

INSPECTION REPORT

Mabel Prichard School

Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123339

Headteacher: Miss Jane Wallington

Lead inspector: John Byrne

Dates of inspection: 8th November to 11th November 2004

Inspection number: 271837

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	70
School address:	St Nicholas Road Littlemore Oxford Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX4 4PN
Telephone number:	01865 777878
Fax number:	01865 775218
Appropriate authority:	LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Margaret White
Date of previous inspection:	16 th October 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Mabel Prichard is a school for boys and girls aged 2 to 16 with severe and profound learning difficulties. A fifth of pupils attending the school have been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Currently, there are 70 pupils on the school roll and because of their learning difficulties attainment on entry is well below average. All, apart from two pupils, have a statement of special educational need. Although pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds only a small proportion are from homes where English is not spoken as the first language. The school population represents a mix of social and economic circumstances and only a minority of pupils join and leave at times other than the beginning and end of the school year. In recent years the school has achieved Investor in People status, a school achievement award and a school curriculum award. In addition the school is part of "The Thames Valley Partnership Schools in Action." The school is also part of an Excellence in Cities cluster and, prior to this, had been a member of an education action zone for five years.

The school is currently "co-located" on two mainstream sites. As a result the integrated nursery, with six part time pupils on roll, is at the Orchard Meadow Primary School. Prior to that it had been located at another primary school. However, it moved at the beginning of the year in preparation for the whole of the Mabel Prichard primary school relocating to the Orchard Meadow site in 2006. The secondary department has been based at The Peers School campus since March 2000. As a consequence of recent building development it now enjoys good purpose built accommodation.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21137	John Byrne	Lead inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, geography and history
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3055	Clive Tombs	Team inspector	Science, music and physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall Evaluation

Mabel Prichard provides pupils with a **satisfactory** education. Overall the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, children are very effectively provided for in the earliest stages of their education. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's commitment to situating accommodation on mainstream sites (co-location) has successfully provided pupils with the opportunity to mix and socialise with their mainstream peers.
- School planning for improvement is not securely based on a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses.
- The high quality teaching and learning experiences provided in the integrated and assessment nurseries ensure that children make very good progress.
- Planning for what pupils will learn is not detailed enough and does not effectively provide for the age and ability range within each group.
- Attention to detail and very good levels of support ensures that the quality of care is high and all pupils are educated in a safe and supportive environment.
- Inconsistencies in the way teachers record pupils' responses means that judgements on achievement over time are not supported by robust evidence.
- The very good attitude and good behaviour of the majority of pupils ensures that there is a purposeful environment for learning in the school.

Improvement, in those areas identified at the last inspection in 2000, has been satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning for pupils of secondary age is now much better, governors have become more involved in the school and careers guidance is available to pupils from Year 7 upwards. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning have been introduced and the school is aware of the need to develop these further. Although there have been improvements in some aspects of the curriculum, there are still issues that have not been dealt with.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Although the school uses national criteria (P Scales) to track achievement there are difficulties in judging accurately progress over time because of the absence of carefully analysed pupil work. In addition, the quality of planning is not always good enough to ensure that the challenges posed by current organisation, whereby class groups span a wide age range, are successfully addressed to ensure all pupils achieve well over time. Achievement is very good for pupils under the age of 5 and is good for the majority of pupils up to Year 2 because work is matched to pupils' needs. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their communication skills. The very good attitudes and good behaviour of pupils makes a very positive contribution to the good working environment that is evident in the school. The good personal and

social skills displayed by pupils is a result of the positive relationships evident in and out of lessons. The quality of experiences available to pupils ensures that spiritual and cultural development is **good**. Pupils enjoy coming to school and consequently attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Very careful planning and the quality of the teamwork evident in the teaching of children and pupils up to Year 2 ensures that they learn in a way which allows them to develop independent learning skills. In Years 7 to 11, new teaching personnel are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning and have been responsible for the improvements in this area. Teaching is more variable for pupils between Years 3 and 6. It does not always respond well to the challenges of the wide age and ability groups in each group and, as a result, work is not carefully matched to individual needs. In all areas of the school inconsistencies in the way teachers mark and record pupils' achievements make it difficult for them to accurately assess where pupils are in their learning. The curriculum remains unsatisfactory because the extent and detail of planning is not sufficient to meet the needs of pupils within each class. In addition, the school recognises that current arrangements fail to guarantee that pupils will not duplicate work or repeat learning experiences. The emphasis placed on pupils' personal needs ensures that care and welfare is very good. Although support and guidance is satisfactory, there are inconsistencies, beyond the school's control, with the way pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared for moving on from school. Links with parents are good, as is the development of co-located provision on mainstream sites. The opportunities available to pupils in the integrated nursery to mix with mainstream peers are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management, overall, are **satisfactory**. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are committed to providing opportunities for pupils to mix and socialise with mainstream peers and, as such, are passionate in their desire to develop co-located provision. However, monitoring systems do not currently provide the required detail to usefully inform future development. For example, the way teachers have developed and implemented their curriculum to take account of the age and ability groups within their classroom has not yet been thoroughly evaluated. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and improving. They now have a greater understanding of the school's work.

PARENTS AND PUPILS VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents think well of the school and the way it helps their children to develop. A minority of parents did express concerns about how class groups were organised and the impact that this has on teaching and learning. Although there are no formal systems in place to gain the views of pupils it is clear from their responses that they believe the school is a good place to be.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is to ensure that:

