

INSPECTION REPORT

Cruckton Hall School
Shrewsbury

Unique Reference Number : 123619

Headteacher : Mr. P.D. Mayhew

Reporting inspector : Mr. J. Ward
T12931

Dates of inspection : 9th - 13th February 1998

Under OFSTED contract number: 401 169

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

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Information about the school

Type of school : Special - Residential

Type of control : Independent

Age range of pupils : 9 to 16

Gender of pupils : Male

School address : Cruckton
Shrewsbury
SY5 8PR

Telephone number : 01743 860206

Fax number : 01743 860206

Name of director of school : Mr. I. Barrett

Information about the inspection team

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. J. Ward, RgI	Science and Art	Leadership and Management Equal Opportunities Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development
Mr. H.O. Spankie, Lay Inspector		Attendance Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mr. F. Price	Design Technology, Information Technology, MFL and Music	Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Efficiency
Mrs. J. Cook	Mathematics, Religious Education and Personal, Social and Health Education	Attainment and Progress Post-16 Provision
Mr. M. McDowell	English, History, Geography, Physical Education	Curriculum and Assessment Boarding Provision

The inspection contractor was:

Severn Crossing

The Village Studio
2a Heol-y-Coed
Rhiwbina
Cardiff CF4 6HP

01222 625929/520826

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
29 - 33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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Main findings

1. The characteristics of pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge their attainments against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does however give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do at the end of key stages. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements and in annual reviews.
2. Cruckton Hall School is very successful in managing and improving the behaviour of its pupils. The headteacher, staff and advisory body have a shared sense of purpose and are committed to providing a good education for all the pupils.
3. Most pupils join Cruckton Hall with serious gaps in their education. By the time they leave, almost all are achieving at or approaching the national average, especially in science and in elements of physical education. This is a considerable achievement.
4. The range of subjects and courses which pupils can study at Key Stage 4 and post-16 to gain qualifications has increased. The number of pupils gaining General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades has risen considerably and standards have improved substantially over the last two years.
5. Overall, pupils make good progress in half of their lessons and do as well as they should in almost all others. As pupils get older, the number of lessons where they do better than would be expected increases. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in about a third of their lessons. This level increases to about a half by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and to over three quarters for those pupils continuing at school after the statutory leaving age. In the very infrequent lessons where pupils' progress is slow, it is largely due to the unsatisfactory behaviour of a few Year 10 pupils. On other rare occasions insufficient work is achieved in the time available.
6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English by the end of all key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can speak and listen well. They explore and explain ideas and share their views and opinions. By the end of Key Stage 3 they are able to explore ideas in plays and literature. By the end of Key Stage 4 and post-16 pupils have developed sufficient oral and listening skills to enter a GCSE examination. Progress in reading develops soundly across all key stages. Many pupils begin as hesitant readers but by the end of Key Stage 4 most can cope with the requirements of course work. A few pupils read for pleasure and information but many do not. Pupils make good progress in the presentation of their writing. However, many have difficulties in spelling and lack confidence in their writing skills. For some this constitutes a barrier to effective learning.
7. In mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 2, good progress by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and often very good progress post-16. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils increase their accuracy when completing straightforward arithmetic and learn rules of how to tackle subtraction. Most name two-dimensional shapes accurately and learn to collect data and use tally charts. However, the timetabling of three lessons on one day at Key Stage 2 hinders these pupils' improving their progress. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils use mathematical language appropriately to describe properties of shapes. Number skills are improved and applied when collecting and presenting data, for example when analysing number plates. By the end of Key Stage 4 most can work out calculations in their heads and use calculators routinely for more complicated work. They learn to express data in their simplest forms and understand the importance of accuracy when constructing angles. Pupils at post-16 make good progress towards improving their GCSE grades.

8. Pupils' progress in science is very good by the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 and is good for the older pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use a basic scientific vocabulary appropriately. They learn about food chains and know life processes include nutrition, growth and reproduction. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils can investigate topics and describe their results, for example when using increasing amounts of filter paper during an experiment, and draw appropriate conclusions. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils understand the characteristics of light and sound waves and explore the effect of weights on springs. Pupils are entered for a GCSE double science examination. Pupils at post-16 know about tectonic processes and learn about the relationships between volcanoes and earthquakes and the composition of the earth. These pupils are studying GCSE chemistry.
9. Good progress is made in art, information technology, design and technology and history at Key Stage 2; in physical education, art, design and technology, geography and information technology at Key Stage 3; physical education, design and technology, personal and social education and information technology at Key Stage 4 and in food technology and general studies at post-16. Post-16 pupils make very good progress in information technology. In all other subjects, at all key stages and post-16, pupils make satisfactory progress.
10. Pupils' attitudes to learning are almost always at least satisfactory and are good in over two thirds of their lessons. The majority of pupils are able to listen attentively and work positively. They take a pride in their work and present it well. Behaviour is of a high standard and pupils are polite and courteous. However a small group of Year 10 pupils have unsatisfactory attitudes and poor concentration. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils willingly undertake tasks for their teachers. They show respect for property. During the course of the inspection week a jigsaw was gradually completed on a table in the entrance hall without mishap. Older pupils undertake responsibility for their own routines and future plans with maturity and confidence. Attendance is good and pupils move quickly to their lessons.
11. The quality of teaching is good across the school and a major contributory factor to pupils' successful academic and social progress. It is consistently very good in information technology. At Key Stage 2, it is very good in science and physical education; at Key Stage 3, it is very good in geography. Teaching is good in all subjects apart from French, music and religious education where it is sound. Teachers are particularly skilled in diffusing potentially difficult situations. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of their standard of work. Teachers create a good working ethos in their lessons and in many instances the enthusiasm of staff transfers to pupils in their efforts to improve the quality of their work. On the rare occasion when teaching is unsatisfactory, the pace of lessons is slow and subject knowledge is insufficient.
12. The school provides a broadly based curriculum that serves the needs of the pupils very well. Pupils are carefully prepared for the world of work and for the next stage of education. The subjects of the National Curriculum are offered at a level consistent with the learning needs of pupils. However, whilst individual education plans do inform the general planning of teachers, they are not specific enough to provide a clear guide to pupils' progress nor do they take sufficient account of pupils' annual reviews and statements of special educational needs.
13. Overall, the curriculum is balanced and, apart from religious education and personal and social education, the time allocated to subjects is sufficient. Opportunities in the residential part of the school help pupils benefit from the curriculum. These include the regular homework sessions and a full range of activities available during the evenings and at weekends. Older pupils are prepared well for when they leave school. Pupils in Year 11 successfully attend local colleges twice a week

where they gain new skills and a measure of independence. Most have three work experience placements and value the opportunity to sample different work places. The provision for pupils continuing at school after the statutory leaving age is a strength of the school. Appropriate individual timetables are carefully devised to include relevant subjects and courses at further education colleges.

