

ERRATUM

Please replace the following pages (page 4, 8, 9 & 24):

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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good overall; it is very good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 3. Teaching is good or better in 89 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in all others. Teachers and learning support workers have very good knowledge of individual pupils, plan activities well to meet their needs and generally have high expectations. As a result of their consistently good approach, teachers plan their lessons well; their organisation and management of pupils are very effective and the needs of all pupils are well met. A strong feature of most teaching is an opportunity for pupils to review, as a whole class, what they have achieved. The school has successfully embraced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is an inconsistent use of signing in the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Issues raised in the previous inspection have been largely addressed. It has improved since the last inspection and the school is aware of the need for continual improvement. Opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to be included in activities with other schools, locally and internationally are very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' and students' moral and social development is a strength. There are many opportunities for them to share and work together and to learn socially appropriate behaviour. Residential journeys contribute very positively to pupils' development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Pupils are given good personal support and guidance. Their academic performance and personal development are well monitored.

The school successfully provides an appropriate curriculum that effectively meets the wide range of pupil needs. Few opportunities exist for teachers to observe each other's lessons. There is an appropriate emphasis on communication using symbols, pictures and simple text. The teaching of information and communication technology and its use across the school

have improved greatly, but this remains an area for further improvement. The school is aware of the need to review its curriculum in light of changes to the National Curriculum. Exciting work related to an increased awareness of Europe, its culture and language is insufficiently developed for some pupils at Key Stage 3.

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15. Across the school, achievements of pupils and students with additional special educational needs, such as autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties, are good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school and provide very effective support for their learning. Pupils are keen to come to school, are willing to participate in activities and show a lively interest in their work. Pupils involved in sensory curriculum sessions respond very positively to the range of experiences offered. From the youngest children to students Post 16, the school places a high priority on ensuring pupils gain independence. This is demonstrated very well in photographic records of pupils' adventure activities, where they are seen to welcome challenges with eagerness and determination.

17. Pupils are polite and cheerful in school and on outings. They are sensible and well behaved. At times, the behaviour of pupils in the school is excellent. A fine example is to be found in the demeanour of pupils at lunchtime, though for some pupils the time could be used more effectively to increase independence skills.

18. They are responsible, and at ease with adults and their peers. The consistent respect that staff show to their colleagues and to pupils provides a very good role model. As pupils get older, they respond with growing maturity to responsibilities given to them. The youngest children make sensible choices, and they are mature young adults by the time they are in the upper school. Their manner when dealing with difficult issues is generally mature and highly commendable.

19. A very good example of personal development is shown at Key Stage 4, where pupils who are gaining accreditation in a catering module talk enthusiastically about planning, preparing and serving a meal to their families at home. The most able pupils are aiming to walk to the local shops to purchase ingredients completely independently.

20. Attendance at the school (around 94 per cent) is good, and unauthorised absence is extremely rare. Pupils attend regularly, despite some having complex medical problems, and this has a direct impact on the good progress they make. Registers are completed accurately, and registration times are well structured to give a friendly yet formal start to the school day. Most pupils arrive by taxi or bus, and drivers ensure that pupils arrive safely at school for a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. Overall the quality of teaching is good. In lessons seen, teaching was never less than satisfactory. It was good or better in 89 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in 45

per cent. Just over 40 per cent of teaching to children aged under five was very good. The teaching for pupils at Key Stage 1 and Post 16 was very good in just under 50 per cent of lessons. At Key Stage 1, teaching in over 25 per cent of lessons was excellent. At Key Stages 2 teaching was good in 50 per cent of lessons. At Key Stage 3, just over 40 per cent is

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good, the rest being satisfactory. At Key Stage 4, teaching was good in 50 per cent of lessons seen, very good in 37.5 per cent and excellent in 12.5 per cent of lessons seen. Overall, this is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when the quality of teaching was good or very good in just over 50 per cent of lessons.

22. Children under five benefit from high quality teaching which promotes good learning. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of children's development and a very good understanding of the curriculum for this age group. Planning effectively supports learning and reflects children's individual needs. Staff are skilled in encouraging children to use signs and symbols and to develop language. Good use is made of pictures and photographs.

23. The teaching of English is good overall. The standard of teaching is very good or better at Key Stages 1 and 2, which is reflected in the very good gains pupils make. Where teaching is very good, teachers use opportunities at the end of lessons to reinforce learning in a fun way, using games to which pupils respond with interest and enjoyment. One good literacy session was seen in Key Stage 4. The introduction of the Literacy Strategy has given a good structure to lessons across the school.

24. Mathematics teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good, at Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory, and at Key Stages 3 and 4 it is good. Realistic and achievable individual targets are set and lesson planning is in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Where teaching is very good, teachers allow time to review pupils' work and preview what pupils will be doing in the next lesson.

25. In science, teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. Teachers' planning, management of pupils and use of support staff is very good. Teachers involve all pupils effectively with interesting and challenging activities that keep them alert and attentive. Pupils with complex needs benefit from sensory science, recognising textures, sounds and observing light. They delight in the total experience of the sensory environment, which includes water, music, light and aromatherapy.

26. At Key Stage 1, all teaching is good or better. In geography and religious education it is excellent; in art and music it is very good; and in information and communication technology, physical education and design and technology it is good. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in music, good in information and communication technology, religious education and art, and very good in physical education, design and technology and geography. At Key Stage 3, teaching is satisfactory in music and good in religious education. No lessons were seen in art, design and technology, physical education, information and communication technology, modern foreign languages and geography. At Key Stage 4, teaching is good and very good in design and technology and geography. Post 16 teaching is never less than good and is often very good.