- The quality of teaching and learning available to all pupils builds on the very good start that children receive in the Foundation stage;
- The organisation and planning for what is to be taught is sufficiently detailed to provide pupils with a quality curriculum appropriate to their age and level of ability;
- Planning for pupils as they move through the school guarantees that they do not repeat topics and ensures that they are introduced to new learning experiences;
- Staff follow rigorously school guidance in the annotation and levelling of pupils' work so that they can accurately track progress over time.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Judgements by the school about achievement over time are not always supported by robust evidence.
- The very good support available to children in the foundation stage and in Years 1 and 2 ensures that they achieve well.
- Pupils make good progress in developing communication that support their good personal and social development.
- Work in lessons is not always closely enough matched to the range of need within the group.
- The narrow range of examinations means that pupils' achievements are not sufficiently recognised at the end of Year 11.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievements, irrespective of special need, gender or ethnic background, are at least satisfactory and it is clear from their individual targets that they make sound or better progress over time. This is a similar finding to the last inspection. However, although the school, for a number of years, has used national criteria (P Scales) to record pupils' achievement over time evidence available for most subjects, is not always sufficient to show that the teachers' assessment of work matches accurately the criteria used.
2. Pupils' achievements in communication are good because of the priority given to this important area across the curriculum. It is particularly good in those lessons where effective use is made of whiteboard technology. This motivates pupils to become involved and they respond very well to carefully targeted questioning using appropriate language. As a consequence of being provided with the opportunity to express preferences and make choices pupils have the chance to practice and develop personal and social skills on a daily basis. This together with the extensive opportunities that many children and pupils have to mix with their mainstream peers does much to promote the personal and social development of these individuals.
3. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and they make good or better progress in all areas of learning because of high quality teaching that follows an educational programme modified to support individual need. Strategies used to support pupils' development are very good and there is a clear focus on modelling communication and behaviour. This very appropriate emphasis and the way children respond has a positive impact on the progress made in all areas of learning. In the very youngest class the age span is narrow, covering only Years 1 and 2. This makes planning and organisation easier for the teacher. This, with the very good support provided by learning support assistants, ensures that pupils in this class make good progress.
4. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 11 is satisfactory overall. Class organisation, whereby a wide age range is taught within the same group, means that planning has to be precise to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Where this is the case, mainly in lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 11, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. However, when planning does not take into account fully the needs of individuals learning activities do not ensure that all pupils will make good progress. In a class containing pupils from Years 3 to 6 the mathematical activity related to number was the same for all pupils. It was clear that work did not match closely where pupils were in the learning with the result that little progress was made.

- It is good that pupils now have the opportunity to gain external recognition of their achievement through The ASDAN Challenge Award. However, there are pupils who would benefit from having access to a wider range of accreditation options which would better reflect their capabilities as identified through the annual review. The school is aware of this and is currently in discussion with The Peers school to look at ways of extending accreditation opportunities for specific pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour in and around school make it a pleasant and purposeful place in which to learn.
- Relationships are very good and pupils in the integrated nursery benefit greatly from the opportunity to mix with their mainstream peers.
- The range of experiences available to pupils enhances their personal development.
- There are specific health related reasons, beyond the control of the school, why the level of unauthorised absences is high.

Commentary

- All children and pupils enjoy school very much; their attitudes have improved since the last inspection. They come in cheerfully at the start of the day and receive a warm welcome that helps build their confidence and self esteem very well. The pupils show very good attitudes in most lessons. They expect to be engaged and to enjoy what they are doing and this promotes their attention and involvement. Behaviour in lessons is good overall, although it is generally only satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because teaching does not always engage all pupils with the result that they become bored and, occasionally, disruptive. The behaviour seen in the playgrounds was always good, with pupils playing amicably together or alongside others. The school works hard to maintain pupils in school and exclusions are extremely rare, being only used as a last resort.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
45	1	1

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

- Relationships between the pupils are very good. This was very well illustrated when two boys, who might not be expected to play together because of their autism, were engaged in playing with a pull-along cart; one pulled, the other sat in it and then, without prompting, they changed over. In many situations, the pupils are able to work together when asked to and at these times they co-operate well, even when not closely supervised. In addition, children in the integrated nursery are encouraged to mix with their mainstream peers and are very well supported in their efforts to do this. Relationships with most staff are also very good because the staff show a high level of interest in the pupils and their needs. The pupils co-operate very well with those who support and assist them in and out of lessons.

8. Pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Their moral, social and cultural development remains good, because the school plans well to promote the pupils' personal development. Good opportunities are planned through the curriculum to develop, for example, the pupils' sense of the wonder in nature and their awareness of their own and others' cultures. The act of collective worship seen during the inspection gave a good visual comparison between Christianity and the Muslim faith. Pupils are encouraged to respect others by listening to their views and to treat them as they themselves wish to be treated. Opportunities within the expressive arts are provided for some pupils to explore and develop their individuality and to enjoy working with others. Children in the Foundation stage make very good progress towards achieving the targets set for their personal, social and emotional development.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/4

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.5%	School data	2.1%
National data	8.5%	National data	0.5%

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

9. The school has encountered a specific difficulty with the attendance of pupils who require full-time nursing support in school. Currently, their absence is unauthorised on those days when the school cannot safely cater for their specific needs because the required level of medical support is not available for them. Otherwise, attendance is good, with most parents co-operating well with the school. Punctuality is good, ensuring that the school day and lessons start on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. Partnership with parents and other schools is **good**. The care and welfare pupils receive is **very good**. The support and advice available to them is **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

Overall teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effectiveness of lesson planning and organisation in the nurseries and in Years 1 and 2 motivates pupils to learn in a lively and interesting way.
- The clear structure to lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 11 has resulted in much improved teaching in this area of the school.
- The wide age and ability range within most groups provide challenges that are not successfully met by all teachers.
- There are inconsistencies in the way teachers record pupils' responses to the learning opportunities and experiences provided for them.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	10 (19%)	22 (41%)	18 (34 %)	2 (4 %)		

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.

