

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIARWOOD SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 109410

Headteacher: David Hussey

Lead inspector: George Derby

Dates of inspection: 3 – 7 October 2004

Inspection number: 270534

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	85
School address:	Briar Way Fishponds Bristol
Postcode:	BS16 4EA
Telephone number:	0117 965 7536
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Reynolds
Date of previous inspection:	11 October 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Briarwood is a slightly larger than average special school, catering for up to 86 pupils. It admits pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and those with autism. A few pupils have multi-sensory impairment (MSI) in addition to these difficulties. The youngest children in the Foundation Stage are taught alongside older pupils in Year 2. At the time of the inspection, there were only two children aged five or below attending the school.

All primary aged pupils are taught on the Briarway site (the original special school site) while most secondary aged pupils and Post-16 students are taught on the Briarfield site, attached to Whitefield Community School, one mile away. The secondary department moved into this newly constructed accommodation which contains a large hydrotherapy pool in September 2002. However, the site is too small to accommodate all the pupils it should, and a class of Year 7 to 11 autistic pupils are taught in the primary base. The well established Post-16 department currently has 12 students. It is based at the Briarfield site.

The school draws its pupils mainly from the area surrounding Bristol. Sixty per cent of the school's roll are white, while the others come from homes representing a wide range of different heritages. These include pupils from Somali, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi backgrounds. Although there are 14 pupils for whom English is not their first language, these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition because of their special educational needs.

Pupils come from a very wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and a very high percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Overall, there is a high level of social need. Most children enter the school with very low levels of attainment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25349	George Derby	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology
32677	Brian Horley	Lay inspector	
10099	Sue Lewis	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Modern foreign language
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27243	Ian Tatchell	Team inspector	Geography History Personal, social and health education Physical education Post-16 Religious education Work-related learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils' achievement is good. The school very successfully meets the pupils' special educational needs, particularly in relation to their communication and personal skills. The quality of teaching is good. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The school has been faced with considerable difficulties which have slowed the pace of some of its work but, nevertheless, the headteacher, staff and governors have worked tirelessly to overcome these. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's vision and commitment to inclusion for all pupils is very strong; the school has worked hard to develop very good inclusive activities and arrangements.
- Pupils achieve well in English and very well in relation to their communication skills; signs, symbols and objects are used very well to aid pupils' understanding, particularly for those with autism.
- Staff motivate and encourage pupils very well and pupils work very hard because of the very good relationships with staff and the relevant, interesting and often exciting lessons.
- Care and concern for pupils' personal and social development pervades all aspects of the school's work.
- Staff know their pupils very well, especially in relation to the diversity of their individual needs.
- 'The management role of teachers that have special responsibilities for subjects needs to be strengthened.
- A good start has been made in formalising systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress overall, but in the subjects of the curriculum these still require further development.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and results in some pupils' learning opportunities being narrowed.
- Religious education is not taught in sufficient depth in the Post-16 department.

There has been a satisfactory improvement since the school was inspected in October 1999. The school's planned response to the issues from the last inspection was clear, although it has been somewhat diverted by the move to new accommodation, with its associated problems and some senior management changes. In addition, the school has been under-resourced and finance has been extremely tight. The school has responded very well in dealing with these issues and it is a credit to the headteacher that the transfer of staff and pupils was managed so well. The school's 2002 - 2005 improvement plan re-addresses the points raised by the eight key issues at the last inspection and much has been achieved in the past school year or so. There are a few areas of work still outstanding, such as training for subject leaders, but these are planned for in 2005.

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	very good
Year 6	good	very good
Year 9	good	very good
Year 11	good	very good
Year 13	good	very good

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

The pupils achieve well across the school. It is the very good attention to pupils' individual special educational needs, and especially their communication skills and personal and social development, which helps them to make sense of what they are learning and of the world around them. Even though the improved curriculum still has a few problems, the way teachers now plan from the new schemes of work has also brought improvements. Pupils achieve very well in communication and in personal, social, and health education and citizenship (PSHCE). They achieve well in mathematics,

religious education and English overall; although progress in pupils' writing skills is satisfactory, more planned opportunities and use of ICT and symbols to promote writing would support their achievement further. In science and ICT, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Despite the often good teaching in these subjects, the planning is not always refined enough to support the small steps needed. Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and based on well planned routines which establish children's early learning and communication skills. Achievement is good in Post-16, although limited in religious education as the programme is not taught in sufficient depth. It is also good in the Foundation Stage; this is mainly because of the good knowledge staff have of the children's needs.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils are very interested in their lessons and behave very well. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' written planning is sound. They consider carefully what the different groups of pupils are to do and learn in lessons and, although this is not always clearly written down, work matches the individual needs of pupils well. Teachers assess pupils' progress satisfactorily but this could be improved by focusing more clearly on the learning by specific pupils and groups. Staff give pupils every encouragement and support them very well, using the high degree of skill displayed by teaching assistants. A very small amount of teaching was unsatisfactory because the pace of learning was too slow. The very good quality of care for pupils, the good links with parents and very good involvement of the community including local schools, very strongly contribute to the pupils' opportunities and progress. The curriculum is broadly satisfactory and the ways in which the school enriches pupils' opportunities are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's leadership is good. He has a very clear view of school development and has built a strong team of committed staff who share the school's ambitions and goals. The leadership by the senior management team and subject leaders is satisfactory. Management overall is satisfactory. The school runs well on a day-to-day basis. The school has come through a period of significant change very well, although there are still outstanding issues, such as insufficient funding. Monitoring of teaching is in place by senior managers. Monitoring by subject leaders, though establishing that what is planned is taught, does not yet extend to analysing the quality of pupils' learning, their achievement and how well it is taught. Training has been planned to improve this. The work of the governors is good. They provide very good support but are sometimes dependent on the headteacher for information about the school's areas for improvement. They have suitable plans to address this. Most, but not all, statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very good views of the school. The few parents at the pre-inspection meeting were very positive about the school. Very few concerns were raised by parents through the questionnaire they completed. Pupils like their lessons and activities very much.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are:

- Improve the work of subject leaders and other co-ordinators by ensuring they undertake all aspects of their roles.
- Ensure that assessment of pupils' progress is developed further and is taken into account by all teachers in planning their teaching and for pupils' learning in all subjects.
- Improve the school's accommodation in partnership with the local education authority (LEA).

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that religious education is fully taught in the Post 16 department.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The attainment of pupils is very low when they enter the school. This is due to their severe, profound, or other learning difficulties, such as autism. Pupils' achievements are good. They are good in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 to 11 and in the Post-16 department. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys or girls of that of pupils with SLD, PMLD, autism or the few pupils with multi-sensory impairment. Those pupils for whom English is not the first language achieve as well as the rest of the pupils because of the very good attention given to communication within the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff understand the needs of pupils very well.
- The pupils make good progress and achieve well in most subjects; they achieve very well in English and PSHCE.
- The good use of signs, symbols and objects significantly aids pupils' progress.

Commentary

1. The standards achieved overall have been maintained since the last inspection, although these have been strengthened in ICT where these were previously unsatisfactory; they have improved and are now satisfactory. In addition, the students' progress in the Post-16 department has improved and is now good, because their work builds well on what they have learned earlier.
2. The curriculum is now satisfactory; it meets pupils' needs well and for the most part, adequately builds on the work previously undertaken. There are still some weaknesses, but overall the curriculum supports adequately pupils' achievement.
3. Other reasons for the good progress and achievement are:
 - good teaching;
 - planning of relevant, interesting and exciting activities for pupils to maximise learning;
 - a wide range of ways of helping pupils to communicate and to learn;
 - effective target setting to raise attainment.
4. In English, and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) the pupils achieve very well. This is because of the very good knowledge that staff have of the pupils' needs and the very good way they use information on pupils' needs to plan work. In many lessons, good and very good stimulating teaching and a wide range of learning experiences enable the pupils to achieve their best. In addition, the support for pupils' skills in these areas pervades the whole of the school's work. It is embedded in everything that is done and is central to pupils' individual targets in their individual education plans (IEPs).
5. The knowledge of pupils' special educational needs, especially those pupils with autism and PMLD, is particularly good. Some staff's subject knowledge, such as that in ICT, has limited pupils' opportunities in the past, but staff knowledge has improved well and the school's new schemes of work for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties are helping teachers plan much more effectively. In science and ICT the planning is sometimes broad and much is left to teachers to decide on the detail of what is taught. This is why achievement is satisfactory and not good or better in these subjects.

