

INSPECTION REPORT

SILVERBANK CENTRE

Chatham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 132034

Headteacher: Deborah Braithwaite

Lead inspector: Mr Tim Warin

Dates of inspection: 1–4 November 2004

Inspection number: 268707

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school	At risk of exclusion/excluded pupils from mainstream.
School category	Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	31
School address	The Silverbank Centre Off Churchill Avenue Chatham Kent
Postcode	ME5 0LB
Telephone number	01634 338802
Fax number	01634 338817
Appropriate authority	Medway Council
Name of chair of governors	Hilary Gerhard
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Silverbank Centre provides for boys and girls aged 11 to 14 who are either permanently excluded from mainstream schools or who are at risk of permanent exclusion. There are 31 pupils on roll. All pupils have a named mainstream school to return to. Sixteen pupils are dual registered with mainstream schools and the majority of pupils now return to their mainstream school after a time-limited period of a term. Twenty-one pupils will return to mainstream education at the end of this term. There are 25 boys and 6 girls on roll with thirteen pupils in Year 9, ten in Year 8 and eight in Year 7. Fifteen pupils have statements of special educational needs and the remaining pupils are at school action plus. The vast majority of pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties although two pupils have difficulties which place them on the autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) continuum. Currently two pupils are in public care. There is one pupil of mixed white and Caribbean heritage. The remaining pupils are white British. Pupils' attainment on entry is often low mainly as a result of the many interruptions to their learning caused by their emotional and behavioural difficulties. However a significant minority of pupils come to the PRU with attainment at or above national norms.

The Silverbank Centre is part of rapidly changing provision which will lead to the creation of 'Silverbank Park'. This is an ambitious project being led by the current headteacher and the local education authority. The Centre is in a brand new building. It currently contains a mixture of pupils placed there for a term and 'longer term' pupils. Its nature and role will change significantly once further building work is completed. The Centre operates an outreach service to mainstream schools which currently consists of six staff. This forms part of the inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21940	Tim Warin	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Science Art and design Physical education
18368	Dave Edmondson	Team inspector	Mathematics English Geography History
1782	Andrew Lyons	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Food technology Personal, health and social education (PHSE) Citizenship
32670	Graham Saltmarsh	Lay inspector	

The inspection contractor was:

Open Book Inspections

6 East Point
High Street
Seal
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN15 0EG

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Centre is part of an exciting and ambitious project to create a range of provision in the new Silverbank Park for pupils who are permanently excluded or at risk of exclusion. The developing provision is very strongly led and managed by the headteacher and the LEA. **Currently it is satisfactory with the capacity for significant improvement.** A committed and dedicated staff team work together to provide continuity and stability in a period of major change. Pupils' achievement and teaching and learning are satisfactory as is the improvement since the last inspection. The Centre provides satisfactory value for money.

The Centre's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a very strong vision, drive and commitment to develop the evolving Silverbank Park into a Centre of excellence with the new high quality premises offering a very good range of facilities.
- The headteacher gives very strong and determined leadership in a time of major change.
- Pupils are enabled to improve their relationships and self worth. They know that their views will be listened to and acted on.
- A committed and experienced staff team provide a very safe, caring and secure environment for pupils to work in.
- There are very effective and constructive relationships between parents, carers and the Centre.
- Work is not matched sufficiently to the different learning needs of the pupils and sometimes lacks challenge.
- Management roles are insufficiently developed for all staff to lead and manage the significant process of change in the curriculum and across the Centre.
- Planning does not clearly identify the Centre's key priorities for improvement.
- Assessment information is not sufficiently used by teachers to plan individual learning activities in lessons to meet pupils' needs.

Overall the Centre has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. A major improvement has been the reintegration of pupils into mainstream with two thirds of current pupils returning at the end of this term.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at end of:	In relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum education	Personal and social
Year 9	Satisfactory	Good

Achievement is satisfactory throughout the Centre. In the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), it is satisfactory. In the wider curriculum and in practical subjects, it is generally good. Achievement is good in art, food technology, geography, history and team skills. It is satisfactory in physical education. Achievement is good in personal and social education – in discrete lessons and through the well-structured opportunities across the school day including breakfast club, lunchtimes and tutor time. In outreach in mainstream schools pupils achieve well in understanding and learning to manage their behaviour.

Pupils' personal qualities are improved considerably by the work of the Centre. Pupils arrive in the Centre with a history of difficult and troubled behaviour including erratic attendance.

Attendance is good and the Centre works very hard to promote this. **Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are good.** This occurs across the school day and for many pupils represents a considerable achievement. A comprehensive and well-used behaviour management system is in place which is highly valued by parents. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** The Centre works hard throughout the school day to reinforce clear principles to distinguish right from wrong and promote the sense of community.

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the Centre is satisfactory. Teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons humour, good relationships and high expectations all play a significant part in challenging pupils to learn and achieve better. Teaching assistants play a very important role in securing learning through their positive approach, knowledge of pupils, expertise and enthusiasm. Teaching can be improved by ensuring there is wider range of learning opportunities and activities in lessons to meet the needs of all pupils. In outreach effective teaching ensures pupils learn how to improve their attitudes and behaviour. The curriculum is satisfactory, with an appropriate focus on the core curriculum to build up the academic skills needed to support reintegration. In addition, there is a successful wider curriculum which strongly supports aspects of personal development, for example team skills and food technology. The quality of care, guidance and support is very good. There are very good procedures to involve pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. Partnerships with parents and the community are good. There are very good constructive links with parents and carers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong and determined leadership in a time of major change. There is a very strong vision for the developing provision which is shared by the Centre, LEA and management committee. The headteacher and LEA have a key role in developing the skills and expertise of all staff to fulfil the management roles required. Currently these are at an early stage of development. Staff have insufficient experience and expertise in monitoring subject delivery to inform curriculum development and Centre planning. In addition planning has yet to develop into an established process which supports the monitoring of developments across the Centre. Management across the Centre is satisfactory. The LEA provides a very strong lead in developing the new provision and overall management is good. The recently established management committee has a developing role in monitoring the evolving provision. The outreach team is led and managed well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEW OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express satisfaction with the Centre. They feel it is helping their children and strongly appreciate the regular contact with the Centre, the availability of staff and the high quality of support they provide. Pupils generally have positive views about the Centre. They appreciate that their views are valued, discussed and acted upon. A small number of parents and pupils express concerns about behaviour and bullying. The inspection found that pupils' behaviour is much improved as a result of being in the Centre and that any instances of bullying are promptly and effectively dealt with.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The areas listed below are where further improvements can be made. For the Centre they are to:

- Provide a wider range of learning opportunities in lessons matched to pupils needs.
- Ensure that work in lessons is sufficiently challenging in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- Continue to develop management roles at all levels in the Centre.

- Ensure there is a rigorous process of planning with clearly identified priorities for improvement.
- Ensure that assessment better informs teachers' planning.

