

## Meldreth Manor School

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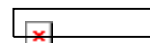
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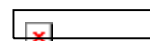
## Basic information about the college



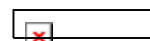
Name of college:	Meldreth Manor School
Type of college:	Independent, residential, specialist
Director:	Mrs Bridget Warr
Principal:	Mr Eric Nash
Address of college:	Fenny Lane Meldreth Royston Herts SG8 6LG
Telephone number:	01763 268000
Fax number:	01763 268099
Chair of governors:	Mrs Christine Gilder
Reference number*:	208231
Name of reporting inspector:	Mrs Isabella Jobson
Date of inspection:	11-14 November 2002

*\*charity or registered business number of the company running the college*

## Part A: Summary



## Information about the college



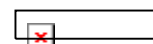
Meldreth Manor School is run by Scope, the largest charity working with disabled people in the United Kingdom. The post-19 provision is part of Meldreth Manor School, an independent residential special school catering for pupils aged 9 to 19. It is situated in the village of Meldreth, which is ten miles south of Cambridge and four miles north of Royston. Local facilities include a village shop, public house and a railway station with connections to London and Cambridge. Meldreth is in a rural location close to the A10.

The post-19 provision, opened in September 2001, has a national catchment area, but currently the majority of students come from the South East of England. At present, there are 20 full-time students enrolled aged between 19 and 22 years of age, and no part-time students. There are nine students in Year 1 and 11 students in Year 2. Some 80% of the students are resident at the college and 55% are female. The post-19 provision includes students with cerebral palsy, profound and complex learning difficulties, sensory impairment and medical problems.

The mission of Meldreth Manor School is to create a supportive and stimulating environment in which students are encouraged and enabled to maximise their abilities, and prepare them to take their places in the wider community.

All students follow a course made up of core subjects and options. The core curriculum includes personal, social and health education (PSHE), current affairs and outings, media studies and information and communications technology (ICT). Physiotherapy, hydrotherapy or swimming are included within the core curriculum. Communication, literacy and numeracy are taught throughout the curriculum. Options for the non-core curriculum on offer each term include art and crafts, cookery, horticulture or pottery. There are additional facilities including an indoor riding school, hydrotherapy pool, 'soundbeam' and other therapies. The college employs an extensive range of staff including teachers, trainers, carers, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, nurses and auxiliaries.

### **How effective is the college?**



Inspectors judged the overall quality of provision to be inadequate. The provision for literacy, numeracy, communication and ICT was unsatisfactory. The overall leadership and management of the college were weak. The quality of education and training was judged to be satisfactory in social and life skills, physical education (PE), drama, music and therapies. The standard of residential provision was satisfactory overall. Care and personal support for students are good.

The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

#### ***Key strengths***

- effective care which enhances learning
- personal development and learning effectively supported by a range of therapies.

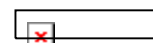
#### ***What should be improved***

- the unsatisfactory teaching
- assessment and recording of learning
- the development of the extended curriculum
- strategic planning

- the quality assurance of the provision
- the governors and trustees meeting their responsibilities
- inadequate police checks
- inadequate response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act or the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Disability Discrimination Act
- the training and deployment of support staff to assist learning.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

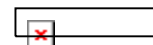
### Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), and Very Poor (5).*

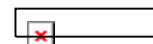
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Literacy, numeracy, communication and ICT	<b>Unsatisfactory.</b> The recording of students' progress is inadequate, individual learning plans contain few developmental targets and an insufficient regard for students' age. Teaching is unsatisfactory and does not promote individual progress. Planning for learning support staff to support learning is unsatisfactory. Students' effective communication is promoted by good speech and language therapy staff. There is good use of ICT multimedia to aid communication.
Social and life skills including art, PE, drama, music and therapies	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching in practical lessons is good and PSHE and creative arts activities are well planned. Good communication strategies are implemented which enhance learning. Therapists offer good support for personal development and learning. The setting of short-term targets is unsatisfactory and the recording of individual learning across the extended curriculum is insufficiently rigorous.

