed; this is still the case and numbers have now increased to 144 full and part time pupils. The school admits pupils with profound and multiple difficulties (PMLD) and severe learning difficulties (SLD) amongst whom there is an increasing number of pupils with autism. The number of boys is significantly greater than the number of girls, which is typical of a special school of this type. A third of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Pupils mainly come from the Thanet area, although a third of the school's roll come from further afield. Children in the nursery often undergo formal assessment while attending the school. All other pupils and students have a Statement of Special Educational Need.

The school site consists of four buildings; the *First Leap* nursery, *Heath House* (for pupils in reception and Year 1 and 2), *Viking House* (for pupils in Years 3 to 11) and *Saxon House* for students in the Extended Education Centre (Post-16). Nearly all pupils are white with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. These come from Bangladesh and other mixed race backgrounds. One pupil is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Because of the pupils' special educational needs, their attainment on entry to the school is usually very low.

Since the last inspection the school has developed outreach facilities supporting pupils in mainstream schools. It has also developed formal inclusion arrangements with a mainstream infant, a junior and a secondary school with pupils attending classes in those schools for parts of each week. The local education authority (LEA) is undertaking a review of its entire special educational needs provision. The Foreland School is due to take more pupils with a broader range of needs than at present. Although, accommodation arrangements and provision for nursery and Post-16 students have not yet been finalised, it is envisaged that building work should start in the next two years.

The school received the Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and up until 2004 was funded as a Beacon School. A new headteacher was appointed to the school in January 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25349	George Derby	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology French
19692	Bob Folks	Lay inspector	
8810	Sue Aldridge	Team inspector	Science Music
23390	Mel Blackband	Team inspector	Mathematics Post-16 Work related learning
2480	Christine Gilder	Team inspector	English Personal, social, health and citizenship education
30243	Ann Heakin	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography History Religious education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International
Upperton House
The Avenue
Eastbourne
BN21 3YB

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Foreland School provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils. However, the school has faced a number of barriers to its work over recent years, particularly in relation to finance and facilities. There are serious weaknesses in the accommodation and in the curriculum. These have had a significant impact on pupils' academic achievements, which are unsatisfactory overall, and especially for pupils with PMLD. The standards pupils' achieve, however, are satisfactory; this is because this includes both their academic achievement and personal development. All pupils make good gains in their personal development and against the personal targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school is soundly led and managed. It provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and very good for students in Post-16.
- The support provided to mainstream schools is very good and it is very well led and managed.
- The opportunities that pupils have to learn in the mainstream infant and junior schools are good.
- Pupils are well cared for; their personal development is well supported and is especially strong in the Foundation Stage and in Post-16.
- The accommodation is very poor; it restricts pupils' opportunities and limits their achievement.
- The curriculum is unsatisfactory; not all pupils study all the subjects they should and there are weaknesses in monitoring of the school's work, particularly the curriculum.
- While the provision in the mainstream secondary school base is good, the opportunities pupils have to learn alongside their mainstream peers are poor.
- Pupils' achievements in science, ICT and personal, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) as a subject, in Years 7 to 11 are unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the school was inspected in 1999 has been unsatisfactory overall. The school has worked hard on a number of fronts to improve its work, especially assessment. It has developed external support and inclusion opportunities well, in line with its vision. However, the school has faced severe difficulties with regard to adequately providing for all pupils. It is constrained in its ability to meet their wide-ranging needs by the grossly inadequate classroom space and facilities. The school has also had to deal with a lack of finance. However, it could be more rigorous in taking action when weaknesses are identified.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 2	good	good
Year 6	satisfactory	good
Year 9	unsatisfactory	good
Year 11	unsatisfactory	good

Year 14	good	very good
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Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Pupils' achievements are **unsatisfactory** overall. In Years 1 to 6, achievement in English, mathematics and religious education is good, and in science and ICT it is satisfactory. The serious weaknesses in pupils' access to the curriculum are particularly apparent in Years 7 to 11. These restrict pupils' achievements as identified above, as well as in some non-core subjects such as French. Pupils' achievement in religious education and English in Years 7 to 11 is satisfactory; however, pupils do not make as much progress in reading and writing as they do in other years. A significant number of individual pupils are not taught certain subjects and, therefore, have little chance to learn or achieve in these. A considerable number of pupils miss some part of the curriculum, despite it being a statutory requirement. In Years 1 to 6, the way the school plans in topics means that pupils have opportunities to learn a range of things and the impact of what they miss is much less. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage because of staff's very good knowledge of children's needs and how to build on what they know. The vocational and very well-tailored curriculum in Post-16, much of which is offsite learning, is a main reason why pupils achieve well there.

The pupils' personal qualities are good; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good overall. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy their lessons. Their attitudes are positive and their behaviour good. Attendance is good; punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but is good in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and in Post-16. Assessment is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, reasonably challenging work is presented in a way which takes account of the ways pupils learn better than in Years 7 to 11. In the secondary department there is too little variety in the ways in which teachers engage and involve pupils, and very little use of ICT in teaching. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most manage pupils well. Teaching assistants often make valuable contributions to pupils' learning in the practical parts of lessons; but sometimes they have too little involvement. Pupils do not have an equal opportunity to learn because of the restrictions of the accommodation and the way the curriculum is planned. Pupils with PMLD do not follow a programme that sufficiently builds on their skills, knowledge and understanding. Other aspects, such as the good care and the good links with parents and the community, contribute to pupils' achievement and opportunities for learning. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. Internal support for helping pupils to use specific communication aids is good, although staff make insufficient use of more 'general' aids.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The work of the governors is satisfactory overall but they do not ensure that statutory requirements are met. The work of senior staff is also satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school. However, while improvements have been made, it is difficult to move forward because of the barriers that affect its work.

Leadership of the Foundation Stage and Post-16 is good. However, leadership of the curriculum is weak. Subject leaders do not always have a full overview of their subjects, including the quality of teaching. Communication across the school's complex provision is good and the management of staff's performance is also good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents, carers and pupils have positive views of the school, although they are right to have criticisms about the accommodation, such as a lack of a suitable environment for pupils with autism, and concerns about some aspects of specialist support. A few parents had some worries about many areas of the school's work, but the large majority of responses were positive. Pupils enjoy their lessons and activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Together with the LEA, and as matter of urgency, radically improve the accommodation.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum which ensures that all pupils, including those with PMLD, have equal access and can make progress.
- Improve the achievements of pupils in science, ICT and PSHE in Years 7 to 11.
- Effectively monitor and evaluate the school's curriculum, including improving the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching and the curriculum.
- Ensure that where pupils are to learn alongside their mainstream peers in secondary school, they are fully included in lessons with relevant work appropriately matched to their needs.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all pupils have their entitlement to the full National Curriculum.
- Provide a disability access plan in line with legislation.
- Ensure that end of year reports on pupils' progress provide information on the levels reached in Years 2, 6, and 9.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' academic achievements are unsatisfactory overall. However, because the pupils make good strides in their personal development, the standards they achieve are, overall, satisfactory. Attainment in all subjects is very low because of the nature and extent of pupils' learning difficulties.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and in Post-16; pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupil's achievements are unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 11.
- Although the school sets reasonably challenging targets to raise standards, it does not take robust enough action to determine why these are not reached by pupils at different stages.
- Not all pupils achieve equally well; pupils with PMLD in Years 3 to 11 do not make enough progress.
- Achievement in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 is good; however, more needs to be done to raise the achievement of pupils in reading and writing in Years 7 to 11.
- Achievement in the subject of PSHCE is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. In the early part of the school (from reception to Year 2) and in Post-16, teachers have strong knowledge of the pupils' needs and plan activities which are well in tune with what they should learn next. Work builds well on what has gone before and the quality of teaching and learning is also good in these years. In the Foundation Stage children achieve particularly well in their personal and communication skills because of the very good attention to these and the expert way they are taught. In Post-16, the whole emphasis is on providing for pupils' individual needs, while preparing them for life ahead. Staff do this very successfully.

2. In Years 7 to 11, the main reason why pupils' academic achievements are unsatisfactory is the way the curriculum is organised and the negative impact that the accommodation has on learning. These are commented on in detail in the curriculum section but, in short, mean that pupils are not taught all the subjects that they should be. The school views its core subjects as English, mathematics and personal and social development and organises timetables so that these take precedence. In addition, other aspects have also taken priority, such as the pupils' inclusion in mainstream school. Consequently, pupils regularly miss subjects, or parts of subjects, to undertake such opportunities for sometimes up to a year and, occasionally, longer. The impact of this is significant in the secondary department because, unlike in the primary department, the pupils do not have the opportunity to make up what they have missed. Only recently has the school been aware of how this impacts on achievement and on its ability to reach the targets it sets itself. For example, the school's data for last year shows that many pupils made little progress in subjects such as science and ICT in Years 7 to 11.

3. Not all pupils have equal access to a teacher. The school's accommodation is so cramped that not all classes can be taught together and often pupils with the most complex needs are taught by teaching assistants, away from the rest of the class. While examples of planning show that for some pupils work built on well, and related strongly to, what the rest of the pupils were taught, this was not the case for all. Work and records show that activities are often repeated, and because of the school's positive emphasis on developing communication skills, the subject focus is often lost in lessons. When PMLD pupils are taught with their peers, activities are not always planned well enough to meet their needs; while activities might meet the needs of the majority of pupils, a small number of PMLD pupils do not always make the progress they could. As a result, the achievements of pupils with PMLD are unsatisfactory overall.

4. Last year's school achievement targets were not reached in Years 7 to 9 and to some extent in Years 3 to 6. The school tracks pupils' progress using P levels and collects data in English, mathematics, science and partially in ICT. The deputy headteacher analyses and shares information from the previous data with the heads of department who then set challenging targets. However, the school does not undertake a sufficiently rigorous analysis which leads to an exploration of why targets are not reached.

5. Achievement in English is satisfactory overall. The strong emphasis on communication, especially speaking, listening, the use of signs, symbols and objects of reference means that pupils do well in this area. Achievement in reading and writing is good in Years 3 to 6 and very good in Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers pay particular attention to developing these skills. However, although achievement is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11, opportunities to provide suitable support for pupils in these areas are limited. Achievement in mathematics is good. In Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress because teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has added structure and a good pace to lessons. The rate of pupils' progress slows in Years 7 to 9 but remains satisfactory. In the more flexible curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11, pupils work primarily on practical applications. However, insufficient time is allocated to mathematics in these years. The achievement of the more able pupils is affected by the reduced time allocation and the constraints of the curriculum, which does not include all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

6. Pupils achieve well in their personal targets in their IEPs. These are clear and focus mainly on the pupils' communication, numeracy, individual care priorities and personal development. In terms of the subject of PSHCE, the focus of the scheme of work in the primary department is clearly on personal development and the priorities in pupils' IEPs for their personal and social skills largely cover aspects that are broadly appropriate as part of that programme. As a result, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, in the secondary department, the PSHCE programmes that pupils follow do not sufficiently cover the broader aspects of the subject, such as the development of knowledge and understanding of topics such as sex and relationships, staying healthy and being safe. A broader programme is being developed but this is in the early stages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils have good attitudes to school and take a full part in the life of the school. Their behaviour is good overall and sometimes very good in lessons. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Attendance and punctuality are both good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy lessons; they are made to feel very welcome.
- The pupils' relationships with others are good.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally managed well and outside lessons it is particularly good.
- Post-16 students are very willing to take responsibility.
- Responsibilities for living in a community are good.
- The cramped conditions sometimes mean that pupils find it difficult to settle, particularly if they find maintaining good behaviour difficult.