For the LEA and management committee they are to:

- Continue to support the evolving centre and the development of management roles.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils throughout the Centre is satisfactory overall. This is similar for all groups represented, for example the small number of girls and those in vulnerable groups such as pupils in public care. The majority of pupils arrive at the Centre with attainment which is lower than average because their behavioural difficulties have disrupted previous learning. This is demonstrated by tests on entry and records from mainstream schools. In the Centre, they achieve well in personal and social education. Their achievement in the core subjects (English, mathematics, science and ICT) is satisfactory. It is generally better in the wider curriculum and in practical subjects with good achievement in art, food technology, geography, history and team skills. The significant improvement in behaviour and attitudes to learning in the Centre means that a number of pupils are now achieving standards in lessons which are in line with national averages.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are entered for National Curriculum tests in line with mainstream expectations and reintegration.
- There is good achievement in personal and social education, which is well supported by activities throughout the school day and in the wider curriculum.
- Breakfast club, lunchtimes, tutor time and team skills are all areas where pupils show significant achievements in personal and social skills.
- Pupils achieve better in the wider curriculum than in the core subjects.
- Unsatisfactory achievements in literacy support means that this is currently not an effective use of time.

Commentary

1. In line with mainstream expectations the Centre enters all Year 9 pupils for National Curriculum tests. Generally results show the majority of pupils gaining levels just below national averages which for some represents a considerable achievement. A significant minority of pupils for the past two years have gained results at or above national averages reflecting the range of ability in the Centre. Numbers taking tests in the past two years have been very small and results often reflect individual abilities rather than meaningful trends. Seven pupils took National Curriculum tests in summer 2004 and provisional results show up to a quarter of pupils achieving standards at or above national averages with the majority below. Generally results are better in science and mathematics than in English. The same pattern is also reflected in pupils' work and in lessons during the inspection with achievement in science and mathematics often in line with national averages and English below. Overall across subjects the significant improvement in behaviour and attitudes to learning means that a number of pupils are now achieving standards in lessons which are in line with national averages.
2. The majority of pupils now in the Centre are on short-term placements with two thirds due to move into mainstream school at the end of this term. Baseline assessments indicate that up to

25 per cent of the current Year 9 should achieve Level 5 and above (including Level 7); however, this will be back in their mainstream schools. The Centre is investigating alternative ways of recognising pupils' achievements for the short time they are placed in the Centre. The SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) has worked hard to set up detailed baseline assessments for reading, spelling and mathematics on entry and these tests will now be repeated prior to the reviews held towards the end of each term. For longer-term pupils regular testing shows a variable picture with some dramatic gains (for example, gains in reading age of up to three years) while for other pupils, progress is more limited or static. The process of setting specific academic targets for achievement is at an early stage of development both at an individual pupil level and to measure overall achievements across the Centre. However increasingly this is being appropriately linked with the work in mainstream schools, for example pupils on short-term placement follow their mainstream school's individual education plan (IEP) and targets.

3. Baseline tests are also used to make decisions about which pupils require additional literacy support. Pupils over two years behind their peers in reading or spelling currently receive a full lesson of individual literacy support. In the two sessions observed too much time was spent negotiating activities and too little time on active learning. In one session, achievement was unsatisfactory because the pupil would not engage in tasks or take part in the lesson. The Centre must review and evaluate the effectiveness of literacy support and put indicators in place to be able to measure its impact.
4. Pupils' achievement was satisfactory in just over half of the lessons observed and good in just under half. There was unsatisfactory achievement in the one literacy support session observed because the pupil was not engaged in the activities and did not want to take part. There are also elements of unsatisfactory achievement in a small number of lessons where pupils are not motivated, have lost concentration and are not prepared to participate. The key to successful achievement in the Centre is effective behaviour management combined with a range of activities in lessons to motivate and stimulate learning. Where achievement is good in lessons, the approach of the staff team is based on good relationships, humour, enthusiasm for the subject and high expectations of pupils. Pupils are fully involved throughout the lesson with activities appropriate to their needs.
5. Overall pupils achieve better in the wider curriculum than in the core subjects. In mathematics, English, science and ICT achievement is satisfactory. Across the core subjects, a wider range of activities and opportunities in lessons are required in order to develop each pupil's learning and therefore achievement. Equally, there are examples where work is insufficiently challenging or related to pupils' individual learning styles. Pupils respond well to varied and well thought out activities particularly where they can become involved and caught up in their own learning. In the wider curriculum, pupils respond well to practical activities which are used well to reinforce learning and achievement. There are examples of very good achievement, for example in food technology, where pupils are fully absorbed in the activities, and this is used well to challenge and reinforce their learning. In addition to academic achievement, the wider curriculum strongly promotes achievement in personal and social skills, for example in team skills pupils achieve well in creating team spirit and in developing social skills and self-esteem.
6. Overall pupils achieve well in personal and social education because of well-structured opportunities across the school day. Breakfast club and lunchtimes both create a sense of community so that pupils are developing social skills in a well-supervised environment. For example, in the breakfast club, daily newspapers provide an opportunity for discussion. Break times are also used well with a high staff presence and plenty of opportunities for conversation and humour. Tutor time in the morning provides a calm relaxed start to the day which puts pupils into school 'mode'. Target sheets and progress from the previous day are reviewed and pupils make good use of the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they should

improve. The current weekly targets are emphasised and reinforced so that pupils are aware of what they need to be achieving.

7. Pupils on outreach achieve well. Skilful teaching, good relationships and well-structured individual sessions ensure that pupils are able to discuss their behaviour and how they can improve. Pupils are able to make decisions about appropriate targets and strategies that need to be put in place. These are then reviewed in the following session.
8. All pupils are fully included. A fifth of the pupils are girls and there is no difference between their achievements and that of the boys. There are also no significant differences in the achievement of pupils in public care; there are strong links with carers to support this. Nearly half of the pupils have statements of special educational needs with the vast majority being for emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. A small number of pupils have additional needs, for example on the Autistic Spectrum Disorder continuum. All pupils are fully included and make appropriate progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils enjoy coming to the Centre. They show respect and care for the new building and its facilities. Equally they respect and trust the staff with whom they have developed positive relationships as a result of clear expectations and guidance. Pupils show positive attitudes, good behaviour and increased self-esteem. The Centre is continuing to develop a caring ethos in a lively and interesting environment. Pupils' response to behaviour management strategies is positive although occasionally these are not consistently applied. Good attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good levels of attendance and punctuality reflect the pupils' positive attitudes towards the Centre.
- Strategies to manage behaviour are effective but are not always applied consistently.
- Trusting relationships with adults enhance the developing ethos of the Centre.
- Provision for personal development is good overall; spiritual and cultural awareness continue to develop well.
- The emotional needs of individual pupils are well provided for and consistently monitored.
- An effective reward scheme encourages positive attitudes and social skills.

Commentary

9. Pupils enjoy coming to Silverbank Park and this is reflected in the levels of attendance and punctuality at the Centre. During the inspection, many pupils expressed their delight with what was on offer to them and a feeling of reluctance at having to leave ultimately to return to mainstream. Where there is an unexplained absence, this is followed up on the first day. The Centre has a particularly close and effective working relationship with the education welfare officer (EWO) who knows the pupils and their families well and can quickly assist to resolve any occasional problems or difficulties.
10. Most pupils clearly make a consistent effort to behave well and behaviour is generally good as a consequence. Their overall attitudes to their life and work in the Centre are positive. They respond well to staff expectations as to how they should behave. The Centre has a positive behaviour management strategy in place. There were a small number of occasions during the inspection when this strategy was not always applied robustly. This was not only identified by the inspectors but, and more importantly, by one or two pupils who then took advantage of inconsistencies. It was interesting to note that both in interviews and in questionnaires the pupils were their own most severe critics when it came to behaviour. There was refreshing

candour from pupils and it demonstrated a real desire to improve and raise their own standards. Behaviour in and around the building between lessons and breaks is calm and friendly. Visitors receive a warm welcome from the pupils.