27. There were examples of excellent teaching in science at Key Stages 1 and 4, and in religious education, geography and English at Key Stage 1. Where teaching is of a very high quality, relationships within the classroom are excellent, knowledge of both pupils and subject is very good and lessons are planned thoroughly, with imagination and flair. Expectations of all pupils are very high. Teachers and learning support workers work effectively together, ensuring full access and participation by all pupils. Lessons are very well supported by the use of technologies such as digital imaging. Excellence is the result of many features skilfully combined.

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82. The leadership and management of the foundation years provision are good. There is a detailed scheme of work covering the early learning goals, which seamlessly links into the National Curriculum. This is supplemented by a highly structured assessment system, which builds on the baseline assessment of each child on admission. There is a good variety of suitable resources, including information and communications technology, and sensory rooms. The indoor accommodation is good, although the outdoor play area is not easily accessible to one group.

ENGLISH

83. The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils' make good gains in developing their English and literacy skills. The standard of teaching is very good or better at Key Stages 1 and 2, which is reflected in the very good gains made by pupils in their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 3, where pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Apart from the one literacy session at Key Stage 4, no teaching of English was seen at Key Stage 4, and judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, which is good. At Key Stage 4, pupils work towards nationally accredited schemes and a number have gained certificates in basic literacy. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

84. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils made good progress in their speaking and listening skills, but less progress in their reading and writing. This has improved so that pupils now make good progress overall.

85. At Key Stage 1, and from a low baseline on admission, pupils make very good gains in their speaking and listening skills. They develop and extend their knowledge of the alphabet. Teachers have high but realistic expectations. Good question and answer sessions encourage all pupils to fully participate, and they sit up straight or raise their hands to be chosen for the answer. Well-structured and balanced lessons retain pupils' interest and develop their concentration skills, and they try hard to complete written exercises neatly and accurately. Higher achieving pupils write nursery rhymes such as Rock-a-bye Baby independently. They read back their work and identify rhyming words. Less able pupils trace over letters or undercopy written sentences and, with help, begin to understand similarities between word sounds. At the end of lessons, all pupils participate very well in a class reading session where they supply missing rhyming words. Pupils with differing abilities are well catered for, and

higher achieving pupils extend their knowledge by working independently on interactive computer stories or reading quietly.

86. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress. The high quality of teaching and imaginative lesson planning provide a good structure for pupils to develop their vocabulary, and they enjoy shared and guided reading sessions. Learning support workers provide very good support in all aspects of lessons, for example working closely with visually impaired pupils to ensure that computer programmes use enlarged texts, and that reading wedges are correctly positioned to aid pupils' visibility. Pupils use scissors and glue to cut and paste words to pictures, which improves their hand and eye co-ordination skills. Lower achieving pupils begin to draw a controlled line in freehand, while more able pupils begin to write words and sentences. Where the teacher uses memory-matching games at the end of lessons

INSPECTION REPORT

THE SHRUBBERIES SCHOOL

Stonehouse

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115823

Headteacher: Mr P J Morgan

Reporting inspector: Geoff Kitchen
21140

Dates of inspection: 26th June – 30th June 2000

Inspection number: 183665
Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Severe and complex learning difficulties
Age range of pupils:	2-19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oldends Lane Stonehouse Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL10 2DG
Telephone number:	01453 822155
Fax number:	01453 822155
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Fletcher
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Geoff Kitchen	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Post 16; Equal opportunities; Special educational needs (lead).	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development (lead); Careers; How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further.
Deborah Granville-Hastings	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development (second); How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work with parents? Integration.
Roy Lund	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern Foreign Languages; Art; Special educational needs (second).	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered by the school?
Sylvia Innes	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information technology; Design and technology.	Monitoring of teaching, appraisal; Staffing, accommodation, resources.
Tony Hill	<i>Team inspector</i>	History; Geography; Religious education.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Kathleen Cannon	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Music.	Assessment.
David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Under fives; Personal, health and social education; Physical education.	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Shrubberies is a maintained day special school for pupils aged 2 – 19 years, situated in the small rural town of Stonehouse. There are currently 66 full time and 13 part time pupils on roll, all of whom have statements of special educational need or are being assessed for such a statement. The school has an Assessment Unit for pre-school children, as well as a county provision for Post 16 students. Pupils have a range of severe or profound and complex learning difficulties, including some with challenging behaviours associated with a diagnosis of autism.

The school is centrally placed to admit pupils from South Gloucestershire, with a catchment area that includes the towns of Stroud, Nailsworth, Wotton-under-Edge, Dursley and Berkley, and part of Gloucester city. The majority of pupils travel to and from school on transport provided by the local education authority. The pupil population reflects the social and cultural background of the areas in which pupils and students live. Twelve pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils who are travellers or refugees, and no pupils with English as a second language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Teaching is of a high quality, enabling pupils to make good progress against individual termly targets. The quality of leadership and management is good and the school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Teaching is of a high quality.
- It promotes very good pupil attitudes and behaviour.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.
- Pupils benefit from a very good range of activities outside school.
- Personal, social and health education is of a high quality.
- The strong local and international community links contribute well to the very good personal development of pupils.
- The school's links with parents are excellent.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in are very good in mathematics, English and personal and social education.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Specialist facilities for the teaching of some subjects to older pupils are unsatisfactory.
- Teachers with responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects are not yet effectively leading and managing their subjects throughout the school.
- Systems to enable governors to monitor and evaluate the school's work need to be developed and implemented.
- Statutory requirements are not being met in relation to reporting attendance in pupils' annual reports, reporting on all National Curriculum subjects at Key Stage 3 for all pupils, and Governors' annual report to parents.
- There is no careers library within school for pupils to use.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has addressed well most of the key issues from the last report of March 1997. The staff have developed a much improved curriculum for pupils aged 5-16 years. The quality of the good curriculum for Post 16 students has been maintained, and that for pupils aged under five is now very good. Whilst the school has moved forward well in its subject monitoring and evaluation activities, it is aware that more opportunities are needed for staff to share best practice.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key	
speaking and listening	A	B	B	B	<i>very good</i>	A
reading	B	B	B	B	<i>good</i>	B
writing	B	B	B	B	<i>satisfactory</i>	C
mathematics	B	B	B	B	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	A	<i>poor</i>	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A	A	A		

** IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.*

The school has set challenging individual targets which are effectively monitored and evaluated. Throughout the whole school, pupils' very good attitudes towards their work, their enthusiasm and very good behaviour make a very positive contribution to their progress. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements in these areas.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
Behaviour in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved. All pupils have opportunities to learn in the community, where their behaviour is also very good.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development of pupils and the relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are good.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school and provide very effective support for their learning. Pupils enjoy school and are willing to participate in activities. Pupils involved in sensory curriculum sessions respond very positively to the range of experiences offered. From the youngest children to students Post 16, the school places a high priority on ensuring that all gain independence. At times, the behaviour of pupils is excellent; they are polite and cheerful in school and on outings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good overall; it is very good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4. Teaching is good or better in 89 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in all others. Teachers and learning support workers have very good knowledge of individual pupils, plan activities well to meet their needs and generally have high expectations. As a result of their consistently good approach, teachers plan their lessons well; their organisation and management of pupils are very effective and the needs of all pupils are well met. A strong feature of most teaching is an opportunity for pupils to review, as a whole class, what they have achieved. The school has successfully embraced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is an inconsistent use of signing in the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Issues raised in the previous inspection have been largely addressed. It has improved since the last inspection and the school is aware of the need for continual improvement. Opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to be included in activities with other schools, locally and internationally are very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' and students' moral and social development is a strength. There are many opportunities for them to share and work together and to learn socially appropriate behaviour. Residential journeys contribute very positively to pupils' development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Pupils are given good personal support and guidance. Their academic performance and personal development are well monitored.

The school successfully provides an appropriate curriculum that effectively meets the wide range of pupil needs. Few opportunities exist for teachers to observe each other's lessons. There is an appropriate emphasis on communication using symbols, pictures and simple text. The teaching of information and communication technology and its use across the school have improved greatly, but this remains an area for further improvement. The school is aware of the need to review its curriculum in light of changes to the National Curriculum. Exciting work related to an increased awareness of Europe, its culture and language is insufficiently developed for some pupils at Key Stage 3.

Procedures for supporting pupils' personal development and promoting good behaviour are a strength of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff provide good, effective leadership. The excellent links with parents and the wider community are a strength.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors provide satisfactory support to the school. There are areas of their responsibilities that are not as fully developed as they are required to be.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Work related to the success of individual targets set for pupils and the focus on the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection has been good.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory

The headteacher, supported by the senior management team, provides good leadership. Planning for school improvement is successful, and the setting of targets is proving very effective. All staff have a clear understanding of the school's aims and values. The governing body has a high commitment to the school and its success and fulfils its role satisfactorily. However, it has yet to be fully involved in the strategic management of the school. The headteacher and governors are achieving best value for money. The hard-working, effective staff team adequately meet the demands of the curriculum. The school has sufficient resources to support the curriculum. The accommodation is unsatisfactory for meeting the requirements of the curriculum for older pupils in some subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable and supportive. • The teaching is good and expectations are high. • They are kept well informed about pupils' progress. • Pupils enjoy school. • The school is well led and managed. 	

Parents have a very positive view of the school. If they have any problems or queries, they feel these are dealt with very well. They find the school very supportive. This is reflected in the very high return of the pre-inspection questionnaire. Inspectors agree that the strengths and successes of the school far outweigh further areas for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The characteristics of pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge their attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils and students know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement and progress, and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' and students' statements, annual reviews and individual education plans as well as lesson observations. The very complex nature of pupils' and students' difficulties means that there is a wide range of skills and abilities within each group.
2. Overall, pupils' achievements are good in relation to their abilities. At Key Stage 1, achievement is very good. At Key Stage 3, it is satisfactory. The very good achievements at Key Stage 1 are the result of the very good, and at times excellent, quality of teaching and learning. Throughout the whole school, pupils' very good attitudes towards their work, their enthusiasm and very good behaviour make a positive contribution to their progress.
3. At the time of the last inspection, overall standards and progress were satisfactory. Since then there have been good improvements, especially at Key Stage 1.
4. Achievements of children aged under five are very good. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and very good progress in speaking and listening. They listen well to one another and use signs and symbols to develop language. They are able to work independently for short periods, and some become engrossed for longer periods of time with activities of their choice. Children take turns and work well individually, in small groups and as a whole class. Their progress in personal and social education is very good. By the time they go into Year 1, they enjoy books, know that print carries meaning and some will make good attempts at retelling well-known stories. Some children use picture strips very effectively to remember the sequence of stories. A few recognise characters in stories and remember initial letter sounds associated with names. Most children explore textures or make marks on paper as part of the development of early writing skills. The majority of children join in number rhymes, and some use simple mathematical language, such as 'biggest' and 'smallest'. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They enjoy investigating materials such as flour, sugar and syrup. They begin to acquire foundation skills related to information technology.
5. Standards in English throughout the school are good. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. This is promoted very well in lessons and in all other activities, for example at lunch-times. Progress in writing is very good at Key Stage 1, satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good elsewhere. Progress in reading is good. The introduction of the national literacy framework is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Older pupils gain nationally recognised certificates in basic literacy.
6. Overall in mathematics, achievements are good. Pupils make very good progress through Key Stage 1 and good progress thereafter. In lessons and over time, pupils' progress and achievement range between very good and satisfactory, reflecting the quality of teaching. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy is starting to raise achievements. The good use of

plenary sessions to reinforce knowledge and understanding is making a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, where higher achieving pupils are included in a group of pupils at a less advanced stage of the work or when pupils are kept waiting to have their work checked or explained, this has a negative impact on raising achievements. The monitoring of the achievement and progress of all pupils and the setting of targets is having a positive impact.