Commentary

7. The pupils are positive about school; this can be seen as they arrive from their minibuses in the mornings when they are greeted by the staff. They enter happily and are often excited about the day's activities and learning. Pupils' spiritual development is good and the school has developed an ethos in which the pupils can develop and grow. Pupils' efforts are highly valued and they feel valued in return. In lessons, the pupils generally respond well to the variety of activities and range of methods used to engage their interest. However, for some pupils the methods are too narrow and their interest can wane. This is particularly the case for PMLD pupils, although some very good examples of drama and role-play, to encourage their interest and involvement, were seen.

8. Relationships are good and some very good examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils get on well with each other and play effectively together. Some amuse themselves, playing on their own, while some join in with others' play. At lunchtimes and break-times, good staff supervision and the strength of personal relationships, results in pupils responding well to the staff's high expectations. In Post-16, lots of opportunities exist at lunchtime to develop individuals' independence; students are keen to take on responsibility and are proud of their efforts. There were many examples of students, often unprompted, helping each other. In the nursery and reception class much support is given for pupils' personal, social and emotional development. As a consequence, they achieve well in this area.

9. A small minority of parents had concerns about behaviour in the school but no instances of harassment were observed during the inspection. Pupils were seen behaving well in and out of school. There were no exclusions last year. The pupils' moral development is good. The school has a clear, strong moral code which is underpinned by the behaviour policy and is reflected in lessons and assemblies. The staff provide good role models for the pupils. Pupils have, consequently, developed a respect for others, will take responsibility for their own actions and willingly help others. Occasionally, pupils with specific behaviour difficulties find it difficult to maintain concentration and effort. The school has good positive behaviour management systems and two staff are qualified trainers. All staff have been trained in the systems, which are applied throughout the school with only occasional variations observed during the inspection. Pupils' behaviour in public is very good and this was commented upon by the tutor at Thanet College, where a technology lesson for Post-16 students was observed. The school's cramped conditions aggravate pupils' behaviour. Staff do remove pupils to quieten them or calm situations, but in the Viking building particularly, there are no quiet areas for pupils to go to and examples of frustration were noticed as a result of this.

10. Pupils are encouraged to develop responsibility and independence. They are well prepared for the life ahead and their social development is good. Lessons, lunchtimes, trips into the community and residential visits all contribute positively. Work to promote this is very evident at the Foundation Stage and in all the work that is done in Post-16. Here the students are taught to look after themselves and to become self-sufficient, but also to take responsibility for organising

things for, and looking after, others. Good examples were particularly seen when pupils were on work experience. Three students working at a local playgroup were very effectively helping a group of children while one student was making herself responsible for organising the other students!

11. A good and diverse range of cultural experiences is provided for the pupils through art, music, religious education and other lessons. As a result, pupils appreciate well their own and others' culture. Art opportunities are wide ranging and music covers composers and performers from different nations. A diversity of faiths is explored and festivals are celebrated.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.2	School data	0.2
National data	NA	National data	NA

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. The curriculum is unsatisfactory overall, although in parts it is good or very good. The quality of care and provision for pupils' personal development is good. The good links with parents and the community effectively contribute to the pupils' education and personal skills. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory; it is good in nursery, reception, Year 1 and 2 and in the Post-16 department. The assessment of the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, and their progress, are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff's knowledge about what pupils need to learn and how to make activities interesting are strong in nursery and reception, Years 1 and 2 and Post-16.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent in Years 3 to 11, although satisfactory overall.
- The use of assessment to respond to individual needs is also satisfactory, but is good in the Foundation Stage, and in the primary and Post-16 departments.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 76 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (8%)	39 (51%)	28 (38%)	2 (3%)	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.

12. There are clear differences in the teaching across the school with strengths in the early part of pupils' education (nursery to Year 2) and in their latter years when students

are in the Post-16 department. Strengths which are consistent across the school are the positive approach that teachers generally have in successfully managing pupils' behaviour and the way they always promote pupils' communication skills throughout lessons. This is a main reason why teaching in English is good. However, it is also a weakness, especially in Years 7 to 11. Due to the considerable weight of the emphasis on communication, the subject content of some lessons is sometimes difficult to determine.

13. There are weaknesses in the consistency of the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 11 in classes and for particular groups, which is compounded by the school's curriculum arrangements and weaknesses in the accommodation. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 11, although satisfactory, has strengths and weaknesses which reflect a lack of consistency of practice across classes and groups of pupils with a wide range of needs. In addition, although it was not possible to judge the quality of the teaching when pupils were taught in mainstream school classes, the learning in most of the lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 11 was poor or very poor. This was because they were not sufficiently included in the lessons and, occasionally, the work provided was not sufficiently related to what the mainstream pupils were doing.

14. The teaching in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is good because of the very strong knowledge the staff have of the pupils' needs and of how to plan work which matches these well. At the heart of the work is the regular observations staff make of children's skills and what they are learning. This enables them to fine-tune their plans, so that the work builds well on their previous learning. In addition, the teamwork with other professionals, such as the speech and language therapists, is strong and supports children's all round development. Many find it difficult to settle initially and often display difficult behaviour in response to an activity, often for no apparent reason. Staff are adept at managing such children's behaviour and pre-empting, as well as calming, volatile situations. Children's communication and personal needs are particularly well understood and this is why they do so well in these areas. Signs, symbols and objects are used well to support all children's understanding and autistic children often get off to a flying start with their education because of the way these are successfully used.

15. There are similar good features to the quality teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, with particular strengths in the development of communication skills. Activities planned always promote these skills and the use of signs, symbols and objects is a particular strength. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to do and learn and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and, despite the serious limitations of the accommodation in the class for autistic pupils in these years, teachers manage the pupils extremely well and match work accurately to their needs. However, some of the pupils' negative responses are exacerbated by the poor acoustics and lack of facilities.

16. While teaching is often lively in Years 1 to 6, the pace of lessons seen in Years 7 to 11 is sometimes much slower. This is sometimes because of the teacher's approach in working with pupils one by one, with each having to wait their turn; this results in pupils losing interest. It is also because teachers have to organise their classes, moving furniture or the pupils themselves, to take account of the small space they have. This also applies to some classes in Years 3 to 6. Activities for some pupils are insufficiently challenging in Years 7 to 9 and the work is not always well matched to their needs. There is also a mixed picture in the way the pupils with PMLD are taught across the school. Some lively sensory

work engaged these pupils very well, with activities which were well related to the focus of the lessons. Pupils were excited and enthralled by this.

17. By contrast, and in a number of lessons in Years 3 to 11 often taught by teaching assistants, the activities are often repetitive. They are not always well matched to each individual's needs and planning often shows that what is carried out is similar each week. Teaching assistants are often used well in the practical parts of lessons and have a clear understanding about what they are to do. In whole class sessions the picture is mixed. Some very good practice was seen in Years 3 to 6 where assistants observed pupils closely. They often recorded pupils' responses and made good evaluative comments on their performance. In other lessons, across the school, there was no clear role for them and they sat and watched the teacher's introduction, often paying little attention to the pupils near them.

18. In some classes, mainly in Years 7 to 11, because of the small size of the room, there is no focal point and, consequently, few introductions or plenary sessions at the end of lessons take place. Where they do take place, some teachers do not use these latter sessions well; they become opportunities to tell pupils what they have done, rather than for assessing or reinforcing learning. There is little use of ICT in teaching, although pupils use it well for communication and occasionally for learning.

19. Teachers do not always plan for pupils to make up work they have missed when they are absent from lessons. This makes it very difficult for the pupils to build on their previous experiences and opportunities and to learn effectively. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 do this best as they plan for pupils to gain a range of skills through different topics. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 have little way of making up missed work, however.

20. Staff in the Post-16 department are knowledgeable about the needs of students and how the work they plan is to prepare them for the next stage of their lives. These ideas are central to the activities that are planned and objectives focus specifically on the needs of the individuals with work which is well matched to these. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are well taught. Activities take place in a context which motivates and inspires students, because they see the relevance of what they are doing to their everyday lives and to what they will be doing in the future.

21. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, though inconsistent. In the Foundation Stage and Post-16 assessment procedures are good and information is used well to inform teaching. The school assesses pupils on entry and staff use the information to plan targets in the school's core subjects of English, mathematics and personal and social education and to provide profiles of pupils' progress. Assessment in ICT is satisfactory overall and is improving. The information gathered from ongoing notes in all these subjects contributes to termly evaluations and is used to create individual targets for pupils. Teachers in reception to Year 6 use this information well to inform their teaching, but for pupils in Years 7 to 11 this is less effective as lessons are not consistently planned with specific outcomes for each pupil. A weakness of the assessment procedures is that they are not used across the full curriculum so that in many subjects pupils' progress can not be effectively tracked. This means pupils' work is not consistently moderated against any nationally accepted criteria, nor can small amounts of progress be easily identified.

22. The school has recently developed a clear system for gathering data and analysing the information. This is useful in showing trends over time and progress of different groups of pupils. However, these findings, though discussed by staff, have not yet impacted on teaching and learning throughout the school.

23. Targets in pupils' IEPs are relevant and teachers monitor progress against them regularly. A strength of the school's practice is that parents are invited each term to discuss, and be involved in, setting the targets for their son or daughter.

The curriculum

The school provides an unsatisfactory curriculum overall. Although the planned curriculum is broad and balanced, what pupils get in practice is often narrow and the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for many pupils. The opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. Accommodation is very poor and staffing and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very poor accommodation restricts pupils' achievements, particularly in Years 7 to 11.
- The curriculum is unsatisfactory for pupils with additional special educational needs.
- Not all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- The provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education as a specific subject is unsatisfactory.
- The curriculum for students in the Post-16 provision is very good; the Foundation Stage curriculum is good.

Commentary

24. The accommodation in many areas of the school is totally inadequate because it does not provide enough space to meet the curriculum needs of all the pupils; this has a negative effect on their achievement. Staff do all they can to alleviate the effects of overcrowding. However, not enough is done to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which includes the National Curriculum. The breadth of curricular opportunities is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 11, although in other years it is satisfactory or better.

The weaknesses in the accommodation include:

- Insufficient classrooms, many of which are too small to accommodate the numbers of young people and adults.
- The Viking building, where most pupils are taught, is particularly cramped; narrow corridors lead to poor circulation and the hall has to be used as a key thoroughfare linking the sections of the building.
- The Post-16 accommodation is unsatisfactory. The Saxon building is now too small for the numbers of PMLD students in the Post-16 department. To some extent this is compensated for by offsite work.
- There is no library or specialist accommodation for science, and only food technology facilities exist for design and technology. There are inadequate teaching

bases for art and music and the secondary physical education changing facilities are unable to be used because of the need for refurbishment.