11. Most pupils are clearly proud of the Centre and progressively develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils usually start at the Centre with poor independent learning skills. Consequently, they are initially over reliant on teachers and classroom assistants for information and support. However, many teachers challenge and encourage pupils to solve their own problems and many respond well with a real sense of achievement. This was especially apparent in practical lessons. However, there are also examples of opportunities for independence being limited, for example staff managing equipment and resources rather than the pupils. Pupils develop trusting relationships with all adults in the Centre and are clear about the boundaries and expectations. Courtesy and respect are apparent across all year groups and the new building has a developing ethos and positive atmosphere of care and lively activity.
12. All staff at the Centre knows each pupil well and are aware of their individual circumstances, needs or difficulties which are constantly monitored. Lapses and incidents are well documented and serve to build up a comprehensive background picture which enables staff to understand and manage challenges with a minimum of fuss.
13. Pupils respond positively to all that is being provided for them and they acknowledge this by taking a pride in the Centre, its community and their individual achievements. There is a highly effective and valued reward system in place in which all staff are involved. The pupils benefit from weekly recognition of their efforts and are constantly encouraged to further develop both academically and socially. Pupils have a developed sense of what is right and wrong and their own responsibilities for community life in the Centre. The provision for all aspects of moral and social development is strong and relevant for the pupils. The Centre places a focused emphasis upon developing team skills which often involve outside physical activity, some of it suitably challenging. During the inspection a group of Year 9 pupils was taken to an outdoor rope-climbing centre where teams of pupils had to assist each other to reach their goals. The team spirit and assistance the pupils gave to each other was notable and they demonstrated some mature social skills.
14. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The Centre is building opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a multi-cultural society and these are progressing well with 'themed days' of the life and culture of different countries, which, so far, have covered South Africa, France and Italy. These include invited visitors, language teachers and performers together with food from the respective countries. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Lessons and group work enable pupils to reflect on issues such as friendship and thinking of others. At other times, pupils discuss their feelings and are able to think about particular personal issues. Pupils are generally happy to express their own feelings and listen with respect to those of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE

The overall quality of education provided by the Centre is satisfactory. A committed and experienced staff team provide a very safe and caring environment for pupils who have previously been excluded or at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools to build up the academic, social and personal skills needed for reintegration into mainstream. The high level of supervision, care and staff involvement throughout a carefully structured school day are important factors in ensuring that pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Strong teamwork, carefully structured lessons and a high level of supervision ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve. Overall assessment is satisfactory. Much work has recently gone into developing systems in the Centre but these are not sufficiently embedded in practice to inform teachers' planning and differentiation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are carefully thought out and planned to provide a safe, structured and secure learning environment.
- There is strong teamwork and, in the large majority of lessons, consistent use of the Centre's behaviour management programme to achieve a positive learning ethos.
- Teaching assistants play a very important role in securing learning through their positive approaches, expertise and knowledge of pupils.
- Lesson objectives are displayed well and shared with pupils to reinforce their learning.
- There is insufficient differentiation of learning activities in lessons to meet the range of pupils' abilities and provide an appropriate challenge to further develop and extend their learning.
- Assessment needs to better inform teachers' planning and differentiation of learning activities.
- In a small number of lessons there are inconsistencies in managing the behaviour of individual pupils, which gives mixed messages.
- In a small number of lessons there are limited opportunities for independence and too much is done for the pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactor y	Unsatisfacto ry	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (10%)	22 (52%)	16 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. The Centre is clearly using a mainstream approach to the structure of lessons in order to prepare pupils for reintegration. It has implemented the Key Stage 3 Strategy to develop teaching and learning and makes good use of advice and support from LEA consultants. There is also good use of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) from mainstream schools, both to widen curriculum opportunities and also to bring in new ideas and techniques to develop teaching and learning in the Centre. During the inspection an AST was teaching drama as part of English lessons. In a recent development day, teachers from the Centre visited mainstream schools to look at classroom practice.
16. Lessons are carefully planned and built around a three-part structure. Pupils engage in warm-up activities at the start of the lesson before moving into activities with a final evaluation of progress and learning at the end of the lesson. A number of activities are used as starters to get pupils thinking, for example word puzzles. In the most successful lessons, there is a good balance between whole-class, teacher-led and independent activities. Activities are short, sharp and focussed with teachers using their experience to know when it is time to move on. Time limits are used to good effect to keep pupils focussed and on task. A combination of activities keeps pupils focussed, motivated and learning. In an art lesson, explanation was followed by activity then followed by further explanation and extended activity. In food technology activities were interspersed with worksheets and plenty of pupil involvement, for example evaluating the taste of fried lychees. In good lessons questioning is used effectively to get pupils involved and participating. The time in practical independent activities is also

used well to reinforce learning and skills. There are examples of good evaluations at the end of lessons where learning is summarised and reinforced. However, in a small number of lessons, there is too much focus in using the last part of the lesson for the teacher to fill in the daily recording sheet without drawing the lesson to a satisfactory close or giving verbal feedback to the pupils on their academic and personal progress in the lesson.

17. Overall most of the satisfactory teaching is in the core subjects rather than in the wider curriculum. Teaching and learning in English and science are satisfactory and good in mathematics and ICT. The majority of very good teaching was in food technology where very good preparation and teamwork, combined with the very high quality facilities in the new building, ensure pupils' interest, motivation and involvement.
18. There is strong teamwork and in the large majority of lessons consistent use of the Centre's behaviour management programme to ensure a positive learning ethos. The majority of difficult behaviour in lessons is dealt with effectively through a combination of teamwork, humour and strong relationships. Teamwork continues to be an important feature of the strategies on the small number of occasions when pupils need to come out of the classroom. This is combined with good communication and sharing of information. The headteacher has a pivotal role in the overall management of behaviour in the Centre and in sorting out serious issues which cannot be managed in the classroom. She works very effectively to resolve issues and deploy the staff team to ensure pupils are appropriately and supportively returned to lessons. This means incidents are well managed with minimum disruption to teaching and learning. An important development is to ensure that there are other staff who can develop the skills and confidence to fulfil this role. Currently, staff know that in insisting on clear expectations for behaviour in lessons they are well supported outside the classroom. While behaviour and attitudes are good overall, there are examples of a small number of individual pupils in lessons refusing to join in, participate or co-operate. The issue is opting out rather than acting out behaviour. The two lessons where there was unsatisfactory learning both resulted from pupils being unwilling to participate or get involved in the lesson. In a small number of lessons, this lack of co-operation or involvement means that while teaching is good, learning is only satisfactory. While teaching teams work hard using a wide range of strategies, humour and positive direction, a small number of pupils remain disengaged and lacking in any motivation over periods of the lesson. Where teaching groups are small, individual pupil's lack of involvement or participation has a significant impact on overall learning. There are also a small number of instances where rules are not rigorously applied and this gives a mixed message to some pupils, for example whether pupils can wear outdoor jackets in lessons. Equally, there are very good examples of rules being fairly, calmly, and clearly applied.
19. Teaching assistants play a key role in classrooms in securing learning through their positive approach, humour, knowledge of pupils, expertise and enthusiasm. Teaching assistants have developed significant expertise in areas of the curriculum, for example in science, art, food technology and ICT. They show a very good understanding of pupils' needs and have strong relationships with pupils. Their humour and positive approach to pupils significantly lifts the ethos in lessons. Teacher / teaching assistant planning currently relates to a behaviour support role in lessons rather than the development of a teaching role in specific activities. There is insufficient focus in planning on how teaching assistants can use their considerable skills and expertise to support individual learning and achievement.
20. Lessons are carefully thought out and planned to ensure a safe, structured and secure learning environment. Activities are closely supervised and managed. However, there are examples where this reduces independence and responsibility, for example handing out pens and resources to pupils to minimise movement round the classroom. Equally, there are examples, particularly in satisfactory teaching, where lessons lack challenge, variety and pace. The key shortcoming in these lessons is the lack of variation in learning activities to meet the range of pupils' needs and provide an appropriate challenge to further develop and extend their

learning. Teaching teams currently do not plan how they will support the learning of individuals or groups of pupils in lessons.