14. Pupils have equal access to curricular experiences but a few lack particular help to overcome significant barriers to learning such as specific literacy and communication difficulties.
15. Curricular planning and organisation are generally good, although there is some discontinuity in the co-ordination and planning between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Systems for assessing progress within subjects are generally sound and effective. Assessment is used to inform curricular planning in most subjects. Annual reviews of statements are conducted well and the procedures meet statutory requirements. A record of achievement is developed which is of good quality and collates and presents personal evidence and certificates gained by the pupil. National key stage assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 are undertaken where possible.
16. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. The quality of the daily act of worship is good and pupils participate fully. The promotion of moral development is very good. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong and appropriate values are encouraged through personal and social education lessons. Provision for pupils' social development is good. A range of activities is provided and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, for example, for feeding the animals. Older pupils have good opportunities to look after themselves in a school flat and when travelling to and from college. Cultural development is sound and, although not planned across the curriculum, elements are taught in subjects such as religious education, art and music.
17. The welfare and support of pupils are good. Both teachers and care staff know the pupils well. The school has recently introduced a system of care plans in its residential provision but these are insufficiently precise to enable the progress of pupils to be monitored carefully. The school's discipline policy is effective and a grading card system works well in encouraging good behaviour. There is a clear and effective system of rewards and punishments. Instances of bullying are dealt with quickly by staff. Attendance is monitored closely. Procedures for child protection are followed appropriately and staff give due regard to health and safety issues.

18. The school's partnership with parents is good. Most parents attend review meetings and visit the school for fetes and carol services. The quality of information given to parents is good. There are close links with the local community and industry, for example through work experience placements. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community. They help with snow clearance in the winter and actively support charities. Youngsters from the neighbourhood play football with the pupils in the sports hall. There are also regular visits from the local vicar.
19. The headteacher provides strong, purposeful leadership. He is well supported by his management team and staff. Clear aims and values are reflected in all aspects of the work of the school and there is a positive ethos. Day-to-day management is good. Communication between teaching, residential, administrative and support staff is clear, open and contributes greatly to the school's success. The school is an orderly community. Plans for prioritising curriculum development and strategies for meeting the needs of the increasing number of pupils within the autistic range are limited. The school development plan does not extend beyond one year and is not precise enough to offer an accurate view of the school's strategies for educational development. Targets are not linked to financial planning nor is there a timescale within which progress can be monitored and reviewed.
20. There are good levels of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support assistants, who are well deployed. The opportunities for staff development are sound, but are not prioritised or based sufficiently on the curricular needs of pupils. The head of care is an experienced professional, but does not have the required appropriate qualification. Job descriptions are, at present, too vague to be a basis for the recently developed staff appraisal system.
21. The accommodation and extensive grounds are well presented and maintained as a result of considerable development and investment by the director over a period of years. The fabric of the school is in very good order and the accommodation is used effectively. The school makes good use of the extensive grounds. However, the health and safety hazards in the design and technology room require immediate attention.
22. The school's day-to-day administration and financial procedures are good. Efficient systems are used to monitor income and the control of expenditure is very accurate. However, the relationship between expenditure and planning for educational developments is weak. Though the cost of educating pupils is high, the improvement in pupils' behaviour and the good progress made mean that the school provides sound value for money.

Key issues for action

23. What the school should do now.

In order to improve on already good provision, the school should:

1. plan to meet the needs of the changing intake of pupils more effectively and to broaden and develop the range of learning in some subject areas by improving the school development plan. In so doing, the school should:
 - * establish the link between financial planning and educational developments,
 - * identify priorities and ensure targets are costed, within specified time scales and extend the plan beyond one year,
 - * include targets for each subject area and for the residential provision.
2. ensure that targets set within individual education plans and individual care plans are more specific in order that progress can be more accurately measured and that closer links are made with the pupils' statements of special educational needs and annual reviews.
3. improve the co-ordination and planning of the curriculum between Key Stages 2 and 3.
4. make arrangements for the head of care to obtain an approved qualification.
5. address the health and safety issues in the design technology room.

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

24. Cruckton Hall is an independent residential school for 42 boys aged between 9 and 17 years who have emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorders. The school is situated on the outskirts of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, although the thirty nine pupils on roll are funded by sixteen education authorities, mainly in the Midlands area. The majority of the school population is white, with ten percent of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.
25. Pupils are grouped into seven classes according to age. There are one junior class and six secondary classes, although in two classes there are pupils whose ages span two key stages. Pupils in their final year at the school attend local further education colleges which provide useful vocational experience and the teaching of specialist skills.
26. The school has organised its residential accommodation into twelve bedrooms with a flat for up to four senior boys to let them experience a greater degree of independence. The school operates a grade card system for monitoring pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work, with privileges and sanctions given according to results.
27. Cruckton Hall school aims to provide a warm, structured, caring, learning environment in which each 'boy feels safe, secure, can succeed and is treated as an individual'. One of its major goals for pupils is the development of self-esteem, positive attitudes to learning and specific work strategies.

28. Cruckton Hall's main priorities include:

- staff training to cover aspects of counselling, medication, sexual awareness, speech and occupational therapy and drug awareness,
- the headteacher and deputy taking a distance learning course on autism at Birmingham University and for all staff to attend courses on the care and teaching of autistic children,
- the assessment of the use of time by autistic pupils,
- a tier system of staff appraisal,
- more specific individual education plans,
- to replace craft, design, technology (CDT), woodwork and art with creative design,
- for pupils to take an increased range of modules in their information technology, externally assessed course, and to include the careers programme within information technology
- the improvement of reading and the development of a whole-school reading policy
- providing heads of departments with capitation budgets.

29. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1996/97	3	---	3

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	---	---	---
	Total	0	0	0
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	--- (0)	--- (0)	--- (0)
	National	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)
	National	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	---	---	---
	Total	0	0	0
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	--- (0)	--- (0)	--- (0)
	National	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	--- (0)	--- (0)	--- (0)
	National	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1996/97	10	---	10

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils achieving standard specified	Boys	1	9	
	Girls	---	---	
	Total	1	9	
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	10%	90%	
	National	--- (---)	--- (---)	--- (---)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of *such pupils* who achieved all those they studied:

	Number	% Success rate
School	--- (0)	--- (---)
National		--- (---)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	2.75%
	National comparative data	
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.38%
	National comparative data	

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	8
Permanent	1

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	20
Satisfactory or better	96
Less than satisfactory	4