- There are inadequate storage facilities for the wide range of chairs, walkers, standing and lying frames that physically disabled pupils need to use.
- Acoustics are very poor in many parts of the school and few adaptations have been made to improve the environment for pupils with visual impairment or autism.
- The sensory room is the only area designed exclusively to meet the multi-sensory learning needs of pupils with more severe learning difficulties and PMLD.
- The hall is too small for some of the combined groups having physical education lessons; in addition, many pupils eat in classrooms as there is too little space for them to eat in the hall.

The impact of these includes:

- There are many restrictions on the breadth and depth of the curriculum and activities that can be offered because of space.
- The school's commitment to inclusion by grouping pupils of all abilities within mixed classes is becoming incompatible with meeting the wide range of their different learning needs in a single, cramped classroom environment.
- The class timetables are designed on the basis of space and logistics rather than curriculum and pupils' needs.
- Pupils of all ages with PMLD cannot easily access the curriculum they need in classroom bases. They only have access to a single dedicated multi-sensory area, which narrows the range of their experiences and restricts their opportunities to develop skills and understanding. The curriculum planned for them does not take sufficient account of subject content and context and they regularly repeat opportunities and experiences.
- Pupils with autism in mixed classes do not have access to learning environments organised to minimise the anxiety and frustrations their impairments cause. Those who experience particular stress as a result of noise levels find learning more difficult than it needs to be.
- Class groups are regularly split to find free spaces to work with teaching assistants, leaving teachers unable to monitor their learning directly.

25. In some cases, more could be done to improve provision but the limitation of the accommodation does mean that some problems are not easily solvable. However, there are weaknesses in the monitoring of the curriculum which have meant that the effect on individual pupils, and particularly those with PMLD, have not been tackled where they could have been.

26. Staff in the primary department plan their work together and this has a positive effect on learning and achievement. In addition, the topic based approach and the additional opportunities provided in Years 1 to 6 bring flexibility to the curriculum. This means that when pupils do miss lessons, staff carefully consider alternative opportunities where they can make up the time. Secondary based staff have little opportunity to plan together or provide additional time for pupils to make up what they have missed. Some teachers do combine subject content in lessons. However, this is not always well thought out and some subjects are under-represented as a consequence. Neither subject leaders nor managers of the various areas are able to effectively monitor planning and teaching or to ensure how effectively the needs of each pupil are being met.

27. Secondary pupils who spend time in inclusion classes at mainstream schools do not receive their full entitlement to National Curriculum programmes. Insufficient attention has been paid to co-ordinating the curriculum for these pupils and some pupils have very little science, ICT or modern foreign language teaching. The school takes advantage of the flexibility allowed in the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11, but this has reduced the time available for specific teaching in English and mathematics and has restricted the achievement of more able pupils.

28. The school has identified PSHCE as a priority subject in the curriculum but has not yet established a full programme which clearly enables pupils to make progress in their knowledge and understanding of this subject as they move through the school. The pupils' progress is not assessed or recorded appropriately and particularly in Years 7 to 11 the time allocated to the subject is insufficient.

29. The curriculum for Post-16 students is very well planned and teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities have access to a wide range of activities which are fully accredited. Pupils with PMLD are effectively taught through a sensory-based curriculum which appropriately involves work with ICT to promote communication and personal and social development. More able students follow well structured courses which make a very good contribution to their independent living skills. These courses are effectively linked to work in health education. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good because staff understand their needs very well and plan a good range of opportunities to meet these.

Mainstream inclusion provision

Inclusion opportunities in the mainstream infant and junior schools are good. The provision in the mainstream secondary school base is good. However, when pupils work alongside their mainstream peers, their learning is poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Primary

- | ● Well developed facilities at the infant school are soon to be replicated in the junior school.
- | ● The quality of teaching is good and work is very well planned; it meets pupils' needs well.
- | ● Good planning between The Foreland School staff and both mainstream schools' staff means that pupils are well included in mainstream lessons and learn effectively.

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Secondary

- | ● Staff have worked hard to develop provision and provide a positive working atmosphere in the base class.
- | ● The Foreland School and the mainstream headteacher have a strong commitment to the provision.
- | ● Suitable informal social opportunities are provided each day.
- | ● Pupils learn well in lessons in the base class and the quality of teaching seen was good.

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- Pupils' opportunities to work alongside mainstream peers are regular and are arranged in line with their particular interests and strengths.
- The learning in mainstream lessons seen during the inspection was often poor because insufficient thought had been given to pupils' inclusion, although The Foreland School staff had often prepared work well and done their best to adapt materials.

Primary and secondary

- The Foreland School has no formal, agreed procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision.
- The way The Foreland School organises the programmes for pupils to attend the inclusion classes means that they can miss important parts of the curriculum.

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Commentary

30. In both the primary and secondary provisions, pupils attend for particular whole days. This is to maximise the mainstream inclusion opportunities for as many pupils as possible. Some may only attend one day while some may attend for up to three days. During the remaining time they are taught at The Foreland School.

Primary

31. The Foreland School, together with the inclusion staff and both mainstream schools' staff have worked well together to define what pupils are to get from the opportunity and the balance of time to be spent in the 'base' class and in lessons with mainstream peers. There is good planning involving all parties and each pupil has a clear set of objectives and the outcomes to be gained. Staff and pupils work very hard to meet these. Although the base class is in the infant school, older pupils in the junior department of The Foreland School have positive opportunities in the mainstream junior school. As part of the review of The Foreland School's provision and to extend opportunities for these pupils, it is proposed to extend facilities so that a base class in the junior school is also formed. Teaching is good because the activities are well thought out and based clearly on the pupils' needs. Pupils are very interested in what they are learning and try very hard. Work is well matched and careful attention is given to the opportunities pupils are to undertake when in the mainstream class. Support is carefully arranged, so that pupils do as much for themselves as possible. Pupils are very much part of the class; mainstream pupils socialise readily and good opportunities for social interaction occur.

Secondary

32. The Foreland School staff have worked extremely hard to develop provision on the mainstream secondary school site. The establishment of such a facility has not been without its difficulties, but there has been a high commitment from both headteachers and a substantial amount of funding provided to ensure success. The teacher-in-charge has worked tenaciously to make the provision successful, but some of the issues The Foreland School now faces are beyond the school's control. There are reasonable opportunities to socialise at break and lunchtime and pupils clearly enjoy the contact that they receive from mainstream peers. In addition, the headteacher of the mainstream school reports positive effects on mainstream pupils. This especially relates to their understanding of disability and to their working alongside pupils in a friendly, co-operative way. Some of these pupils

make a point of greeting The Foreland School's pupils and some sit beside them when eating their lunch.

33. The 'base' class is well designed to accommodate pupils of all disabilities and the teaching and work planned in the class is of good quality. Teachers and assistants work very hard to provide a good range of opportunities in English, mathematics and PSHCE, although there is also some teaching of humanities, art and science each week. Work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are keen and interested and work very hard. When pupils attend mainstream classes, their work is well prepared. Careful thought is given to their interests and aptitudes and mostly to the content of the lessons. Discussion takes place between key 'base' class staff and mainstream school teachers to ensure that the work that mainstream pupils undertake can be appropriately adapted for The Foreland School's pupils. However, during the inspection, pupils were included little in lessons and what they gained from each lessons was poor; occasionally their learning was very poor. In a geography lesson, a pupil followed carefully structured materials about a lesson on volcanoes, although this was work he had studied in another lesson the previous week. Occasionally, despite the staff's best efforts, the work prepared for pupils relates little to the topic in the lesson. This is largely because some of the ideas taught to mainstream pupils are far too complex to be understood by The Foreland School's pupils. Records show that in the past pupils have had more positive experiences.

Primary and secondary

34. Close working co-operation between the headteachers are at the heart of the success of the primary provision. Although there are no formal ways for the school or governors to monitor the provision, feedback is positive and pupils clearly benefit from the experiences and opportunity. There are weaknesses in the arrangements which lead to some pupils missing some subjects, although this is compensated for reasonably in the primary department, as discussed above. However, this is done by each individual teacher and no one has an overview of the whole situation. In the secondary department, the impact of this lack of overview has a much greater impact and leads to pupils not having their rightful access to the full curriculum. In addition, the opportunities in mainstream lessons are becoming increasingly unsuccessful. While there is certainly a high commitment from the mainstream headteacher, the detail of the outworking to support successful inclusion is not in place. The Inclusion Service Manager has a role of overseeing the provisions at a strategic level and carries this work out well. However, there is no one monitoring, evaluating these provisions or the organisational arrangements, or taking effective action when issues arise. Until recently governors did not have sufficient oversight.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and safety of pupils are good overall. Provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory overall. Pupils are listened to and their views are satisfactorily taken into account. Students' views are very well considered at Post-16.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils at the Foundation Stage are very well cared for.

- Post-16 students receive very good advice based on monitoring, particularly in further study and career opportunities; there are very many ways in which student's views are sought.
- Health and safety procedures are very good.
- The time allocated to some external professionals for working in the school is not enough to fully meet all pupils' needs.

Commentary

35. Termly inspections of the buildings and grounds are made, and risk assessments are undertaken for a wide range of matters including individual pupils, trips and visits. There are many well-qualified first aiders on site and procedures are very good. Child protection procedures are good. All of these ensure a safe environment for the pupils.

36. All members of staff know the pupils very well on a personal basis and relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Adults care for and look after the pupils well throughout the school, and very well in the Foundation Stage. Each pupil has a number of caring adults to approach, who look after them if they need help and support, and the teachers are readily available. There is a good 'family' feel about the school and this is at its strongest in the Foundation Stage and Post-16. There is good outside specialist support from the occupational therapist and physiotherapists, although closer liaison and some additional training for school staff could improve this even further. In addition, there is not enough time provided to support the high numbers of pupils in the school. Other specialists include the educational psychologist who visits termly, a speech and language therapist who is based on the site and support for visual impairment from the school's own qualified teacher of the visually impaired. The support for hearing impairment is insufficient. The school regards the amount of support provided by the school nursing services as inadequate and has partly funded this provision so that there is an assistant present on the site at all times. However, since the school has done this, further erosion of the service has led to even less time being provided by a qualified professional.

37. The school's systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' academic and personal development provide much information to enable staff to give appropriate advice and guidance. The school uses this to formulate targets for pupils on an academic and personal basis and the resultant Annual Review reports are of a good standard. However, although this works well in the six separate parts of the school, and the deputy headteacher has a whole school overview, subject leaders do not have a full picture of progress through their subjects. This weakens the school's ability to maximise pupils' progress across the school. Advice and guidance at Post-16, particularly with regard to further study and career advice, is very good. However, there is very little guidance provided for younger pupils in Years 9 to 11.