21. In observations of the work of the outreach team teaching and learning were of high quality. There is commendable consistency in the approaches being used by different staff in separate schools. Staff are well prepared and are clear about the programme for each individual pupil. There are good relationships and an open approach which encourages pupils to talk about their progress at school. Sessions are focussed and well-structured with good use being made of available time. There are clear outcomes from the sessions with pupils devising targets and strategies which will then be revisited at the next session.
22. The recently appointed SENCO has worked hard to establish detailed baseline assessments which can be used to measure pupils' progress in the key areas of literacy and mathematics. Pupils will be reassessed towards the end of this term and this information will form part of the reports which form the basis for termly reviews. This should give a measure of progress for pupils who are placed in the Centre for a term, who are the majority of the population. In addition, subject teachers carry out detailed assessments against national standards and there is regular assessment through tests at the end of units/modules. The setting of specific academic targets is at an early stage of development. In addition to establishing baseline targets, the SENCO has also initiated a major overhaul of SEN procedures including reformatting individual education plans to make them more user friendly. Sensibly the Centre is making increasing use of the mainstream schools' IEPs and assessment data. The detailed pen pictures of pupils give a succinct summary of behavioural/social issues combined with baseline assessment information, for example reading and spelling ages. This provides useful background information to staff. However assessment information is not yet sufficiently well embedded or used by teachers in planning their lessons. The detailed baseline assessments show the wide range of ability and prior attainment in all groups (for example National Curriculum Level 2 to Level 7 in a Year 9 group). Currently, this information is not effectively used by teachers in planning activities, groupings, or how individual pupils will be supported in lessons. Its use is currently limited, for example in deciding who receives literacy support. While regular assessment of behaviour is well developed and used through the daily recording sheet, assessment for academic learning and achievement is at an initial stage of development and not yet embedded in teachers' practice.
23. The Centre has a marking policy which is consistently applied with all work being marked regularly and in the prescribed green ink. Pupils receive positive feedback on their work although in some cases comments could be more evaluative about how work can be improved.
24. The daily recording-sheet is used well and valued by both pupils and parents. Currently, evaluation is based on attitudes to learning and the weekly target for personal development. A further development could include academic monitoring.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It has an appropriate range which supports reintegration as it covers most of the subjects from the mainstream school. In addition, the Centre works hard through the school day and in the extended curriculum to promote a range of opportunities for personal and social development. The Centre continues to improve and develop the curriculum. There is good opportunity for enrichment by using ICT both as a core subject and to enhance and develop learning across the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has a clear focus on preparing pupils for returning to their mainstream schools.

- The Centre supports the social development of pupils well, particularly through the breakfast club and the supervised breaks.
- There is a broad and soundly balanced curriculum that meets the requirements laid down for the Centre.
- Homework is not regularly set.
- Staffing is very good with a complementary match of teachers and teaching assistants.
- Accommodation and resources are very good.
- The provision for information and communication technology offers the potential to make an exciting contribution to learning throughout the Centre.

Commentary

25. The Centre sets out to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with reintegration back into mainstream education as its main focus. The Centre has a curriculum that meets the statutory requirement for a pupil referral unit (PRU) and the requirements for full-time education. It complies with the LEA's policy on the curriculum for pupils educated in PRUs. The Centre operates a well-structured and supervised day in which the informal parts of the day, for instance breaks and lunchtimes, are carefully planned and used to promote the development of social and personal skills. This is extended by the breakfast club, which is organised as an effectively supported start of the day for most pupils.
26. The curriculum has been well designed. It provides a broad and balanced week of study which incorporates all areas of learning. There is an appropriate balance between the core curriculum, the extended curriculum and well-structured opportunities throughout the week for personal and social development. The Centre works hard to improve and develop the curriculum by using mainstream expertise and experience; for example in drama, French and music.
27. The core curriculum is well organised with English, mathematics, science and ICT having a good proportion of time. Some progress in these core areas is slowed by individual pupils being withdrawn for the whole of the period for additional literacy lessons. The core curriculum is well supported by an effective PSHE programme.
28. Pupils' individual needs are identified through baseline assessment, which is followed up by regular assessment in all areas of the curriculum. However, their work is not extended by the regular use of homework as it would in a mainstream school. A number of parents highlighted this as a concern in questionnaires. The school is currently working with parents on developing a homework programme.
29. The Centre is actively developing a range of curriculum opportunities to promote wider skills particularly in practical areas through art and food technology. Links with mainstream schools are good and this helps in preparing pupils for the fast planned turn round of only one term. The whole Centre, with its outreach team, and the LEA have key roles in fostering links and seeing how pupils can be quickly returned through the 'revolving door'. At the time of the inspection, with the Centre only just beginning its new role, it was not possible to judge how effective this will be.
30. There are few opportunities to enrich the curriculum beyond the school day, but the range of opportunities that takes place during the day is wide, with out-of-school visits taking place regularly through the social development scheme. In addition, the rewards programme offers an exciting range of off-site activities which take place every Friday morning for all pupils who have met the appropriate targets. Target setting throughout the day, in every lesson and throughout every part of school life is a key feature that is used to motivate and enable pupils to identify their progress in social and work skills. Pupils discuss their progress regularly with their teachers and share with each other their successes and failures in meeting targets. The

daily recording form is taken home which is a key part of home-school links. This is valued by the parents who see it as a way for them to find out their children are progressing in the areas that they know need improvement.

31. At the time of the inspection, with the other part of the Centre still unfinished, staff were not all fully engaged on their normal roles. Where it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of the staffing organisation in these circumstances, it is clear that staffing skills and expertise are very well matched to the needs of the curriculum and the pupils. There is a genuine commitment to the pupils from all staff. This is particularly evident in many of the non-teaching staff through the quality of their relationships with the pupils and their commitment to their needs. Some of the teaching assistants are stunning in the way that they work with pupils, challenging both behaviour and academic progress in a way that is positive and yet unforgiving of second best.
32. Fifteen pupils have statements of special educational needs. The Centre is meeting the provision outlined in their statements. Statements are reviewed appropriately and SEN systems are well organised and maintained.
33. Accommodation is new and of a very high quality. There is good outdoor space within the Centre boundaries. For the number of pupils planned, the amount of accommodation is very good. There are good resources in each of the rooms and there is a good supply of books. The Centre is continuing to plan improvements; for example, the school is now wired for electronic whiteboards although none have yet been installed. The school is bidding for funding from the LEA, and its school improvement plan identifies that every room will be equipped.
34. ICT equipment is very good, with a well-equipped specialist room with 10 machines and colour printing. In addition, every classroom has one computer. There is a very good software base with the most modern and effective programmes, many which are capable of being customised for teaching other subjects. In lesson observations, these are used infrequently and, outside the specialist room, little use is made of the computers in classrooms to support learning. Overall, for every day use, there is a very good provision of resources.