10. The quality of teaching and learning for the nursery aged pupils is very good; it is good with very good features for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Children learn and make progress because of lively and stimulating teaching which uses a range of resources that interests them and encourages involvement. The quality of teamwork is evident in all sessions and this, combined with careful sharing of information, ensures that adult support is planned and children are not over-directed in activities. This same teamwork is evident in the teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2. The very good deployment of adults and the level of cooperative working ensures that all pupils are effectively included, for example in a science lesson based on the big book "Going on a Bear Hunt." The support pupils receive ensures that they can respond and make progress at a level appropriate to their needs, for example, from observing the effect of pressing a button to recognising and naming colours.
11. At the time of the last inspection, teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11 was deemed to be unsatisfactory because of sketchy planning, poor pace and low expectations. This is no longer the case and new teaching staff are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Planning, based on the three part lesson - starter, main and plenary - is now good and identifies a range of activities to develop the lesson aim for individual pupils. In most sessions extension activities are planned that challenge the most able. All pupils are clearly motivated by the imaginative use of resources and are confident in their learning to the point where they draw attention to and laugh at mistakes made by the teacher. The enthusiastic and lively approach of the visiting music specialist is infectious and is evident in the animated response and involvement of all including supporting adults! Where teaching is less effective, the good number of support staff are not always effectively used to help those pupils with additional needs and teachers find it difficult to identify appropriate activities that meet the age and ability needs of the pupils.
12. Teaching, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, is not always successful in providing quality learning experiences for all pupils. Planning for the specific lesson is usually of a good quality. Teachers try really hard to involve all pupils in the start of the lesson by good use of questioning and by employing resources, such as the interactive whiteboard, which does motivate pupils. However, for the main part of the lesson, work taken from medium term planning is often the same for all pupils and as a consequence, even when classes are split into as many as 3 groups, the learning needs of all pupils are not always adequately met.
13. When planning is not of a high quality teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and pupils quickly become distracted and behaviour deteriorates. This happened in a science lesson for pupils with more complex needs in Years 3 to 6. The session focused on day and night time, but the activities identified did not match pupils' learning needs, being far too difficult, and, as a result, tasks were only achieved through considerable over direction and involvement by support staff. The activities lacked meaning for pupils, hence the disruption, and they made little or no progress.
14. Assessment of pupils' progress is based mainly on their responses to the learning opportunities and experiences provided for them. Despite guidance being clear in the assessment recording and reporting policy, there are inconsistencies in the way this is interpreted by individual teachers. Most teachers maintain examples of pupils' work or have pictures of pupils' responses to activities. However, this information is not always helpful to them when assessing pupils' achievement or deciding the next step in learning because marking is not explicit in identifying the context of the activity, the support provided or the level of achievement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. There are **satisfactory** opportunities to enrich the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weaknesses, identified at the time of the last inspection, in the quality of the curriculum still exist.
- Curriculum planning lacks detail and fails to ensure that pupils do not repeat work over a period of time.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has a very well planned emphasis on play.
- The life skills curriculum for Years 10 and 11 lacks the detail necessary to ensure that all pupils are well prepared for leaving school.
- Co-location on the secondary site enables pupils to benefit from age appropriate activities with main stream peers at an outdoor education centre.
- The plans in place to co-locate the primary site to new accommodation will ensure that all pupils will benefit from high quality accommodation.

Commentary

15. Since the last inspection the school has not addressed fully the need to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and, as a result, this aspect of the school's work remains unsatisfactory. The quality of planning, showing what pupils will cover during a topic lacks the necessary detail. In the majority of subjects, it does not ensure that pupils, in classes where the age range is wide, have access to a curriculum that is relevant and ensures they make progress as they move through the school. Although there is evidence of teachers adapting work that pupils are given to consolidate learning the information available in medium term planning is too narrow for the age and ability range in class groups in Years 3-11.
16. The lack of a systematic approach towards planning, together with the absence of clear learning intentions suitable for the range of special needs within the school, means that it is difficult to check accurately what pupils are learning over time. In addition, there is no way of ensuring that pupils are not repeating topics or the same learning experiences on more than one occasion. The school is aware of this potential problem and currently is considering ways of ensuring that it does not happen.
17. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good and relevant to the individual needs of the children. In both the integrated and assessment nursery, there is a greater emphasis on the sensory curriculum and carefully planned opportunities for play as well as the development of skills in the areas of learning.
18. The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Through the externally accredited ASDAN Transition Challenge programme, pupils learn a range of vocational skills. Satisfactory cross-curricular links are made in order for pupils to complete the modular programmes. However, the development plan for the 14-16 curriculum does not yet identify clearly the links between PSHE, citizenship, careers and work related learning to ensure an appropriate breadth and balance and that the pupils' experiences move them forward in their learning. At present, courses leading to further accreditation at Entry Level Certification or in the National Skills' Profile are not offered as a matter of policy.
19. The school provides a satisfactory range of activities outside school and this, together with the links that exist with the community and other schools, extends and enriches pupils' learning opportunities. Music has been supported by visiting teachers. This has provided pupils with opportunities such as working with other schools on a musical production and for two pupils to be part of a performance at the Royal Albert Hall. The co-location of pupils in Years 7-11 at the

local community secondary school provides very good opportunities for the school to develop its inclusion programme and, through individually designed timetables, enable pupils to work and socialise with other young people of the same age. When pupils visit a local outdoor education centre, they are involved in problem solving activities and a range of outdoor pursuits.

20. The accommodation for learning is good. Currently, the school is located on three sites. Plans are in place for the main school to re-locate to a site with a local community primary school. The new site will provide more spacious accommodation and the opportunities to extend the range of learning experiences for all pupils. Learning resources for each subject have been improved and are located in the library. However, this does mean that it is less inviting as a quiet area to read and study. Throughout the curriculum there remains a need to review the resources for pupils in Years 7-11, to ensure they are accessing learning and reading materials appropriate to their age and interests.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures in place to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils are **very good**. Support, guidance and advice provided for pupils is **satisfactory**. There are **satisfactory** systems in place to take pupils' views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes very good care of its pupils and health and safety is given a very high priority in school.
- Although inconsistencies exist in the way staff assess where pupils are in their learning, they use the knowledge they do have to offer good support, advice and guidance.
- The transfer of pupils between the different stages of their education is very good, except for pupils moving to post -16 provision, where it is satisfactory.

Commentary

21. All staff work hard to ensure that the good procedures that exist to promote the care and welfare of pupils are effectively implemented. Child protection is very well organised and staff understand the importance of recording and reporting any concerns they have. Links with the local agencies responsible for child protection are very secure as are those in place with the carers and agencies involved with pupils in public care.
22. A very good feature of provision is the care taken to carry out risk assessments on all pupils, enabling the school to make well-informed decisions about the level of support and staffing required. Those pupils with specific medical or personal needs are very well supported by staff who ensures their needs are met sensitively and sympathetically. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and so pupils feel safe and valued. Supervision at all times is of a high order. The day-to-day first aid and regular medical requirements are handled well by a full time nurse.
23. Despite the fact that assessment information showing where pupils are in their learning is not always based on secure evidence, annual reviews and end of year reports indicate that teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Consequently all adults involved with pupils' education are able to provide them with the support and guidance necessary to help them move on.
24. Pupils new to the school are introduced to its routines and organisation very well. Children in the nurseries make introductory visits with their parents and these effectively help them to settle quickly. Transfer from the nurseries into primary classes and from the primary school to the secondary school or other provision is also very good. A series of visits, progressively becoming less supported by staff from the previous class, help prepare pupils for the move to

their new surroundings and staff. However, through circumstance beyond the school's control, the preparation that pupils receive for their transfer to post-16 provision is only satisfactory.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with its parents. Its partnership with other schools is **good** and those with the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst the general information provided for parents is satisfactory, the quality and detail of the reports they receive about their child is good.
- Many parents have a good opinion of the school.
- The commitment to co-locate provision with mainstream schools provides pupils with the opportunities to mix and socialise with their mainstream peers.