38. Pupils' views are sought on a day-to-day basis although there is no school council. These views are taken into account and acted upon satisfactorily. However, at Post-16, as part of self-assessment, evaluation and general personal development procedures, the arrangements for seeking the students' views and taking them into account are much better developed.

39. Parents are happy with the support, care and guidance that their children receive but a few had some slight concerns about the level of supervision at break-times. Supervision observed during the inspection was satisfactory.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, although parents have concerns about the accommodation and certain aspects of specialist support. There are good links with the community and these are very good at Post-16. The school's outreach service is very good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are right to be concerned over some aspects of the school's provision.
- Very good support is offered to pupils in mainstream schools by the Inclusion Service Manager.
- Links with the community and with schools and colleges at Post 16 are very good.
- Annual reports on pupils' progress do not contain all the information that they should.

Commentary

40. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting were mostly pleased with the work of the school and were positive about it. However, there were a small number of negative comments, mainly related to the very inadequate accommodation. Parents were unhappy with cramped classrooms, no peaceful or 'quiet' areas, no library, no designated areas for autistic pupils and insufficient sensory activities. They were also unhappy about some aspects of therapy support.

41. Questionnaires also mainly indicated good parental support, although there were a few concerns in various areas. Inspectors agree that the accommodation is very poor. A good range of therapists support pupils' needs, but their time allocation has not grown along with the number of pupils in the school. This particularly affects support for the hearing impaired. For some pupils with physical needs, examples of insufficient or inappropriate use of equipment were observed. The accommodation and sensory limitations do affect pupils' progress, but inspectors found behaviour to be good and pupils are adequately supervised at all times. Annual Review reports are of a good standard, and whilst homework is not routinely provided, it is given on request. The school has an 'Open Door' policy and parents and their views are welcomed at any time.

42. The school has a strong *Friends of The Foreland School* organisation, which organises some very successful fund raising events. This generates very useful additional funds to provide resources and equipment for the school. It has also organised a successful Family Day Out in an attempt to bring parents, pupils and school staff together at the same time.

43. Information provided to parents is good. The school prospectus is friendly and informative and is well supplemented by the governors' annual report to parents. Annual reports on pupils' progress are combined with the Annual Review report and are very informative. However, they do not always contain all the levels that pupils have attained

by the end of Year 2, 6, and 9 as statutorily required. Many letters are sent to parents and regular newsletters are sent out to keep them informed of events in the school.

44. The work of the outreach team is very good. This is led by a highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic Inclusion Service Manager who has formed very strong relationships and partnerships with staff from other agencies, such as from the local family mental health centre, staff from schools in the local cluster groups, and cluster support staff. A particular strength is in the different ways schools, staff and pupils can be supported. This can be by discussion, observation of a pupil, provision of resources such as software and attending pupils' reviews. A major way of helping staff is through highly organised training programmes on important topics such as behaviour management and autism; feedback from these events is usually very positive and staff feel they have gained a great deal. Time is well managed and most link schools are within a short travelling distance. Inter-agency working is strong and occasionally observations are made and reports are written on the basis of requests by other organisations. The manager is careful to ensure that a reasonable balance of this work is maintained. Schools which receive support were approached or visited during the inspection and expressed their strong appreciation of the service provided and the enthusiasm and professionalism of the team. The team is very well respected by the local schools. The manager has recently introduced an evaluation system which enables her to receive feedback on the quality of service, its impact on pupils' progress and how it could be improved. Reports seen were very positive.

45. The school has good links with the local community and makes many visits to sports and leisure centres, to local shops, to garden centres, theatres and other places of interest. Post-16 students, in particular, work and study regularly in the community, using local organisations for a wide range of purposes including work experience, swimming and sporting activities.

46. Links with local schools are very strong and this is mostly achieved as a result of the tremendous effort put into developing inclusion links and the outreach services. The Post-16 department has very good links with colleges and Thanet College provides very successful courses for the students. The college is very complimentary about the work and attitudes of the students. The procedures for transfer of students are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. The effectiveness of management is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a good role model for staff; she successfully promotes teamwork, and a positive and caring ethos, but leadership of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and Post-16 provision are good; the outreach service is very well led and managed.
- The school's accommodation and funding arrangements present considerable barriers to further improvement.
- Communication across the school's complex provision is good.

- There are suitable arrangements to improve aspects of teaching but the management structure does not enable subject leaders to have an overview of teaching in each subject.
- There is no cycle of school self-evaluation, and suitable action is not always taken when weaknesses are identified.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good support; however, they do not ensure that statutory requirements are met.

Commentary

47. The headteacher has been tenacious in developing a vision for the school which embraces the proposals for its future role and work. She has consulted on the school's aims and values with staff and governors and has developed a shared vision for development. She has a clear view of what sort of a school The Foreland School will be in the future, which is consistent with local and national developments. There is a strong commitment to working with mainstream schools to the benefit of the pupils at The Foreland School, as well as those in mainstream. There is a clear whole-school policy that sets out what the school considers to be priorities for its pupils, and timetables faithfully reflect this. A suitable range of clear policies guide the work of the school, and staff understand these and apply them well. Staff have embraced the need to change and there is a strong team spirit in the school. The school has responded to its changing population, such as the increase in numbers of pupils with autism or visual impairment, by appointing key staff with appropriate expertise and organising ongoing training of existing staff.

48. Although the school is a complex organisation, communication across all of its provisions is good. The headteacher has led the development of a pattern of meetings that is not onerous for staff, yet gives each and every one of them a forum within which they can be heard, and their views are valued. Workforce reform has been managed well and all staff are allocated time to carry out their management functions. Teamwork is strong in the school. Through the regular meetings, all staff contribute to school improvement planning and information flows effectively through and across teams. The senior management team has representatives from all key areas of the school, and is the main forum for final decision making and policy formulation.

49. In moving forward, however, the school has been constrained by two significant barriers, both of which have absorbed considerable management time. Firstly, the accommodation seriously limits what the school can do to improve. While a new building is proposed, very little can be done in the interim without considerable capital expenditure which the school does not have. The school has recently emerged from a funding crisis. It was recognised that the school was not fairly funded in the recent past and the LEA has now provided a small transitional grant, prior to the allocation of a full formula budget from April 2006. The school spends over 97 per cent of its budget on staffing, leaving very little for supporting developments.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	1,946,949	Balance from previous year	66,295
Total expenditure	1,870,233	Balance carried forward to the next	143011*
Expenditure per pupil	13,498		

* This includes non-school (LEA) funds for special projects which the school holds – the school's actual balance carried forward was £56889

50. In addition, the development of the outreach and inclusion arrangements (as part of LEA initiatives) came at a time when pupil numbers and the resultant pressures on the accommodation were also increasing. Nevertheless, the headteacher has been successful in moving the school forward in the face of all the problems she faced. The very effective leadership and management of the outreach provision have led to the development of a service which is highly valued by mainstream schools. The primary inclusion programme is managed well with positive benefits for the pupils concerned, although the secondary provision falters in that pupils are not successfully included in lessons, despite the best efforts of the Foreland staff. The successful co-ordination of the Foundation Stage provision has resulted in close multi-agency working and parent partnership, to the benefit of the children. The Post-16 department's effective aims, values and very strong emphasis on personal development and skills successfully prepares students for the next stage of life.

51. However, the picture is not entirely positive as the barriers of the accommodation and the organisational arrangements of inclusion in mainstream schools have led to weaknesses, particularly in the secondary curriculum. The curriculum has not been effectively monitored and where issues have been identified steps have not always been taken to resolve these. Although there is a general sense of the issues, no one person has an overview of the detail. While it is recognised that the many of the issues cannot be simply resolved, more could be done to keep a close watch on this and make adjustments were possible. At present, the school has few means of offsetting the disadvantage experienced by these pupils.

52. The school's improvement plan is successful in promoting the sort of changes that will better enable staff to cater for changes in the school's population. However, at present the school improvement plan spans a period of one year only and is not fully costed; this is a weakness. Although there is an impending re-organisation, this insufficiently details plans showing what developments will be needed to prepare for the school's new role in 2005/6. All members of staff are part of the school's good performance management system, including non-teaching staff, administrative staff and the caretaker. Targets set for staff are linked to the school's pupil progress targets, and the process identifies staff development needs. Overall the process is effective in contributing to school improvement.

53. Although there is no formal cycle of school evaluation involving staff, parents, pupils and governors, the headteacher and staff have identified areas for further development and acted on these. For instance, suitable action has been taken to address staff absence, and improve staff skills in moving and handling. Assessment information is analysed rigorously by the deputy headteacher as a way of measuring the value the school adds to pupils' attainments, and targets have been set to raise achievement based on this information. However, too little has been done to deal with the reasons for the weaknesses, in secondary science and ICT, for example.

54. Monitoring and support for teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. At teachers' meetings there is a clear focus on teaching and learning. For example, moderation of P

level assessment has been a feature at these meetings. Although all teachers are seen teaching, both as part of performance management and as part of the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's regular monitoring arrangements, subject leaders do not routinely monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. There is a lack of an overall leader for each subject and the existence of two or more leaders means that there is nobody with the task of maintaining the total overview of provision in each subject. As a result of this, strengths and weaknesses are not routinely identified; strengths cannot be shared or weaknesses rectified. Some inconsistencies in teaching and of provision across the school are the outcome of this.

55. The governors are a highly committed group of people who support the school well. While some have first hand experience of the areas they are responsible for, by making visits to school and meeting staff, many are reliant on the headteacher and staff for information. They carry out most of their duties and responsibilities well, although some statutory responsibilities are not fulfilled. They are very aware of the school's deficiencies in terms of the accommodation and some are aware of the complications that these bring to some pupils' learning opportunities. While they extol the benefits of the very successful outreach programme and the inclusion opportunities that pupils receive, they are also aware from their monitoring that some aspects of the school's work are not successful. They have recently monitored the secondary mainstream provision because of concern flagged up by the headteacher and know that not all pupils can be taught together in many Foreland classrooms because of the limited size of these. They receive 'Review of Year' reports from the curriculum leaders and this helps them to be informed of the financial requirements for subject development. However, there is little in the reports about pupils' progress and the impact of provision on their achievements; reports are more descriptive than evaluative. Governors are aware of the significant barriers which affect the working of the school. Nevertheless, they do not ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to the National Curriculum; there is no plan for securing disabled access and reports to parents on pupils' progress do not contain all the information that they should.

Work related learning

Provision in Work Related Learning (WRL) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 10 and 11 WRL is satisfactory but further development is needed.
- There is very good provision for WRL at Post-16.
- There are very good links to the Post-16 curriculum.

Commentary

56. Work related learning forms part of the Year 10 and 11 accredited courses. Part of this work is taught by a teaching assistant. In these courses the pupils learn about different forms of employment, and make visits to places of work. The pupils do not have formal careers guidance and work experience only takes place at Post-16. This serves to narrow pupils' opportunities. The school recognises there is more work to be done to strengthen provision here.