Care, guidance and support

The school offers its pupils very good care and guidance in a safe and supportive environment. Parents and pupils have every confidence in the high level of care provided and the willingness of staff to listen and act upon any concerns. Support for each pupil is good as is the monitoring of personal development and achievement. The Centre is receptive and very good at taking pupils views into account. Experienced high calibre classroom support ensures that individual guidance and care is of a very high standard.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Centre provides a very safe and caring environment for pupils and staff.
- Pupils are enabled to develop a sense of fairness and social justice.
- Very effective classroom support has a positive impact on learning and behaviour.
- A high value is placed upon the views of pupils which gives them pride and self-esteem.
- A popular breakfast club enables pupils to make a positive start to the school day.

Commentary

35. The Centre provides a very high level of care, welfare and health and safety for pupils and staff. Site security and immediate environmental safety are particularly well managed by a dedicated member of staff, with responsibility for overall site management, who ensures that

all requirements regarding fire, first aid, and other aspects of security are maintained to the highest level. Regular reviews identify any potential hazards. Suitable procedures are in place to assess all risks prior to taking trips and engaging in outside activities.

36. All Centre staff know the pupils and their personal circumstances in detail and continually monitor their well being very effectively. Child protection procedures are effectively in place and staff are well trained. Individual pupils who are or may be at risk are well monitored. The school maintains a close relationship with social services and child protection teams. Relationships throughout the Centre are warm and caring, enabling pupils to thrive in a safe and secure environment in the knowledge that they can discuss any worries or concerns freely and in confidence.
37. Through simple yet clear rules and guidance, pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of fairness and consideration towards each other and the staff in the Centre. Both in their questionnaires and subsequent conversations, pupils confirmed that there is an adult that they can turn to if they are worried or concerned about anything either at the Centre or elsewhere. They know that any form of bullying, or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated by the rest of the community at the Centre and, that any occurrences, will be swiftly and firmly addressed.
38. Monitoring of personal development is thorough and detailed. Reviews are regularly held and any additional support required is identified and implemented. As part of the review process subject reports detail academic progress. Induction arrangements are effective and reassuring to enable pupils to settle quickly when they are first admitted to the Centre. Pupils' personal, health and social education have a high priority and contribute well to individual development and maturity.
39. Individual support in lessons is very effective. Much of it is delivered by teaching assistants in collaboration with teachers. During the inspection, the work of some teaching assistants observed was very good. They are knowledgeable, experienced and have a very good knowledge of pupils needs. They make a major contribution to the very effective support pupils receive through the school day.
40. The Centre makes a considerable effort to seek pupils' views and ideas through a very effective school council. Pupils enthusiastically told an inspector that through the school council a cycle track was planned together with other outside facilities and that classroom lockers had been provided. Other matters such as after-school clubs, uniform and meals are reviewed and discussed.
41. The Centre provides a free breakfast club for all pupils, which is very popular. Pupils quickly settle with staff to read the day's newspapers and other magazines which promote discussion and social interaction. Other supervised activities are also available. The club ensures that pupils are composed and ready to start the school day following a proper meal.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The Centre has developed a very good partnership with parents and carers. The Centre provides parents and carers with a daily record of pupils' work and behaviour together with their progress and achievements. This is highly appreciated by parents and carers and provides continuity between home and the Centre.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The close and effective relationship with parents and carers is a strength of the Centre.

- Daily recording sheets give parents and carers a clear and ongoing overview of pupils' progress and behaviour.
- Educational links with other schools are well developed and constructive.
- The outreach team provides and enables a close working relationship in mainstream schools with pupils at risk of being permanently excluded.

Commentary

- Both before and during the inspection, parents commented warmly on the close working relationship the Centre sought to initiate as soon as their child was admitted. Written induction information about the Centre is detailed, colourful and very reassuring. The staff seek to learn as much as possible to facilitate pupils' care, education and overall welfare and this is clearly appreciated by parents. The very effective pupil day sheets are seen and signed each day by parents/carers, who are invited to make their own comments and observations regarding attitudes, behaviour and completion of work. Pupils receive encouragement on a daily level from the Centre and at home; achievements and improvements are also celebrated. The scheme rewards pupils with credits which accumulate to a weekly goal and can be monitored by staff and parents alike.
- Parents know that they are welcome in the Centre at any time to discuss any resulting issues or concerns with staff or a member of senior management. The Centre is anxious to involve parents at every level in reviewing, contributing and developing individual education plans and targets to be set for their children. They are always invited to, and usually attend, annual reviews of those pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Termly reviews are detailed and comprehensive. Academic progress is comprehensively set out in plain English that is easy to follow and understand. Other aspects, such as attendance and team skills, are also explained. The Centre values comments and discussion from parents, carers and pupils, which are also summarised in the review document.
- The Centre's role within the immediate community is at an early stage of development. Local facilities such as parks, recreation areas and local sites of interest are already being exploited well. Visits to Rochester Cathedral have given pupils an appreciation of the rich heritage the area has and there are plans to expand this programme. At the same time, visits from drama groups, teachers from other schools and some local sixth form students are raising pupils' awareness and interest in local life, history and culture.
- The headteacher is anxious to develop the site as a resource for the local community that can be used after the school day. Some imaginative plans are being developed, for example in using the ICT suite for the benefit of parents and the local community and using the new hall for sport and exercise. The rationale is to make the Centre an integral part of the local area so that residents can fully understand its role and the Centre can harness their support in contributing to its success.
- By the very nature of its role in the area, the Centre has a close working relationship with most secondary schools in the local authority area. However, the Centre is also developing links with a number of local advanced skills teachers who visit for special lessons in such subjects as drama, music and French.
- The Silverbank outreach team, based at the site, works very closely with schools in the area to develop and support inclusive practices and to reduce the rate of exclusion and truancy. It is well respected as a resource in mainstream schools. A major aspect of the work in mainstream is to support pupils experiencing difficulty by raising their expectations and achievements while reducing disaffection and negative attitudes to school. The team has an increasingly important role in working between the Centre and mainstream schools to support pupils on short-term placements. This is a developing area of work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong and determined leadership in a time of major change. This is driven by a very clear vision for the new Silverbank Park to be a Centre of excellence. This is shared equally by the LEA and the Centre. The LEA provides strong support to bring about the required changes. A committed staff team work hard to provide continuity of education in the evolving provision but management roles across the Centre need to continue to be developed. The management of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher gives very strong and determined leadership in a time of major change.
- There is a very strong vision, drive and commitment to develop the evolving Silverbank Park into a Centre of excellence. This is strongly supported by the management committee, LEA and Medway Council.
- The headteacher provides a very good role model for ambitious, positive and constructive work with excluded pupils.
- Staff are used and deployed well.
- The Centre, LEA and local mainstream schools have put effective procedures in place to ensure the reintegration of pupils into mainstream schools. Two thirds of the current pupils will be returning to mainstream schools at the end of this term.
- The outreach service is run well and its work is respected by mainstream schools. However, they currently perceive it and the Centre as separate services with different referral routes.
- The Centre, in collaboration with the LEA, must continue to develop management roles to ensure that all staff have the skills and expertise to lead and manage the significant process of change in curriculum and Centre development.
- School improvement planning currently reflects the immediate and pressing priorities of change. It has yet to develop into a rigorous process of strategic planning which establishes the key priorities for the Centre's work.