### How well is the college led and managed?



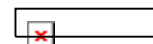
Leadership and management of the post-19 provision are weak. Strategic management is very weak and there is a lack of critical oversight by the charity, Scope. The status and role of the post-19 provision within Meldreth Manor School are not clearly defined. Daily management by the senior management team is satisfactory. Quality assurance procedures are unsatisfactory and are not systematically evaluated by senior managers or governors. Self-assessment procedures lack rigour. Management information systems are complex and data are not well co-ordinated across the establishment, making it difficult to determine the progress of individual students. Governance of the college provision is weak. Procedures to monitor appeals and complaints are insufficiently rigorous. Scope have not completed police checks for all staff. Although paperwork is currently with the Criminal Records Bureau, a large number of staff have not been cleared by the police check.

### To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



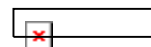
The school's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. The aims and values of Meldreth Manor School promote effective care for all members of the community. Staff are especially effective in the care of students with profound and complex physical and learning difficulties. Volunteers effectively add to the support given to students by staff. The promotion of social integration is good. Equality of opportunity is well promoted through the PSHE provision, but there is a lack of oversight to ensure consistency across the post-19 provision. There are inadequate arrangements for consulting students and learning their views. The college has not produced a gender policy. The governors have been slow to respond to their responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. There is no race equality policy or action plan to implement the act. There has been no training for staff in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act or the SEN Disability Discrimination Act.

### How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Support and guidance are satisfactory overall. The provision and management of a wide and appropriate range of therapies are good. Students are well cared for and benefit from a range of specialist therapy and nursing provision. Personal support for students is good and develops self-confidence and awareness. However, there is insufficient specialist guidance for the promotion of lifelong learning and no opportunities for confidential discussion, advocacy services and counselling. Induction procedures for post-19 provision were introduced in September 2002, but there is no student handbook to help students understand the aims and purpose of their course. Equal opportunities are not well promoted across the extended curriculum. The proximity of the college to residential facilities and school buildings restricts the promotion of a realistic adult environment. The school's rural location means that students have a very limited experience of or appreciate adult life in a natural community. Students are reliant on staff to facilitate interaction in the community, and are unable to differentiate between their living accommodation and educational sessions. Partnership with local agencies, social services, health services and specialist networks is good.

## Students' views of the college



Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

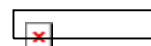
### ***What students like about the college***

- the staff
- the disco
- the food
- their room
- the teaching of drama.

### ***What they feel could be improved***

- lack of activities whilst awaiting help from teacher
- increase trips away from college
- meet more people, other than college staff.

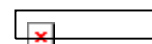
## Other information



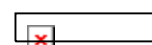
The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the inspection. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit

it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC is responsible for ensuring that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post-inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

## Part B: The college as a whole



### Achievement and standards

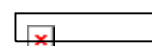


1. Inspectors were unable to measure the overall achievements of the post-19 provision or assess learners' progress in their time at the school. The school does not collate data centrally for analysis. The initial assessment of students' performance, ability and needs on entry to the school does not provide a clear picture of individual students' levels of achievement or provide the basis to plan realistic or challenging targets for the development of personal and learning skills. Learning targets are generally too global and insufficiently broken down into small steps to assist the recording of students' progress. Targets are insufficiently challenging for some learners. There is no regular review of achievement or amendment of targets, where appropriate. One student had the same learning goal for over a year. Teachers fail to identify students' achievements or record them formally across the extended curriculum.

2. Students' ability to maintain skills and consolidate them is satisfactory, but the teacher's expectation of their learning is too low. The school does not offer students the opportunity to gain accreditation. Students effectively develop and increase their communication skills. During lessons, specific interventions by specialist staff, such as speech therapy and physiotherapy, are reinforced effectively by both teaching and care staff. Drama provides students with the opportunity to gain self-confidence and learn skills in conveying their views to their peers. Students reach a satisfactory standard, in relation to their learning difficulties, in activity-based sessions, such as dance. Students are not given opportunities for supervised work experience, even when such placements are on offer within the locality. For example, the attached riding school, which has extensive facilities for learners with disabilities, would welcome students for supported work placements. Individual learning plans do not include transition plans and learning goals for supported independence. Lifelong learning is insufficiently promoted. Students are not made aware of all the possibilities open to them in the future.