57. By contrast, all students in the Post-16 provision experience and study a wide range of WRL activities. Students with PMLD visit different work places and meet a variety of people who work at school and in the community. The experiences form part of their accreditation and play a valuable role in their progress towards independence and understanding of the adult world.

58. Higher ability students learn effectively about the world of work. An important part of each student's timetable is given to learning about working practices. Students visit factories, supermarkets and building sites to gain experience and they learn about different trades and industries. For example, in one good lesson, students increased their understanding by discussing photographs of building sites and handling the tools used by bricklayers. Students are effectively prepared for further education or employment. They have group and individual careers discussions with Connexions advisers and they follow courses at Thanet College.

59. All higher ability students benefit from a well organised programme of work experience. Students begin their experience by working at school in 'controlled' situations, such as operating the school 'tuck-shop' or in shadowing the caretaker or office staff. In their second and third years, students, where possible, take part in weekly sheltered placements in a variety of charity shops and playgroups. These are very well managed and organised and discussion with students indicates that they enjoy the opportunities and gain much from them. Students assess their own performance in the workplace and learn about health and safety issues as well as the expectations of employers and their work colleagues. The placements are carefully monitored and both employers and students are fully briefed on the expectations placed on them.

60. Provision for WRL is effectively linked to the wider Post-16 curriculum. Through work experience and learning about work, students are given every opportunity to gain independence skills and understanding, and the activities are closely linked to other work in personal and social education and learning about the local environment. Each element of the students' WRL is accredited and forms part of a substantial record of achievement. Students' work is very well assessed and recorded through photographs and the comments of employers. The leadership of the provision is very good and ensures that students receive full benefit from their work experience and work related studies.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Nursery and reception children achieve well because of good teaching and a high level of care in both classes. Occasionally, the teaching is very good. The provision has changed since the last inspection when reception children were taught with infants. The school has recently decided to make a separate reception class and this provision has been in place less than a term. Despite being in the early stages of development, the class is quickly establishing routines and learning experiences to benefit all the children. The nursery has managed to maintain many of the attributes of the provision noted at the time of the last inspection. This, combined with the introduction of the new reception class, shows the school has made a good improvement.

The accommodation and resources are satisfactory; the nursery is fortunate to have two rooms and a good storage area in the mobile unit. These are put to very good use, one providing a sensory environment and the other for more mobile children who have social and communication difficulties. The two groups of children attend the nursery each for two days a week. The nursery manager and nursery nurses provide very high quality care and education and throughout the day are continually observing children's responses to activities and using the information well to plan the next stage of learning. Very good partnerships with the therapists from the external pre-school services ensure that specialist support and advice is readily available so staff can adjust their strategies according to children's individual needs. Many useful links are also established with other pre-school providers because children are encouraged to attend playgroups or mainstream nurseries when they are not at The Foreland. Parents are kept fully informed about their children and their progress through the regular use of home-school books.

The curriculum in both classes is effectively based on the six areas of learning nationally recognised as appropriate for children in the Foundation Stage. Staff are conscientious in making sure activities are accessible for all children no matter what their learning difficulties might be. Lessons are well planned with specific objectives for each child. Assessment of children's progress is good; all staff make detailed notes and use this valuable information in planning the next stage of learning. Children respond well to the adults; very good relationships are developed making children secure and happy to learn. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage who have additional special educational needs such as autism, physical difficulties or PMLD is good.

Many children, particularly in the reception class, find great difficulty in concentrating and being a member of a class group. Staff are adept at managing these children, pre-empting volatile situations and keeping children on task. Children attend for four days a week until they are five years old. The 'day at home' / other provision is arranged sensitively so the children with more complex needs attend one day when the autistic children stay at home and vice versa. The impact of this arrangement is that staff are better able to focus on children's specific individual needs and this helps children to achieve well. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Good communication among staff and a clear view of how

provision should meet the changing needs of children means that the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their formal education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high priority is given to personal development.
- Very good relationships, care and guidance make a considerable contribution to learning.
- Teamwork is very strong and staff manage pupils very well.

Commentary

61. Throughout the Foundation Stage personal, social and emotional development is considered to be of high priority and permeates the whole of the curriculum. The high level of staffing in both classes is valuable. Adults are well informed; they work closely with individual children to develop their self-help skills, co-operation and independence. This is evident not only in lessons, but also during meal times where children are encouraged to be independent where possible. The majority of children experience problems in concentrating on any activity for a significant length of time. Staff use children's individual targets and work hard to increase concentration levels that may vary between a child engaging in eye contact for a few seconds, to another being able to sit and enjoy a game for 10 minutes. Good use of praise and calming strategies encourages children to participate in class play, take turns and enjoy their learning. Staff in the reception class work closely as a team and are firm with children; for example one child who had scattered his magnetic letters was not allowed to move to his preferred activity until he had helped to pick up the letters. Due entirely to the persistence and encouragement of staff he eventually learned to co-operate. Very good teaching based on very good planning for children's individual needs, suitably supported by the teaching assistants, result in children achieving very well in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high priority given to this area and the way it pervades all activities means that children's' achievement is very good.
- Staff use a good range of alternative communication methods appropriate for the special educational needs of the children in their care.
- Accommodation limitations mean that the reception class cannot work in the small groups needed for some activities.

Commentary

62. Teaching and learning are very good. The need for children to be able to communicate underpins the whole curriculum. The teacher and nursery manager assess children's existing level of communication, decide on appropriate strategies and then work with the full team to develop the children's ability to communicate. For the nursery children who have PMLD staff work, for instance, to encourage a child to smile to show pleasure in a game, to follow an interesting object with their eyes or to reach for something they want. These children benefit from the sensory approach to their learning and they achieve very well. The nursery children who have social and communication difficulties are taught differently. They work on a structured programme based on Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), learning to exchange a symbol card for an object with increasing confidence. Throughout the day, nursery staff clearly repeat words so all children are exposed regularly to relevant vocabulary.

63. This very good practice continues into the reception class. Good use is made of visual timetables to help children understand the routine of the day. The high level of staffing results in all children having constant opportunities to interact verbally, and adults are very skilled in responding to children and encouraging them to talk and express their feelings. Storybooks are used effectively to interest children and the reception teacher adopts a sensory approach using items mentioned in the stories so all children can participate in the experience. Where appropriate, staff use a hand-over-hand technique to help children develop pre-writing skills, and the use of switches, PECS and other visual symbols increases as the children become more skilled at expressing choices. The speech and language therapist augments the teaching and successfully brings specialist expertise to this aspect of children's learning. However, the accommodation problems which affect the rest of the school impact here. The reception class cannot always split into appropriate speech and language groups because of the lack of available rooms, so children do not always get the full benefit from this provision.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weakness

- Number is promoted well through song and personal and social activities.
- Children respond well to the learning opportunities.
- The development of mathematical vocabulary is linked well to communication skills work.

Commentary

64. In both classes, adults regularly sing number songs and children join in according to their understanding and ability. Staff count with children and help them to sort or choose items by colour. Art activities are used well for children to gain an understanding of shape, such as nursery children making paper plate faces based on simple shapes. Reception children enjoyed singing *Five Little Monkeys* as they extended and consolidated their ability to count. Consistently good teaching results in good achievement. The practical approach of turning snack-time into a mathematical experience is successful; toast is shared, choices made between types of spreads and the concept of 'more' is reinforced well. Planning

includes specific mathematical targets for each child and a high level of focus on communication and personal development, resulting in good achievement for all children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage staff provide a good range of interesting learning opportunities.
- A good range of resources is used to stimulate children.
- Good adult teamwork results in good participation and an increase in children's independence.

Commentary

65. Children achieve well in this area of learning. Teaching is good; the lessons are well structured providing a good range of choices to interest the children. The children learn well, as a result. Nursery children show a natural curiosity about their surroundings. Adults encourage them to investigate their environment, and where necessary support children by bringing items to them and giving physical prompts so children learn to touch and explore the resources. For example, the nursery manager provided a good range of Father Christmas toys that moved and made sounds when activated. The children were fully involved and fascinated as they tried to work out how the toys worked. Similarly, reception children explored the impact of salt on ice, the consistency of sand and used wax crayons to make rubbings. Particularly good features of teaching are the teamwork of all staff, the support they give children and the very good plenary sessions. These are used as a good assessment opportunity and children are helped to understand what they have learned and are praised for their efforts.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage staff provide very good physical care and support.
- Staff have a good understanding of the children's physical needs and provide good learning opportunities relevant to these.
- Teaching is good and pupils learn and achieve well.

Commentary

66. High proportions of children in both classes have complex physical needs and rely on staff to care for them. In both classes staff are diligent, treating children with respect and ensuring their physical comfort during the day. Good use is made of beanbags and cushions so children can move from wheelchairs and stretch their limbs. In the nursery, staff make very good use of *Tac Pac*, a commercial programme providing sensory stimulation and experiences. Reception children join the Year 1 and 2 pupils for a departmental physical education lesson. With adult support, they all learn to join in with familiar dance routines and enjoy the freedom to move, express themselves and be part of a large group. Both classes have outdoor play areas for wheeled toys and social play. When appropriate, adults support children well in developing fine motor skills, such as moving the pointer to click on an icon on the computer screen, and developing pincer grip as a pre-writing skill.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- A good range of learning opportunities is provided.
- Success in this area of learning boosts children's self-esteem.

Commentary

67. Children achieve well in this area of learning. Staff are imaginative, providing a good range of opportunities for children to experiment with glue and paint. Regular opportunities are provided for children to sing and listen to music, helping to create a happy atmosphere. Samples of children's work are displayed around the walls showing they are given a varied range of experiences. Nursery children benefit from the high level of adult support as they glue and stick with increasing independence, a particular strength is the constant reinforcement of language throughout the creative activities. In the reception class lessons are well planned. Children are encouraged to explore musical instruments, model clay and use the 'paint shop' program on the computer. In one instance, well-structured teaching resulted in each child working individually with an adult to appreciate and use paint to emulate the style of the artist Mondrian.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 TO 4 AND IN POST-16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision for English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and students achieve well in speaking and listening throughout the school; pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not make as much progress in reading and writing as pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Teaching is good, and good management of individual pupils' behaviour enables most pupils to learn well in lessons.
- Subject leadership is not sufficiently focused on improving achievement, particularly in the secondary years.
- Assessment practice varies too much between age groups.
- The very poor accommodation creates a range of additional barriers to effective learning. This restricts many pupils' capacity to achieve, particularly those with autism and with PMLD.

Commentary

68. Pupils in the primary department and Post-16 students achieve well in English. They achieve better than those in the secondary department where achievement is just satisfactory. There is good attention to pupils' communication skills in all these year groups. They make good gains in their ability to use spoken language, signs, symbols and objects, and, for a few pupils, in using specialist communication aids. However, there is not enough focus on reading and writing in Years 7 to 11.