Commentary

48. The Centre and its outreach service are part of evolving provision which will lead to the establishment of Silverbank Park. This is an exciting, ambitious and forward-looking project which will offer differentiated provision for pupils at risk of exclusion and excluded from mainstream schools. There is a very strong vision and commitment from both the LEA and the Centre to bring this about. The brand new building, which currently houses the Centre is very good evidence of the commitment of both the LEA and Medway Council to create a Centre of excellence. It is purpose designed to a very high specification, providing very good facilities to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. In its design much thought has gone into providing a positive learning environment throughout the Centre, for example, layout, colour, décor and the use of classical music. The LEA is also strongly supportive of the need to develop management roles to take on the full range of responsibilities required in the evolving provision and ensure that the headteacher can carry out the wider strategic leadership and management role required in the future. The LEA has currently placed an associate deputy headteacher to support the headteacher and senior managers through the process of change. In addition, the Centre is well supported in the Key Stage 3 Strategy through adviser support and consultants. There is also good use being made of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) from mainstream schools to develop the curriculum in areas such as drama, French and music as well as bringing in new ideas and approaches. The LEA, working with the Centre and mainstream schools, has put effective procedures into place to ensure the reintegration of pupils from the Centre.

49. The Management Committee is well established and meets termly. It is very clear about its developing role and sees itself providing the challenge and support which would be expected of a governing body. It has good representation from the key partners who support progression from the Centre, for example a secondary school headteacher and a Connexions manager. Currently, there is limited representation at meetings from the local and wider community. The headteacher reports termly to the Management Committee on progress in the Centre.
50. The headteacher provides very strong, determined and purposeful leadership in a time of major changes. She has very high aspirations and vision for the developing provision. She provides a very good role model for staff in the way that she works with young people with significant behavioural difficulties in a firm, constructive and non-confrontational way. Both the new building and the planned reintegration of two thirds of the pupils into mainstream school at the end of this term are significant indicators of the success of her vision and determination. She has a key role in resolving and managing significant behaviour issues which have escalated beyond the classroom. She is currently working with senior managers to develop their expertise and skills in this area.
51. The headteacher has created a committed hardworking staff team whose skills in managing behaviour, humour and good relationships ensure that pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Management roles are developing with ongoing support from the headteacher. For example linking with mainstream expertise and bringing in specialists in subject areas. However, subject co-ordinator roles in particular are at an early stage of development. There is currently no systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and planning for subjects and therefore curriculum development. The current focus in planning on immediate priorities is appropriate and necessary in the present context of continued building work and establishment. However, as a development, the Centre needs to institute a rigorous process of school improvement involving all staff which clearly lays out the Centre's key priorities for improvement and the actions to support this. Monitoring at all levels is integral to this process. Recent monitoring has involved a detailed scrutiny of work and thorough lesson monitoring led by the headteacher. However, skills and expertise need to be developed across the staff so they can take the lead role in monitoring subject delivery and its development.
52. Staff are used and deployed well. There is a high level of support and supervision throughout the school day. Incidents beyond the classrooms are dealt with effectively and there is very good communication and sharing of information within the staff teams. Teaching teams have a good mixture of expertise and experience to deliver the subjects of the curriculum. The weekly timetable provides an important opportunity for staff to plan together on Friday afternoons. This also provides the opportunity for training and staff development. The Centre has very recently been awarded Investors in People (IIP) status with the Friday afternoon sessions being identified by staff as a key time for developing roles and practice. In addition, the IIP report highlighted good practice in communication and the induction of new staff. It recognised the high quality of training and development for all staff, including teaching assistants. Staff felt valued and supported with recent changes to the performance review process being welcomed. Currently the headteacher carries out all the performance management in the Centre.
53. The Outreach Service is well led and managed. Its work is respected by mainstream schools. However they also see the outreach team as separate to the Silverbank Centre with different referral routes. Currently there is little indication of the developing role of outreach as integral part of the evolving Silverbank Park provision and as an essential component of the success of short-term placements in the Centre.
54. Financial resources have been targeted to the immediate priority of ensuring the new Centre is fully equipped and resourced. Subject co-ordinators feel that are well supported in being able

to order the equipment and resources needed. There is a rigorous and systematic system of purchasing stock and equipment which ensures that the principles of best value apply. The Centre is continuing to develop resources, particularly in ICT, with major developments planned in each classroom. An experienced ICT site manager co-ordinates ICT developments and ensures best value. The targeting of funding towards ICT is in line with the Centre and LEA's aspirations to be a Centre of excellence for ICT.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to May 2004

Income and Expenditure (£)	
Total income	£601,203
Total expenditure	£514,813
Expenditure per pupil	£12,870 *

Figures of income/expenditure give little indication of a rapidly moving situation and increased staffing. The expenditure per pupil in the Centre is based on a maximum occupancy of 40 pupils and a nominal deduction from the total expenditure for the costs of the outreach team. The expenditure / pupil cost is relatively high. However, this is only a broad indicator of actual costs.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 3

ENGLISH

Provision for English and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are carefully planned and structured with clear learning objectives.
- There is a well-structured scheme of work.
- There is a good range of resources.
- Work is insufficiently matched to pupils' abilities to extend learning and achievement.
- Standards in English are lower in lessons and National Curriculum tests than in other core subjects.
- The literacy support programme is not an effective use of staff or pupil time.

Commentary

55. Overall achievement is satisfactory. When pupils are stimulated, involved and interested there are examples of good achievement. In one lesson pupils clearly understood the plot of Macbeth and were able to recall the characters involved and key aspects of their personalities. In another lesson pupils knew what was required to plan out a story and make a "twist in the tail"
56. Standards are below the national averages. Baseline assessments show a wide range of attainment. The majority of pupils are working below the national averages with some well below. However, in Year 9, up to a quarter of pupils are working at or above national averages. Many pupils come to the Centre with low literacy skills as a result of the many interruptions to their previous learning caused by their emotional and behavioural difficulties. Standards in English lessons are generally below those in other core subjects. Additionally the provisional National Curriculum test results in English in 2004 were low in comparison with the results obtained for mathematics and science.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are carefully structured and planned. There are clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils at the start of lessons and are referred to and reinforced throughout. The English programme is based around the Key Stage 3 National Literacy Strategy with topics and planning following the mainstream curriculum. Mainstream expertise and approaches have also been developed by using ASTs from mainstream schools. During the inspection a drama AST worked in two English lessons bringing in a range of techniques, energy and high expectations to involve pupils in playing out scenes from Macbeth.
58. There is strong teamwork in lessons to support pupils. Teachers and support staff working together ensure that pupils are on task. Teaching assistants play a key role in raising the ethos in lessons through good humour and positive relationships. This has a positive impact on securing learning. Teaching and learning would be improved by better differentiation in lessons to meet the wide range of learning needs. Work and activities in the main part of the lesson are not always suitably matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Currently, there is a similarity of approach and content which, in the majority of lessons, does not provide the challenge or range of learning opportunities to extend individual learning and achievement beyond satisfactory. In examples of good teaching and learning, the content of lessons clearly builds on previous skills and pupils are suitably challenged.