6. Some individual pupils make significant progress, such as autistic pupils who have had difficulty in other settings. A significant strength is the way teachers use signs, symbols and objects well throughout their lessons to support pupils' communication and understanding. There is still scope, however, for better support to be provided for pupils' 'written' communication. Achievement in writing is only satisfactory because pupils do not have enough opportunities to use a wide range of ways in which to express themselves in written form.
7. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to collect data in English, mathematics and science on pupils' progress using differentiation performance criteria (P scale). This has aided the target setting process. Meaningful target setting procedures are developing and the information leads senior staff and governors to ask pertinent questions about the relative progress of pupils with different needs. This has resulted in an increase of self-critical appraisal and more awareness of how the school can challenge itself to do better for pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good across the school and at all stages. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond very well to their lessons and apply themselves very well to any task.
- Pupils are very receptive to new experiences and the school is a harmonious establishment.
- Pupils are confident and relationships with each other and with adults are very good.
- The school makes very good provision to prepare older students for life in the broader community.

Commentary

8. The school has good systems for the recording and monitoring of pupils' attendance. Attendance varies from year to year, mainly due to pupils' medical needs. The school takes immediate action to check with parents/carers when a pupil's absence is unexplained. The majority of pupils are brought to the school by local education authority transport which is often delayed in traffic. As a result, pupils are sometimes late and classes do not always start on time.
9. Pupils arrive in the morning happy to be at school and keen to start lessons. In lessons pupils apply themselves very well to whatever task they are given and achieve well as a result. Lessons are interesting and teachers try to provide exciting opportunities to help pupils learn. As a result, pupils are interested in the activities. Most pupils react very well to the opportunities to try new experiences, such as visiting local shops and play an active part in sports activities. Pupils are happy and confident in school and when visiting other locations. Their relationships with each other, staff members and other adults are very good. They are confident and the older students are happy to talk about their school life. An example was a Post-16 student clearly explaining how the students had cooked spaghetti the previous day and the importance of good hygiene.
10. There are high expectations for pupils' conduct and staff work consistently to achieve this. The school's moral code is well promoted and pupils are clear on how they should behave. Staff draw up detailed behaviour management plans where, because of pupils' special educational needs, their behaviour is challenging. Pupils' successes are recognised in class, through assemblies and in the entrance hall where award certificates are displayed on a board. Pupils rise to the occasion and try very hard to meet the academic and personal demands made upon them. There were no exclusions in the previous year.

11. Pupils are given time to reflect on their experiences and what they have achieved during lessons as well as school assemblies. In a primary assembly the teacher skilfully used light, music and tactile objects, such as flowers, to illustrate the changes in autumn. An assembly on a similar theme in the secondary department used colour and tone to help pupils think about change. There are many opportunities for pupils' social development inside the school and in the wider community. The very good links with local businesses and colleges encourage Post-16 students to feel confident mixing with those of a similar age and the general population in preparation for life after school. In the main school, pupils use a room fitted out with domestic furniture and appliances and learn routine household jobs such as cooking, in a realistic social environment. Throughout the school there are good opportunities for pupils to mix with those from other schools particularly through joint sporting activities. Younger children often attend sessions at a local nursery and join in their activities. Other cultures are recognised through religious education lessons and by celebrating the festivals of other faiths when pupils get involved in cooking the foods eaten on these occasions.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.4
National data	8.7	National data	0.5

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 good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Other aspects, such as the very good quality of care, welfare and safety for pupils, the good links with parents and the very good links with the community and other schools contribute well to the pupils' opportunities and progress. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good. It is good in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 to 11 and in the Post-16 department. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have an intimate knowledge of pupils' wide ranging needs at all stages in their school life.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons which engage the pupils fully.
- Staff have very high expectations as to how pupils should behave; as a result, behaviour is very good.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support and care for pupils.
- Teaching is good and sometimes very good in subjects and for the pupils' personal and communication development.
- Assessment procedures are improving and are satisfactory; assessments made in lessons about what pupils have learned are not always sharp enough because the intended outcomes for each pupil are not specified in planning.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching overall has been maintained since the last inspection, though there are no longer any subjects where teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching is good because of the good expertise of staff and their detailed knowledge of the pupils' needs. This commences in the Foundation Stage where detailed notes are kept of pupils' responses which build into a picture of their strengths and weaknesses. In the Post-16 provision the skills students have

developed over their time in school are further expanded to prepare them very well for later life. This relates not just to the pupils' academic needs but also to their communication and their personal skills. Signs, symbols and objects are used well to promote pupils' understanding and make clear what they are to do and learn. In most lessons the targets set for pupils in their individual education plans are taken very good account of. Pupils learn well because of this. The teachers also use their knowledge well of what pupils have learned previously when planning lessons.

13. Teachers generally plan interesting and motivating lessons; learning is exciting and captures pupils' imaginations and interests. As a result, pupils enjoy school and learning very much. Pupils know they can succeed and their confidence and self-esteem are significantly boosted through the praise and rewards they receive. As a result of the very good encouragement they get in lessons, and the high quality, knowledgeable support by teaching assistants, the pupils try hard and respond extremely well to their lessons. The quality of personal care in lessons is very good. The very good level of care provides a secure and effective environment for learning. The school has developed the skills of support staff well in this respect and the approaches that staff take are unobtrusive and very sensitive. Sometimes, care routines do take up time and leave less time for learning. This is partly because of the design of the building and sometimes because of the organisation of the school day in the particular class. The school recognises these difficulties and is considering how it can overcome them.
14. Teachers' expectations are high and they organise and manage their lessons well. Pupils behave well because they are interested and have very good relationships with staff, and also because staff make it very clear what they expect from the pupils. The staff know when to stand back and when to intervene, thus promoting as much independence as possible among pupils. In addition, much use is made of communication aids, simple switches and software which helps pupils make choices.
15. Written planning is satisfactory. In many cases only one objective is identified for the whole class. Discussion with teachers indicates they do not expect all pupils to achieve such an objective and that some may go on to achieve much more. They are often clear about how the work they have planned meets the different pupils' needs and the tasks set during the inspection were matched well to these needs overall. However, assessment of pupils' responses in lessons, and over time, is not always sharp enough because teachers do not record the different outcomes. This leads to a lack of preciseness in the assessments made and in planning for the next steps. In the best practice, teachers have considered the considerable variation in pupils' ability and have clearly identified on their plans what they want each pupil to learn. Teachers and teaching assistants then record the pupils' learning against these and build up a very clear picture of pupils' skills and progress.
16. A very small amount of weak teaching was seen during the inspection. This was in classes in Years 3 to 6 and Years 10 and 11 and was because the methods used with the pupils with the most complex needs were misjudged, the pace of the lessons was too slow and not all pupils were sufficiently involved in learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (15%)	35 (56%)	16 (26%)	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.

17. The teaching is good in English, mathematics, and in religious education. In PSHCE and the aspect of communication, the teaching is very good. Teaching in science and ICT is satisfactory. This is because teachers do not always clearly identify what they want each pupil to learn. Only a small amount of teaching was observed in the other subjects and it is,

therefore, not possible to make a judgement about its quality. In English, the very strong emphasis on speaking and listening and pupils' communication helps pupils to learn very well. The use of signs, symbols and objects of reference is very successful in helping them understand what they are to do and learn. Opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills occur in a range of subjects. The teaching of writing is generally satisfactory but it is a less developed area of teaching and learning. Too little use is made of different methods to promote written work, especially, ICT.

18. The school's assessment procedures have improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. They are an improving aspect of the school's work. The differentiated performance criteria for the 'P scales' have been used for some time in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to track pupils' progress. In addition, the most important things pupils need to learn is identified and progress tracked through the recordings made in pupils' individual education plans. The use of a newly introduced commercial computer-based scheme is enabling more detailed profiling of pupils' progress, so that the school now has the data to look much more carefully at pupils' progress and achievements. It has begun this well for those areas of the curriculum for which it has data. However, much of the change is recent and in most other subjects there is still considerable work to be done. In these subjects, procedures are too informal and plans for gathering information too infrequent to ensure teachers and subject leaders are clear about standards and progress.
19. Teachers generally do, however, have a very strong informal understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do, particularly in relation to their communication, personal development and their specific special educational needs. The school recognised that systems in place previously did not support a detailed understanding of pupils' achievements in subjects over time, nor allow standards in subjects to be monitored and targets set. Good profiles of pupils' work and experiences are now being built up in core subjects to address this. However, there is not yet a sufficiently regular system for recording and monitoring pupils' responses, achievements and learning in other subjects. The school has worked hard to give teachers confidence in assigning levels and understanding what the new assessments mean and is now in a position to take assessment and target setting forward more quickly. In some classrooms, such as in the Foundation Stage class and the classes for autistic pupils, there are some good day-to-day observational assessments made by teachers which also inform lessons and pupil records well.
20. The use of the information gained through assessment is satisfactory overall, but varies from class to class. It is generally used well in the Foundation Stage, in English, mathematics and personal and social development (and PSHCE) to inform lesson planning. Information gained from these subjects also informs IEPs and behaviour programmes well, although some targets set are too general. However, in some subjects such as science and ICT less experienced teachers do not always have a clear idea as to what each pupil will gain from the lesson and how that builds on previous learning. Records kept do not always enable this link to be made. Assessment in these subjects is unsatisfactory but there are suitable plans to address these weaknesses.