69. Pupils achieve well and make the fastest progress in English between Years 1 and 2, building on the very good provision made in the nursery and reception classes. Records show pupils' achievement, recorded in small steps and measured using P Levels, rising well in reading, writing and communication, for pupils of all abilities by the end of Year 2. The pupils do particularly well in early writing. A good range of multi-sensory approaches to letter formation are combined with close attention to developing an effective pincer grip for writing. Many pupils continue to make steady progress in reading and writing during Years 3 to 6. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, the most able readers can phrase short sentences correctly and are happy to try pronouncing unfamiliar words.

70. Overall, the pupils in Years 7 to 11 perform less well in reading than in speaking and listening or communication. More able pupils do not make as much progress as they could in writing. The school's data shows progress is slower in English in the secondary department than in the primary department and Post-16. None of the pupils in Year 11 who have PMLD had made significant gains. Lesson observations confirmed a much stronger emphasis on speaking and listening and little emphasis on extending reading or writing skills in all groups. The more able pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not always sufficiently stretched to develop their writing in lessons, make sure their letters are sized correctly or write using pens. Occasionally, pupils physically sequence word and symbol cards to produce simple sentences. Although pupils use computers to write with in ICT lessons,

opportunities are sometimes missed to use such technology to support pupils in their early writing in other subjects.

71. In Years 10 and 11, accommodation difficulties lead to pupils with PMLD being taught for much of the week by teaching assistants. The class teacher works predominantly with the more able group. This is an unsatisfactory situation. The staff team find it hard to meet sufficiently regularly to report on progress and plan the next steps of work for individual pupils with the teacher. This way of working slows these pupils' progress. The work planned for more able pupils is reasonable, but not always sufficiently challenging with regard to writing. For example, a good range of approaches to the novel *Treasure Island* was used to make the story accessible. Several of the more able pupils could read aloud from a summary of the plot presented using symbols, albeit more with enthusiasm than with accuracy! However, the summary of the text prepared by staff for copy-writing practice did not challenge the most able. These pupils could have achieved more by producing a page of the story each.

72. Post-16 students achieve well in English. The accreditation scheme in use for some students' literacy is appropriate, ensuring that all three strands of English are presented through vocational and community contexts. The emphasis on continually extending students' recognition of everyday words they encounter, such as *café*, *supermarket* and *bears* promotes students' confidence with reading and everyday writing, so increasing their independence within the community. In a lesson about what meant most to people about their home, more able students confidently used a range of approaches to work out the unfamiliar words. Those with more complex needs responded clearly and positively to symbols and sign-supported clues provided by the other students and the staff. Students present all their written work with care, and more able students' very good speaking skills actively engages their less able peers in discussions. Detailed records show sustained progress across all three aspects of literacy and communication work each year

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but variable. There are very good relationships, rapport and behaviour management by teaching and assistant staff. Speaking and listening skills are well emphasised with a good use of signs and symbols in all age groups. Recent budget pressures have pared back staff training and subject leaders recognise that more training in signing and using symbols is needed for new staff to improve consistency in pupils' augmented communication experience. Assessment and monitoring practice is satisfactory overall. The approach taken to recording progress daily in Years 1 to 6 is particularly effective, but is not used consistently elsewhere in the school. Some very demanding, intensive and individualised literacy work was provided for Years 5 and 6, focused closely on the pupils' IEP targets. There is insufficient use of multi-sensory teaching across the school to ensure all pupils can play a full part in class – based lessons.

74. Two main factors hold back improvements in teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. These are the approach to subject leadership and the very poor accommodation. These are also why provision in English has not improved since the last inspection. Leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. Subject leaders' monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and standards has not developed well enough. Three people play a part in leading the subject, although four others have a consultancy role. Department leaders have access to advice from three colleagues with communication expertise, and the deputy headteacher analyses pupils' performance against school targets and annual assessment data at the end of each school year.

However, leaders do not meet regularly to focus on whole school priorities for the subject. More rigour in the analysis of data is needed to pinpoint why school improvement targets set for pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not being met, and why progress appears to slow down in the secondary department.

75. The very poor accommodation has a negative impact on standards in English at all levels in the school, and the effects are wide ranging. Overcrowding particularly affects the secondary pupils as does the way in which pupils are grouped and staff deployed. Although experienced teaching assistants provide some very good sessions, some need more support and training in teaching strategies and in recording what pupils learned during a session. Extra recording and liaison is needed to ensure teachers are clear as to what pupils have learned in all lessons and that plans are adjusted as a result. Teaching time is regularly lost as furniture is rearranged to move from whole class to individual or group work and activities are designed to fit the limited space.

76. The pupils with the most complex needs are disproportionately affected by accommodation difficulties and subsequent arrangements. Classrooms are not large enough to provide the range of multi-sensory areas and equipment that all these pupils need to participate in full and there is pressure on the single, well-equipped sensory area. In several English lessons pupils with autism found noise levels stressful. Insufficient withdrawal or quiet areas meant their responsiveness and learning in some lessons was affected as a result.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

77. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well throughout the school. Additional strategies are devised by the Advanced Skills Teacher to help those with autism develop their communication skills in lessons. Some lively and animated conversations take place, as a result. However, reading and writing are not promoted widely enough in all the subjects. Opportunities are missed to engage pupils in writing or reading activities. Symbol-supported worksheets are often well designed for emergent readers but more able pupils need to be challenged by more demanding reading content and greater writing opportunities.

Modern Foreign Language

78. This was not a focus for the inspection and only one lesson could be seen. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in a modern foreign language. Not all pupils in Years 7 to 11 are taught **French**. Some who attend a mainstream secondary school for sessions miss out, and one class in Years 7 to 9 has French half termly while other classes have it every week. In Years 10 and 11, French is taught by a teaching assistant to PMLD pupils and the more able pupils who attend mainstream school do not have French at all. This means that not all pupils have the same opportunity to learn, make progress and achieve adequately in French. The teaching in the one lesson seen was satisfactory. The knowledgeable teacher provided a wide range of activities which interested the pupils. She encouraged their involvement well, although working on the floor was difficult for some, especially those with physical disability who were sitting in a wheelchair. The classroom was cramped with too many pupils for the size of the room and no wall space or whiteboard to work from. The movement of pupils to and from the floor slowed the pace of the lesson considerably and this meant that those who

could not easily see became distracted. Some teaching assistants were vigilant and encouraged pupils to try hard to watch and listen; others were more focused on the activity than the pupils they were supporting. The leader has worked hard over the years, developing provision and providing residential experiences. However, the curriculum, teaching, learning and achievement are not adequately monitored.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning has been improved through the use of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Assessment is not rigorous enough in Years 7 to 11.
- Very poor accommodation restricts pupils' achievements.

Commentary

79. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress because teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has added structure and a good pace to lessons. The pupils enjoy the well planned lessons, they are keen to learn and, as a result, they make good progress. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils have learned to match numbers and symbols and to count to 20. They are becoming familiar with mathematical terms such as *on* and *under*. By the end of Year 6, more able pupils learn to apply numbers in simple addition and subtraction sums and they have developed their understanding of common two-dimensional shapes such as *square* and *rectangle*. They understand terms such as *straight*, *side* and *corner*. Teachers make good use of assessment. They carefully record each element of the pupils' progress and this enables them to set appropriate targets for improvement. Programmes for pupils with PMLD are well structured. Teachers make good use, for example, of objects of reference (objects that help pupils understand ideas and support their communication) to teach the pupils to match objects to numbers and to experience different patterns in sand and water play. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the topic-based curriculum which enables pupils to learn mathematics within a context of general understanding about the world.

80. The rate of pupils' progress slows in Years 7 to 9 but remains satisfactory. Where teachers use the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and there is much practical work, lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils respond well. Pupils in Year 9, for example, worked at varying levels on *light* and *heavy* objects. More able pupils made good progress in learning that the size and weight of objects do not necessarily correspond. Other pupils begin to understand the ideas of *heavier* and *lighter* by 'weighing' two objects in their hands. In lessons where this structure is not used successfully the pace of learning slows. Assessment is not always used thoroughly enough to evaluate the small steps in pupils' learning and this has a negative effect on their achievement.

81. In the more flexible curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11, and especially in those in Post-16, pupils and students work primarily on practical applications of money, time and number as part of courses designed to increase their independence. Pupils learn

the value of coins and apply this knowledge in real life situations such as supermarket shopping. Pupils make good progress in using a simple shopping list to choose items and work out the price. They are shown how to compare prices and use their money to buy the items at the checkout. The pupils' mathematical work is accredited in Post-16 as part of a wider qualification in independent living skills. However, insufficient time is allocated to mathematics in the curriculum for Years 10 and 11 which limits the achievement of some pupils. The assessment of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough and teachers do not make good use of available data to inform their planning for individuals. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 and good in Post-16.

82. Teaching is generally good and is characterised by the good relationships in lessons especially between the pupils and teaching assistants. Lessons are usually well adapted to the needs of individual pupils, and teaching assistants take responsibility for teaching small groups or individuals. They are competent and confident in their work and have high expectations of the pupils' achievement. The teaching assistants keep good records which help to inform the teachers' planning. Features in the best lessons are the good pace, clear teaching objectives and the suitably adapted work for pupils of different ability. Teachers are imaginative in their use of resources, for example in Year 3 where a pupil with visual impairment greatly enjoyed the experience of feeling a balloon as it was inflated and deflated to help her learn about 'bigger and smaller'.

83. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Many positive features of the provision have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils have regularly reviewed targets, although these are less precise in Years 7 to 11. The co-ordination of work in the primary department is effective because all the teachers plan together. Co-ordination of the secondary department is less effective since teachers plan separately and the subject leader has no responsibility or opportunity to monitor planning or target setting. The subject leaders have helped to produce a comprehensive policy and scheme of work, and resources to teach the subject are good. There are few effective arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and particularly in the secondary department there is no system which ensures that each pupil has equality of access to the curriculum.

84. The accommodation is very poor. Teaching rooms are too small, particularly in Viking House, to allow full inclusion of pupils with PMLD. These pupils are taught outside the classroom in alternative rooms or, where possible, in the sensory room. This means that some pupils are regularly taught by teaching assistants and they have comparatively little access to their teacher. The social opportunities to take part in mathematics lessons with other pupils are thus reduced. Pupils do not move on quickly enough because staff do not sufficiently adjust the learning in response to their successes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

85. This is good. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is taught through topics such as 'food'. Pupils are able to practise mathematics in weighing ingredients in cooking, in dividing food to share and in counting items such as plates. Pupils in Year 10 and 11 and Post-16 students learn mathematics as part of wider courses in independent living. They learn how to apply mathematics to everyday situations such as shopping or in counting the time taken to do a job.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve adequately, but in Years 7 to 11 their achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with PMLD, and secondary pupils who miss science because they go to mainstream schools for lessons, do not do as well as others.
- There is no overall subject leader, which limits subject improvement.