7. In science, achievements are very good at Key Stages 1 and 2, good at Key Stage 4 and satisfactory at Key Stage 3. The younger pupils benefit from very good teaching. As a result, they develop good observational skills and deepen their understanding of materials. They learn to respect and care for the environment and living things, such as small creatures and plants that they collect and study in lessons.

8. Throughout the school, pupils' and students' achievements in information and communication technology are good. Since the last inspection, high expenditure on resources and on-going staff training have significantly improved pupils' achievements.

9. At Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements are very good in religious education, geography and personal, social and health education. They are good in design and technology, physical education, music and art. No firm judgement could be made about history, but standards are at least satisfactory.

10. At Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements are good in religious education, art, music, physical education, design and technology, and very good in geography and personal, social and health education. They are at least satisfactory in history.

11. Pupils' achievements at Key Stage 3 are satisfactory in music, design and technology, personal social and health education, and good in religious education and physical education. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement for art, geography and history. Some pupils' achievements in modern foreign languages are unsatisfactory.

12. At Key Stage 4, pupils' achievements are good in design and technology, physical education, music and geography, and very good with some excellent features in personal, social and health education. In modern foreign languages, achievements are satisfactory. Standards in religious education, history and art could not be judged because they are taught as modules at other times.

13. Students' achievements at Post 16 are good in all subjects except personal, social and health education where they are very good. Students work towards nationally recognised accreditation in both academic and vocational areas. Some students leave school with a recognised qualification.

14. All pupils and students have individual education plans that include challenging targets, directly matched to pre-National Curriculum levels of attainment, for mathematics, English and personal and social education. Pupils' achievements are evaluated on a termly and annual basis, and their gains are closely monitored. The good progress over time, as well as the future predictions of outcomes and expectations, is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. In other subjects, where the method of target setting is less sophisticated, pupils' achievements and predicted future outcomes and expectations are less clearly recorded and monitored.

15. Across the school, achievements of pupils and students with additional special educational needs, such as autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties, are good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school and provide very effective support for their learning. Pupils are keen to come to school, are willing to participate in activities and show a lively interest in their work. Pupils involved in sensory curriculum sessions respond very positively to the range of experiences offered. From the youngest children to students Post 16, the school places a high priority on ensuring pupils gain independence. This is demonstrated very well in photographic records of pupils' adventure activities, where they are seen to welcome challenges with eagerness and determination.

17. Pupils are polite and cheerful in school and on outings. They are sensible and well behaved. At times, the behaviour of pupils in the school is excellent. A fine example is to be found in the demeanour of pupils at lunchtime, though for some pupils the time could be used more effectively to increase independence skills.

18. They are responsible, and at ease with adults and their peers. The consistent respect that staff show to their colleagues and to pupils provides a very good role model. As pupils get older, they respond with growing maturity to responsibilities given to them. The youngest children make sensible choices, and they are mature young adults by the time they are in the upper school. Their manner when dealing with difficult issues is generally mature and highly commendable.

19. A very good example of personal development is shown at Key Stage 4, where pupils who are gaining accreditation in a catering module talk enthusiastically about planning, preparing and serving a meal to their families at home. The most able pupils are aiming to walk to the local shops to purchase ingredients completely independently.

20. Attendance at the school (around 94 per cent) is good, and unauthorised absence is extremely rare. Pupils attend regularly, despite some having complex medical problems, and this has a direct impact on the good progress they make. Registers are completed accurately, and registration times are well structured to give a friendly yet formal start to the school day. Most pupils arrive by taxi or bus, and drivers ensure that pupils arrive safely at school for a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. Overall the quality of teaching is good. In lessons seen, teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good or better in 89 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in 45 per cent. Just over 40 per cent of teaching to children aged under five is very good. The teaching for pupils at Key Stage 1 and Post 16 is very good in just under 50 per cent of lessons. At Key Stage 1, teaching in over 25 per cent of lessons is excellent. At Key Stages 2 and 4, teaching is good in 50 per cent of lessons. At Key Stage 3, just over 40 per cent is good, the rest being satisfactory. Overall, this is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when the quality of teaching was good or very good in just over 50 per cent of lessons.

22. Children under five benefit from high quality teaching which promotes good learning. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of children's development and a very good understanding of the curriculum for this age group. Planning effectively supports learning and reflects children's individual needs. Staff are skilled in encouraging children to use signs and symbols and to develop language. Good use is made of pictures and photographs.

23. The teaching of English is good overall. The standard of teaching is very good or better at Key Stages 1 and 2, which is reflected in the very good gains pupils make. Where teaching is very good, teachers use opportunities at the end of lessons to reinforce learning in a fun way, using games to which pupils respond with interest and enjoyment. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 4. The introduction of the Literacy Strategy has given a good structure to lessons across the school.

24. Mathematics teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good, at Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory, and at Key Stages 3 and 4 it is good. Realistic and achievable individual targets are set and lesson planning is in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Where teaching is very good, teachers allow time to review pupils' work and preview what pupils will be doing in the next lesson.

25. In science, teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. Teachers' planning, management of pupils and use of support staff is very good. Teachers involve all pupils effectively with interesting and challenging activities that keep them alert and attentive. Pupils with complex needs benefit from sensory science, recognising textures, sounds and observing light. They delight in the total experience of the sensory environment, which includes water, music, light and aromatherapy.