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment and progress

30. Overall, pupils make good progress in half of their lessons and do as well as they should in almost all others. Most pupils join Cruckton Hall with serious gaps in their education but by the time they leave almost all are achieving at or approaching the national average, especially in science, food technology and in elements of physical education. As pupils get older their rate of progress increases. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils do better than would be expected in about a third of their lessons. This rate improves to around a half by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and to over three quarters for those pupils continuing at school after the statutory leaving age.
31. In the very infrequent lessons where the progress made by pupils is slow this is largely due to unsatisfactory behaviour of a few Year 10 pupils. On other rare occasions insufficient work is achieved in the time available.
32. The range of subjects and courses which pupils can study at Key Stage 4 and post-16 to gain qualifications has increased. The number of pupils gaining GCSE grades has risen considerably and standards have improved substantially over the last two years.
33. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English by the end of all key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils speak and listen well. They express ideas clearly and respond to instructions well. Their reading is progressing soundly; although some are still hesitant readers, most are confident. Writing skills are improving but spelling and word finding still challenge some pupils. Pupils' speaking and listening skills by the end of Key Stage 3 are sound. They discuss the plot of story books or give an account of their work. Reading continues to develop slowly and whilst some read for pleasure and information, many do not. Writing develops further in Key Stage 3 but is still weak by the end of the key stage. By the end of Key Stage 4 many pupils speak clearly and well. Reading skill continues to develop and most can cope with the reading requirements of course work. Writing skills, however, progress slowly, and for some this constitutes a barrier to effective learning. Post-16 pupils speak confidently and read fluently. They develop their response to poetry and write more extensively.
34. Overall in mathematics pupils' progress is good. Partly through unsatisfactory timetabling, concentrating three lessons in one day, and through over-emphasis on number work, by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make only satisfactory progress. They become reasonably accurate with straightforward arithmetic and learn about shapes and how to collect data. Pupils' rate of progress is good by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and at post-16. By the end of Key Stage 3 they use appropriate mathematical language and improve further their number skills which they apply when drawing graphs. Most pupils, by the end of Key Stage 4 use calculators appropriately, make reasonable estimates and use a range of calculations when investigating, for example, properties of shapes. Pupils at post-16 work to improve their GCSE grades. The highest attainer understands and applies theorems. Others use number skills appropriately and can classify and present data using suitable techniques.
35. Pupils' progress in science is very good by the end of Key Stage 2 and is good for the older pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use a basic scientific vocabulary appropriately and know that life processes include nutrition, growth and reproduction. They learn about food chains and develop their own ideas about different chains. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils investigate and describe results, for example of increasing the number of sheets of filter paper in an experiment, with growing confidence and draw appropriate conclusions. They have a basic knowledge of the human reproductive system. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils understand the characteristics of light and sound waves and explore the effect of weights on springs. They develop their ability to

solve scientific problems through experimentation and making suitable generalisations. Pupils at post-16 know about tectonic processes and complete diagrams on plate margins. They learn about the relationships between, for example, volcanoes and the composition of the earth.

36. Post-16 pupils make very good progress in information technology. Good progress is made in art, information technology, design and technology and history at Key Stage 2; in physical education, art, design and technology, geography and information technology at Key Stage 3; in physical education, personal and social education and information technology at Key Stage 4 and food technology and general studies at post-16. In all other subjects, at all key stages and post-16, pupils make satisfactory progress.
37. There are no measurable differences between the progress of pupils in terms of ethnicity. A few pupils with specific learning difficulties do not make the progress they should in reading and writing largely because their individual education plans do not target literacy teaching in sufficient detail.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

38. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Most pupils apply themselves to work, ask relevant questions and respond appropriately when given a challenging task. They concentrate when they are listening and ask for help when they need it. Many pupils are increasingly able to work collaboratively, which they find difficult to do when they join the school. Older pupils are developing a capacity for personal study and have mature attitudes to work. Most pupils are well motivated and take pride in the presentation of their results. However, the few lessons which are unsatisfactory are all within year 10 where a few pupils show little interest in some of the activities and have poor concentration skills.
39. Behaviour overall is very good. In the previous academic year there were only eight fixed term and one permanent exclusion. The pupils respond well to the clear behaviour policy and its system of rewards and punishments. School rules and conventions are followed and pupils understand that certain types of behaviour are unacceptable and that all staff will respond in the same manner. Behaviour at break-times is usually satisfactory and often good. The few instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Pupils are pleasant to visitors and generally listen well to adults, such as a local clergyman who regularly conducts a school assembly. Pupils' respect for property is clear from the lack of graffiti or damage to school buildings, extensive grounds and equipment. They act responsibly and a flower arrangement and an uncompleted jigsaw on tables in the main entrance area of the school were left undamaged.
40. Relationships between staff and pupils are pleasant and whilst some pupils have difficulties in their relationships and can be antagonistic most co-operate well with each other. The large majority know the difference between right and wrong and behave accordingly. At lunch-times pupils are well behaved and there is a pleasant social aspect to the occasion.
41. Pupils' personal development is good. Younger pupils willingly undertake tasks for their teachers. They volunteer to clean equipment or to be responsible for ensuring windows are closed and lights turned off in their class at the end of a day. Other pupils feed the animals and collect eggs from the farm. All take turns in having some responsibility for their table at lunch-time. The older boys undertake responsibility for their own routines and future education and career plans with confidence and maturity. All pupils increase their abilities to look after and manage themselves from participation in the extensive residential trips and activities.

Attendance

42. Pupils' attendance at school is good, exceeding 90% in the past academic year, and being above the national average for this type of school. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Pupils' presence in class and on campus is closely monitored by the teaching and care staff, who will immediately identify any absentees.
43. Pupils move quickly to their lessons, enabling full advantage to be taken of the time available for learning.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

44. In almost all lessons teaching is at least sound and in over two thirds of lessons it is good or very good. The quality of teaching is a major contributory factor to pupils' successful academic and social progress. The quality of teaching in information technology is very good across all key stages. At Key Stage 2 teaching is very good in science and in physical education and at Key Stage 3 it is very good in geography. Teaching is good in most other subjects apart from French, music and religious education, where it is sound.
45. Where teaching is particularly good teachers have positive relationships with pupils and this, combined with secure subject knowledge and well chosen activities, promotes good learning. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and are skilled in the management of potentially difficult situations, dealing with any behaviour problems using the school's procedures.
46. Teaching is well organised and responds flexibly to the individual needs of pupils providing good levels of individual support and guidance. In the majority of lessons good use is made of the classroom assistants. Teachers create a good working ethos in their lessons and in many instances the enthusiasm of staff transfers to pupils in their efforts to improve the quality and presentation of work, which is of a high standard.
47. A particular feature of good teaching is the use of interesting and varied practical activities, for example, in the use of the extensive grounds to study aspects of geography and in science where the use of experiments to support learning is a positive feature of most lessons. In the rare instances where teaching is unsatisfactory the pace of lessons is slow or there is a need for relevant in-service training in the subject.
48. The quality of day-to-day assessment is generally sound and is good for post-16 provision. The use of assessment to inform teaching in science and information technology is good; pupils' work is regularly checked and tested to ensure their understanding. Homework is routinely set each day and this successfully reinforces and extends what has been learned in lessons.

The curriculum and assessment

49. The curriculum is broadly based and well calculated to promote pupils' learning. It meets their intellectual and physical needs well and promotes personal development. Pupils are soundly prepared for the world of work or for the next stage of education.

50. The curriculum includes the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum within some subjects is based upon Programmes of Study from earlier key stages and not all attainment targets are covered. This, however, is consistent with the need to match work to the pupils' aptitudes and abilities and to take account of their special educational needs.
51. The school provides residential care for its pupils and operates a twenty-four hour curriculum. This is soundly based, has clear aims and helps to support pupils' learning in the classroom.
52. There is equality of access to all that is provided and individual education plans have been drawn up which inform curricular planning to meet specific pupil needs. These plans should be refined, so that targets are clear and unambiguous and progress towards their achievement can be judged.
53. The curriculum meets the requirements of most pupils. However, some who have specific literacy and communication difficulties require more specific programmes to enable them to gain full access to it.
54. Planning is undertaken in all subjects, but in some it is under-developed. Projections for activities to be undertaken in these instances focus too narrowly on content and provide too little guidance about how the subject is to be developed for all learners, particularly those with additional needs, how it links to other subjects and themes and how the success of the lessons, including pupils' response to teaching, will be assessed.
55. Progress and continuity of learning between Key Stages 3 and 4 is good and is supported by the fact that the same teacher offers the subject in both the key stages. However, continuity between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 is less secure.