The curriculum

The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils are satisfactory. These are also satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and at Post-16. There is a good range of activities to enrich pupils' learning. The resources and staffing are satisfactory but the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has worked hard to plan a curriculum which meets the very wide range of pupils' needs across two school sites.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of different sports and arts activities.

- Teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity in lessons to further pupils' personal and social development.
- The course for students at Post-16 prepares them very well for leaving school.
- Subject planning is developing appropriately although some plans lack the detail necessary to support inexperienced staff.
- The weaknesses in the accommodation affect learning in several subjects and the impact of the weaknesses on personal care routines sometimes means that lessons do not always take place as shown in timetables.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to religious education in the post-16 curriculum.

Commentary

21. The school has responded well to the changing needs of pupils and has adapted the curriculum accordingly. The pupils' significantly increased needs and the complexity of providing a curriculum across two different school sites have provided a considerable challenge. However, it has resulted in a curriculum which is largely broad and balanced, although there is still some work to do. Pupils have the opportunity to study appropriate subjects for their year groups and all pupils have access to a relevant curriculum matched to their needs. Religious education is taught as a separate subject throughout the school but at Post-16 is taught within other subjects, as part of the school's award bearing course. However, this is not taught in sufficient depth.
22. The planning of the curriculum has gathered pace over the last few years and has been focused on ensuring that there is an overall 'map' to guide teachers' planning across the year groups. Most schemes of work cover all aspects of what needs to be taught but the detail of these is not yet fully in place for all subjects. These include art and music and science and ICT. Although the planning is adequate, the lack of detail in parts means that it is possible to repeat work and is too reliant on teachers deciding how to extend work. A few schemes do not give sufficient guidance to inexperienced staff in how to plan the activities for pupils with the most needs.
23. There is insufficient monitoring of the school timetable and the amount of actual teaching time undertaken in classes. The amount of time allocated across the week for different classes for the teaching of some subjects such as mathematics varies greatly. Teachers sometimes finish lessons earlier than that stated on the timetable in order to get pupils ready for the next activity or for lunch or snacks. This is partly due to difficulties with accommodation and staffing as well as to meet the personal needs of those pupils with the most physical difficulties.
24. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and the arts which help improve their fitness, social skills and understanding of cultural pursuits. The school is part of the School Sports Partnership and pupils take part in different sports and in sporting festivals with other schools. These have included netball workshops, dance and athletics. Pupils visit art galleries and attend art workshops with local artists such as the 'Get Art Bristol' project.
25. Provision for personal, social and health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is very good. At the primary stage this is largely about self-care and personal hygiene, although pupils do study aspects such as healthy eating and drug awareness from time to time. In the lower part of the secondary department (Years 7 to 9), PSHCE is taught on a modular basis and was not being taught at the time of the inspection. In Years 10, 11 and Post-16 this happens all year round and at present the lessons are planned in conjunction with a MENCAP project 'Transactive' which involves inclusion activities with mainstream pupils. A strength in the provision is the way that teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop pupils' personal and social development during lessons across all year groups. This constant attention to improving means that pupils make very good progress in these areas.

26. The Post-16 department is very successful in preparing students for life after school with the good support of the careers guidance provided by the 'Connexions' adviser. Work placements are provided for the students and they benefit from the close links that have been established with local colleges.
27. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The secondary department was built two years ago and is a well lit building which includes a large hydrotherapy pool. However, this facility has never been used due to a lack of appropriate hoisting equipment and the heating system being affected by pupils from the secondary school activating false fire alarms. Although it has taken a considerable amount of time, all these issues have now been resolved. Staff are being trained in the Halliwick swimming method and it is hoped that the pool can be used at the beginning of 2005. There are no specialist subject facilities except for a music room. The resistant materials programme cannot be fully provided because of this and the science programme is based on an earlier stage of learning. The school cannot offer a secondary model of subject teaching because of the lack of facilities. Access and movement around the building is problematic for those pupils who need most care and support. This especially relates to access to bathroom facilities and the dining room but in some classrooms, when all pupils are present, it is difficult to move them around. There is little storage and mobility equipment lines corridors, reducing their width. There is no distinct Post-16 facility, although the school has done its best to provide a separate area. However, access is still difficult for some pupils, such as around the food preparation area and the cooking equipment, as these have not been especially adapted.
28. Since the secondary pupils moved onto the Whitefield Community School site, the primary department is now more spacious. The school makes good use of all space in this department. Outside areas have been developed well although there is a lack of large play equipment. Despite improved lighting some areas are gloomy. The acoustics in the hall are poor and mean that it is not always easy for pupils to locate sound. Some areas, such as sensory rooms and the library, are very small and access by pupils is difficult. The school is seeking ways of utilising the caretaker's vacant house, although it cannot be used by pupils because access is also difficult to this building. The primary department accommodates a class of pupils from Years 7 to 11 because there is no space for these pupils on the secondary site. Although the school tries its best to provide opportunities, there is no peer group. These arrangements are unsatisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides good advice and guidance based on monitoring. The school seeks and acts upon pupils' views well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good health and safety procedures including thorough risk assessment.
- There are very good partnerships between teachers and health professionals.
- The school has very good induction methods for new pupils.
- Pupils have very good relationships with adults at the school.
- Post-16 preparation for further education and life in the wider community is very good.

Commentary

29. Pupils' care, health and safety and general welfare are of the highest priority for the school. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection and these procedures are fully in place. He has had recent training which has been disseminated to all staff. The school keeps detailed records of children where there is cause for concern. Risk assessment is carried out for all activities outside the school. Full risk assessment on most pupils is carried out by teaching staff and other healthcare professionals. For example, physiotherapists produce detailed risk assessments at least once a year for all pupils who require physical help

to move. In addition to building checks and improvement, there are programmes for the maintenance of equipment such as wheelchairs which are attended by technicians, teachers, healthcare staff, and parents.

30. The very good induction procedures are greatly appreciated by parents. Initial information from education, health and social services is included in the child's entry document with input from teaching and healthcare professionals and parents. This forms the basis of a pupil profile which contains the developmental record of the child through the school. A home visit is made by the teacher and healthcare staff where appropriate.
31. The school is very successful in supporting pupils and monitoring their personal progress because of the very strong bonds made between staff and pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic when they arrive at school and are met by teaching assistants who take them into their classes where they are individually welcomed by their teachers and settled in. They trust the staff implicitly. Wherever possible, teachers involve pupils in deciding what they will do. In the Post-16 group, each day ends with a period of reflection to consider the achievements of the day and the plans for tomorrow. Here students are consulted about the mini-enterprise items they will make and sell.
32. Staff have very good relationships with pupils and a comprehensive understanding of their achievements and development. As a result, they are able to provide the support and advice that they need. Older pupils receive good support in their career choices from the school and the Connexions service. The good opportunity for work placements assists this process well. Due to the school's very good links with the local colleges of further education students are given every opportunity to visit and familiarise themselves with these. As a result, students are confident when considering further study and make the transition very well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. Links with the community are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The procedures to prepare Post-16 students for transfer to further education are very effective.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the school's very strong links with local businesses that provide financial support and work placements.
- There are very good links with local schools and colleges which give very good support to the pupils' personal development.
- The school has very good procedures to deal with any concerns of parents.
- The partnership with parents is good and this contributes well to pupils' learning.

Commentary

33. The partnership with parents is good and they appreciate the caring nature of the school. They receive comprehensive annual reports and home-school diaries ensure that contact is maintained on a daily basis. The school provides a helpful newsletter as well as other correspondence about school activities. Senior staff conduct a survey of parents to provide information in a form suitable to them such as another language, Braille or in audio form. Parents are invited to coffee mornings to discuss developments with the school and to exchange information with other parents and carers. This contact enables parents to support the learning of their children. This informal system is enhanced by more formal consultation over major issues such as sex education. Some parents were concerned over the move of the secondary pupils to the new site which is shared with the Whitefield Community School. Considerable effort was made by the school to alleviate these worries including a special section in the school's very clear and useful website.