26. At Key Stage 1, all teaching is good or better. In geography and religious education it is excellent; in art and music it is very good; and in information and communication technology, physical education and design and technology it is good. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in music, good in information and communication technology, religious education and art, and very good in physical education, design and technology and geography. At Key Stage 3, teaching is satisfactory in music and good in religious education. No lessons were seen in art, design and technology, physical education, information and communication technology, modern foreign languages and geography. At Key Stage 4, teaching is good and very good in design and technology and geography. Post 16 teaching is never less than good and is often very good.

27. There were examples of excellent teaching in science at Key Stages 1 and 4, and in religious education, geography and English at Key Stage 1. Where teaching is of a very high quality, relationships within the classroom are excellent, knowledge of both pupils and subject is very good and lessons are planned thoroughly, with imagination and flair. Expectations of all pupils are very high. Teachers and learning support workers work effectively together, ensuring full access and participation by all pupils. Lessons are very well supported by the use of technologies such as digital imaging. Excellence is the result of many features skilfully combined.

28. During the inspection, the teaching in 37 per cent lessons was very good. These lessons often contain elements of the excellent teaching. They are based on very good knowledge of pupils' needs, with a good balance between support and encouragement of independence. Expectations are made clear, and an appropriately brisk pace is maintained throughout the lesson. Skilful questioning in follow up work related to a residential journey engendered a very good response from pupils on their feelings and recollection of their experiences.

29. Good lessons are seen in most subjects and key stages. Here, the impact of very good features is lessened by failure to fully involve or stretch one or two pupils. Assessment is less well used, the pace and challenge within the lesson is not sustained or the learning objective is not so successfully reinforced.

30. One in ten lessons are satisfactory. The less successful elements of these lessons are where teaching strategies are not so consistent; there are no opportunities to review the lesson; signing is inconsistent; praise and encouragement are under-used; planning is insufficiently detailed to provide opportunities for less able pupils to participate as much as they could. In one or two lessons, the pace resulted in a rather dull session where inspectors felt pupils were being supervised some of the time rather than taught. Less successful lessons lacked challenge and relied too heavily upon routines.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

31. The school meets its statutory requirements by providing a range of relevant and appropriate learning experiences, including the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is very good for under fives and satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good for other key stages. The needs of pupils with additional special educational needs are met well through individual curriculum support within each teaching group and through the sensory curriculum. The curriculum is socially inclusive, and ensures that all pupils have good equality of access and opportunity.

32. The curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection, especially the schemes of work for most subjects. The strengths of the teachers are used well to co-operate in producing appropriate schemes of work. However, the planning for modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3 remains unsatisfactory. There is a good balance of teaching time between subjects, with an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced since the last inspection, and these are having a marked effect on increasing achievements.

33. Policies and schemes of work are good at all key stages, Pre 5 and at Post 16 for all subjects, with the exception of those for modern foreign languages, which are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3 though satisfactory at Key Stage 4. The provision for religious education is good, following the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the needs of pupils, and consequently the curriculum planned for each pupil is interesting and stimulating.

34. Since the last inspection, there are more externally accredited courses in place to meet the needs of most pupils. Some students at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 follow the Accreditation for Life and Living course, and there is the National Skills Profile for high achievers. No pupils follow GCSE courses.

35. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good, bearing in mind the difficulties imposed by transport arrangements and the long distances that some pupils travel to school. From Key Stage 2 onwards, pupils benefit from annual residential experiences, this year at Burnham-on-Sea, which develop their personal and social skills well. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are enabled to develop their independence skills at the Stackpole Centre in Tenby. These visits illustrate a considerable time commitment and dedication from the staff, who give up their own time to plan and undertake them. There is no doubt that pupils' personal and social skills benefit greatly from the opportunity to live and work together outside school hours.

36. The provision for careers education and guidance for older students is good. Older pupils took part in an enterprising project that made and sold 52 hanging baskets this year. Vocational courses are enhanced by the school's extensive links with local businesses. Some pupils gain appropriate work experience in a local garden centre and small supermarket. Although resources are available, the school has yet to establish a careers library that is accessible to students.

37. The links with the community are very good, contributing very positively to pupils' achievement, and are a strength of the school. Pupils and students take part in a wide variety of visits, such as canal boat trips, which contribute to their learning in history, geography and science. There are also regular visitors to the school. Neighbourhood Engineers have taken part in a Key Stage 4 design and technology project to build a go-kart and experiment with wind power. The Eagle Star Building Society has enabled pupils and students to maintain the school pond and to make 'story sacks' in English. Akoma, the African art and music project has provided Rastafarian workshops in school for pupils at Key Stage 4 and students at Post 16, which have stimulated African art and music projects. A local chef has contributed to the food technology and personal, social and health education programmes. Art Space in the Forest of Dean has provided a photographic workshop and Linda Davies Designs has run a fabric printing workshop for students at Post 16. A visiting aromatherapist provides support for the school's sensory curriculum for pupils and students with profound and multiple learning difficulties and challenging behaviour. Students on placements from Stroud High School and Stroud College provide pupils and students with experiences outside the day-to-day curriculum, which develop personal and social skills well.

38. Of particular note, and also a strength of the school, is the school's participation in the Comenius project at Key Stages 3 and 4. The project is a European Union initiative designed to promote links between similar schools in different countries. As a result of this, pupils send information about themselves, their school and the local community to schools in Brittany and the Czech Republic, and receive information in return. This has reinforced their work in history, geography and personal and social education. Pupils communicate via e-mail, using Widget symbols with the appropriate language annotations. Some of pupils have a considerable vocabulary in Czech and French, which they are delighted to try out on each other and on visitors. The project is reinforced with very good exhibitions of photographs and pupils' work.

39. The school has well organised links with mainstream schools and some pupils successfully re-integrate into mainstream. Pupils at Key Stage 4 have taken part in the Barclays New Future Award through integration with pupils in a neighbouring mainstream school for outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 take part in a dance project at a neighbouring junior school. Other pupils, at Key Stage 2, take part in drama at a local mainstream primary school. There is also a link with another special school for trampoline and percussion sessions, and regular shared activities with similar schools in the area for barbecues, forest walks and a swimming gala.

40. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection.

41. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Some assemblies have a good religious theme, allowing time for prayer and reflection. An assembly seen during the inspection included a prayer read by a pupil, whilst candles were lit to add to the sense of spirituality. Birthdays and special achievements were also celebrated. The school celebrates the festivals of major faiths in assembly and class time. Pupils visit local churches and the cathedral, where a sensory trail has been designed by the religious education co-ordinator to enable them to experience the awe and wonder of a large sacred building. Lunchtime begins with words of grace spoken by a pupil, supported by an adult. Pupils are able to reflect on important issues that affect their lives, in English, science and, particularly, religious education.

42. The provisions for moral and social development are very good. Stories and parables from holy books, such as the Bible and the Qu'ran, offer opportunities to discuss right and wrong behaviour. Pupils role-play many of the stories and understand the moral message behind such well-known parables as that of the Good Samaritan. A geography lesson included reference to ethical issues involved in killing animals and in building of dams.

43. All subjects make a very good contribution to the provision for pupils' social development through group activities, and some include visits outside of school, where expectations of good and safe behaviour are high. Pupils play instruments and sing together in music lessons; they visit local shops to buy provisions for cookery lessons; they come together to take part in the Christmas pantomime. An excellent opportunity to integrate with mainstream peers is offered through sports lessons, shared with a local secondary school.

44. There is good provision for pupils' cultural development. Villages in India, St Lucia and other Caribbean islands are studied in geography lessons. Pupils visit the local folk museum and church buildings in history lessons. In art, they look at paintings and sculptures from Thailand, Egypt and Africa. They listen to the music of Ireland, Africa, Australia and Europe in music lessons. Curriculum enrichment activities offer a wide range of opportunities for pupils to visit the community and take part in events within it. Visitors further enrich the curriculum when they demonstrate African mask making, or show pupils how to play the didgeridoo. A key contribution stems from the school's involvement with the Comenius project.

45. Although the school has made very good progress since the last inspection, there are still some important areas to develop, which relate to our own multi-cultural, multi-faith society. Contact has been made with several religious leaders in the nearby city. The school is looking to widen its spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision through visits to mosques, temples and synagogues in the near future.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school provides a very good level of care and support for all its pupils, which is appreciated by the parents. This area was praised in the last inspection and the high standards have been maintained. It is a clear strength of the school.

47. The school gives a high priority to the physical care and well-being of its pupils. Safety and security are considered at all times, whilst not affecting the relaxed and easy atmosphere in school. Clear guidelines for child protection are given to all staff. Staff are well trained and informed, and local authority procedures are adhered to. The school has very good relationships and works as a close-knit team with outside agencies to provide the best support they can for their pupils. Specialist support to the school includes a speech therapist, physiotherapist, educational psychologist, and specialists for the hearing and visually impaired. A weekly visit by an aromatherapist to work with a small group of pupils demonstrates the school's wish to cater for all the needs of its pupils. The care given to pupils with severe physical problems is of a very high quality, being thorough, gentle and sensitive. Health and safety are well monitored, and regular checks are carried out on all electrical and fire equipment. Risk assessments are made of the school premises and all trips out of school.

48. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good and have created a caring and secure environment. All staff, including non-teaching, know pupils and their individual needs very well, and have a genuine concern for their progress, welfare and personal well being. Pupils find their teachers are approachable, accessible, responsive and encouraging. The high quality of their relationships is the basis upon which much of the personal support is built, and this contributes to pupils' confidence and ability to cope with everyday school life. The school is a happy place and pupils and staff enjoy being there.

49. The procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The behaviour and bullying policies give all staff a consistent base to work from, and older pupils were involved in drawing up their classroom rules. Adults in the school provide excellent role models for pupils through the good working relationship between class teachers and learning support workers, and the climate of trust, friendship and respect. Behaviour programmes are constantly monitored and amended, with comments against targets and progress towards them noted.

50. The school appropriately carries out statutory assessments at ages seven, 11 and 14 years, and individual results are reported to parents. However, overall results are not included in annual reports at the end of key stages as required, nor in the governor's annual report or the school prospectus. The school's procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils'

achievements are good overall, and have improved since the previous inspection. They are very good in personal and social education, English, mathematics, careers education, in Post 16 and in Pre 5. They are less well developed in other subject areas, though satisfactory overall. They are unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages.

51. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed an impressive and sophisticated procedure to track pupils' academic achievements in mathematics, English and personal and social education, and this is very good. Pupils' academic targets are directly matched to pre-National Curriculum levels of attainment, and their gains are closely monitored. The effectiveness of the system allows the school to assess pupils' progress over time, as well as predicting future outcomes and expectations. Additionally, it measures progress within key stage groups and highlights gender issues, allowing for effective early action where necessary. With the introduction of the new National Curriculum next year, and where pre-National Curriculum levels are set for all subjects, the school has plans to extend its current system. In subject areas for which there are no pre-National Curriculum levels, methods of recording and monitoring pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievements are evaluated on a termly and an annual basis, which informs curriculum development and lesson planning as well as individual target setting. Current schemes of work are less well informed, particularly in English at Key Stage 3, where there are no formal schemes of work. However, in all subjects, schemes of work are being revised to include evaluated information and to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum.

52. The system of target setting, which was inconsistent at the time of the last report, has improved, and there are now well-developed ongoing procedures, directly linked to pupils' needs. Individual education plans accurately reflect the recommendations of pupils' annual reviews, and are used well as working documents within the classroom. Additionally, the teachers' very good knowledge of pupils ensures that academic and personal needs are met. The teachers keep good daily records in most subject areas, and these are linked to pupils' individual education plans. They are evaluated on a termly basis, and parents are kept well informed as to their child's progress. Annual review and transition plan procedures continue to be well organised, and form the basis of the school's annual progress reports to parents.