56. Good provision is made for extra-curricular activities. A variety of visits is made to the local area and farther afield. Outdoor and adventurous activities are promoted. Some inter-school sport takes place on a friendly, non-competitive basis. Careers education is given and work experience is arranged. Careers guidance draws upon the expertise of the careers service and a life plan is drawn up for each pupil at the transitional review of their statement before their fourteenth birthday.
57. Systems for assessing progress within subjects are generally sound and effective. Assessment is used to inform curricular planning in all subjects. Annual reviews of statements are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice. National key stage assessments are planned at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, and all pupils enter for a range of externally accredited examinations at the end of Key Stage 4. These include GCSE and certificates in the use of information technology (CLAIT).
58. Older pupils are prepared well for when they leave school. Pupils in Year 11 successfully attend local colleges twice a week where they gain new skills and a measure of independence. Most have three work experience placements, and they value the opportunity to sample different work places. The provision for pupils continuing at school after the statutory leaving age is a strength of the school. Appropriate individual timetables are carefully devised. Pupils have good opportunities to improve examination grades and to increase the range of subjects at examination level with the inclusion of chemistry in school and media studies at college. Their curriculum is further enriched by the inclusion of general studies. They are encouraged to become more independent; for example, some live in a flat in school and they travel to college without supervision. One pupil already has good links with his local community through attendance at a college near home on a Friday.
59. During their time in the school pupils develop a summative record of achievement. Credits and certificates gained are collated and bound together with personal statements in an attractive folder.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

60. Pupils' moral development is very good, their social development is good and spiritual and cultural development is sound.
61. There is a strong sense of purpose in the school. The values and attitudes promoted by the school are consistently applied, and parents agree that these have an extremely positive effect on their boys' development.
62. A daily act of worship of broadly Christian character permits pupils to participate fully in hymn singing, prayer, and in discussion as well as consideration of the day's theme. Grace is said at meal times.
63. Opportunities exist for spiritual awareness and reflection through different aspects of the curriculum, particularly through religious education, but also through art, music and literature. The school's daily meeting at the end of a school day and the custom of sharing individual's crises and problems with the pupils also provide the boys with an opportunity to develop both self-knowledge and sympathy for others.

64. Pupils are given clear guidance to distinguish right from wrong, reinforced by good example from both teachers and care staff. The school has a very successful discipline code and a system of rewards and sanctions which emphasises consideration for others and the demands of life in a community. The personal and social education programme encourages pupils to reflect on their role in the school and the wider community, while providing considered guidance and the opportunity to discuss issues relating to their well-being.
65. Provision for pupils' social development is good. While limited opportunities exist for taking responsibility in school, such as duties in class and in the dining hall, or by feeding the animals, responsibility and social development are heightened on school expeditions and during outdoor activities, for instance, camping and boat handling. Older pupils also act in arena parties at the West of England Show. The school's acts of local charity in helping the elderly and infirm and fund-raising for overseas charities help generate a responsible attitude towards society at large.
66. Many facets of the curriculum help the pupils appreciate their own culture and traditions and some emphasis is put on the diversity and richness of other cultures. However, particularly in view of the lack of ethnic minority representation among the pupils, this is an area which requires further development to ensure that both multi-cultural and other national cultures are more fully recognised.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

67. Support for pupils in the school is good. Both teachers and care staff know the boys well and direction and advice are available at all times. An independent 'listener', specialist medical care and psychological support are available regularly or by consultation. Most parents appreciate the level of support and guidance their sons receive.
68. The system of individual education plans, individual health plans and care plans helps to support planning and has clear aims. However, the plans are too broad and are not effective in measuring pupils' personal development and progress.
69. Pupils' Records of Achievement are well maintained and represent a useful document for pupils' interviews with employers and places of further study.
70. The school operates a successful discipline policy. A daily behaviour grading card, together with a system of rewards and sanctions, helps to promote an orderly atmosphere and to ensure uniformity of application throughout the school. This is well understood by the boys and resulting behaviour is very good. Rare instances of harassment or bullying are swiftly and effectively dealt with and talked through with those involved. The importance of consideration and respect for others is emphasised.
71. There are effective policies in place for child protection, health and safety and other aspects of pupils' welfare. The curriculum provides good opportunities to develop life skills, for counselling and guidance and for promoting personal health. All staff are regularly trained in child protection procedures and all evidence is scrupulously documented. Minor recommendations concerning health and safety identified by Shropshire Social Services and Fire Service during their recent inspections have all been rectified.
72. Close attention is paid to the pupils' safety and well being by all staff both in school and when on school trips and expeditions. Overall, the school fulfils its aim of providing a warm, structured,

caring learning environment for the boys.

Partnership with parents and the community

73. The school makes every effort to develop a close partnership with the boys' parents. The extremely wide catchment area and changes in home circumstances sometimes make this difficult to achieve.
74. Information provided for parents is good. A well-presented and illustrated prospectus gives a detailed, helpful description of the school for new parents and regular newsletters covering current events are sent. Parents visit the school at least termly to discuss their boy's progress and attend annual reviews. The boys are encouraged to keep in regular touch with home either by telephone or letter. Pupils have access to a telephone although, at times, this must be negotiated. The telephone number of 'Childline' is displayed. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were satisfied with the degree of information and consultation provided for them regarding their sons' education and progress.
75. The school's links to the community make a very positive contribution to pupils' attainment and personal development. The school's summer fete and the bazaar are village events and are well supported. Local youngsters come in to use the school sports hall. The vicar regularly takes school assemblies and has a pastoral role in the school community. Boys from the school assist old persons in the village, for example with snow clearance, and have raised money to help a local child with cerebral palsy. Work experience programmes bring boys in contact with local employers and, in some cases, have led to weekend jobs.
76. Classes and larger groups from the school make regular educational trips to Shrewsbury and the surrounding countryside. Individuals attend classes at local colleges, and participate in youth activities such as scouts, cadets, sports clubs and hobby groups. Outdoor activities extend to Snowdonia, to the coast and on the River Severn, providing good opportunities for boys to mix with other young persons at Youth Hostels and Camp Sites.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

77. The headteacher, in partnership with the director and school management team, gives strong and purposeful leadership and is successful in promoting a positive ethos within the school. There is a shared sense of understanding and vision about the management of pupils with behavioural difficulties in a school characterised by very good standards of behaviour and discipline.
78. The aims of the school are clear and detailed and emphasise pupils' social, emotional and physical development within an environment in which individuals are fully valued. However, specific curricular goals require greater emphasis and priority.
79. Routine administration and organisation are very good and lead to effective and efficient communication across the school. Frequent and regular staff meetings are held which contribute to excellent levels of co-operation and teamwork between the disciplines. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils from school to the residential care staff are good. Timetables for lessons and the organisation and routines within the residential facilities are easily understood by pupils. The school

is an orderly community.