3. Retention rates and attendance are satisfactory, and match other independent specialist colleges. Punctuality is poor and impedes learning at the beginning of sessions. Students arrive up to 30 minutes late in some lessons. The students' punctuality is dependent on care staff ensuring they are at the lesson on time. As the post-19 provision is just in its second academic year, inspectors were unable to form a valid judgement about the suitability of the students' future destinations after leaving Meldreth Manor.

### Quality of teaching, training and learning



4. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory overall. Teaching was good or better in 26% of lessons, satisfactory in 35% and unsatisfactory in 39%. Teaching was more effective in lessons with a strong focus on practical activities. In these lessons, teachers were able to gain students' interest, motivate them to learn and encourage them to review their own progress. The very good sessions provided coherent links between individual learning plans, what was to be learned in the sessions and the activities undertaken. In unsatisfactory

lessons, learning support staff were not effectively deployed by the teacher and students were passive or inactive for a considerable part of the session. Students often wait to be involved for extended periods of time. Planning for whole group teaching was ineffective, did not take account of the students' personal learning objectives. Teachers did not modify the language or work to meet the varying needs of the students. The planned use of learning support assistants to promote learning in whole group sessions is inadequate; support staff were not directed how they could assist students with their activities. Students' individual learning plans are not fully incorporated within the context of the lesson or across the extended curriculum. Shift patterns for care staff disrupt both teaching and learning. The changeover occurs during lessons and results in different care staff supporting a student. Learning is not sufficiently evaluated or recorded. There is limited evidence of rigorous review of lessons to identify what does and does not work in order to adapt lesson plans or to evaluate the impact of the teaching on students' learning. Some learning resources were inappropriate, such as the use of crinkled paper to demonstrate the sound of autumn leaves when leaves were lying in drifts outside the classroom.

5. All teaching staff have qualified teacher status either in the primary or secondary sector. However, teaching staff lack expertise and experience in post-compulsory education and the development of the curriculum to meet the needs of older students. Teachers and support staff show considerable knowledge, competence and expertise in the associated physical and sensory needs of students with cerebral palsy. Students have access to a good range of specialist staff, including speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and nurses. Music and dance therapy support the students' emotional and social development. Physiotherapy and hydrotherapy enable students to remain in as good a physical and mental shape as possible. Good use of speech therapists enables students to exchange their thoughts and ideas. There are too few trained learning support staff.

6. The buildings and site are not well maintained, with some uneven paths not adapted for students with restricted mobility. The extensive grounds are not used effectively to enhance learning. For example, the greenhouses are not readily accessible by the students with restricted mobility and the adventure area is in need of refurbishment. The close proximity of day provision to residential provision creates an institutionalised environment. The appearance of the internal education accommodation reflects the commitment of the staff to provide a welcoming environment for students. However, the content of displays of art and craftwork, is often more appropriate for young children than young adults. Some residential accommodation is cramped with a shabby décor and some inadequate personal care facilities. For example, there is one bath and shower for eight students in one of the flats. In another, three students are sharing a room, one of whom is 15 years of age.

7. Therapists and other specialist teachers and staff undertake assessment related to their expertise, but the information gained is not used effectively to plan future learning nor does it identify what kind of support should be arranged. Comprehensive plans are reviewed and updated regularly, and provide an effective framework for monitoring and evaluating students' care needs. However, care plans are not linked adequately to students' individual learning plans. The assessment of students' progress in their individual learning plans is only at an early stage of development and opportunities are not identified in teachers' schemes of work. Staff in the residential flats and families receive a weekly summary of activities undertaken, but not what learning has taken place. Students' termly reviews lack evaluation and mostly contain descriptions of the students' experiences, rather than recording what has been learned or the progress made.