53. The expectation that pupils will develop an awareness of their own learning is embedded within classroom monitoring procedures. This gives positive support to pupils' personal development and improves their self-esteem and confidence. This is managed through good teaching and effective lesson planning, which allows pupils to evaluate through discussion what they have achieved at the end of each session. At Key Stage 4 and in Post 16, pupils maintain well-organised and neatly presented Records of Achievement, which highlight their successes.

54. Attendance is good. The close relationship with parents means that the school is notified of the reasons for absence immediately by telephone, note or the driver that brings the pupil to school. Staff make contact with home on the first day of absence to ensure that there are no major problems if they have not received any notification. As a result of this very close relationship, unauthorised absence is extremely rare. Parents are very keen for their children to attend as regularly as possible, even those with medical and health problems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. The school has maintained the very good partnership with parents reported in the last inspection and is constantly looking for ways to develop the relationship further. Parents' views of the school are excellent. They fully support the work of the school and are appreciative of the care and support given to their children. Parents find all staff approachable and feel comfortable airing their views and concerns. They feel able to play a full part in the education of their children and that they are kept well informed about their progress. The number of returned pre-inspection questionnaires was high, indicating parents' interest in and support of the school.

56. Parents receive very good quality information about the school and its philosophy and approach. The prospectus is attractive and interesting, and gives parents a good flavour of school life. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. Parents have the opportunity to meet with staff formally twice a year to discuss the individual education plans and the progress pupils are making towards the targets set. A report covering a pupil's performance in all subjects forms the basis of the discussion at the annual review. However, not all subjects are included in some reports of Key Stage 3 pupils. This is an area for improvement. The report is detailed and gives parents a clear indication of the strengths and weaknesses of their child in each subject, and what they need to work on to improve. Where necessary, parents also receive reports from other professionals, for example the speech therapist, to complete the picture. Parents are given the opportunity to give their written comments before the review, and the review meeting is carefully minuted so all agreed action is recorded. The attendance at these meetings is very high, with over 90 per cent of parents and carers attending. The school currently does not report individual pupils' attendance on the reports, or the National Curriculum levels reached at the end of key stages. The informal communication between parents and staff is very good, with many telephone calls between school and home to discuss progress or concerns.

57. The school works hard to encourage parents to take an active part in their child's education and is successful in doing so. The home-school diaries have been used for a number of years to pass messages or observations back and forth, and some parents use them as a means of conveying their worries or hopes. The home-school agreement emphasises formally the relationship between parents and school. Workshops for parents have been held to introduce a variety of topics or issues. All parents of children new to the school are invited to a session to introduce them to school, the staff and school life. A recent workshop gave parents of Key Stage 4 pupils an insight into the sex education programme and the resources that pupils would be using. Parents receive a copy of the sex education policy and are aware of their right to withdraw their children from any part of it if they wish. The school has recently run an eight week course for parents called EPIC (Everyday Problems in Childhood), and has given parents practical advice and suggestions on handling their children at home. The parents who attended found it so useful that they continue to meet each week as a self-help support group. The course is to be repeated in the autumn. The parent-teacher association works hard to organise a variety of social events throughout the year to provide parents with a forum to meet and talk to each other. This is seen as particularly important as pupils come to school in taxis and buses from a wide area and parents do not get the chance to meet and talk at the school gate.

58. The school values the high opinion and level of support from parents and strives to maintain it. The partnership is a genuine one that makes a significant contribution to the comfort and security of pupils in the school and to the progress they make. There is a very strong sense of everyone working together for the benefit of pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher provides effective leadership, giving a very clear sense of direction that is reflected well in the school's aims and ethos. The headteacher, with very strong support from the deputy, makes very good use of communication and consultation to promote team spirit and to motivate staff. This effective leadership has ensured good improvements since the last inspection. These include improved curriculum planning; the introduction of a sensory curriculum; the monitoring of teaching; the improvement of information and communication technology; the development of non-statutory whole-school target setting, based on levels of attainment in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. The school development plan also benefits from the contributions of all staff from an early stage, and therefore contains very realistic and appropriate targets. Responsibility for each task, timescales, costings and criteria for success are very clearly defined, and the plan does much to enhance the commitment to improvement shared by staff and governors. Staff work together as an effective team. However, the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are not fully developed, so they do not have full accountability for the quality and development of their subject.

60. The governing body is informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. It satisfactorily helps to shape the direction of the school. Although the chair and chair of finance are closely involved with the development of the school and the planning process, other governors rely too heavily on the headteacher for their knowledge of the school and its merits and limitations. For example, there is no programme of appointments for them to see the school at work in order to gain first hand information, and such visits are infrequent. There is an appropriate committee structure to facilitate decision making. The finance committee is very aware of the financial implications of proposed developments, but minutes are not always sufficiently detailed. The annual report from governors is unsatisfactory, does not meet minimum statutory requirements and is a missed opportunity to further celebrate the achievements and richness of the school year.

61. The monitoring of teaching by senior management is carried out on a regular basis and, together with a well managed system of staff appraisal, has done much to promote the high quality of teaching which is a strength of the school. The headteacher is very aware of areas for improvement in teaching and works closely with staff to build on strengths. There are also good arrangements for the professional development of staff. All training has clear links with school priorities and is effectively co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher is responsible for the good programme of induction for new staff. The school's good practice in staff training and development has been reflected by the gaining of the 'Investors in People' standard.