Commentary

86. In Years 1 to 6, achievement is satisfactory. Teachers plan science work as part of topics, and this gives coherence to pupils' learning. It also allows flexibility, so that if pupils miss science because of their inclusion in a mainstream class, teachers are able to make up for this at another time. Although the scientific content is greater in certain topics than others, over time, topics give suitable coverage of all scientific areas of learning. However, in secondary classes, less time is allocated to science; the school does not consider science to be one of its core subjects. At this stage, the curriculum is restricted by the school's accommodation as there is no specialist room; so certain practical and investigative activities cannot be easily or safely provided. Several pupils have missed science, sometimes for a whole year, because they attended mainstream schools on the days when science was taught in their class. Although the situation is now better and the school has ensured that nearly all in Years 7 to 11 are now taught the subject, secondary pupils do not achieve well enough, and this is unsatisfactory.

87. As a group, pupils with PMLD do not have the same opportunities as others. In a few classes, teachers ensure that these pupils are taught by them as often as others. However, in most classes, because classrooms are not big enough for whole class teaching, the PMLD pupils are taught by teaching assistants in the sensory room for significant periods of time. Much of what they do is appropriate for developing pupils' communication skills, but teaching lacks a scientific focus. This is reflected in PMLD pupils' science subject reports which are about achievement in communication rather than in science.

88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; they are better in the primary classes than in the secondary classes where the teaching in one lesson was unsatisfactory. This was because the pace was slow, and although interesting and relevant activities were planned, these did not meet the needs of all pupils. In a lesson for younger primary pupils with PMLD, the teaching and learning were good. Staff ensured that pupils were

comfortably positioned so that they were ready to learn. Adults successfully used a good range of sensory resources and activities associated with the topic light and colour to elicit a good range of responses from pupils. A *menorah*, previously used in an assembly, with lighted candles, introduced the topic, and a few pupils tracked the light as it moved, then reached towards the candles. Scented candles evoked a similar response. One pupil reached out for coloured lenses offered, and one chose from three coloured lenses by pointing with her eyes. Adults supported pupils well, and pupils were responsive throughout the session. Through their frequent use of key words, staff showed high expectations of pupils developing an understanding of language associated with the topic, and they seized opportunities to consolidate understanding of numbers as well.

89. Since the last inspection, subject planning has been developed and the teaching of secondary science has been revised so that it is taught discretely, rather than being totally embedded in topics. The planning also helps to ensure that pupils build on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding. For instance, primary pupils learn about healthy eating, and secondary pupils build on this by finding out how food is digested and why certain vitamins are necessary. However, secondary teachers do not always plan tasks that are matched well enough to pupils' abilities. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to ask pupils to predict and to measure.

90. The impact of the school's accommodation on learning and pupils' welfare is clearly evident in lessons. Because there is no sink in classrooms time is lost when pupils have to go out to wash their hands after handling materials. In a lesson where pupils were making birdseed cake, they were not able to safely melt fat because there was no facility for heating. As a result, teaching assistants had to do this for them and a learning opportunity was lost. As part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, the secondary science subject leader has considered ways of developing the curriculum but has found that the limitations of the accommodation are a constant barrier. Storage space presents a further problem; staff are reluctant to purchase additional resources as there is nowhere to store these.

91. There are two subject leaders for science, one for primary classes and one for secondary classes. This structure has not supported improvement well enough. For some time, assessment information has shown a reduction in the progress pupils make beyond Year 7. While the reasons for this have been widely discussed, and heads of departments have checked long-term planning to ensure that it is not at fault, the quality of teaching and learning in secondary science lessons has not been checked. Overall, there has not been enough improvement in the subject since the last inspection, and leadership and management in science are unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong commitment to the use of ICT.
- The work of the 'steering' group is satisfactory; because of this, ICT is adequately led and managed, although more needs to be done to address the weaknesses in the secondary provision.

- The lack of opportunity for learning about ICT in the secondary department is the reason that pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory.
- Much of the work is taught on an individual basis and, while support is strong, there are few opportunities for introductions or plenary sessions.

Commentary

92. The school continues to have a high commitment to ICT, especially in supporting pupils' communication and learning in lessons. A considerable number of professionals guide the work and development of the subject, recognising that in The Foreland School, ICT has a very wide role. The 'steering' group includes two subject leaders, a hardware consultant, the deputy headteacher and the school's technician / support teacher. It is effective in developing and directing resources, identifying shortfalls and improving the curriculum. It takes an appropriately wider view of ICT than just the curriculum. A recent development is that of another group of staff, including a speech and language therapist, were used to support the development of alternative augmentative communication through the use of communication aids. While minutes of ICT 'steering' group meetings show that a watchful eye is kept on provision, and that much discussion takes place about resources and finance, there is little about curriculum matters or pupils' achievements. Discussion with the key staff shows that there is a clear view of where the provision needs to improve, although there is no actual plan to guide ICT development overall. The primary curriculum leader has a clear plan for curriculum development and monitoring in Years 1 to 6, and has well organised documentation to support this. She recognises that the staff's and pupils' work is not sufficiently checked and this needs to be improved. However, the secondary leader has no such planning, especially to address the problem of those pupils in Years 7 to 11 who do not study ICT as a subject because of their attendance at mainstream school. Improvement since the last inspection has been limited. Assessment is satisfactory. It is improving and procedures are now in place in Years 7 to 9 to enable the information to be used in the target setting process. In Years 1 to 6, the staff assess pupils against their key learning objectives with teaching assistants often keeping notes on pupils' response in lessons. End of year assessments are made in Years 10 and 11, although there is no ongoing tracking of pupils' progress.

93. In the primary department, pupils make sound progress overall. Some do miss lessons because of primary inclusion or other activities. However, the primary curriculum is planned through topics so pupils get opportunities elsewhere and staff are vigilant in making up work that pupils miss. In addition, staff set objectives for each individual pupil as part of the programme of work. Pupils work towards these, often supported by teaching assistants. By Year 6, more able pupils use a mouse competently, select programs from icons displayed and save their work. They can edit simple text and pictures. Less able pupils use switches, concept keyboards and touch input to select objects to make things happen on the screen. They also use simple 'talking switches' to greet others. A weakness, however, and clearly observed in the skills which a few pupils showed during the inspection, is that the programme does not move on quickly enough for the more able pupils and they spend too much time going over what they can already do. Teachers usually receive good quality monitoring reports from the assistants who work with the pupils, but teachers do not modify their objectives speedily enough for some pupils.

94. In the secondary department, pupils have a reasonable opportunity to use their basic ICT skills to support their learning, usually in English and mathematics. Some pupils

use ICT devices to help them communicate and some more able, physically disabled pupils show good skills in coping with the different ways of using devices to help them find what they want to say. However, while there are good opportunities to use ICT to support reading or to research information, for example, in the mainstream secondary inclusion 'base' class, there is no taught programme for ICT. Pupils who attend mainstream inclusion 'bases' often miss out on lessons, and do not build adequately on what they have learned previously. Some pupils have not studied the subject for some considerable time. In addition, although more able, older pupils could undertake an award bearing course appropriate to their ability, they have no opportunity to do this. Those who are taught ICT learn soundly and make satisfactory progress; however, because there is a significant number who do not follow the programme of study, achievement overall in Years 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory. In Post-16, ICT is integral to all that is done and pupils undertake a programme which builds well on their previous learning. It enables them to achieve well.

95. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers and assistants are reasonably confident in the use of software and know how to guide pupils so that they successfully learn the necessary skills. Training and good support by the technician and subject leaders has led to this improved knowledge. Some still need further training, however. Guidance by staff is careful, allows pupils to try things for themselves, and ensures that pupils gain success from what they are doing. They are also careful not to do too much for pupils, thus developing their independence. As a result, many pupils show a good level of confidence and skill, work hard and concentrate well. In classrooms and the ICT room there is no focal point for teaching, and no permanent means of display where teachers and pupils can interact with software. This means that many lessons seem to lack introductions, or plenary sessions where learning is reviewed at the end of lessons. Often where the latter occurs, this just tells pupils what they have done. Occasionally, digital images are projected onto the wall for pupils to see the work of others. During the inspection, pupils in Years 7 to 9 had produced a simple but competent multimedia presentation about healthy lifestyles, demonstrating a good link to science and health education. Although the object of the lesson was for them to present their work to others, the equipment could not be set up in a way to promote this because of the very cramped space in the ICT suite.

The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum

96. This is satisfactory. Pupils have sound opportunities to use ICT during lessons and leisure time. Good use is made of a wide range of communication aids to support pupils' ability to indicate choice and need, although low-tech aids could be used more. Reasonable use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects and the school is building up a range of suitable software. It recognises that subject leaders need to take more responsibility for this.

HUMANITIES

97. Only a small number of lessons were able to be seen in **geography** and **history**. As a result, no judgement can be made about provision in these subjects. Policies and schemes of work have been updated since the last inspection. Teachers are imaginative in helping pupils to understand the difficult concepts of *time past*, and *then and now*. Photographs show good use is made of the school and the local environment in helping pupils gain a basic geographical understanding. The topic approach with younger pupils

includes learning songs, dancing and tasting food associated with other countries. Sensory stories based on different times in history are used to stimulate and interest pupils. In Years 7 to 9 humanities topics are linked to literacy and long-term planning covers all year groups over a three year programme. Subject coverage is not effectively monitored. The provision does not ensure that all pupils have equal access to learn; records show that one pupil missed the humanities subjects for two years because of the mainstream inclusion programme. Subject leaders update colleagues on developments, but there is no monitoring of teaching or precise records of pupils' achievement.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The subject leaders do not monitor the subject well enough.
- A high emphasis is given to the celebration of religious festivals and this strengthens provision.

Commentary

98. Since the last inspection improvement in provision has been satisfactory. Many positive aspects of the subject's qualities have been maintained. In addition, the subject leaders have developed a more comprehensive scheme of work in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In Years 1 to 6 religious education is taught through departmental assemblies. There is clear planning for this, based on the syllabus. In the older classes there is some discrepancy in practice, with some teachers giving discrete lessons and others adopting a cross-curricular approach to the subject.

Subject leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Though subject leaders monitor planning, they do not have a direct input in influencing the subject, nor do they have the opportunity to monitor teaching. This means there is no check in those classes where religious education is taught through other subjects. Though analysis of work indicates all classes have religious education the school cannot identify whether they receive a planned and balanced provision. Assessment procedures lack rigour. Though teachers record pupils' experiences, information does not show whether pupils have built on what they have learned previously.

99. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are good and pupils achieve well. The departmental assemblies / teaching sessions provide good opportunities for children to learn about customs that are important to people from different faiths. They link well with termly topics for other subjects and the religious calendar. There is little evidence of recorded work, but photographs show a broad range of activities have taken place. For instance, pupils celebrate *Harvest Festival*, *Mothering Sunday* and *Chinese New Year*. Pupils in Year 2 have experienced food and dance associated with Hindu, Jewish and Christian wedding celebrations. By the end of Year 6 these experiences include Buddhist festivals and more detailed work on prophets and saints. Teachers are careful to include sensory experiences of food, music and songs from different religions so those pupils with PMLD are able to achieve well in their understanding of different faiths.