34. The school has very strong links with a wide variety of schools and colleges from nursery to university which provide support. A local nursery sends children to take part in activities with pupils at the school and receives pupils for regular visits to the nursery. This greatly enhances the personal development of the pupils, particularly their social skills. Strong sports links exist with local schools supported by the Bristol Sports Co-ordinator who is based at the school. For older pupils the local colleges of further education provide specific lessons such as how to use their library and students are encouraged to use general facilities such as the college's refectory. The school works with Bath Spa and West of England Universities and provides placements for both student teachers and student nurses.
35. There are very strong partnerships with local businesses. A great deal of financial support is provided directly to the school via 'PROPS', a local rugby based charity which supports all similar schools in the Bristol area. Among other support, it provides funding for the running costs of the school minibus. In the area for students over the age of 16 there is a room with domestic furniture and appliances provided by the local well known store and used to give pupils experience of routine domestic responsibilities. A number of businesses provide work experience for older pupils. During the inspection a pupil was seen working industriously as part of the team in the catering section of a large furniture warehouse.
36. The school makes very good use of local facilities to provide experiences for pupils such as a visit to a supermarket by Post-16 pupils. A wide variety of organisations visit the school to take part in activities with pupils. These include dance, drama and music groups and the Zoolab team who bring animals into the school for pupils to see and touch. Assemblies are given by representatives of local religions and the police.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership, a very clear vision and sets high aspirations for everything that the school does. The headteacher is supported by the deputy headteacher well and by the senior management team. The leadership by senior staff and those with subject responsibility is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Governance is good. Management is satisfactory. The school does not provide a planned programme for religious education in the Post-16 department, as legally required.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has built a strong team of committed staff who share the school's ambitions and goals and are working hard to achieve them.
- The headteacher, staff, and governors have a very strong commitment to inclusion.
- The school has coped very well with significant change because of the very strong leadership and determination of the headteacher and the very good support given by the governors.
- School reorganisation and other issues have meant that some aspects of the work of the senior management team and subject leaders are new or have not yet been fully implemented.
- Governors are very committed and know the school's strengths very well; they are less knowledgeable about where improvement is needed, such as where statutory requirements are breached.
- Although the school runs well on a day-to-day basis, the monitoring of some aspects of its work is not yet as rigorous as it should be.
- The school improvement plan is detailed, but needs to have a sharper focus on how actions will improve standards.

Commentary

37. There has been satisfactory improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. Almost all issues identified at that time have been addressed satisfactorily or better, although the pace of development for some aspects has been slower than originally planned. This is because the school has had to deal with significant changes

such as the relocation of the secondary department and the numerous problems with the arrangements, several changes within the senior management team and significant changes in the numbers of pupils with complex needs that the school admits. In addition, the school has struggled with its finances and it is only now that there is a recognition of the complexity of pupils' needs by the LEA and the amount of staff needed to support these. The headteacher has led the school through all of this very well indeed. He has kept focused on how the school can provide inclusive opportunities and has inspired staff and parents towards this. Staff morale, parent confidence and standards within the school have been maintained. Recent appointments have strengthened the strong staff team even further. Very good training opportunities are in place for all staff based on the needs of the school. This has developed the confidence and expertise of staff well so that the special educational needs of the different groups are met very well.

38. Despite the difficulties with the new accommodation at Briarfield and the restrictions this places currently on curriculum and inclusion opportunities, this department has developed well. The move to this facility brought along with it expectations that inclusive opportunities would be at the fore of practice. However, the oversubscribed nature of Whitefield (the local community secondary school) and the lack of access for disabled pupils to specialist rooms have meant that staff have had to work really hard to make things happen. The work of the co-ordinator for inclusion on this site has been exceptional in providing links and opportunities. Strongly inclusive opportunities that have now enriched the experiences of both school communities have been created, for example through English and through modern foreign languages. However, there is still much to be achieved, although this is not likely to occur until Whitefield building is remodelled in 2007. The provision at Briarway has forged on, adjusting to its new role and to the more varied groups of pupils. It has made a good start, for example by making improvements in the gathering of and the use of assessment data. This means that pupils' needs are met more effectively and standards overall have risen. In addition, the data gained is now being used effectively for target setting. The school now analyses and tracks the achievements of its different groups well. Individual and group tracking data is being used to identify strengths and weaknesses in core subjects such as English and mathematics and personal and social development effectively. The headteacher has been at the forefront of LEA consultations towards finding a meaningful way of target setting for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties.
39. The senior management team has changed considerably over the last five years as the school has adjusted to the need to manage and lead staff on two sites and to senior staff leaving. The current deputy headteacher and senior management team have been in post for just over a year. They lead and manage their departments on a day-to-day basis well, identifying resources and checking planning. However, although subject leaders are now involved in checking on what is planned to be taught in their subjects, they are insufficiently aware of what is actually taught and its quality. Little attention is given to ensuring that timetables reflect how subject time is actually spent. Development plans for subjects relate more to actions or purchases rather than how standards will be raised through the actions. Except in English, mathematics, science and PSHCE where data is routinely collected on pupils, leaders do not know how well pupils are doing. The school is addressing this through the way in which it has now started to collect attainment data. In addition, subject leaders will soon have training so that they can monitor teaching in their subjects.
40. The governing body is effective and brings a good range of expertise to the school. The governors are very committed to the school's aims and values. They visit the school regularly and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. They, and particularly the past and current chairs, have worked tirelessly, often lobbying the LEA and others, for example, when the school was preparing to move its secondary department and in supporting the resolution of numerous problems following this. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths. However, they are less aware of the school's weaknesses and although involved in development planning, they could take a more proactive role. They recognise that they need

more training to be even more effective here. As a result, they are not aware that religious education should be provided in the Post-16 department or that some minor information that is statutorily required in the prospectus is missing.

41. The school improvement plan, though focused on key things that the school needs now to do, does not focus sufficiently on how standards will be improved as a result of actions taken. Some recognised underfunding of the school, the additional costs of the move to the Briarfield site, the current review of special educational needs provision and the role of special schools by the LEA have made it difficult for actions to be set within a broader school improvement context. As a result, some issues arising from the previous inspection have not been addressed with sufficient pace. The school's performance management system is effective and linked well to school and individual staff's development priorities.
42. Financial planning to support the school's priorities is good and best value principles are applied soundly. Governors keep a keen eye on the school's performance, especially now that the data is beginning to be used for setting targets. Governors monitor the school finances well and ensure that best value is obtained from supplies and services. They have been very concerned over the school's finances, especially since the school separated into two facilities and the pupils' needs have increased considerably. The allocation of funds has not been sufficient to ensure the care and health and safety of pupils and it has been necessary, with LEA agreement, for the school to set a deficit budget for 2004/5. Following recent discussions however, it has now been agreed that the school has been underfunded and a new allocation of money with an improved 'formula' will rectify the overspend.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,381,301	Balance from previous year	13,390
Total expenditure	1,387,573	Balance carried forward to the next	7,118
Expenditure per pupil	16,717		

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

43. The effectiveness of the school's provision for work-related learning (WRL) is satisfactory and is developing in line with national guidance. This judgement is based on discussions with the headteacher, teachers, pupils, and study of pupils' work placements. Pupils learn through work experience and learn about work, by developing their knowledge and understanding of work and enterprise through discussion, visits and careers education. The older students learn about work by developing skills for enterprise and employability, through their mini-enterprise project and contributions from careers education and guidance.
44. Planning for the teaching of WRL is at an early stage in mathematics, design and technology, and PSHE and citizenship. Careers education is good, and there are very good links with local employers, who provide work experience placements. The school offers vocational subjects at Post-16, and has plans to develop pupils' work-related skills further, for Year 10 and 11 students. The school is aware of the need to produce a clear policy and written programme for implementing WRL which is understood by all those involved.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff's good knowledge of the children's individual needs means that these are well met.
- There is very good support for children's communication skills.
- Musical interaction supports learning well.
- Very good relationships and high quality care for children are seen in daily activities.
- Staff organise the environment well, despite the limitations of the space.

Commentary

It is inappropriate to comment in detail on the provision for the two children who were in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection. These are educated alongside pupils in Year 2 and comments about the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement are combined with those reports. The majority of the children have complex needs and, therefore, their planned learning activities are very specific and particularly focused on developing their communication and personal skills, such as improving their understanding of the world around them, the way they take part in activities and the length of time they sustain involvement. From an examination of pupils' records, teachers' planning documents and the lesson observations the following judgements can be made.