80. General job descriptions are in place for all staff but specific responsibilities are neither sufficiently identified nor developed. Some staff are unsure of the extent of their role as subject co-ordinators and have no delegated budget responsibilities. Much work has been completed to produce a broad range of documentation on administrative and child-care policies which are of good quality. However, there is no overall policy for the curriculum which provides suitable guidance.
81. There is a clear appreciation of the strengths of the school. Some areas which need to be developed have been identified within its school development plan. However, there is insufficient planning which extends beyond one year to include developments to reflect the schools' changing intake of pupils and to underpin future progress. Targets are not linked to financial planning, nor is there a timescale within which progress can be monitored and reviewed. The plan does include opportunities for staff development but these are not prioritised, nor are there specific targets for each subject area and for the residential provision.
82. The school has an advisory group who meet regularly and who fully support the work of the school. Members of the group have been given individual responsibilities for the financial, social and educational areas of the school and also serve to advise on policy and development issues. However, procedures for fully evaluating the work of the school do not enable the advisory group to fulfil this role adequately.
83. The school has a satisfactory policy on equal opportunities. It is successful in providing a supportive community in which all pupils feel able to grow in confidence. However, whilst it complies fully with most of its statutory responsibilities there are some elements of non-compliance. There are health and safety hazards within the design and technology room and the head of care lacks an approved qualification.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

84. There are good staffing levels with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support assistants. Generally, the good match of either initial or subsequent training to subjects taught by teaching staff meets the demands of the curriculum. Teaching staff, support assistants and care staff are well deployed. Unqualified teachers receive suitable levels of support and supervision from the headteacher. Whilst the head of care is experienced and professional, the post-holder does not have the required appropriate qualification. There is a need for care staff to have further training in child care practice and the needs of pupils in the autistic spectrum.
85. Job descriptions are too generalised and are not regularly reviewed. They do not specify clearly the specific responsibilities that are assigned to staff and are therefore inappropriate as an effective basis for the recently developed staff appraisal system.
86. There is a programme of in-service training and courses which have dealt with issues such as restraint procedures, counselling and autism. However, the current in-service training programme is not prioritised or based sufficiently on the curricular needs of pupils.
87. The accommodation and extensive grounds are well presented and maintained as a result of considerable development and investment by the director over a period of years. The fabric of the school is in very good order. There are many specialist facilities which support the teaching of the curriculum. These include an excellent sport hall and an impressive information technology suite. There are designated rooms for science and food technology, although there is no designated

central area for a library. The design and technology room has some serious health and safety issues which require immediate attention and the art room in one of the mobile classrooms is small and inadequate. However, plans have been drawn up to replace the mobile classrooms and to further develop aspects of the residential accommodation.

88. The residential accommodation is spacious. Pupils have privacy and a common room to relax in. A flat is used to promote independence skills. There are plans to convert the nearby house to provide a greater degree of independent living for older pupils in the near future. The school grounds are used to support curricular and extra-curricular activities. Overall, the accommodation is well presented and used effectively.
89. Resources for learning are excellent in information technology. They are very good for pupils' leisure and extra-curricular activities. Resources for physical education and science are good and in most other subjects they are sound. There are some deficiencies in resources for history and geography and, at Key Stage 2, for mathematics. Resources are poor in religious education. The school makes good use of local colleges for post-16 provision.

The efficiency of the school

90. The school's administration and financial control procedures are carefully organised. Communication between the school secretaries and the domestic bursar is good. Efficient systems are used to monitor income and the control of expenditure is very accurate. The school's business accounts are audited each year by external accountants, but the school's private fund is not audited annually.
91. The school development plan does not enable educational developments to be supported by financial planning as the majority of initiatives are not costed. Subject areas do not have detailed, phased targets which would enable them to be accurately costed and developed over a period of time. The link between expenditure and school development planning is weak. The financial monitoring and evaluation procedures are in early stages of development with the result that the school does not have any formal systems to determine its own cost-effectiveness.
92. Overall, taking into account the high cost of educating pupils at the school and the good levels of progress and improvement in behaviour, the school provides sound value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

English, mathematics and science

English

93. In English, the essential skills of writing, spelling and reading, present a particular challenge to many of the pupils who have specific difficulties with literacy and communication. Creditably, many overcome these difficulties and undertake courses of study leading to GCSE awards.
94. By the end of Key Stage 2, progress is always satisfactory and frequently it is good. Speaking and listening skills develop well. Pupils explore and explain ideas, and share their views in, for example, a discussion arising from a comprehension exercise. They listen with understanding when information is being given. Reading also progresses soundly. Some are still hesitant readers but most are confident, have strategies for reading unknown words, and put expression into their voices when reading aloud. Pupils' experience of reading includes stories, information books, poems and a wide range of children's fiction. Writing skills develop more slowly and pupils write little in an extended way. They learn to check their writing and to present it neatly. Punctuation skills are being slowly established but some have specific spelling difficulties.
95. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils make satisfactory progress and on occasion, progress is good. The speaking and listening skills of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 are sound. They show good analytical skills in their ability to discuss the plot and characters of a text and can explore ideas in plays and literature. Reading continues to develop, but the pace is slow, and the esteem accorded to books by pupils is frequently low. Some read for pleasure and information but many do not. Whilst there is progress in writing throughout the Key Stage, spelling accuracy and handwriting are in some specific cases, weak, and progress is slow. However, the presentation of pupils' work is of a good standard.
96. By the end of Key Stage 4, progress has been such that many pupils have established sufficient oral and listening skills to make it realistic for them to attempt GCSE. Reading skills continue to develop, and most can cope with the reading requirements of the course. The lack of a central, well-resourced library limits the development of independent learning. It is in writing, however, that the slowest progress is made. Some pupils have profound difficulties with spelling, which amount to a real barrier to progress.
97. A small group of post-16 pupils make good progress as they study for GCSE. They are confident of improving the grades they previously achieved and this is a realistic target.
98. Response to lessons is generally good. Pupils in Key Stage 2 put a great deal of effort into presenting their work well. They are proud of their developing, neat, cursive handwriting, and pleased with the progress they make in reading and in understanding. They behave well. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are interested in their work, but some find it hard to sustain concentration for a full lesson. However, instances of poor behaviour are isolated and do not prevent others from learning.