Commentary

25. Parents receive good quality reports on their child twice a year. These provide parents with clear details as to what their child is doing and how they are getting on in school. Other information provided is generally satisfactory. Although there is a web site, the school does not provide a regular newsletter to give an overview of what is going on in school. Home school diaries are used well by most families to exchange messages and information, and the teachers of nursery aged children, where possible, try to talk to parents on a daily basis. Telephone calls are also used to keep parents informed about how their child is getting on in school. Information on what the pupils are learning on a day to day basis is not sent out as a matter of routine in all classes, but some good innovative ways are in place to inform parents. This includes a daily duplicated note in one class that says what has been taught, giving parents the information they need to start talking with their child about the day.
26. The analysis of parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire shows that many, especially those of younger pupils, have a positive view of the school. However, parents at the meeting prior to the inspection were less positive and raised concerns about a number of issues. The majority of these were found to be outside the control of the school. However, the organisation of teaching groups was a concern for a minority of parents and the inspection found this to be an issue particularly where as many as 5 year groups are educated in the same class.
27. The integrated nursery and the provision for secondary age pupils are already co-located on mainstream school sites. These give the children and pupils involved good opportunities to mix with their peers and, particularly in the nursery, to enjoy their company. A few secondary pupils are already enjoying being able to attend lessons in the mainstream school, although the reasons behind the integration are not always clear. More integration is planned to involve a greater number of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is totally committed to developing co-located provision for the benefit of pupils.
- Improved procedures ensures that governors are now more involved in the work of the school.
- Staff development is given a high priority by the headteacher
- Planning for future developments is not routinely based on rigorous monitoring that systematically identifies areas for improvement.
- Management of the school's finances is sound.

Commentary

28. Overall, the leadership and the management of the school are satisfactory and there have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection in addressing the key issues identified. The headteacher is competent and committed to the school and its pupils and provides a clear vision and driving force for the continuing development of the school onto the sites of other mainstream schools. Foundation aged children and secondary aged pupils have already been co-located onto a nursery and secondary school site and the primary department will move in the next 18 months. Through this co-location, children and pupils are provided with very good opportunities to mix and socialise with their mainstream peers.
29. The small governing body has made improvements since the last inspection when it was judged unsatisfactory. They are now much more involved in the work of the school and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They are less dependent on the headteacher to keep them informed and have developed independent ways of finding things out for themselves. These include more frequent visits, monitoring teaching and learning and their attachment to a class group. However, as yet, governors have not developed the rigour necessary to challenge the work of the school in order to establish a stronger sense of accountability for what it does. The chair of governors works in the nearby secondary school where the senior pupils are based and, therefore, has useful and relevant expertise and understanding. She provides consistent support to the headteacher.
30. Over the last year there has been a significant turn over of teaching and support staff. A strength of management is its success in developing staff skills so that newly appointed teachers and support staff quickly settle and become aware of school policy and practice. Weekly meetings and in service training provide a range of development opportunities closely linked to the needs of the school, particularly that of meeting challenging behaviour. The school pays for all support staff to attend meetings, training after school and professional development days. The performance management of staff, including support staff is sound. The latter group of staff make an effective contribution to the good and very good teaching seen.
31. Planning for future developments to bring about improvements is not securely based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, none of the areas for development noted in this report have been identified in the current school development plan as priority area for improvement. However, the role of the subject co-ordinators is developing through planned opportunities to formally monitor teaching and learning. A number of them, with the good support of the deputy headteacher, are beginning to develop worthwhile subject action plans which identify priorities that should usefully inform whole school planning.
32. The headteacher and bursar manage the school's finances soundly and efficiently and the governor finance committee receive regular reports to help monitor progress against the budget. Recommendations of the most recent audit have been acted upon. The large carry forward figure is explained by the fact that it includes funds earmarked for building improvements.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 – March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1010901	Balance from previous year	936219
Total expenditure	958278	Balance carried forward to the next	81214
Expenditure per pupil	14302		

WORK RELATED-LEARNING

Provision for work related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have access to an accredited programme to support learning skills and attitudes that are valued in the work place.
- Pupils' work and the evidence from their experiences lack clear annotation and levelling to verify teachers' assessments.
- The long and medium term planning for the work related curriculum requires further development.

Commentary

33. The ASDAN Transition Challenge programme provides pupils in Years 10 and 11 with a wide range of cross-curricular learning experiences that begin to develop their skills and attitudes for life beyond school. Pupils participate in school-based lessons, activities in the community, visits to different places of work and work experience. Photographs of pupils taking part in their road safety programme and going shopping show their enthusiasm and enjoyment. However, the evidence to support the assessment of their work and participation is not always levelled and coded according to the system used throughout the programme. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to identify what pupils have achieved in terms of skills and independence.
34. The school is providing a range of experiences through PSHE, citizenship, careers and work experience for pupils. Overall, these fulfil the minimum statutory requirement for WRL. However, the long and medium term planning and organisation of groups, require further development to ensure that pupils' experiences are balanced and challenge and move them forward, covering the skills required to manage in the work place as independently as they can.

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

Throughout the following commentary, overall judgements about provision relate to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and any other significant aspects.

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are very well planned and, as a result, children achieve very well in both nurseries.
- Teachers have a very good understanding of how to meet the needs of children who are at different stages of development.
- Children in the integrated nursery have very good opportunities to play and work alongside their mainstream peers.
- Adults work closely together ensuring a suitably high and consistent emphasis is given to play, communication and social skills.
- Teachers lead their teams and manage links with families, other nurseries and schools very well.