8. The programmes and courses are not well designed to meet individual needs and there are few opportunities for students to express choices and preferences in a meaningful way. However, the



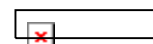
residential accommodation promotes and develops appropriate adult behaviours. There is insufficient coherence and planned progression across the extended curriculum. Limited use and involvement in the life of the local community restrict opportunities for students to learn and transfer skills in realistic contexts. Opportunities for pre-vocational activities in art and craft, and horticulture are insufficient. Enrichment activities available for students in the evenings and at weekends are limited.

9. Support and guidance for students across the extended curriculum are satisfactory. Personal support for students is good and ensures their dignity. This encourages the development of self-confidence and is beginning to make the students aware of what they can achieve. Many staff give students considerable support and time in addition to their contractual duties. For example, staff give their time to arrange visits off site and residential experiences. There is good communication with the wide range of staff involved in the individual care programmes. The specialist guidance for students relating to their future choices and lifelong learning is unsatisfactory. Most students are unaware of what they could do when they finish their course in the post-19 provision. Personal advisers from the Connexions service are involved with the provision, but there is no planned transition programme for life after college. Attendance is satisfactory, considering the severe medical needs of some students. All absences are related to medical need.

10. Induction programmes are not well developed, although there have been some induction activities. There is no student handbook available in a range of media to ensure that students understand the aims and purpose of life and work in the post-19 provision. Individual learning needs are identified well. The co-ordination of activities across the extended curriculum is not always cohesive. There is no provision for advocacy, counselling or an independent listening service. This is unsatisfactory and does not effectively promote equality of opportunity for students.

11. Partnerships with other agencies, including social services, the national care standards commission, the health authority and specialist networks, are good.

## Leadership and management



12. Leadership and management are weak. Strategic management is very weak within the school and there is a lack of critical oversight by the charity, Scope. The principal and governors are unsure of the status and future position of the post-19 provision within Meldreth Manor School. This uncertainty adversely affects the planning of developments and delays improvements to the accommodation and education provision. Daily management of the provision by the senior management team is satisfactory. The headteacher of the school is not well supported by Scope education managers. Staff from across the multi-disciplinary teams have confidence in the management team and identify with the mission of the school. Staff report increased morale which has improved significantly since the last Ofsted school inspection in 1998, when the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. Staff work hard to improve standards and to provide purposeful and interesting experiences for students. Management and co-ordination of the post-19 provision within the overall school structure are unsatisfactory. The 80% teaching load for the teacher in charge leaves insufficient time for the management of data, development of provision and evaluation of performance. The provision and management of a wide and appropriate range of therapies are good, and effectively support students in their learning. The management of the social care provision is good and is much improved since the last school inspection.

13. Quality assurance procedures are unsatisfactory and are not systematically monitored, reviewed or evaluated by governors or senior managers. The views of parents, carers and students or their advocates are not sought. No member of the senior management team is delegated to co-ordinate management information systems and the information itself does not assist in the effective monitoring of individual students' progress. A very wide range of data are collected by all staff teams. Attempts by the college staff to co-ordinate and streamline information are unsatisfactory; for

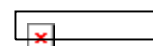
example, there is no networked information system for staff to record activities, achievement or students' progress against individual learning plans. Staff involved in the provision of the extended curriculum meet regularly to develop a cohesive approach to their programme and share information on students' progress. Good practice is not well disseminated to staff. Whilst all post-19 staff were involved in the creation of the self-assessment report, self-assessment lacks rigour. Procedures to evaluate the quality of the provision in all aspects of the college work have very little impact on improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of students. For example, Scope advisors infrequently undertake teaching observations.

14. Staff appraisal and performance management follow Scope's procedures. Supervision of care staff is regular and meets the requirements of the national care standards. However, some senior and middle managers have not received appraisal since the opening of the provision. There are no clearly defined performance or success criteria for the college as a whole, for senior managers, teachers, care staff or therapists.