99. In Key Stage 4, pupils who study for GCSE examinations are attentive and interested. They bring their prior learning to bear in addressing their present tasks, and work hard to develop their understanding. Behaviour is generally good but a few year 10 pupils do not co-operate and are unwilling to make the effort to learn. However, the learning climate for those who wish to benefit from the lesson is not seriously interfered with. The small group of post-16 pupils enjoy their lessons and strive to get the greatest benefit from them.
100. Teaching is generally good. The teaching in Key Stage 2 is well structured to develop confidence in learning and promote good standards of presentation. Similarly, in Key Stage 3, teaching is reinforced by well-planned lessons that address the difficulties pupils experience as language users. In Key Stage 4, where pupils are studying a set text for examination purposes, very good teaching is seen. On the rare occasion when teaching in Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory, the purpose of the lesson is not fully supported by the methods chosen to implement it. Assessment is well used in both pupils' oral and written responses. Good use is made of the classroom support assistants to enable all pupils to have a positive learning experience. For the Year 12 pupils teaching is based on excellent knowledge of the learning needs of each individual and teaching communicates a love of literature and language.
101. The curriculum is satisfactory and is soundly based on the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum and upon the examination syllabus for GCSE. The transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 is not yet securely based. There is a lack of moderation of standards between teachers and as yet little planning for continuity and progression. Homework is set and marked, but insufficiently targeted to the learning needs of individuals or for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning.
102. Whilst planning is informed by individual education plans, the targets set within these are not sufficiently precise to be measured and to be of use in determining progress. Resources are adequate, but if the study of English is to prosper, there is urgent need to provide a well-resourced library.

Mathematics

103. Overall pupils' progress in mathematics is good and by the end of Key Stage 4 a few pupils are attaining levels that are at, or approaching, the national average. Pupils make sound progress by the end of Key Stage 2 particularly in number work. They increase their accuracy when completing straightforward arithmetic and learn rules, for example how to tackle subtraction, which they apply to their work. Most name two-dimensional shapes accurately. They learn to collect data and complete tally charts. However, timetabling of three lessons of mathematics on one day hinders these pupils' improving their progress. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils are making good progress. They use mathematical language appropriately to describe properties of shapes. Number skills are improved and applied when collecting and presenting data, for example when analysing car number plates. Pupils' progress continues to be good by the end of Key Stage 4. Most are developing means to work out calculations in their heads and use calculators routinely for more complicated work or to check answers. They make reasonable estimates and approximations and understand the importance of accuracy when constructing triangles. They learn to express ratios in their simplest forms and when investigating relationships develop strategies to find patterns, predict answers and produce appropriate formulae. Pupils at post-16 make good progress working towards improving their GCSE grades. They work through past papers undertaking a wide range of calculations. Higher attainers study and learn to apply Pythagoras' theorem. Others establish the mean median and modal positions of data which they present graphically.

104. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. Pupils measure in science and when making wooden items in design and technology. They weigh ingredients for recipes, learn numbers in French, interpret data in geography and assess proportion in art.
105. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They respond well to praise and encouragement. Almost all work is completed and presented very well. They take care, cutting shapes accurately when making models and taking measurements as exactly as possible. Many persevere when work becomes difficult although a few need constant support and reassurance. They settle quickly to their work and their behaviour is usually very good apart from, on occasion, a few pupils in Year 10. Relationships with their teacher are very good.
106. The quality of teaching is good in nearly three quarters of lessons and satisfactory in almost all the remainder. The mathematics co-ordinator has good subject expertise. Relationships with the pupils are very good, which helps teaching and non teaching staff to insist on high standards of presentation and behaviour. The work set for pupils at Key Stages 3, 4 and post-16 is appropriately challenging and lessons are planned well to include changes of activity to maintain the pace and pupils' interest to increase their progress. However, on occasion at Key Stage 2, work takes too long to complete. Homework is effective in reinforcing class work and practising skills. Although checklists are used for younger pupils and examination papers for older pupils, on the whole assessment strategies are not well developed and individual education plan targets are too broad to be helpful.
107. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum from Key Stage 3 onwards and has good continuity. It is, however, narrow at Key Stage 2 and progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory. Resources are generally sound although there are some inadequacies at Key Stage 2 which contribute to the narrow curriculum range. Information technology is, currently, insufficiently used.

Science

108. In science pupils' progress is good across the school and by the end of Key Stage 4 attainment is approaching and sometimes reaches the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use their own ideas and give clear explanations on a topic related to food chains. They know that most of our energy comes from the sun and that nearly all food chains start with a green plant. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils learn the importance of prediction within science, based on a practical activity to show how muddy water passes through different amounts of filter paper. Pupils make good progress in their practical and investigative skills and in developing an understanding of the content and language of science. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils reach a good level of skills and understanding and in the last academic year almost all pupils achieved success in their GCSE examination. They are able to discuss and propose different hypotheses on the effects and outcome of placing additional weights on to a coil of wire attached to an electric motor and can record the results of their work in a scientific format. Year 12 pupils are entered for chemistry GCSE. They are able to research independently information from texts on how tectonic processes are involved in the formation, deformation and recycling of rocks and can recall correct terminology with prompting and questioning.
109. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and at post-16. They concentrate well and are interested in the lessons. Pupils look after materials and equipment and work well with each other in the practical activities. All demonstrate their interest through asking relevant questions and older pupils apply logical reasoning to solving problems with confidence. On a few occasions they illustrate their ideas to others using the blackboard.

110. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and at post-16. Lessons are taught with an enthusiasm which engages the interest of pupils and is supported by good subject knowledge. There are frequent opportunities for discussion and good use of questions which challenge pupils to explain their thinking. Assessment of pupils' work is used well to consolidate understanding and knowledge and there are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning.
111. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator, who is a specialist, has done much to develop examination opportunities in science. The ethos for learning is very positive and there are good opportunities for practical experimentation and investigation by pupils. The scheme of work is satisfactory and is closely linked to National Curriculum programmes of study. Resources for science are good, appropriately stored and accessible to pupils. Good attention is given to aspects of health and safety within lessons.

Other subjects or courses

Design and technology

112. Overall, pupils make good progress across the key stages. At the end of Key Stage 4, pupils' achievements are at or approaching the national average. In the most recent GCSE examinations pupils achieved good success in food technology and in design technology.
113. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know how to measure out ingredients accurately and use different methods to make pastry. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils understand how to construct a working plan and build upon previous knowledge using isometric projections. In food technology, pupils make beefburgers and understand the need for current cooking times. At the end of Key Stage 4, pupils make items out of wood related to their own interests, such as a games table. They are able, with some assistance, to make dovetail joints. Pupils at post-16 make meals such as a vegetable stir fry. They are able to compare and evaluate different cooking methods and record their results. However, pupils' progress in design and technology is restricted to a narrow range of practical tasks and there are limited opportunities for progress and design and evaluation.
114. The response of pupils is good across the key stages. Most pupils follow instructions reasonably well and can select and use appropriate utensils or tools for a specific task. Pupils concentrate well in detailed drawing tasks and gain enjoyment from practical activities. A number of pupils demonstrate considerable skill and confidence.
115. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teaching is brisk and the organisation and management of tasks is good. There is suitable emphasis on hygiene procedures. Theoretical and practical tasks are explained clearly. In food technology, there is a suitable emphasis on the design and evaluation of foods and methodology. Teaching is particularly effective when further learning points are drawn out of situations that arise.
116. The full range of the programme of study for design and technology is not offered. There are limited opportunities for design and evaluation, and most work is related to working with resistant materials. There are too few opportunities for pupils to work with compliant materials such as textiles.
117. There are some serious health and safety issues which require immediate attention in the design technology room. Machinery is unguarded and is not permanently fixed to work benches. A full health and safety check, including comprehensive risk assessments, needs to be implemented as a

matter of urgency.