100. Teaching and learning is less consistent for pupils in Years 7 to 11, but satisfactory overall. Achievement is satisfactory. Two lessons were seen in Years 7 to 9 and pupils in Year 9 achieved well in their understanding of the story of Rama and Sita. The good use of resources linked with the Hindu festival of Divali enabled pupils to dress up, participate in role play and taste Indian food. No lessons were seen in Years 10 and 11 though pupils' progress files show they continue to use role play to help understand the differences in world religions.

TECHNOLOGY, VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101. Music, art and design, design and technology and physical education were not fully inspected and are not reported on in full.

102. It is not possible to make a judgement about provision in **art and design** as no teaching was seen. Discussion and analysis of pupils' work and records show the policy and scheme of work have been updated. The different departments work in very diverse ways, with younger pupils having a designated art lesson and older pupils being taught on a more flexible cross-curricular basis. The value of these approaches has not yet been monitored. There are two subject leaders, though one is temporary. Subject reports are provided for the governing body but there is no specific development plan for the subject. Pupils' work shows the school provides a range of creative opportunities for painting, printing, collage, experimenting with texture and using modelling clay. However, some pupils miss these creative opportunities for up to twelve months, because of the time they spend in mainstream school inclusion activities.

103. **Design and technology** was only sampled and so there is no judgement about provision. One of the two subject managers is temporary. Teachers' planning is monitored to ensure links with the National Curriculum. However, teaching and planning is not monitored although planning and evaluation have been identified as areas for improvement. From Year 7 onwards, the subject is not taught as a discrete lesson but through a topic or cross-curricular approach, and there is a very high focus on the food technology aspect. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 cover design and technology as part of the ASDAN Transition Challenge award. Due to lack of monitoring the school is unable to ensure a well-considered balance between this subject and others. Also, because of the lack of specialist facilities such as a workshop, the school cannot provide a full range of experiences, such as work with resistant materials in Years 7 to 9. A small number of pupils sometimes have opportunities at the mainstream secondary school and a few students undertake work with such materials at the local college.

104. **Music** was not a particular focus for the inspection and insufficient evidence was collected for judgements to be made on standards and provision. During the inspection, three lessons were seen. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in two lessons, and good in one. In the best lesson, the teacher had planned a different learning outcome for each pupil in the group; these were challenging, and pupils met the objectives by the end of the lesson. In other lessons, a good range of musical instruments was used to enable pupils to create *scary* music, and the good use of symbols enabled pupils to follow simple notation. However, there were some lost learning opportunities, and when playing together, pupils were not required to follow the convention of coming in on cue, which detracted from their overall performance.

105. Since the last inspection a specialist music room has been created. This room is too small for whole class groups, and in one lesson seen, pupils' learning was adversely

affected by the slowing of the pace while pupils moved from one activity to another. Because the school is so short of storage space all music equipment is stored in the room which further reduces the space available for teaching. However, the room is also used for music therapy, another innovation since the last inspection, and it is well suited for this purpose.

106. In common with most subjects, there are two leaders, one for primary classes and one for secondary classes. Both report to governors each year, mainly on matters that relate to resources. They do not have assessment information to indicate how well pupils are doing in music because this is not collected. Neither leader has an overview of teaching and learning in music because this does not form part of their role.

Physical education

107. Only two lessons could be formally observed. The teaching in a Year 3 / 4 lesson was good because the pupils practised a good range of movements and because physically disabled pupils were fully involved in the lesson with activities relevant to their needs. The lesson was characterised by the care for pupils' physical wellbeing and by the high expectations the teacher and teaching assistants had for the pupils' achievement.

108. Discussions held with teachers and the scrutiny of planning confirms there to be a relevant and progressive scheme of work. Some pupils take part in mainstream lessons as part of their inclusion programme, and Post-16 students follow courses which lead to accreditation. The more able students and those with PMLD are able to learn about their bodies and the value of exercise. The more physically able group of Post-16 students visits the Ramsgate Leisure Centre on a weekly basis.

109. Accommodation for the subject is very poor. Indoor facilities are totally inadequate; they are very cramped and unsuitable for the needs of pupils with PMLD. The hall in Viking House is multi-purpose and used as a thoroughfare. During one lesson (not formally observed), the considerable number of pupils and staff found it difficult to find space in which to move. The outdoor facilities are minimal and there are no appropriate spaces to teach physical activities. Most pupils who are physically able have access to swimming lessons, older pupils have access to horse riding and all pupils take part each year in a sports day where they receive medals and certificates. The school is considering the value of incorporating a MOVE (Movement Opportunities via Education) programme into its curriculum. Older pupils benefit from the opportunity to take part in residential visits to outdoor pursuit centres. Here the pupils learn the basics of canoeing, abseiling and potholing. The enjoyment of pupils on these visits was evident in a striking photographic display of their achievements.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and students achieve well in meeting their IEP targets for PSHCE and for their personal development.

- High priority is given to pupils' care and self-help skills which promotes their personal development well.
- The subject is part of the school's core curriculum but there is no formal assessment and recording of pupils' progress, which is unsatisfactory.
- Subject leadership is not effective enough to raise standards of achievement.

Commentary

110. The school's commitment to this vital area of learning is reflected well in its place as a core subject of The Foreland School's curriculum. Substantial time within the week is dedicated to developing and supporting pupils' care and self-help skills. The area takes first place in the reports for pupils Annual Reviews and information about pupils' progress in this area, and often occupies a substantial part of the teachers' reports. Records show that pupils of all ages make good progress throughout the school in achieving the targets set for them as part of their IEPs, which are regularly reviewed and amended.

111. Staff know their pupils very well, understand their prime individual needs and work hard to find strategies to meet these. Many of the youngsters with very complex needs have their own dedicated teaching assistants for much of the time and relate very well to them. Staff support pupils well in care routines and always strive to help them to become as independent as possible.

112. There are two main weaknesses in the provision. The most important is the lack of consistency in the tracking of the skills that pupils gain. There are recording systems in place, but this information is not always used by staff or reported to parents. Personal targets in the pupils' IEPs are clear and, as well as focusing on communication and mathematical development, also focus on the pupils' individual care priorities and personal development. This helps pupils to develop important skills which meet their personal needs. However, there is not a programme for PSHCE in place which covers wider aspects such as the development of knowledge and understanding about sex and relationships education, staying healthy and keeping safe. A broader programme for PSHCE in Years 7 to 11 is beginning to be developed. This is in the early stages. The focus on self-help and social or behavioural skills in IEPs is important but it leaves the 'education' element, for which there are national expectations, to take place mainly through other subject lessons. The elements of PSHCE which appear in targets in IEPs are often appropriate, especially in the primary years. However, the subject is not yet properly supported by an agreed approach throughout the school to planning and tracking how all the topics in PSHCE are being covered. Pupils in the primary department achieve soundly in PSHCE but for those in the secondary classes, their achievement in the subject is unsatisfactory.

113. The practical impact of this during the inspection was that only two lessons actually timetabled as PSHCE which covered parts of the programme of study in Years 7 to 13 could be seen. In both, of these teaching and learning were good. The pupils in Years 7 to 9 had great fun learning about keeping clean and fresh, naming and using a range of toiletries and equipment, and began to learn about the changes at puberty, including sweating! Post-16 students took part in a challenging lesson about the meaning of *home*, and both lessons showed good use of a range of teaching approaches to support the pupils' understanding and help them practise communication skills. Teaching assistant support for both groups was also good, and teachers' lively delivery made learning entertaining as well as stimulating the young people's interest.

114. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The severity of many pupils' learning difficulties means that they will need to return to the most important topics regularly over the years. The subject leaders recognise that they currently have no means of ensuring that when a topic, such as sex education, is covered in one way during the secondary phase, the approach in the Post-16 department reinforces and develops students' knowledge and understanding and does not simply repeat it. Developing a clearer and more systematic approach to covering the subject content and devising an approach to recording and then assessing levels of achievement are needed to make sure that this core area develops the pupils' knowledge and understanding as well as their personal care and self-help skills. The subject was not reported in the last inspection so no judgement regarding improvement can be made.

POST-16

The provision for Post-16 (Extended Education Centre) students is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for students of all abilities is very good.
- The preparation of students for the transition to adult life is very good.
- Leadership and management of the provision are good.
- The accommodation for Post-16 students is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

115. Students achieve well in Post-16 and the provision is very good because the curriculum is very well planned and teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities have access to a wide range of activities which are mostly accredited. Teaching and learning are good. Staff are knowledgeable about the students' needs and plan activities which are well tailored to these. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the development of students' literacy and numeracy skills, independent living skills and in provision for work experience. Literacy and numeracy are well promoted through the practical application of real life situations such as shopping and learning to recognise signs and instructions.

116. Pupils with PMLD are effectively taught through a sensory-based curriculum which appropriately involves work with switches and ICT technology to promote communication and personal and social development. Staff have devised interesting opportunities for students to experience elements of music, art and cookery. Students take part in work experience by visiting places of work and meeting people who are employed in school. The students' learning in all curriculum areas is appropriately accredited. Staff keep very good photographic records of students' achievements and many students make good progress in learning to initiate actions and express choices.

117. More able students follow well structured courses which make a very good contribution to their independent living skills. These courses are effectively linked to work in health education, for example in learning about the value of clean air and its effect on lung capacity and fitness. Outside agencies and the community are used effectively; for instance, in work experience placements and in visits to places of work and leisure. Most students, over their time in Post-16, take part in a residential visit where they experience adventurous outdoor pursuits. Some take part in a visit to France.

118. There is a very good partnership with Thanet College. More able students experience college life on one or two days each week and take part in courses in practical skills. Students have made wooden sleighs in technology. They are well supported by school staff and they take pride in their achievements. The courses make a good contribution to the students' independence skills since they mix with other students and are encouraged to buy drinks and meals in the canteen. During their last year at school, the students who are planning to move on to college take part in planned integration into full time placements. Other students also have transitional arrangements planned with regard to their next placements. These are very effective in preparing the students for the transition to college life and in providing the experience of opportunities in further education, training or employment.

119. Accommodation in the Post-16 is unsatisfactory because of inadequate facilities for the increased number of students, and particularly for those with PMLD. There are inadequate facilities for physiotherapy or personal needs and rooms are too small to accommodate the equipment needed for physically disabled students. This has a negative effect on the quality of education which can be provided. Staff have reacted positively to the challenge by ensuring that many students go out of the unit every day as part of their learning about the community.

120. There is a very clear view of the development of the provision generally, and of what needs to be done next to improve what already exists. Each student has an individual timetable, developed through careful assessment of his or her needs and ability. These complex arrangements are efficiently organised and continually monitored for effectiveness. The Post-16 manager is well aware of problems in accommodation and has worked hard to minimise their effect. Planning is very good and, where appropriate, fully involves staff at Thanet College. The recording and assessment of students' work is exemplary and incorporates a high degree of self-assessment by students which contributes to their portfolio of work, and which adds to their awareness of their own knowledge and understanding. Teamwork by staff in the unit is very good. The teachers have very clear responsibilities and their work is carefully monitored by the unit manager. Relationships with students are very good since staff provide good role models for students' behaviour and have high expectations of their efforts.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	6
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

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