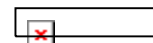
15. The promotion of equality of opportunity for disability through the PSHE provision is good. The college's response to the SEN Disability Discrimination Act is weak, with no evidence of a response by governors to their anticipatory duties to monitor issues related to disability and there has been no training for staff. The response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act is ineffective with no promotion of issues about race and ethnicity. There is no implementation plan for the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. Issues relating to the promotion of advocacy and sexual orientation are not well promoted. The college's response to bullying and harassment is good, although the complaints procedure for students is unsatisfactory. In September 2002, Scope developed new recording procedures for complaints, but these have not yet been fully implemented. Governors do not regularly monitor and review appeals or complaints.

16. The oversight of the strategic direction of the college by governors is weak. There is limited monitoring of the quality of the provision and of the quality of their own performance as governors. New guidance procedures and training by Scope are currently being prepared. The clerk to the governors has completed training, prepared and delivered by Scope, in the roles and responsibilities of clerks. The school follows rigidly the guidance presented by Scope in seeking competitive tenders to secure resources and services. However, some processes are over-burdensome on the efficient running of the school. Budget holders do not receive detailed and regularly updated information.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



## Literacy, numeracy, communication and ICT



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (Grade 4)**.

### **Strengths**

- positive and productive team work by teaching, care and therapeutic staff
- good use of ICT multimedia in teaching

- well-qualified speech and language therapy staff promote effective student communication.

### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory teaching
- inadequate recording of progress
- unsatisfactory and inconsistent planning for support staff to promote learning
- few developmental targets within individual learning plans
- insufficient adult focus in planning programmes across the extended curriculum.

### ***Scope of provision***

17. Literacy and numeracy are taught to all students through the core curriculum, options and choice sessions, regardless of their learning difficulties. Lessons include literacy; time and space; rebus symbol users; current affairs; media studies; cookery; multi-cultural studies; fund-raising; and letter writing. Communication is one of the three main elements in the core curriculum: it is included in all students' learning plans. The college has a policy that ensures all students have access to a wide range of technical aids to improve communication. This policy defines the complementary use of signs, symbols and speech to enhance verbal comprehension, improve expressive ability and develop literacy skills. Some students use electronic devices to assist and augment their communication (AAC). ICT includes control technology, the use of technology in the wider world, and the skills to access technology and projects.

### ***Achievement and standards***

18. The recording of students' progress is inadequate. Reports are mainly descriptive, listing activities completed, with limited evaluation of progress against individual learning plans. There are no processes to record small steps of progress. The college is taking part in a pilot to record individual responses made by students. The information gained is not used to evaluate progress. Students do not have their performance accredited by suitable qualifications.

19. Throughout their time at the college, most students are able to maintain their level of communication skills. Most students achieve as expected in line with their communication aims and ability. However, this is mainly in response to functional communication with staff rather than ideas. Students are keen to learn and are well motivated. Some students have strong, assertive communication. For example, a student who did not have speech drew attention to the fact that his communicator needed recharging. Communication between students is limited. Learning plans do

not include this aspect. There is insufficient challenge for more able students, who are given tasks identical to those given to their less able peers.

### ***Quality of education and training***

20. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall. In the sessions observed, 20% of teaching was good, 30% of lessons were satisfactory and 50% were unsatisfactory. Teaching is not planned to promote progress and students' individual aims and needs are inadequately addressed. The extensive use of teacher-led lessons is inappropriate, given students' diverse needs and complex learning difficulties, and there are insufficient opportunities for students to participate actively. Planning for the use of support staff is inconsistent and their roles are not identified in lesson plans. Support assistants are not consulted on lesson plans. Students often wait to be involved for extended periods of time and there are few opportunities for them to work together. For example, seven students in a current affairs lesson, which included two additional staff, had nothing to do whilst waiting for the teacher to come to them. There is insufficient use of specialist aids to enhance communication in some lessons. For example, one teacher stood behind students whilst speaking and signing, and another ignored valid additional communication contributions when a student asked for their mouth to be wiped.