Information technology

118. Pupils make good progress in information technology across the school. At post-16, it is very good. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 but pupils' records reveal that progress is good and that they are able to use word-processing skills and know how to change and use different fonts. At Key Stage 3, pupils demonstrate considerable skill and confidence in retrieving information and know how to sort and amend data. Pupils at Key Stage 4 make good progress towards external accreditation examinations. They are able to use spreadsheets, databases and input data with reasonable accuracy. Post-16 pupils use advanced skills to integrate information from a range of sources. They use a digital camera to record their work and use video to critically analyse their performance in a debate.
119. The response of pupils to learning is good across the key stages. Almost all pupils work with a sense of enthusiasm and commitment on information technology tasks. They derive a lot of pleasure from their printed work and use digitised photographs which add to the high standard of their completed work. Most pupils persevere to overcome difficulties and work with some independence, evaluating new software programs after set tasks have been completed.
120. The quality of teaching across the key stages is very good. Tasks set are appropriate and challenging for pupils and individual help is given sensitively when needed. Relationships with pupils are good. Useful and constructive comments are given to pupils, which assists in improving the quality of pupils' work. Objectives for lessons are always clear and well organised. Thorough assessment is made of pupils' progress, which is used to inform future planning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately with helpful comments made. The use of external accreditation is a strength and adds to the high level of motivation.
121. There is a useful development plan for information technology which indicates how the subject is to develop over the next year. The accommodation and resources are excellent and make positive contributions to the progress of pupils. Information technology is used to good effect in other subjects such as science and geography but is not used well in mathematics.

History

122. Progress in history is good at the end of Key Stage 2 and post-16 and sound at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4.
123. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. They study the Aztecs and make replicas of Aztec artefacts in their art lessons. They know that the Aztec Empire arose in Mexico and flourished for centuries before being destroyed in a conflict with the Spanish. They are aware of some of the foodstuffs that originate from the Yucatan and which were then introduced to Europe.
124. By the end of Key Stage 3, the pupils make satisfactory progress. They undertake some of the study units of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum for the Key Stage. Material drawn from the previous Key Stage underpins the work in some cases. Pupils at the end of the Key Stage are informed about British history from 1759. They can answer questions about slavery and emancipation, and give reasonable accounts of events marking political unrest in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as the “Peterloo” massacre. History in Key Stage 4 is offered as single unit of study in Year 10. Progress on the topic of war is sound, particularly in developing elements of factual knowledge and judgement of similarities and differences in topics under study. Specific difficulties in writing and spelling limit the ability of some pupils to respond appropriately to the curriculum. A small group of post-16 pupils make good progress in preparing for their GCSE examination.
125. Pupils' attitudes to learning in all key stages and post-16 are generally good. In the rare instances where behaviour is unsatisfactory, a small group of Year 10 pupils are easily distracted from slow tasks and lack concentration.
126. Teaching is generally satisfactory. In the best lessons, good preparation and use of support staff enable pupils to make individual progress. Resources are well chosen and guide sheets of good quality help the pupils to structure information.
127. History has not yet fully developed into an examination subject. Resources are limited and artefacts and primary source materials are scarce. Teachers of the subject are experienced, but not specialists, and would benefit from relevant subject in-service training.

Geography

128. Progress in geography is good at the end of Key Stage 3 and sound at the end of Key Stages 2 and 4.
129. At Key Stage 2, no teaching was seen during the inspection. Work and teachers' records were scrutinised. By the end of the Key Stage, pupils have undertaken local surveys of traffic and economic activity, have used maps and plans of varying scales, and have studied the locality in which the school is situated. A contrasting locality in South America is also studied. Geographical themes appropriate to the key stage are adequately addressed. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils make good progress. Geographical skills, particularly those emanating from fieldwork, sketching, measuring, recording, and collecting, become more established. Progress in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory and pupils are entered for the GCSE examination. They undertake geographical surveys, record their results using information technology and attempt to form hypotheses about their findings. This aspect of work is comparatively weak, and progress in coming to understand about how geographical questions might be framed is slow. For some pupils with specific literacy

and communication difficulties, the slowness in reading constitutes an additional barrier to learning. Alternative methods of recording findings should be sought for these pupils.

130. Pupils respond well in each age group where lessons were observed. In Key Stage 3, where learning is active and based on a practical field activity, response and commitment to learning are very good.
131. Teaching is always satisfactory, and in Key Stage 3, it is very good. In the best lessons, careful organisation enables the pupils to build upon local fieldwork and to form hypotheses about what is found. Relationships with pupils are good and promote learning. Subject knowledge is sound overall and in some aspects good.
132. Resources for the subject are limited. There are sufficient textbooks and maps, but there is a lack of photographic and video material and information technology based resources which are specific to the subject. A broader range of equipment to support fieldwork and river studies is needed. In order to develop the subject further and to maintain standards, further in-service training opportunities and links with mainstream schools are required.

Modern foreign languages - French

133. Pupils' progress is sound at Key Stage 3 and in year 10. Pupils in year 11 have been disapplied from a modern foreign language. Pupils at Key Stage 3 understand simple statements and questions in French and usually respond in single words or short phrases. Year 10 pupils know greetings, how to count in tens to one hundred, name colours and ask for items in the target language. Pupils make steady progress in gaining knowledge and confidence. They find reading and writing more difficult and need support, but most are able to show understanding of single words and can select appropriate words to complete short phrases.
134. Pupils respond positively and answer questions with reasonable accuracy when they are related to simple everyday requests. They find written tasks more difficult and can, occasionally, become distracted.
135. The quality of teaching is sound. The teacher encourages and support all pupils who have the confidence to respond in French. Learning points are illustrated to pupils in a way which helps them to remember how to pronounce particular words. Mispronunciations are corrected sensitively.
136. There is a sound policy and a scheme of work which outlines suitable coverage of the programmes of study. Resources for the subject are adequate and an audit of these is maintained.

Art

137. Progress in art is good by the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 and sound by the end of Key Stage 4. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils trace drawings of Aztec designs and make a clay mould from a cardboard template. They learn to experiment with a range of materials and develop their fine motor skills using scissors, pencils and plastic knives. Pupils successfully build on their skills and can trace and draw and give increasing attention to pattern and design. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils use sketch books and all understand the need to develop their ideas from initial plans. They learn to use perspective in letter shapes and to shade appropriately when sketching. Their drawings show good attention to detail. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils learn to appreciate the work of other artists. They show increasing ability in observational drawing of a model and can use a pencil to estimate proportions of the body.
138. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good at Key Stage 2 and usually satisfactory at Key Stages 3 and 4. Younger pupils, particularly, enjoy art activities and work with care to produce good results. All pupils listen intently, follow instructions carefully and concentrate for quite long periods of time. Most pupils are keen and demonstrate increasing confidence in their artistic skills. On the rare occasions when behaviour is unsatisfactory a small group of Year 10 pupils have poor attitudes to work and limited concentration skills.
139. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and good use is made of the classroom assistant to support and help individual pupils. Clear instructions are given and there are high expectations of achievement. Activities are carefully chosen which take good account of the interests and abilities of pupils. Pupils are skilfully taught and work is regularly assessed and progress discussed with pupils. However opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative are limited.
140. The art co-ordinator has considerable enthusiasm and good subject expertise. However, the curriculum policy and scheme of work are of limited value as they are insufficiently used and require review in order to inform the planning for pupils' progress in learning. The role of the co-ordinator in helping to inform budgetary decisions through the school development plan has yet to be put into place. Accommodation used for the subject is unsatisfactory and limits the opportunities to extend further the range of activities. Resources for the teaching of art are satisfactory, well managed and accessible to pupils.