59. The co-ordination of English is currently satisfactory. A good baseline assessment is made of literacy skills on entry to the Centre. There are well-structured schemes of work based on the mainstream curriculum. However, there is not enough emphasis on differentiation or how assessment informs the planning of individual learning activities in lessons. No use was observed during inspection of ICT to support learning in lessons. However, there is evidence in pupils' files of word-processed work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. There is a thorough system in place to measure pupils' literacy skills on entry to the Centre and this is used as the basis for individual literacy support. This system is recently established and has yet to become embedded and inform practice. There is currently insufficient emphasis on a systematic approach to developing literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils record much of their work through worksheets. They rarely have the opportunity to write at length or for different purposes. There is an appropriate focus on reading skills in lessons with pupils having the confidence and skills to read out loud. The centre has made satisfactory progress in developing pupils' literacy skills which was a key issue in the last inspection.
61. Individual literacy support currently consists of intensive sessions lasting for a whole lesson. In practice pupils find it hard to remain focussed and on task for that length of time. There are examples of unsatisfactory learning and achievement because pupils will not co-operate or engage in tasks. Currently, this is not an effective use of staff or pupil time.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good, committed leadership.
- Lessons are well planned, structured and resourced.
- Teaching is enthusiastic and determined.
- Profiling of pupils has started and will lead to improved learning.
- Further differentiation of activities supported by ICT will improve learning and achievement.

Commentary

62. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory with good features. Older pupils were lively and interested in a lesson on three-dimensional shape recognition. All pupils by the end of the lesson were able to visualise a three-dimensional shape and confident enough to draw its net on the board. Pupils encourage one another to attempt even more difficult three-dimensional shapes and were genuinely pleased when they succeeded. Younger pupils were able to work out the formula for calculating the angles in a polygon. They used this to work out internal and external angles. Pupils are able to understand and apply terms like 'mode' and 'range' to a small set of data. Consistent achievements and progress in lessons mean that many pupils are reaching standards in line with the national averages. Baseline assessments show a wide range of prior attainment on entry.
63. Teaching is good overall. The staff have good subject knowledge and a confident lively approach which motivates pupils to listen and maintain interest. Good relationships and a positive classroom ethos enable pupils to learn and make progress. Normally, the pace of lessons is brisk and pupils respond to questions positively. When the level of challenge is appropriate, pupils are productive and extend their learning. Encouragement and feedback from the teacher helps pupils to know how well they are doing. Overall, teaching is well

planned and resourced. There are clear objectives for every lesson which follow the Key Stage 3 Strategy closely. The newly introduced system of profiling should lead to a more individualised approach to learning. A wider range of learning opportunities supported by ICT would improve learning and achievement.

64. The subject leader is new to the Centre and is still establishing pupils' strengths and weaknesses but has a strong commitment to improve standards. She has established some exciting additions to support mathematics in the Centre. There is a link with Cambridge University where pupils can pose mathematical problems to one of the students. She has worked closely with the Key Stage 3 mathematics consultant and an AST to establish and resource a scheme of work which is based upon the Key Stage 3 Numeracy Strategy.

Numeracy across the curriculum

65. Pupils have opportunities to improve their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example science and food technology. However this is not in a systematic way. There are effective cross-curricular links between mathematics and ICT. Overall the promotion of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. The Centre has made satisfactory progress in improving pupils' numeracy skills which was a key issue in the last inspection.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Experienced specialist science teacher who is successful at working with pupils who have challenging behaviours.
- A practical engaging approach to science which promotes pupils' interest and involvement.
- Very good facilities and resources.
- Strong effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants.
- Lessons are not sufficiently differentiated to challenge and promote achievement and learning.

Commentary

66. The achievement of pupils in science is satisfactory. Thorough planning, specialist knowledge and good teamwork ensure that lessons are safe, structured and secure. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are considerable strengths in teaching in the high quality of relationships, use of humour and organisation of practical work. Teaching and learning can be improved through wider differentiation of learning activities to meet the range of learning needs in classes. There is insufficient challenge in the range of activities and approaches used in lessons to extend and develop learning. There is also insufficient emphasis, particularly during practical sessions, on reinforcing and developing the key learning points needed to improve achievement.
67. A strong feature of the provision is the focus on practical work. There are very good facilities in the brand new science room for a wide range of practical work, and these are complemented by a very good range of resources and equipment. Pupils are interested and involved during practical investigations and, as a result, are clearly keen and enthusiastic about their work in science. In a Year 7 practical lesson, pupils became very effective explorers and investigators in understanding the difference between plant and animal materials. They made interesting discoveries and original observations which were strongly valued and supported by staff. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils tested for the presence of food (starch) in green leaves. There was an appropriate emphasis on health and safety throughout the practical which ensured pupils worked safely and independently in the laboratory.

68. Scrutiny of work and discussion with the co-ordinator also reinforce the practical approach to subject delivery, for example pupils have recently made detailed 'models' of skin and will shortly be making edible 'cells'. This practical approach, combined with the quality of accommodation and equipment, provides a secure basis for further improvement. The interest pupils build up in science is also seen as important in supporting reintegration.
69. Pupils' work is regularly assessed during lessons. Written work is regularly marked with clear feedback to pupils on the quality of their work. In the vast majority of cases, pupils take care and pride in the quality of their written work. This is well maintained in pupils' folders and provides a clear record of their achievements while in the Centre. In addition, pupils take formal tests at the end of units of work. The curriculum is based on the mainstream curriculum with pupils' achievements supporting reintegration. Current topics include photosynthesis (Year 9) food and diet (Year 8) and cells (Year 7).
70. The co-ordinator is clear about where further improvements can be made, for example in the development of subject expertise and the increasing use of ICT for data logging and investigation. However, there is currently no formal process for planning subject developments or feeding this into a wider school improvement plan. The high quality of teamwork is a major feature of the science provision. Both the co-ordinator and teaching assistant effectively combine their specialist skills, knowledge and enthusiasm. There is a strong similarity in their calm, unflustered approach in lessons, combined with humour and strong relationships. There are very good examples of humour and positive enthusiasm lifting pupils motivation and therefore learning in lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of ICT is good with interesting lessons that motivate pupils so that they learn well.
- There is a very good range of software for pupils to use in the very good specialist facility.
- The Centre is planning to make ICT a feature of its provision and it has made a very good start.
- Pupils are able to gain and develop their understanding of ICT in all areas of experience as laid down in the National Curriculum.
- There is little evidence of computers being used in classrooms to support learning other than in the specialist base.

Commentary

71. Overall the achievement of pupils is satisfactory with good features in discrete ICT lessons which ensure pupils are often working broadly in line with national expectations. Although there is some disruptive behaviour, it is only from a small number of pupils. Most pupils look forward to working in their ICT lessons, and recognise the high quality of the new provision. They work hard and make sound and often good progress. Some pupils decide to focus on their own learning. They move away from other pupils and simply get on with their own work for extended periods. These are most often boys.
72. Some lessons are really imaginative. In one lesson, pupils worked out a story line that they then made into an animation. They were able to add sound clips and produce one minute of high quality film. The resources that they use have been carefully chosen with a nice balance of challenge and guaranteed success.