21. Working relationships and one-to-one communication between staff and students are good. Students enjoy the practical aspects of lessons. In the more effective lessons, good planning for staff roles and the use of ICT enable students to achieve. For example, in a specialist communication group, students practised, reinforced and extended their use of symbols, and augmented communication and conveyed their messages with the group. Good use is made of ICT multimedia equipment. For example, in a media studies lesson, one student used a switch to control a PowerPoint presentation, whilst another used a soundbeam to provide sound effects for the storm they were researching. In an ICT lesson, several students successfully identified aspects of technology around the college prompted by audio clips and digital photographs. One student signed 'water' for the first time to identify the sound of a boiling kettle. Positive feedback is given to students at the end of lessons.

22. Speech and language therapy staff use their knowledge and expertise effectively to support the students' progress. However, there is insufficient expertise in teaching literacy and numeracy, and in promoting learning in a further education setting. Support staff are inefficiently deployed and not always allocated to sessions where their skills could benefit students. Learning support staff are insufficiently trained. Staffing levels are inadequate to meet individual learning aims and assessed requirements for students in many lessons. Specialist ICT resources are good and include soundbeam, large monitors, touch screens, switch controlled resources and appropriate software. These are not consistently used across the curriculum. Teaching rooms are cramped for larger groups and resources are not arranged to promote individual access. For example, resources in a choices session were very limited and students struggled to reach switches to operate a computer and a tape recorder.

23. Initial assessment of students' literacy and numeracy skills is inadequate. The school produces numeracy targets which are generic, but not specific targets for each student. Detailed, individual targets to maintain communication are established by the speech and language therapist. Individual learning plans contain few developmental targets with sufficient emphasis on incremental progress. Teachers produce good individual summaries, which outline students' use of and skills in technology.

24. Planning of programmes across the extended curriculum is ineffective in developing students' skills, with insufficient adult focus. Curriculum content and individual targets lack coherence. Some contexts for learning have limited relevance to students and there are some unsuitable activities in lessons. The use of ICT and communication aids, to allow all learners to participate fully is insufficiently promoted. The teaching does not use the community and the residential experience to enrich learning sufficiently. There is a strong focus on enabling consistent communication across the extended curriculum. However, there is insufficient emphasis on promoting independence and developmental progress to support transition to life after college. Many staff use unsuitable terminology, which does not have an adult focus, such as inappropriate references to school and

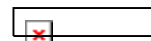
pupils rather than to college and young adults.

25. Support for additional personal care needs is effective. Registers are taken in morning tutorials and staff advise colleagues of students' absence. Teachers do not insist on punctuality to lessons and lateness is not challenged. Valuable time is lost when teachers go over previous topics to bring the latecomers up to date. This is unsatisfactory.

### ***Leadership and management***

26. Provision for literacy, numeracy, communication and ICT are not well co-ordinated across the extended curriculum, and leadership and management are unsatisfactory. An effective curriculum framework is not in place to support the statement of purpose for the post-19 college. Quality assurance and self-assessment procedures are inadequate and do not identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Nor do they identify the extent to which equality of opportunity is promoted to enable students to make progress commensurate with their learning difficulties. Monitoring of the communication policy is inadequate.

### **Social and life skills including art, PE, drama, music and therapies**



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (Grade 3)**.

### ***Strengths***

- good teaching through practical activities
- effective care which enhances learning
- good communication strategies to support learning
- good support for personal development and learning by therapists.

### ***Weaknesses***

- ineffective use of individual learning plans in lesson planning
- inadequate assessment and recognition of learning

- insufficient learning support staff
- inadequate implementation of the extended curriculum.

### ***Scope of provision***

27. The provision inspected included social and life skills delivered mainly through PSHE, drama, art and craft, music, PE and therapies. There are close links between the PSHE curriculum and drama with strong contributions from the other creative arts. Music and dance are offered as therapies to which students are referred and which support their emotional and social development in a different setting. Physiotherapy and hydrotherapy form an integral part of many students' experiences and strongly support their ability to remain in a good physical position to maximise learning opportunities.