Music

141. Pupils make sound progress in music. It was not possible to observe classes performing or listening to music during the week. However, pupils' records reveal they have studied a wide range of styles in music, including classical, folk/protest songs and Asian and rock music. Video evidence of past performances suggests progress is sound. Just over one third of the pupils at school have instrumental tuition. Pupils play a range of instruments which includes drums, flute, violin and keyboards. Pupils are making steady progress towards relevant grades on their particular instruments.
142. Pupils are very keen to demonstrate their individual abilities on their chosen instrument. In lessons, pupils work well in pairs or individually to make musical instruments out of everyday items. They enjoy making drums out of material stretched over hollow containers.
143. The quality of teaching is sound. Clear instructions are given to pupils and individual help is given

when needed. There are good relationships with pupils and this help to diffuse potentially difficult situations. Effective use is made of questioning and full explanations are given when necessary. Support staff are well used to help pupils make musical instruments.

144. The quality of teachers' planning, although generally sound, rarely illustrates how work is to be matched to more or less able pupils and what the intended outcomes are to be. There is a good range of instruments for pupils to play and effective use is made of peripatetic music teachers who regularly come into school.

Physical education

145. The school attaches considerable importance to physical education, which is reflected in the amount of curriculum time devoted to it.
146. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make sound progress in their lessons. Many pupils come to this work having done little systematic physical activity before joining the school. They test themselves against their personal best in swimming and running, and they develop their strength and agility in gymnastics. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils make good progress. They undertake and achieve awards in swimming and achieve personal bests in cross-country running. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils make very good progress. They improve on their own performance, and in gymnastics they develop sequences of movement, balance, and tumbling skills in their floor work.
147. Response to lessons is good in each key stage, and in all aspects of physical activity undertaken. The effort and commitment made by pupils striving for swimming awards is outstanding. Behaviour in the gymnasium, swimming pool, and running field is uniformly good.
148. Teaching is always good and in Key Stage 2 it is very good. Lessons are well structured and effectively managed. The teaching of gymnastic skills is systematic and results are of a high order. There is good subject expertise and teaching.
149. The curriculum addresses many areas of activity from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, but not all. For example, dance is not offered. There are particular strengths in aspects of the gymnastics taught and in swimming. Good records of assessment of performance are kept. Games are taught and there are a few inter-school fixtures, although these are friendly rather than competitive. Opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities are provided, including fell walking, camping, and canoeing. Qualified instructors accompany pupils in these events. Most of these activities are at weekends and this limits access to the programme of outdoor pursuits for some pupils. Accommodation and resources are good and include an excellent sports hall with ample space and appropriate facilities.

Religious education and personal and social education

150. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects which are timetabled together. However, pupils make better progress in personal and social education than in religious education, where progress is sometimes slow. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a background knowledge of Christianity and know about aspects of Buddhism. They explore human characteristics, deciding which are desirable. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils retain some facts from events surrounding the life of Christ and learn about Christian beliefs. They develop a code of conduct and understand the potential effects of name calling. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils' self-knowledge increases. They form and express their opinions on issues including smoking, drug taking and managing and taking responsibility for their own behaviour. They learn about the beliefs and values of Judaism. Pupils at post-16 cover personal and social education topics including AIDS and a debate on the decriminalisation of soft drugs in general studies lessons. They improve their capacity to make informed judgements through appropriate research and present a reasoned argument well.
151. Pupils' attitudes to work are good at Key Stages 2 and 3 and post-16 and sound at Key Stage 4. Pupils are willing to answer questions and usually listen attentively to their teacher and often to each other. They take a pride in their work and writing, often of extensive passages, is neat. Relationships with the teacher are good and pupils behave well.
152. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and sound overall at other key stages. Teachers insist on good behaviour and neat handwriting to maintain good standards of presentation. Explanations of tasks are clear. Personal and social education is generally taught well. Teaching in religious education is less secure, reflecting the lack of subject expertise. This has a direct impact on pupils' progress in religious education lessons which often lack variety of teaching methods and materials.
153. Time available to teach personal and social education and religious education is inadequate and in consequence coverage of some topics, particularly in religious education, is limited. There are few resources for teaching religious education, although the local church is visited and visits to other places of worship are planned. Work is marked regularly but assessment procedures are under-developed.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

154. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors and a lay inspector, who spent the equivalent of 22 days in the school.

Key Stage	Key Stage 2	Key Stage	Key Stage	Post-16
Lessons seen	14	33	26	10

During the inspection:

- a total of 51.8 hours was spent observing 83 lessons or parts of lessons;
- all class teachers were observed teaching on several occasions;
- assembly, break-time and lunch-time activities were observed;
- 8.5 hours were spent examining a full range of pupils' work;
- 3 hours were spent listening to the reading skills of pupils of all ages;
- pupils were observed attending a course at a local further education college;
- a range of sporting activities was observed;
- pupils were observed in their residential accommodation;
- discussions were held with teachers, governors, care staff, the financial officer, the domestic bursar, educational psychologist and clergyman;
- pupils' statements of special educational needs, annual reviews and other records and report to parents were examined;
- teachers' plans and records were examined;
- the school's development plan, budget information, policies and other documentation were analysed, as were minutes etc.;
- prior to the inspection a parents' meeting was attended by 5 parents and 15 questionnaires were returned and analysed.

155. Data and indicators

PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
School	39	39	39	---

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (Y6 - Y12)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5

Education support staff (Y6 - Y12)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	160

Average class size:	5
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Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	87%
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Average teaching group size:	KS2	5
	KS3	5.2
	KS4	5.5

FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:	1996/97
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	£
Total Income	847,914
Total Expenditure	840,063
Expenditure per pupil	21,540.80
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,851
Balance carried forward to next year	7,851

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

37

Number of questionnaires returned:

15

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	57.1	28.6	---	7.1	7.1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	71.4	21.4	7.1	---	---
The school handles complaints from parents well	55.6	22.2	11.1	11.1	---
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33.3	46.7	6.7	13.3	---
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	46.7	46.7	---	6.7	---
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	53.3	46.7	---	---	---
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	85.7	14.3	---	---	---
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	40.0	20.0	40.0	---	---
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	60.0	33.3	6.7	---	---
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	26.7	66.7	6.7	---	---
My child(ren) like(s) school	33.3	46.7	---	13.3	6.7

Other issues raised by parents

A concern from one parent over the lack of knowledge about pupils in the autistic spectrum and the need for training, to include teachers and care staff.

A request from one parent that drama should be included on the timetable.