Commentary

35. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in two nursery classes which cater for sixteen children in total, all of whom attend part-time. The 'assessment nursery' based at the school has places for ten part-time children none of whom attend for more than three days each week. The 'integrated nursery', co-located with a mainstream nursery has places for six children who attend mornings only. In both nurseries children achieve very well in all areas of learning because of high quality teaching and a very carefully planned and modified curriculum. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when children were judged to achieve 'well' in response to good teaching and learning in both nurseries.
36. In both nurseries teachers not only lead and manage their staff teams very well, they also work with their own families, and colleagues beyond their nurseries very effectively to the benefit of the children. For example, the teacher in the assessment nursery takes the assessment documentation and works with colleagues in the playgroups and nurseries that children attend when not with her. This ensures that all adults share a full and thorough understanding of what the child can do and what needs to be taught next.
37. Teaching and learning in **personal and social development** and **communication, language and literacy** is very good. The considerable strengths in these areas of learning are because of the emphasis that they are given in every activity and exchange. In both nurseries staff are very skilled in providing very good models for communication and behaviour. Children benefit from consistent expectations and communication with the result that they feel secure and ready to learn. There is an extremely well considered balance between providing individual teaching and opportunities for children to work successfully in a small group. In addition, those in the integrated nursery have the bonus of periodically working very successfully in a larger group with their mainstream peers. As a direct consequence of these approaches, children in both nurseries play purposefully, demonstrate curiosity and watch adults closely, constantly wanting to understand and participate.
38. All adults are very skilful in avoiding doing too much for children too quickly because they understand the importance of giving them the chance to act independently. They are very skilled at ensuring what is provided caters for the needs of each individual. For example, the use of different music, to build up an association with different activities, enables a blind child to begin to understand what is happening and feel sufficiently secure to respond in appropriate ways. The introduction of PECs (Picture Exchange System) at snack time is very successful in

helping children to express a preference. For all children staff support their spoken language with signing, with the result that key vocabulary is reinforced very successfully and children's attention is held very effectively.

39. In the assessment nursery, the highly structured and systematic use of symbols and photographs helps children to attach meaning to symbols, a fundamental precursor to reading. In the integrated nursery children show great pleasure in paying close attention to a story shared in a large group with their mainstream peers. This is extremely effective in promoting their interest in books and stories.
40. Teaching and learning in **mathematical development** is very good. In both nurseries adults understand the value of play in promoting learning and developing skills. While showing children how to use equipment, or providing key vocabulary careful encouragement is given to exploration and discovery. For example, when children in the assessment nursery select play equipment an adult joins them and gently suggests building a tower, or picking up the 'big' toy or the 'round' shape. In a teacher led group session, children in the integrated nursery thought of a number and then held up the corresponding number of fingers. This significant achievement was possible because all adults seamlessly adjusted their demands and the level of help provided to suit each individual child. This enabled the most able child in the group to name a hexagon and count its sides, while other members of the group matched large and small squares.
41. Children's interests are developed to extend their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Those in the integrated nursery pay close attention, alongside mainstream peers, to recall work on light and dark and the importance of lamps to celebrate Diwali. Very good teamwork means that they listen to a story reinforcing the idea of night and day very carefully and express their understanding and enjoyment of it. In the assessment nursery a very good 'cooking' lesson, in sweet making, resulted in children exploring icing sugar and cream through their senses, and observing and feeling the differences that occurred when the ingredients were mixed.
42. Teaching and learning in **physical development** is very good. The rich variety of activities available to children throughout the day means that they are constantly refining and developing their co-ordination skills. There is a challenging climbing frame in the outside area and adults teach children to develop their climbing and balancing skills with great care. During the inspection one boy eased himself backwards down a wooden ladder for the first time. In so doing he demonstrated the highly effective teaching he had received. Children who have greater physical disabilities work alongside those benefiting from a sensory curriculum in an extremely valuable 'hands session'. Meticulous planning enables children to work individually with an adult receiving massage and then joining in with nursery rhymes providing an exceptional fusion of an alternative curriculum and entirely age appropriate activities.
43. Activities that provide highly suitable opportunities to explore art materials are very carefully chosen and planned. All the previous strengths identified in teaching apply to **creative development** and consequently children achieve very well. In the integrated nursery children have extremely good opportunities to develop their imagination through stories and art work. They are beginning to use toys to represent real objects and play alongside peers in imaginary situations.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In English inspectors saw ten lessons and, in addition, looked at pupils' work, scrutinised planning and talked with staff. The modern foreign language taught is French and as only one lesson was seen a judgement has not been made on provision in this subject.

Modern Foreign Language

44. All pupils in Years 7 to 11 now have the opportunity to study a modern foreign language either as a discrete lesson or as part of the daily PSHE programme linked to healthy eating. In the one French lesson observed teaching was good and pupils were enthusiastic in their responses. It was appropriate that planning was not over ambitious and, as a result, pupils waited with nervous anticipation to practice the target language. They enjoyed very much the opportunity to swap places as the reward for responding with words such as “bonjour” or “salut.” At the time of the last inspection pupils were not taught a modern foreign language.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils’ communication skills are good because of the frequent opportunities they are given to practice them across the curriculum.
- Ways of recording pupils’ achievements lack the detail to be able to track their progress effectively over time.
- When planning effectively reflects the range of ability within the group teaching and learning is good.
- A structured programme for reading and writing effectively supports the National Strategy for English.
- Current class organisation makes it difficult to monitor the impact of the English curriculum on pupils’ learning.

Commentary

45. Overall pupils’ achievement in English is satisfactory. National criteria are used as a way of measuring achievement and progress. Although use of these is well established, there is an absence of clear evidence to see how judgements are reached. Furthermore, the lack of a consistent and rigorous approach across the school for assessing pupils’ work and for recording the outcomes of learning intentions to show pupils’ progress in lessons and over time, means it is difficult to track what pupils can do independently.
46. Pupils achieve well in the development of their communication skills in class and around the school. They have good opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills and pupils of all abilities are encouraged to give their views and express preferences. In preparation for an assembly pupils in Years 7 to 10 are given the opportunity to share in the choice of song they will sing and sign. They respond with the increasing maturity of young adults. Those pupils who require it receive additional support in the development of their communication skills through working with speech and language therapists. According to their needs pupils learn to sign, use a picture exchange communication system, symbols and objects of reference. However, these systems are used inconsistently, and because of this, pupils do not always have the opportunity to learn as well as they can.
47. Throughout the school, where teachers have carefully adapted work to meet the needs of all pupils, teaching and learning are, at least, good. In a lesson where role-play is used with Year 3 to 6 pupils to reinforce the understanding of the story *‘Mrs Honey’s Hat’*, one pupil is asked to act out the main character and does so with confidence, showing knowledge and understanding of the story. Since the last inspection teaching and learning opportunities for pupils in Years 7 to 11 have improved and are now good. This is because of teachers’ detailed planning and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Less effective teaching and learning occurs when what is planned does not adequately address the wide age and ability range within groups and planning does not identify clearly what teaching assistants are expected to do to support pupils’ in their learning.