The children make good progress and achieve well in the areas of **communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and personal, social and emotional development**. Creative development was not inspected. All activities have a 'communication' component and work in these impacts significantly on pupils' understanding and use of language. Achievement in the **communication** aspect is very good and strongly supported by the routines and planning which take place during each day and during each lesson. Good planning of all the activities meets the wide range of the pupils' needs. This was very successfully displayed in a numeracy lesson where musical interaction engaged and involved the children very well in learning about the language of space.

The teaching seen during the inspection was consistently good. The children's learning was very well supported through the use of sign, symbols and objects. Their knowledge of the pupils' needs and how to develop their communication is good. The teacher and the support assistants maintain detailed, ongoing, records of the pupils' work and these are used very effectively to plan future activities. These build into a profile which is intended to link to the Stepping Stone and Foundation Stage profiles. Staff carefully consider the children's specific needs and seize on opportunities which arise. In a lesson with children in the nursery of a local primary school, Briarway children were given the opportunity to develop their physical, social and play skills with their mainstream peers. The dance session gave children from the local nursery the responsibility to move Briarway children in their wheelchairs and enhanced Briarway children's reactions to the stimuli of music, and movement and personal contact.

The quality of physical care is very high in this class and enables children to gain the maximum opportunity from their lessons. Staff make the best use of the physical space that is available. Because of its layout not all areas of learning can be set for pupils to explore. The outdoor area is being developed and suitable plans are in hand to expand the range of outdoor play equipment.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the co-ordinator has suitable plans for developing the Foundation Stage further. This area of the school's work was not reported on in the last inspection and, therefore, no judgement about improvement in provision can be made.

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

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision in English is **good**. It has some very good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very skilled at recognising and responding to pupils' communications and in using sign, symbols and technology to support progress in this area.
- Although pupils make sound progress in writing, some could achieve even more if there was more use of symbols, ICT, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) and other resources to enable them to write more independently.
- Pupils with autism make good and sometimes very good progress.
- Very good use is made of drama, role play and song to support pupils' understanding of English and of stories and literature in particular.
- Assessment has been strengthened and is now good, although in some other subjects, pupils' literacy needs are not taken sufficiently into account enough when planning activities.

Commentary

45. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment in English is very low because of their learning difficulties and many are at the very earliest stages of communication. The strong teaching and careful assessment and documenting of children's progress and skills mean that their achievement in English is good overall. This is similar for boys and girls of all ages and for all the different types of disability. All pupils have literacy targets as part of their IEPs and for many these include communication goals. This means that most teachers plan well in English to meet pupils' special educational needs and support their participation in the English programmes. Achievement is very good in communicating, speaking and listening, because support for self-expression and understanding is evident in almost everything the school does. Everyday routines are used well in classrooms to help pupils to become more aware of others and of what is happening to them. Adults listen carefully to, and take account of, pupils' views so that the pupils know that they have important things to say and their contributions are valued. This encourages them to communicate and express their views further. Even those with the most profound difficulties make very good progress in their listening, watching and attending by the end of their time in school.
46. By the end of their time in the primary department (Year 6), those with the most complex needs respond to, and some join in, a range of simple songs, rhymes and stories. They look with real interest at the books and photographs that are shared with them. More able pupils use simple sentences or a mixture of phrases, signs and gestures to comment on and share their work. They use some English vocabulary such as *author*, *word*, *sound* and *letter* appropriately and can retell simple parts of stories they have been told. Some recognise a range of letters and their sounds and can blend these into simple words. Throughout the secondary department (Years 7 to 11) and for the oldest pupils in Year 12, there is similarly strong support for pupils' self-expression. More able pupils expand their vocabulary and the ways in which they communicate with others. Those with the most complex needs recognise more objects of reference or use their PECS more effectively. Some use *Big Mack* switches and other technology with much more purpose to enable their 'voice' to be heard in and to take their parts in lessons. Pupils with autism make similarly good progress and become more aware of others' needs. The more structured programme and very consistent use of PECS and ICT resources help them to know how they are doing and what they need to do next, but also ensure their English experience and skills are systematically built on and extended.

47. The pupils' progress and achievement in early reading skills are good with very good features for all ages and disability groups. These skills are systematically explored and developed throughout the school and there is very good use of symbols and teacher-made resources to support this. Progress is particularly good in Years 3 to 9, where the teachers generally plan in more detail on an ongoing basis. The literacy strategy is well implemented, but particularly in the classes where planning reflects what each individual will learn and how previous learning will be built on. In the primary department, stories, rhymes, songs and class routines support pupils' involvement and understanding well. Those with more ability increase their range of words, letters and/or symbols they recognise by the end of each Key Stage. In Post-16 the most able students read simple texts fluently and accurately and can answer simple questions about what they have read. Some more able pupils, including those with autism, in the secondary department cope very well with simple versions of classic texts. They enjoy simple poetry and identify rhyming words within these accurately. With their teacher they make up simple rhyming couplets about each other. Those with more complex needs have a strong sensory curriculum which allows them to experience stories, such as *Macbeth* and *Robin Hood*, in relevant meaningful ways at the same time as their peers. They enjoy dressing up and watching others do so. They make noticeable strides in their interest in books, objects and awareness of others' communications, as well as in their own.
48. Most pupils make sound gains in their handwriting over their time in the school and more able pupils make similar progress in their spelling. They use pencils, crayons and paints to make simple marks. The highest attainers write individual words they know and some simple phrases. There are also some very good examples of shared writing of class stories, of adults 'scribing' (writing down for pupils what they want to say) and of recording through photographs of children's experiences as a form of 'writing'. Achievement is satisfactory overall in writing. However, the pupils' own independent recording of their experiences through mark marking, such as through the use of ICT and PECS and other media is less systematically supported. The school is aware that it now needs to look further at how it supports those with the most complex needs in this area, particularly through more use of symbols, ICT and more identified writing and recording opportunities.
49. Teaching in English is good overall and has some very good features. On rare occasions, it is unsatisfactory. Here, the pace of the lesson is too slow and some pupils are not effectively included at all times. Generally, however, teaching is lively and very well focused on pupils' individual needs as well as on the English ideas to be explored. Resources are used well and a wider range of sensory stories are being developed. Teaching assistants, in particular, make a very strong contribution, through both working with individuals and groups and ensuring that individuals are part of the larger class sessions.
50. Throughout the school drama and role play are used particularly well to enable pupils' understanding of what they are reading as well as pupils' confidence in communicating. These bring stories to life and are well integrated into the school's broader culture. There have been some excellent examples of inclusion and collaboration with Whitefield School to support this such as in a production of *Macbeth*. Pupils from both schools have benefited greatly from these opportunities and they make a very strong contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Similarly, the many visits and visitors enrich English opportunities further.
51. There is a good, relevant, curriculum in place which takes account of pupils' ages, interest and special educational needs. Although pupils of similar ages are often in different classes, according to their special educational needs, their teachers plan well together and so they study similar texts and themes. Activities and teaching methods vary appropriately according to pupils' levels and particular needs. Assessment and monitoring of progress in English are good. Differentiated performance criteria (P levels) have been used for some time to measure progress and teachers are very aware of pupils' strengths and needs in relation to these. Almost all teachers adapt their lessons well to meet pupils' needs because of the information gained.

52. The subject is well led and managed. The English curriculum and pupils' achievements are monitored well by the co-ordinator who has a clear vision as to what the school is trying to achieve and what now needs to be done. Teaching has also been monitored, although in line with the school's improvement planning it is recognised that this aspect of the co-ordinator role could be strengthened further.

Literacy across the curriculum

53. Support for literacy in other subjects is satisfactory overall. Communication, language and reading are very well promoted in almost all subjects through the use of symbols, sign, spoken language and text. Most teachers know their pupils very well and have generally thought out how they can support pupils both towards the subject lesson objectives and towards the IEP targets that they have for literacy or communication. However, much of this is informal and teachers plan for this in different ways. The school has no specific and systematic way in which the school identifies and plans for literacy to be supported in other subjects and this means that there are missed opportunities sometimes, particularly for writing or recording. Occasionally work planned, for example in science, does not take account of pupils' differing literacy levels effectively.