73. Teaching is good, thoroughly planned and resourced. Pupils respond well to the specialist facility and to the work. They get support of high quality from a teaching assistant who is skilful both in challenging and supporting. There is good use of the Internet, which is used appropriately and not excessively.
74. Overall leadership and management of ICT across the Centre is good. The Centre is rightly ambitious for its ICT provision. In the early stages of establishment, it is clearly showing its potential and how it can be developed. It has cleverly enabled some pupils to break free from their pattern of poor working attitudes and enabled them to produce high quality individualised work of which they can feel justifiably proud.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Although in each of the other classrooms there is a computer, they were seldom seen in use during the inspection. An analysis of work shows that pupils do not regularly use ICT in lessons in the way it could and should be used. The Centre needs to look at how to develop the ICT opportunities for pupils in lessons so that it can utilise the skills and interests that pupils are gaining in their discrete ICT lessons.

Other areas of the curriculum

76. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is **good**. The opportunities provided for personal and social education, throughout the school day, through breakfast club, tutor time, lunches and supervised break times ensure that achievement is good overall. In separate PSHE lessons pupils make satisfactory progress. There are planned courses for each year and they cover a suitable range of topics that have relevance to the pupils and are designed to support their needs. Because the teaching takes place mainly with their form teachers, pupils are comfortable in sharing ideas and making their views known without embarrassment. Teaching is good with a healthy balance of real concern and yet challenge, which enables the pupils to consider how they can return to life in mainstream schools. For some, progress is good and they are able to come to terms with the issues raised, whereas others have still a considerable way to go. There is a good attention to issues of health in every year group, with the younger pupils focusing on what is needed for a healthy body to the attention to sport and alcohol in Year 8 and drugs in Year 9. Relationships and their development are tackled in every year, as are rights and responsibilities. These are the underpinning for the whole life of the Centre. PSHE then is far more than just a themeatics lesson in the school. It is an essential part of the process which enables pupils to leave the Centre and return to their original school. Breaks, lunchtimes and the informal parts of the school day are used constructively to develop personal and social skills. Staff eat with pupils and use this time well to promote conversational skills and also discuss issues such as healthy eating and getting on with each other. Classical music is played through out the day in all parts of the Centre and is used to create an atmosphere in which pupils feel relaxed and confident in talking about themselves and events in their lives out of school.
77. In art pupils make **good** progress. They show a good understanding of techniques, for example how light can be used to change the mood in a still life and how to create movement in landscapes. They show good attitudes to work and can demonstrate a high level of concentration, for example completely ignoring fireworks outside the classroom to retain their focus on understanding drawing techniques. They are able to understand how artists make use of different techniques, for example in the landscapes of Henri Rousseau. They clearly enjoy the practical aspects of the subject and make use of reference material to support them in their work. The co-ordinator is clear where further improvements can be made, for example in the use of sketchbooks and in the use of extended curriculum time to develop practical work. ICT is used well to support work in art although it was not in use in the two lessons observed. The co-ordinator is keen to further develop ICT with the imminent arrival of

whiteboards and projectors in the Centre. Currently, there is no formal planning system in place for subject developments. A feature of the high quality of art provision is the strong teamwork, with teachers and teaching assistants combining their expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject.

78. In food technology pupils make **good** progress. Three lessons, one for each year group, were observed where pupils were producing a main course for a meal. The product could be taken home and used as part of the family diet. Pupils worked hard in the lessons and achieved well. They are keen and interested in the subject area and look forward to the lessons. There is a good balance of challenge and support. For example, in each lesson pupils were encouraged to try a new fruit that they have not previously experienced and to analyse the taste and texture. Often they were not keen, but a healthy balance of rewards and cajoling by the teacher and teaching assistant enables pupils to overcome their reticence and at least try a small portion. Some were pleasantly surprised and all quickly complete the analysis sheet. Pupils look forward to the practical activities. Pupils made a Chinese stir-fry in the lesson seen. Practical achievement was good although none of the teaching was by a specialist. In consequence the attention to hygiene was not rigorous. However, there were good discussions on a healthy diet and how the dish contributed to a balanced intake. In addition, the cultural influences of the cooking method and ingredients were touched upon, adding to some good awareness of cultural differences being gained. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well thought out and pupils clearly understand what they have to do and why before proceeding to practical activities. There are good examples of pupils working very effectively together and supporting each other as they carry out the practical tasks and clear up afterwards.
79. In physical education the progress of pupils is **satisfactory**. Pupils get one lesson a week and a feature of the lessons is the use of a starter as a literacy activity, for example constructing a poem from the word 'competition'. In the activity part of lessons, pupils demonstrate some good skills, for example how to control the ball using the instep in a football activity. Similarly, good skills were shown in a badminton session after an initial reluctance from pupils to play badminton rather than football. In addition to physical education skills there is an appropriate focus on personal development, for example listening and following instructions, turn taking, and tolerance towards others. A feature of lessons is the teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants with both playing a full role in the lesson. There are good examples of the very positive input of teaching assistants where humour, enthusiasm and knowledge of pupils lift motivation and learning. A success highlighted by the co-ordinator is the equal participation of girls. Currently football, volleyball and badminton are the main physical education activities and take place on site in the school hall.
80. In the team skills programme, pupils make **good** progress in key areas of personal development such as developing self-esteem, the concept of team spirit and social skills. Team-skills is an integral part of the curriculum with each group receiving one afternoon a week. It is an area of the curriculum which many pupils highlight as an aspect of the school they particularly enjoy. In the one session observed, pupils visited a local outdoor pursuits centre where the session was led by an instructor. Pupils achieved well in key areas of personal development with a clear 'team spirit' developing through activities and 'bubbling' self-esteem. Achievements in team skills are also well displayed in the Centre.
81. In history pupils make **good** progress. They achieve well as a result of an established scheme of work and strong teaching based upon a sound knowledge of the pupils. Pupils make good progress in learning and understanding the problems facing Germany at the beginning of 1914. Strong links exist between geography and history and the good progress made by pupils ensures the subject makes a valuable contribution to the curriculum as a whole. Pupils' awareness of important historical events is raised and by studying the same topics as mainstream schools this supports their reintegration. Teaching in history is good and

sometimes very good. Teacher's knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject motivates the pupils and ensures their learning is never less than good. Lessons are well planned and resourced with clear and well-understood learning objectives. Very good use of open-ended questions directed to specific pupils provides timely intervention and ensures pupils are involved and able to widen this knowledge and understanding.

82. In geography pupils make **good** progress. Good planning and an appropriate scheme of work are in place. Teachers provide pupils with a suitable range of tasks which enable them to gain good geographical skills. Pupils achieve well. They demonstrate that they can interpret data and draw conclusions from it. They understand how climate and rainfall affect forests and that this has an effect on life within the forest. Teaching in geography is good overall. This is due to good planning and clear objectives for each lesson. A brisk pace, coupled with lively interactions and good use of probing questions ensure that good progress is made. Pupils are interested and involved and receive appropriate encouragement.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the Headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	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).