48. The school, to support the National Strategy, has established a structured programme for literacy. Pupils enjoy the 'Codebreaker' programme that provides the opportunity for regular reading and writing development and they respond well to the structure and routine of the lessons. However, pupils in Years 7 to 11, and in particular Years 10 and 11, have less opportunity to access reading and writing materials and activities suited to their age.
49. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator provides a good role model through her own teaching and is enthusiastic to move things forward. With this, and the appropriate professional support for developing her role as a co-ordinator, there is the potential for her to impact significantly on the overall provision for English. At present, the arrangements for subject monitoring require a more consistent approach to ensure that pupils in mixed age groups are all receiving a programme of work appropriate to their needs.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Language and literacy are well supported in other subjects. Most lessons throughout the day provide pupils with good opportunities for using and developing their skills in speaking and listening. Teachers in a range of subjects including science, religious education and ICT use key vocabulary. However, the key words are not always supported by visual cues, displayed in the classroom or incorporated into pupils' PECS boards or books to ensure they all have the opportunity to access learning with greater independence.

MATHEMATICS

Inspectors saw seven lessons and, in addition, looked at pupils' work, scrutinised planning and talked with staff.

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although there has been a significant improvement in teaching and learning for pupils in years 7 to 11, the mixed age groups are a challenge for teachers.
- Lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are planned and organised effectively and, as a consequence, pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The activities provided for pupils with the most complex needs in Years 3 to 6 are not well matched to their identified learning needs.
- Whole school planning is not precise enough to ensure that pupils are being provided with work that covers all the required elements of the mathematics curriculum.

Commentary

51. At the time of the last inspection teaching and learning were judged to be unsatisfactory. Work planned for pupils was uninspiring and, as a consequence, they often became bored. This is no longer the case. Indeed, for higher attaining pupils in Year 7 to 11 teaching and learning is good and this is clearly having a positive impact on the progress that they make. Planning for this group is good with the result that all pupils are involved and show enthusiasm for the starter activity such as when using a hundred square to point out patterns in numbers. The main part of the lesson is carefully planned and work provided is designed to match individual needs so that all pupils make progress at a level appropriate to their ability. The pupil working at a level significantly higher than the other pupils is provided with good "extension" work.
52. Teaching for pupils with challenging behaviour and profound and multiple learning difficulties in Years 7 to 11 has also improved, but not to the same extent. Planning is still of a good quality and the range of resources used and the activities set, motivate pupils to become involved for

short periods. However, the wide age range and ability within each group poses a considerable challenge for teachers. In a lesson, where the pupils exhibited some very challenging behaviour, the teacher tried very hard to engage the pupils in a numeracy session designed to improve their skills in adding two single digit numbers. Her detailed planning was successful in part. However, the lesson format did not meet every pupil's need and, for a few, was far too long. Also the wide age range, where pupils spanning five year have to be taught together makes it hard to provide an appropriate curriculum particularly for those pupils in their final year at school. It also presents difficulties in terms of providing suitable examination opportunities for pupils. As yet, the range of examinations available to pupils in Year 10 and 11 are not sufficient to challenge the most able.

53. The practice of grouping pupils according to special needs rather than age, causes difficulties for the school in terms of ensuring that pupils are provided with a programme that gives them access to the full mathematics curriculum. The long term planning makes clear what aspects should be covered and when, but it is set out by year group rather than class group. This is a particular problem for teachers in the secondary school because planning shows that in some terms they would be expected to cover up to four different aspects of the curriculum for the same class group. This would be very difficult and, indeed, it is clear that it does not always happen.
54. Nearly all of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are in one group and the good teaching that they receive is having a positive impact on the standards they achieve. The strength of the teaching team is a factor in the success of this class and enables the class teacher to organise the numeracy session into two groups based on ability. Planning, which follows closely the National Numeracy Strategy, is good and teaching recognises the different abilities within the group. Pupils appreciate the style of the class teacher who is careful to emphasise the target language related to shape. They show their understanding by being able to describe shapes by using words such as "curve" and "flat" and show obvious enthusiasm when they have to name and describe shapes by feeling for them in a bag. This enthusiasm and response is missing in the class for pupils with the most complex needs in Years 3 to 6. The main part of the lesson goes on for too long and the activities related to number recognition and 1:1 correspondence are not matched to the needs of the majority of the class, some of whom are at the very earliest stages of learning.
55. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the areas in need of development and is anxious to involve the local authority's subject advisor to support her in the development of the subject action plan. Although monitoring of the subject does take place, as yet this has not had an impact on improving teaching and learning where there are weaknesses. Although resources are satisfactory overall, several teachers do make very good use of interactive white boards to support their teaching of mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. This aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. Although planning does not always recognise the opportunities to extend learning into other subjects teachers do take the opportunity to reinforce number skills in particular. For example, by counting with support or identifying independently the number of vowels in a word.

SCIENCE

Inspectors saw six lessons and, in addition, looked at pupils' work, scrutinised planning and talked with staff.

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching varies, but is consistently good for pupils in Years 7 to 11.

- Most pupils make satisfactory or good progress in lessons, but evidence to judge achievement and progress over time is not secure.
- Pupils enjoy the practical and investigative aspects of science and respond well to lively and imaginative teaching.
- Planning is not sufficiently detailed to meet the wide age range and the different special needs of pupils in class groups.
- Appropriate systems are being developed to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning are checked.