Modern foreign languages

54. No lessons could be seen during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in modern foreign languages. Since the last inspection, a new programme has been introduced and the school now fulfils its statutory responsibility in this area. Languages are taught in alternate terms, with a new language being introduced each time. Discussion with teachers and an examination of pupils' work and their records reveal a number of satisfactory and some good features. **German, French and Spanish** have all been taught and combined with a range of cultural experiences to ensure that pupils' learning is as relevant and meaningful as possible. The most able pupils and students learn to greet each other and use a small number of everyday words and phrases about themselves, food and animals. Some recognise words and symbols for these. Other pupils enjoy the sensory experiences provided by the French café, or the music that accompanies their lessons. A topic approach introduces linked vocabulary and phrases, but good class routines and songs also reinforce key phrases and vocabulary.
55. Modern foreign languages are very well led and managed well by a committed co-ordinator who is enthusiastic as to how the subject also supports the pupils' listening, special educational needs, confidence and self-esteem. The co-ordinator monitors planning and is rightly seeking to extend resources. There are good plans to extend the subject further, including adapting programmes to enable more direct teaching of the language for more able pupils and the introduction of new languages, such as Urdu. She, and the inclusion co-ordinator, have created some very good inclusive links, in conjunction with Whitefield school. Whitefield teachers have taught Briarfield pupils and Whitefield pupils have taken part in quizzes, 'theme afternoons' and days with Briarfield pupils. The autistic pupils on the Briarway site have a carefully planned and matched modern foreign language provision, although logistics mean that they cannot always share in the inclusive activities. Although records and assessments made in modern foreign languages are adequate, they mostly describe pupils' experiences rather than clearly indicate what has been learned.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Where appropriate, teachers make good use of the numeracy strategy approaches.

- Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour very well.
- Teaching assistants support pupils very well.
- Planning for the use of mathematics across the curriculum is not in place.
- The small steps of progress that pupils make in lessons is not recorded in all classes.

Commentary

56. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and this results in pupils making good progress, especially in areas such as counting, matching shapes and colour and money recognition. Teaching is well matched to the needs of the pupils and they use computers to support their learning well in lessons where it is appropriate. In a class containing a range of secondary age pupils with autism each pupil had an individual programme of work which was well supported by teaching assistants and which challenged the pupils. In the same lesson a more able pupil worked independently on a computer program that helped them understand the sequencing of actions through a story about a day in the life of a boy.
57. Teachers make good use of the numeracy strategy approaches and techniques in their teaching. They provide lively and engaging lessons and give opportunities for pupils to work on the targets in their individual education plans. In an introduction to a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 3 to 6 the teacher used a combination of well directed questioning and pupil participation to engage and focus the pupils on counting to 10 and finding the missing number. There is always a high degree of direct teaching and support from teachers and teaching assistants and this keeps pupils motivated and challenged to do as much as they can.
58. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress over time and during lessons. For example, over a period of two years a pupil in Year 4 went from counting to six to being able to count to twenty and from being able to distinguish large and small shapes to being able to sort circles, squares and triangles. Given the needs of the pupil and the barriers to learning that they face this represents good achievement.
59. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively as a team. They know their pupils well and have very good relationships with them. This enables teachers to plan well for their needs and for teachers and teaching assistants to support pupils well who are in distress or whose behaviour sometimes presents a barrier to their learning. These good qualities, combined with lively and engaging teaching, result in pupils being not only attentive and happy but being very positive about their learning. In a lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3 on capacity, teaching assistants worked intensively with pupils on emptying and filling buckets with water and sand and reinforcing key words such as 'empty'. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities and made good progress in understanding the difference between full and empty.
60. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Relevant documentation is in place and the subject leader is beginning the process of reviewing the scheme of work to ensure that it will meet the wider range of pupil need. Although the subject leader monitors teachers' planning they have not yet observed mathematics teaching across the school so that good practice can be shared and teaching improved further. In some lessons, teachers and teaching assistants are not recording consistently enough the small steps of progress that pupils make and which can be used to build up a detailed picture of the progress that pupils can make over long periods of time. However, the subject does have a portfolio of selected examples of pupils' work but it is not organised to easily show the progress made, often over long periods of time.
61. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. The school has maintained the good teaching and progress noted in the previous inspection and has made improvements to resources including the purchase of relevant computer software. However, although it is planned to give subject leaders the opportunity to observe teaching this term it was an issue at the last inspection and progress in making this improvement has been too slow.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. This is unsatisfactory overall. Although there are more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in the secondary curriculum, little use of mathematics was seen throughout the school during the inspection. There are few subjects that promote the use of mathematics well by including opportunities in the medium and short-term planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** with some good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has worked hard to improve planning but at times it is not detailed enough.
- Staff make learning fun and think carefully about how they can present scientific ideas in a simple way.
- Time for learning is sometimes insufficient and occasionally eroded by care routines.
- Assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

63. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. There is potential for these to be better, especially for the older pupils. Planning has been improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. Although there are some weaknesses, there is a greater attention to the range of pupils' needs and to the practical activities they need to undertake to develop their skills as scientists. For many pupils with the most severe or complex needs it is their early learning skills which are developed well by the sensory science work that is planned. They show increased attention and response to activity, better engagement and greater participation. Interesting and exciting activities are planned for all pupils.
64. Older, more able pupils, gain a great deal from the practical activities they undertake, and understand ideas such as the effect of exercise on the heart and how the skeleton protects and supports the body. Staff borrow resources from the high school and collaborate with staff there on ideas which aid pupils' progress. The curriculum for these pupils is largely planned from an earlier stage, mainly because the school has no science facilities. Although the new Briarfield building was designed with a science laboratory it was thought that most secondary pupils would be using Whitefield facilities. As a consequence, the room was altered and is now a music technology room.
65. At times, the planning is not specific enough, especially in detailing what different groups are to learn and do. Although, in practice, most staff enhance the activities and some plan work together, developing new or extended opportunities, planning does not always support those teachers with less experience than others. In addition, the time for learning allocated to secondary science is short and is eroded in some classes by the way care routines are organised. However, this is partly due to the design of the building.
66. The subject is well taught. Teachers plan interesting tasks which motivate the pupils. There is a good emphasis on observing, exploring and investigating and activities are particularly well thought out for those with the most complex needs. Staff are skilled at designing activities which enable pupils to gain an understanding of complex ideas. This was well exemplified in a lesson for pupils in Years 7 to 9 where they were involved in developing ideas about organs and where they are located in the body. Pupils took a plastic torso apart, matched organs to those disassembled on the table and rebuilt a different drawn model. The lesson pace is brisk and good quality questioning keeps pupils on their toes. Pupils enjoy science very much and are keen participators. Activities are generally well matched to pupils' needs and take good account of their age and interests. The learning that teachers expect to

take place among the different groups of pupils is not always clearly identified on plans, however, and often there is only one objective stated. At times, staff do not use sign, symbols, or pictures sufficiently and rely too heavily on spoken explanation. Pupils who rely on visual means to help them understand find it difficult to become involved in such sessions. At most other times, however, teachers and assistants make very good use of these methods which has a significantly positive effect on pupils' understanding. Little use of ICT to support pupils' learning was seen during the inspection or by teachers to aid their scientific explanations to pupils. Although teachers do make good use of video to aid this process, sometimes the ideas presented are far too complex for pupils' level of ability.

67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Resources and staff knowledge have improved since the last inspection. The introduction of the new scheme of work has been monitored well and gaps in planning found which have now been rectified. No monitoring of teaching has taken place and this is planned for 2005, when training for the subject leader has been arranged. The plan for developing the subject has a good range of actions but is largely focused on resources and planning. There is little on standards or quality of provision. Portfolios of pupils' attainment and progress are being developed but there is little information on science at present which helps to track what pupils have achieved in each area of learning in science. Assessment in science is just beginning with the introduction of a commercial profile which should aid the teachers' view of pupils' progress. Data has been collected for a few years but information resulting from this is too broad; this is because data is not obtained for the different areas of science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory** and has some good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The status of the subject has been significantly improved and ICT is used regularly through the school to aid pupils' communication and early learning skills.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Activities for the less able pupils have been mostly thought out well, although planning generally lacks detail and activities for the most able pupils need to extend their skills further.
- Hardware resources are not always carefully chosen.
- Assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

68. The school has worked hard to improve its ICT provision. It has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory; this was because it was poorly co-ordinated and not taught at all to some pupils. The leadership and management of the subject are now satisfactory and much work has been put into raising the profile of the subject and improving staff knowledge. This has been successful. The number of computers has significantly increased along with a good range of relevant software, particularly for the less able pupils. There is an adequate range of specialist devices to help pupils access the computers. Occasionally, however, the equipment used with pupils is not finely graded enough. For instance, some pupils struggle to use a mouse when a roller ball would be more appropriate, or they use a keyboard when what they are typing is meaningless and the use of an overlay keyboard or word, picture or symbol bank would be a better approach.
69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers organise and manage their lessons well. The activities are well thought out and interest and motivate pupils. They often build well on what pupils have learned previously. What staff intend pupils to learn is not always sharp enough, however. At each stage and in every class there is an extremely wide range of ability, yet often only one learning outcome is identified. Discussions with staff sometimes reveal that they do expect different pupils to learn

different things and plan these accordingly. However, these are not written down or assessed. The staff verbally explain what they want pupils to do and learn and this is clear. The confidence of teaching assistants and the way they help pupils, ensuring that they do as much for themselves as possible is a strength. They know when to stand back and when to help. The school has just purchased an interactive whiteboard and recognises how this can aid further teachers' demonstrations and explanations.