### ***Achievement and standards***

28. Most students demonstrate increased skills and achievement in communication through the effective intervention by the range of specialist staff and reinforcement by teaching and care staff. One recently arrived student had begun to use his new communication file and showed increased confidence in using signs and symbols to communicate his wishes and views. In many sessions, students participate well and respond to questions and instructions with enthusiasm and success. Target setting is too general. Staff find it difficult to identify specific incremental achievement and progress of individual students. The termly reviews of student learning and achievement are descriptive rather than evaluative. There is no recording or acknowledgement of achievements for the content of each lesson. For example, the recognition of students' success when communicating their likes and dislikes. There is no use of nationally recognised accreditation. In some lessons, poor punctuality adversely affects the planned structured learning strategies.

### ***Quality of education and training***

29. Teaching, training and learning are satisfactory overall. Of the 13 lessons observed, 31% of teaching was judged as good and 38% of lessons were satisfactory. In the good sessions, planning was thorough with aims, individual goals and activities clearly documented. In unsatisfactory lessons, planning lacked cohesion, and individual learning goals were not included in the content and activities. Clear learning outcomes and tasks relating to the different skills and knowledge of students were not identified. Planning for teaching the extended curriculum and short-term goal setting were inadequate. Insufficient use was made of information gained from ongoing assessment to modify individual learning targets. Many sessions were lively with students actively participating; there was a clear structure and successful focus on accessible teaching points matched to appropriate activities. Where an activity-based approach was used, students' interest was most apparent, but where sessions were delivered to a static circle of students, there was little peer exchange or involvement of everyone in the group. Some good sessions have a focus on the needs of adult life, dealing with, for example, expected social responses. Therapists remind students to adjust their posture and teachers' awareness of the comfort levels of students was well demonstrated in most sessions. One student, who was obviously in discomfort and unable to focus on the session, was moved from her wheelchair to the floor and was thus able to participate more fully and achieved success in the activity.

30. There is good use of qualified specialist and care staff, and appropriate equipment in providing effective learning opportunities. Communication aids are well used, many with the help of speech and language specialists. Some accommodation is poor and shabby.

31. Care staff ensure good personal care and attention for students. However, most care staff have

not been given specific training to help with the educational needs of students. Well-qualified specialist staff for physiotherapy, music, movement therapy, drama and dance provide good, effective and readily available personal, creative and educational support. In these sessions, learning support assistants provide effective help to support students to understand and to meet their individual goals. Teachers share with learning support assistants the objectives and activities of the sessions facilitating a strong individual focus on learning and achievement. There are too few learning support staff in most teaching sessions. The constant turnover of such staff, hinders any continuity of learning and recognition of achievement. There is insufficient use of real objects to enhance the transfer of knowledge and skill. Whilst outings are stimulating and interesting, the activities do not maximise individual learning opportunities.

32. Teachers effectively collect detailed information about activities undertaken by students and their individual responses. Such information is conveyed informally to staff at regular meetings. Individual learning goals for separate social and life skills are insufficiently linked or broken down into measurable incremental steps and are not collated in a central formal record. Recording of progress against individual learning plans on a short-term basis is limited. There is no external accreditation offered, although some students could benefit from external accreditation to measure achievement.

33. Courses meet the needs and interests of learners by dealing with the emotional and social aspects of adult life. Some of these courses are continued into the extended curriculum, but do not take account of the individual learning goals. The school imposes what is to be taught with few options for students to make choices. There are no opportunities for students to join in community-based activities outside of the school.

34. Individual needs are closely identified in relation to care and communication requirements, and are well addressed across the curriculum. Individual learning goals, however, are inadequately addressed in the extended curriculum. There is little focus on guidance and support for those who would benefit from contact with the world of work social contact in the community.

### ***Leadership and management***

Teachers and therapists have a clear understanding of the appropriate focus and direction of their provision, and work hard to co-ordinate their approach. Care staff do not have a similar view of their role. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted in relation to disability and relevant training is provided. Monitoring of teaching and learning is inadequate: there is no observation of teaching scrutiny of lesson plans or evaluation of students' progress. Programme review and evaluation of interventions are unsatisfactory.