Commentary

57. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the most effective lessons, such as in the older class for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, teaching is lively and imaginative. Pupils are encouraged to explore a variety of magnets and begin to recognise that some objects attract and others do not. There is great excitement when a magnet attracts objects and each 'find' is treated with a cheer. Learning support assistants are well deployed and ensure that all pupils do as much as they can for themselves. In less successful lessons, for example for pupils in Years 3 to 6 with profound learning difficulties and behavioural needs, questions are only directed at higher attaining pupils and, consequently, teaching does not cater for the wide range of needs within the class. Pupils are only fleetingly engaged, and support assistants are not sufficiently involved in pupils' learning at the beginning and end of the lesson.
58. Most pupils achieve well in lessons. For example, the very youngest pupils begin to understand the difference between light and dark because of the very good use of torches to find the bear in the 'cave'. Pupils in Year 6 identify bones belonging to certain animals and higher attaining pupils know that a skeleton protects as well as supports the body. Older pupils learn the names of the components used in a simple circuit because of the very good use of ICT and, with support, they create a simple circuit with a switch. However, there is a lack of work or photographs in pupils' records to confirm that pupils maintain this good progress over time. Rarely is work or photographs annotated or levelled to show pupils' achievement over a period of time and in different contexts.
59. The current class organisation results in pupils being placed in groups with a wide age range - as many as five year groups in some classes. This poses challenges for teachers who are trying to ensure that all pupils build steadily on previous learning as they move through the school. This task is extremely difficult for them because despite their best efforts the curriculum they are following in science is not sufficiently detailed. It does not provide adequately for the age and ability levels of the pupils with whom teachers are expected to work with.
60. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner and the role of the co-ordinator is developing. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning have been introduced and now need to adopt a sharper evaluative edge so that they impact more positively on pupils' achievements. Resources for the subject are good and motivate pupils to participate and learn. The subject has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Although only one discrete lesson was observed, inspectors did see the use of ICT in a range of subjects. In addition discussion was held with staff and records scrutinised.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 7 to 11 effective planning and organisation provides a range of learning experiences for pupils.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning in other subjects is not always planned for.

- ICT as an aid to develop communication is in need of development.
- Improved resources for ICT have provided the opportunity for the subject to develop.

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. National criteria are used to assess pupils' achievement, however, the lack of evidence make it difficult to track accurately progress over time.
62. During the inspection, opportunities to observe pupils in Years 1 to 6 using a range of ICT were limited. However, pupils in Years 7 to 9 are following the Key Stage 3 ICT National Strategy which has been appropriately modified and adapted to meet their needs. For Year 10 and 11 pupils, the ASDAN Transition Challenge programme provides planned opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills. For example, pupils in one Year 7 to 11 class are able to log on, word process a short piece of work, change the font and size and save their work to disk. At the end of the lesson, with encouragement from the teacher, pupils explain clearly and with enthusiasm what they have done. They use key vocabulary such as highlight, font and drag and drop with understanding and confidence.
63. Throughout the school, pupils use switches to make choices. However, they are not always given the chance to interact independently with programmes and class activities because the opportunities to use a range of ICT systems for communicating are inconsistent. Digital cameras are used to prepare resources for individual pupils and for recording purposes and there is a range of evidence in school to show pupils at their work, out on visits or what they have completed in class. This provides pupils with the opportunity to recall and reflect on what they have been doing. The 'CAVE' provides a stimulating, multi-sensory environment and the use of ICT has the potential for developing the awareness of pupils with additional needs.
64. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that all teachers and most support staff have received opportunities for appropriate training. She has provided guidance in the long term to address the range of pupils' learning needs and the skills to be developed. However, ICT does not feature routinely in teachers' planning. There has been good investment in resources for ICT including the provision of five interactive whiteboards for use in delivering the curriculum. Classrooms have at least one stand alone computer and a range of curriculum software.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The use of ICT is not consistent throughout the school. It is not always clear from teachers' planning or records, how teaching across the curriculum ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills in ICT in a way that builds on their earlier learning experiences and moves them forward. However, as a result of improved resources, the opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons have been increased. Word-processing is used well to support literacy skills and enable pupils to present their work neatly.

HUMANITIES

During the inspection two lessons in history and one lesson in geography were observed. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall judgement on the provision for geography and history.

66. It is evident from scrutiny of planning and discussion with the co-ordinator that the topic approach used in both subjects ensures that all pupils are provided with an appropriately wide curriculum.
67. In the lessons seen learning was good because teachers' planning recognised the varying needs of the pupils. In a geography lesson for Years 2 to 6, pupils' interest was captured by the use of frozen leaves to help pupils understand the difference in climate found in Polar

Regions. They responded well using very appropriate language, for example describing the dead plant as “floppy.” In a history lesson for predominantly Year 7,8 and 9 pupils, excellent use of an interactive white board enabled pupils to understand and compare how the ideas of Leonardo Da Vinci influenced the design of the modern day helicopter. Responses to the range of stimuli provided by the class teacher were good, as was the way pupils participated in the design of their own “helicopter blades.” They gained great pleasure from trialling their inventions.

68. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has a good grasp of what is being taught across the school. He is aware of the need to ensure that, in the future, planning needs to guarantee that pupils will not cover the same topic on more than one occasion. Resources within classrooms are satisfactory and there is an appropriate range of resources within the library to support the topics identified for each subject.

Religious Education

Inspectors saw three lessons and, in addition, looked at pupils’ work, scrutinised planning and talked with staff.

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient evidence to make valid judgements on pupils’ progress over time.
- Teaching for the youngest pupils is effective in providing opportunities for them to learn how to share and work together.
- Pupils’ experiences are enhanced by visits out of school, by visiting speakers and by the study of other faiths.
- A systematic approach to planning to ensure all pupils have access to suitable curriculum in religious education has yet to be fully implemented.

Commentary

69. In the absence of robust evidence to verify progress over time, it is difficult to reach an accurate judgement on achievement in religious education. However, teaching and learning for pupils in years 1 and 2 are good. They make good progress in learning about the story of Noah, listening attentively, responding to simple questions and taking turns to put the animals into the ark. Appropriate behaviour and participation is rewarded and pupils are confident and happy to join in. The additional use of song, signing and switches, ensures that all pupils are able to understand the sequence of the story and achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing an understanding of personal relationships and they know the importance of being kind. The daily snack time routine encourages pupils to be part of a group and makes a good contribution to their personal and social development.
70. Pupils in Years 3 to 11 make satisfactory progress. They are introduced to a range of world faiths and religions. They learn about Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. In Years 7 to 11 pupils are learning about Islam. An effective power point presentation showing people at prayer and celebrating enables the pupils to increase their understanding of Ramadan and Eid and make links with their own experiences of prayer and celebration. In addition, planning for their own Eid celebration helps pupils to understand the meaning of celebration and relate their own experiences to those of others. The good progress that they are making is evident in their responses.
71. The well displayed work in classes and corridors provides good evidence of how visits out of school support and enhance the religious education curriculum. These displays do much to consolidate pupils’ learning in the subject. Pupils also benefit from visits from the local clergy.

72. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school follows the recommendations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which has been modified to suit the needs of the pupils. Both religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Monitoring of teaching and learning is part of a two year rolling programme. However, this has yet to have an impact on planning for the range of age and abilities in each class group. As a result, the systems to ensure pupils have access to a broad range of experiences and make progress in their learning require further development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and Technology

No lessons were seen in this subject and it is not possible to make a judgement on provision.

73. Work in this subject is appropriately based on national guidance and, as such, topics identified have the potential to develop designing and making skills. Pupils, who are capable of doing so, show appropriate accuracy in skills such as cutting and sticking. Older more able pupils, in a history lesson looking at inventions, were able to follow a simple design to produce a spinning device that worked. They responded well to encouragement to explore refinements designed to improve the performance of their designs. Pupils with more severe needs in the secondary school very appropriately have regular opportunities to develop life skills, with support, for example when making themselves snacks. They enjoy evaluating the finished product!

Art and design

Although four lessons were seen in art and design and music insufficient, evidence was gathered to make an overall judgement on provision in these subjects.

74. The work on display in the school indicates the good links that exist between art and other subjects. This was evident in the large tie-dyed cloth produced by pupils in Years 1 and 2, representing the sky, which contributes to their scientific learning about night and day. Similarly, pupils in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 create stained glass windows and models, based on visits to churches to reinforce learning in religious education.
75. In both lessons observed, the art activity was a suitable choice for the pupils concerned. In a good lesson all adults were involved in successfully helping pupils to settle and focus on a well chosen activity. As a result of the teacher's good expectations, pupils made good gains in dabbing paint with a brush in the style of Monet and evaluating their work. Teaching was satisfactory rather than good when pupils with profound and multiple difficulties used suitable collage materials, but were periodically given too much help by support staff. This meant that while sufficient learning took place, pupils did not always have enough time to feel the materials and manipulate them independently to enhance their learning well.

Music

76. In the two lessons seen, both for pupils in Years 7 to 11, teaching and learning were very good. Teaching was characterised by very good subject expertise, the very good use of musical resources, high quality support by learning support staff enabling the teacher to interact with each pupil in turn, and a suitable balance between listening and active participation. Pupils were totally engaged and thoroughly enjoyed these sessions. They made very good progress in identifying and using a variety of instruments, and in responding to sound and movement. Music is an important part of the day's routines and activities which pupils clearly enjoy.

Physical Education

As only two lessons were seen insufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall judgement on the provision physical education.

77. In both the lessons seen teaching and learning were satisfactory overall. Pupils in the secondary school are developing their balance and co-ordination in linking a series of movements of contrasting actions and body shapes on the floor and a low box. Pupils of primary age with profound and multiple learning difficulties tolerated and enjoyed the sensation of being massaged in the calm environment of the sensory room. However, it is inappropriate that older, more active pupils are not expected to change and were allowed to perform in their socks. The curriculum for physical education is broad and includes swimming and outdoor pursuits education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Inspectors saw six lessons and, in addition, looked at pupils' work, scrutinised planning and talked with staff.

Provision for personal, social, health and emotional development and citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships and support ensures that pupils grow in confidence and develop good personal and social skills.
- Recording of pupils' progress does not always demonstrate the impact of daily activities on pupils' achievement over time.
- The emphasis on providing pupils with choice ensures that they are motivated to develop their communication skills.
- There have been improvements in the secondary age curriculum because the school understands the need to develop a more cohesive approach to planning.

Commentary

78. Pupils achieve well in their confidence, and willingness to communicate and relate to others throughout the school. This is because adults are unfailingly kind and supportive of pupils and have good relationships with them. These relationships combined with the countless occasions throughout the day when pupils are offered choices, successfully enhance pupils' personal development. This is evident, for example, when pupils in Years 1 and 2 willingly select which torch they wish to use in their science lesson and when older pupils decide whether or not they want to go outside at break-time and choose which activities they will engage in.
79. It is clear that all staff take great care to ensure that pupils' choices are respected and that this, in turn, has a positive effect on pupils' communication skills and personal development. Pupils understand that it is very worthwhile indicating their preferences and so are motivated to develop their individual communication skills. When pupils are working in groups, tremendous care is taken to encourage turn taking and sharing adult attention, with positive results. In one session seen, pupils made good gains in understanding the idea of fairness when they voted for which mental mathematics game they would play.
80. Although specific time allocated to discrete lessons is brief, it is entirely appropriate that work in this area of the curriculum underpins a lot of what goes on through the school day. However, where time is identified on the timetable, it is not always sufficiently structured. During these potentially valuable occasions, for instance, when pupils are having a relaxed time over snacks, or at the beginning of the day when they are working on their own, planning does not always show clearly what individual pupils will gain from the session. In these circumstances pupils make satisfactory rather than good use of their social skills because of the lack of focus in adults' intervention with them. Despite high levels of support, the absence of detailed planning and recording of pupils' responses make it difficult for the school to arrive at judgements as to the impact that these occasions are having on pupils' achievements over time.
81. Older pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their independence through working for the ASDAN award and joining school trips and outings. This represents satisfactory

improvement in provision since the previous inspection. The deputy head teacher has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in relation to pupils' increasing independence and social skills. She has accurately identified that need for greater cohesion in planning for careers education, citizenship and work related learning in order to give the oldest pupils a richer experience of developing personally and socially by extending opportunities to learn beyond the school environment.

82. The co-ordinator for this subject is new to the responsibility and she is in the process of developing the subject appropriately. However, as a new and part-time member of staff working in the lower school, she has no knowledge of the curriculum for older pupils. Despite this, under the guidance of senior colleagues, the school is ensuring that it now meets statutory requirements in relation to citizenship and careers education. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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