70. By the time they leave the school, the less able pupils use switches to communicate, make simple choices and make marks on the screen. They often make good progress in aspects of their early development which are supported by the use of computers, such as their ability to be involved in an activity, listen, watch and pay attention for a sustained period. The most able pupils use a keyboard to write simple words and sentences, and create a picture using a range of tool icons. They understand how technology affects their everyday lives, such as how traffic lights and pelican crossings are controlled and how automatic doors sense that a person is in front of them. The most able pupils are in the Post-16 department. They make good progress in constructing a website and some students are very adept at editing pictures and inserting text.
71. The planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. The subject leader has carefully considered the activities that pupils need to undertake which will meet their wide ranging and complex needs and build on their previous opportunities and experiences. However, for the inexperienced teachers the planning is too broad and only a narrow range of examples is provided. Planning is generally good for those pupils at the earliest stages of development who increase skills in touching the screen or pressing switches, often to make things happen and to make choices. This enables many pupils to interact with, and to control, devices something which they find extremely hard to do without the technology. At times, the planning could show even greater challenge, such as responding by pressing multiple switches or to an activity which identifies a greater range of possible choices on the screen.
72. For the most able pupils, the planned activities do not always extend pupils' skills far enough, although most teachers are adept at altering the planning to take account of these pupils' particular needs. The co-ordinator recognises that the opportunities that have been designed for pupils will need to be reviewed, and is already receiving feedback on what has been successful and what needs improving. Monitoring, to ensure what has been planned has been taught, is in place. This has helped to identify gaps in the planning and improve the programme. However, the monitoring of teaching is not planned for until later in the year, after training has been provided. The subject development plan clearly identifies what needs to be done, but is not a sharply focused enough plan which identifies how aspects such as achievement and teaching will improve. It is largely about improving resources. Assessment in ICT is only at a very early stage, although what is planned for the future should be adequate. In addition, there is limited data collected at present to help inform the school of the progress that pupils make in ICT.

The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. This is satisfactory. Pupils have a wealth of opportunity to use ICT during lessons and during leisure time. During the latter, it is often for playing educational games, and this helps pupils to reinforce skills and extend their interest in activities, particularly those who are autistic. Very good use is made of a wide range of communication aids to support pupils' ability to indicate choice and need. This is a significant strength. There are missed opportunities, however, to help pupils communicate their ideas in print and insufficient use is made of software or hardware which enables pupils to produce words, symbols or pictures from banks of these. Reasonable use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects and the school is building up a range of suitable software. Some pupils use the Internet to research topics in other subjects. However, the text is often too complex; off-line resources could be usefully adapted from those on-line.

HUMANITIES

74. **History** and **geography** were both sampled. No teaching was seen during the inspection so the subjects have not been reported in full. However, improvement in both of these subjects has been satisfactory since the last inspection with further development of the curriculum, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators and the assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Both subjects are taught as part of humanities provision and in some classes are taught one term in every two.
75. Evidence regarding provision is based on discussion with the subject co-ordinators and teachers, an examination of planning, of pupils' work and records. Pupils' achievements are generally good in these subjects. The curriculum provided ensures that they build on their previous knowledge, experience and skills. Each subject has separate co-ordinators, who are enthusiastic, have adequate development plans for the subject and lead and manage the subject well. Subject co-ordinators monitor planning. Effective policies have been developed with a good scheme of work in place and the programmes fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum.
76. In geography very good use of the locality supports pupils' growing awareness over time of the main features of the geography of the area. As they progress through the school, the highest attaining pupils develop a growing awareness of features of the environment and use appropriate vocabulary to describe them. They can contrast features of their own and other localities and identify different areas of the United Kingdom and of the world. Other pupils, through the work covered and the visits and outings programmes, develop an increasing awareness of their locality and, using simple maps and symbols, find their way about them. They understand simple facts and differences in relation to weather and relate this to how they need to dress or how plants need rain to grow. The most able pupils understand simple facts about pollution and that they need to play their part through picking up litter and being careful with water to 'help the world' and others.
77. In history, a well thought out programme of class routines, 'stories', role play, visits and teaching of historical themes supports all pupils as they develop an understanding of the passage of time and changes in the world very well. In every classroom teachers enable pupils to plan and revisit their experiences; younger pupils show a developing awareness of how they and others have changed over time, as they look at photographs of themselves and others as babies and at differing points in their lives. All pupils learn about the lives of important people from different ages and some remember key events or facts related to these. Well chosen visits combined with very good planning enable more able pupils to understand some of the features of Victorian England, of World War II or of Roman Britain according to what they are studying. Other pupils with more complex needs are able to experience the differences using sensory or tactile methods and enjoy the participation.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good; a broad and highly relevant range of learning experiences is provided.
- Resources for religious education are very good, accessible and well organised.
- Good community contacts and work with parents and others enhance pupils' experience of the different religions and cultures; this is supported by visits to different places of worship.
- The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development.
- Although provision in the main part of the school is good, the subject is not fully planned and taught in the Post-16 department.

Commentary

78. There has been a very good improvement in the provision for religious education since the last inspection. The co-ordinators have undertaken some very good work in revising and adapting the religious education locally agreed syllabus to ensure its relevance for all pupils. Pupils' experiences and their developing understanding are monitored well. Resources are very good and they are used very well. It was only possible to observe a small number of lessons. However, scrutiny of pupils' records and work, discussion with the subject co-ordinators and teacher files, observation of school assemblies and religious displays provide good evidence of the school's provision.
79. Pupils' achievements across the school are good. This is because of the good teaching and the interesting ways in which teachers explore religious ideas with their pupils. In every lesson they set up an atmosphere of 'spirituality', by using candles or particular artefacts. A very good example of this was when pupils in Years 7 to 9 learned about the Hindu story of Raksha Bandhan and as the story unfolded they were able to see and feel the crown and masks associated with the story. Afterwards they made their own special bracelets out of coloured paper, sequins and glitter and handled them with great reverence, because of how the teacher conveyed their 'special-ness'. Younger pupils learn about sharing and caring for each other as others care for them; older pupils learn about different religions and visit various places of worship. The highest attainers know that prayer mats are important for Muslims and know that they have to face Mecca as they pray. Bible stories and stories from other faiths are taught throughout the school. During lessons pupils learn about different aspects of different religions as well as about the culture of other countries.
80. In the Post-16 department religious education is taught through work from the themes in their daily tasks, like helping others and sharing. However, there is no specific programme of study to ensure all aspects of religious education are covered. Students are encouraged to consider their views on moral issues, right and wrong, and to take personal responsibility. This they do very well. Statutory requirements, however, are not met for the Post-16 students.
81. Assemblies support the subject well; pupils celebrate religious festivals, taking part in acting out stories. They sing with enthusiasm and often joy and even those who find it difficult to watch and listen do so when there is a prayer and time for quiet reflection. Periods of reflection at the end of the day provide another opportunity for pupils and teachers to share the achievements and frustrations of their day. Staff are committed to enabling all children to access religious education and assemblies and support their involvement and understanding very well, although occasionally signs and symbols could be used even more.
82. The leadership and management of religious education are good. The subject is well led. Monitoring and evaluation of the planning of lessons and their outcomes help to improve provision. Monitoring of teaching by the subject leader is not yet established but is part of the school's development plan. Good support and advice are provided for teachers. Development plans are focused on enriching pupils' experiences and their understanding and supporting teachers through resources and implementation of the new scheme of work. Assessment procedures and monitoring of development have improved with some evidence provided of pupils' experiences and responses; written assessments are now more evaluative, although some do not detail sufficiently individual pupils' developing understanding and knowledge.

TECHNOLOGY, VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

83. Music, art and design, design and technology and physical education were not fully inspected. No lessons were observed in music and design and technology, although one lesson was observed in both art and physical education. Additional information was obtained by scrutinising pupils' work and holding discussions. However, judgements about achievement and teaching and learning cannot be made for these subjects.

84. In the one lesson seen in **art and design**, teaching and learning were good and the pupils achieved well. The teacher used a big book and the characters in the story to good effect to engage the pupils and to give meaning to the masks they had been making. The teacher's rich use of language and description brought the masks to 'life' for the pupils.
85. Good quality displays throughout the school show good examples of the range of art work including printing using a range of materials and the use of tie-dye techniques. In the secondary department there are good examples of pupils' work such as paintings of sailing boats and the sticking on of shapes onto paper to make flowers.
86. Art and it is promoted well through topics in other subjects such as English and through work with professional artists such as the recent project called *Get Art Bristol*. In one lesson, pupils in a class for pupils in Years 2 and 3 made colourful butterflies in response to a story about the growing up of a tiny seed. Pupils have worked with professional artists in the *Get Art Bristol Exhibition* where pupils creatively explored contemporary practice in art and had their work exhibited professionally.
87. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Detailed termly planning is in place for this term and this gives good guidance to teachers. Although planning has been monitored to ensure what has been planned is taught, the teaching of art teaching, however, has not been monitored by the subject leader.
88. A long-term 'map' of topics has been developed but there is no detailed scheme of work covering the primary and secondary curriculum as yet to give teachers further guidance. It was noted in the last inspection that some classrooms did not have sinks. This has now been improved and sinks are available in all classrooms. The quality of provision in art has been maintained since the last inspection.
89. **Design and technology** has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. Resources and equipment have been improved and the school has developed schemes of work, although they have yet to be completed. The school tends to focus on food technology in the primary phase and this is sometimes combined with other subjects such as ICT. For example, in an ICT lesson on 'control' for pupils in Years 3 to 6, pupils helped prepare the food to go into a food blender and then switch it on and off. The secondary department does not have access to a design and technology specialist room and the specialist equipment needed to give pupils in Years 7 to 9 access to working with resistant materials. However, pupils in the secondary department take part in successful mini-enterprises which have included such activities as designing and making a range of Christmas gifts, boxes, cards and bookmarks.
90. Teachers use **music** and song very well in lessons to engage pupils, reinforce activities such as counting and to emphasise turn taking. Music and song are also used well to provide happy endings to lessons and sometimes to start the day. Music is used well to enhance pupils' communication skills as well their social development. There is now a very good range of resources for music. Resources are appropriate to the age of pupils in the secondary department and include a range of percussion instruments as well as microphones, keyboards and some switches to assist pupils with access to instruments. There is a good focus on music technology to help the most disabled pupils to access the subject. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The primary subject leader has provided each classroom with a good range of simple small instruments that teachers can have easily to hand to use during a lesson. The school leads the organisation of a music festival every two years that involves pupils working with other pupils from special schools.
91. **Physical education** is a popular subject where pupils have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in physical education where they learn to run, jump, and develop ball-handling skills over time. Those who are physically disabled are able to follow physiotherapy activities, and use the sensory rooms and soft play areas to work on their individual targets. Pupils of all abilities are included well in lesson activities, often linked to their IEPs. Pupils' skills are guided and developed very well in this

way in every lesson. Teaching is well supported by good planning, organisation and creative use of a range of resources including visiting dance groups. Lessons help pupils to consider health and safety issues. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Although formal assessment is limited, pupils' developing skills are informally tracked well over time and reports to parents are clear. Subject leadership and management are good and both co-ordinators clearly make the subject a key contributor to the school's provision. The wide, varied curriculum provides opportunities for dance, gymnastics, swimming and games as well as many sports. A key feature is the very good involvement and inclusion with other schools. Strong links with Whitefield, as well as other local special and primary schools have been developed through the 'Sports Co-ordinator Programme' for games and sports 'festivals'.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have a very good understanding of the pupils' needs and encourage them constantly, giving them a clear idea of what is expected of them.
- Personal, social and health education is taught very well and students achieve very well in relation to their individual targets.
- Leadership and management of the subject and the quality of the curriculum are good.
- Pupils' personal and social development is supported very well by the inclusion opportunities provided.

Commentary

92. Pupils' records and their achievement in lessons show that they achieve very well. They achieve very well, for example, in their independence, in organising themselves and in interacting and working with others. Planning for the subject has improved since the last inspection and now includes sex education and opportunities for Post-16 students to have work experience placements; achievement at Post-16 has also improved as a result of this. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
93. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection was good, but when the considerable 'incidental' teaching of personal and social skills throughout the school day and the progress made by students are considered, teaching is judged as very good. This is why pupils achieve so well.
94. By the time they leave school, students show independence in many ways; for instance, when using a computer or the digital camera. Others have learned to take off their coat unaided, wash their hair or cook a meal. Throughout the school, mature, thoughtful discussion takes place of sensitive issues such as family relationships or bullying. Many students show great confidence in speaking to visitors. The relocation of the secondary department adjacent to a mainstream secondary school has resulted in a developing partnership between staff and students who share some of the facilities and occasionally work together. This has enhanced students' ability to relate to one another and also the mainstream pupils' understanding of their needs.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are good. It is well organised with thorough monitoring and tracking of pupils' experiences and progress through their personal targets in their individual educational plans. The range of curriculum opportunities is very good and very well linked to individual pupils' needs, so that in each age group those at earlier stages of development are able to be challenged and make suitable progress as well as those with more advanced skills. In citizenship lessons pupils learn how to be part of the community and to contribute through opportunities such as making lunch for the group and invited visitors. There is as yet no school council to provide even greater opportunities for the understanding of citizenship within the school.

POST-16

The provision for Post-16 students in the school's 'Briarfield Centre' is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of learning activities with strong links with local colleges supports students' good level of achievement.
- Religious education is not planned and taught with regard to the locally agreed syllabus.
- Very good and focused teaching results in students learning very well.
- Relationships between staff and students are exceptionally strong and they are combined with very good support; consequently, students become as independent as possible.
- Computers are used very effectively to support learning.
- The accommodation does not meet the pupils' needs.

Commentary

96. The school's management team has successfully developed an atmosphere and curriculum that is appropriate for the needs and age of the students. The very strong emphasis on developing skills for life after school is highly successful. It is noteworthy that the creation of this supportive and effective ethos has to be set against accommodation which is unsatisfactory. Despite moving into new purpose-built accommodation, the lack of storage reported at the last inspection is still evident and the lack of a discrete Post-16 unit is a missed opportunity. The staff make very good use of local facilities, partly to compensate. These opportunities considerably enhance students' social development. There are also considerable other benefits, such as those connected with work related learning, when they are included as part of the wider community. The school is in negotiation with the LEA over a move of this department to a new Post-16 campus in Bristol catering for mainstream and special needs students.
97. Post-16 students achieve well. Stimulating teaching and a wide range of learning experiences enable students to give of their best. The curriculum provides students with the opportunities to be as independent as possible.
98. The teaching provides a very good balance of challenge and support. The friendly atmosphere of lessons, appropriate to students' ages, encourages them to tackle new situations with maturity and confidence. Teaching and support staff work very well together and this effective teamwork is reflected in the quality of the lesson planning and approach. A particularly strong feature is the use of computers to enable all students to access the curriculum and to support their learning.
99. Staff are also very successful in facilitating students' personal development. Very good targets provide the basis for effective learning. These are combined with high quality support which enables students to adapt to new situations, such as attending college, with confidence.
100. The teaching of communication skills and numeracy is good. Staff have a clear idea of students' needs, and learning activities are well planned to address them. Opportunities for discussion and work related topics in subjects, such as careers, give students the opportunity to practise and develop communication skills.
101. Practical exercises and use of computers ensure students' good achievements in mathematics. All students are provided with opportunities to achieve qualifications in practical skills such as money management and home management. Less able students also gain awards and learn useful social mathematics skills such as telling the time and use of money. The use of computers is well established and students develop their skills well. They contribute to web page design and through strong teaching, the process of text, picture and photo layout and manipulation is learned well. Over time, pupils' achieve well in ICT. More

able pupils extend their skills through a general higher level award, although there is no specific award bearing ICT course followed. This is a missed opportunity to celebrate specific students' successes.

102. The department is very successful in preparing students for life after school with the good support of the careers guidance provided by the 'Connexions' adviser. Work placements are provided for the students and they benefit from the close links that have been established with local colleges.
103. Students already benefit from a rich curriculum and the introduction of an externally accredited course 'Towards Independence' will extend their curriculum and provide a record of achievements at school and college. Teachers successfully broaden students' horizons through visits to community facilities such as libraries, leisure centres and shops. Students participate in a successful mini-enterprise involving the production of large mobile 'body boards' for sale to other schools and marketed using their own website.
104. The Post-16 provision is well led and managed. The difficulties of working in unsatisfactory accommodation have been imaginatively addressed to create an appropriate 'adult' atmosphere for the students. There is a clear vision and sense of purpose to the work of the department.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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