62. The school budget is very well managed and is effectively linked to school improvement planning. The school's finance officer produces high quality financial information that informs on-going financial planning. The headteacher and governors are aware of the importance of seeking value for money from the school's expenditure and seek

to do so on all occasions. The most recent external audit of the school's financial procedures found them to be satisfactory. Action has been taken to correct the few shortcomings noted. The school is successfully applying principles of best value and gives good value for money.

63. The school has a stable and very experienced staff who are appropriately qualified. Through a well established system of appraisal, staff are effectively deployed and their training needs are identified and met. Most recently, staff have received in-service training on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and on improving classroom practice. This has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching, which has improved considerably since the previous inspection.

64. The provision of non-teaching staff is good, and learning support workers make an effective contribution to the quality of care and learning of pupils. They work successfully as a team with teachers to manage the smooth running of lessons.

65. Accommodation in the school provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Buildings and internal accommodation are clean and well maintained. The grounds are adequate in size and provide a pleasant outdoor environment for leisure and learning activities. Corridors and classrooms are bright and attractive with displays of work, and the school is maintained in good decorative order. The library is of reasonable size and appropriately graded into age appropriate sections, with suitable sized shelving for each area and some study areas. The range, quality and quantity of books are satisfactory. However, there is no careers library. The school makes maximum use of the accommodation available, but the lack of specialist rooms for science and design and technology makes it unsuitable for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. The all-purpose hall for physical education is adequate for younger pupils but inadequate for older students.

66. Learning resources are satisfactory in quantity and, because they are well looked after, are in good condition. Equipment is more accessible than during the previous inspection following reorganisation of storage. Spending on equipment is prudent so that teachers are able to update annually to provide sufficient resources for planned topics. There is a policy of buying what will be used to give the greatest value so that resources are not left idle in cupboards. The school makes good use of local resources, such as churches and the riding centre, to enrich the learning experience of pupils.

67. Information and communication technology resources have improved significantly so that now there is at least one computer in each room. There are appropriate additional resources that are suitable for pupils with complex needs. There is a good range of software for pupils to research information for topics, and internet access is available. Further improvements to resources and staff training are being postponed until the new information and communication technology co-ordinator takes up post in September.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. The LEA, together with the school and the governing body, should:

- Improve specialist facilities for the teaching of physical education, music, design and technology for older pupils.
(*Paragraphs: 170, 163, 130*).

69. The school and governing body should:

- Ensure teachers with subject co-ordination responsibilities are effective in leading and managing their subjects throughout the school by giving them non-contact time to monitor colleagues.
(*Paragraphs: 61, 95, 105, 115, 125, 132, 140, 144, 153, 157, 171, 177*).

- * Develop and implement systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by the governors;
(*Paragraph: 62*).

- * Meet their statutory requirement to report attendance in pupils' annual reports;
(*Paragraph: 58*).

- * Meet their statutory requirement to report annually on all National Curriculum subjects at Key Stage 3 for all pupils
(*Paragraph: 58*).

- * Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements;
(*Paragraph: 57*).

- * Establish a careers library within school for pupils to use;
(*Paragraphs: 36, 96*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	37	44	11			

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	79
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	12

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	79
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Pre 5 – Post 16

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7
Average class size	8

Education support staff:

Pre 5 – Post 16

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	530

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	718704.00
Total expenditure	708402.00
Expenditure per pupil	89668.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	7843.00
Balance carried forward to next year	18145.00

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF PARENTS AND CARERS

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	79
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	12	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	70	25	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	37	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	47	6	0	6
The teaching is good.	88	12	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	85	13	0	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	95	5	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	13	8	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	74	23	0	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	18	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	19	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	22	0	3	5

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. The quality of the provision for children in the foundation stage of education has improved since the last inspection and is very good overall. There is a bright, stimulating and welcoming environment where children feel safe and want to do their best to win praise and encouragement from the staff. Teachers and learning support workers form a very effective, cohesive team. This ensures that children learn well whether taught individually, in a group, or as a whole class. All children achieve a great deal by the time they are five.

71. Children develop social skills very well. It is clear that they enjoy school and have quickly made very good relationships with staff. By the time they are five, they behave considerately towards other children and relate well to their teachers and other well-known adults, waiting patiently for their turn. Most children behave very well. Children's attitude to learning is very good. They appear confident and enjoy telling you about their work. Most are able to work independently for short periods, and some become engrossed for long spells. All respond well to encouragement and a few words of praise.

72. Children with additional needs also respond very well to the attention they receive from all adults, who enable them to participate in the activities provided. A few have behaviour management plans, which help them to improve their behaviour and to learn what is unacceptable. These plans are effective because parents agree them and all staff consistently apply the procedures. Throughout this time, children become used to making choices, for example, which toy to play with, book to look at and song to sing. This helps to develop their independence.

73. Children enjoy a variety of activities to support their good language development. Some of the children who are admitted to the school have speech and language difficulties and immature speech. Staff are skilled in encouraging children to use signs and symbols and develop language. Objects of reference, such as a mug for drinks, are carefully selected by means of photographs to help children make links between words and activities. Staff talk with children constantly as they work, asking questions to draw out responses. Children learn to concentrate well and respond enthusiastically to questions, for example, about pictures in the big book. There are stimulating and imaginative role-play areas to develop children's spoken language.

74. By the time they are five, their achievement in language and literacy is good. Children know that print carries meaning and enjoy having books read to them. Some make good attempts at retelling well-known stories, sometimes using a picture strip to help remember the sequence of the story. They listen to instructions and follow directions. Many children handle books independently and with care. They turn pages and their appreciation grows as they identify some of the pictures. A few recognise characters from stories and remember initial letter sounds associated with names.

75. Children's writing is at a very early stage. A few make marks on paper, but without meaning. Nevertheless, they work well on objectives identified in their individual education plans.

76. Mathematical understanding and numeracy are promoted very successfully through carefully planned and structured class teaching and in working in a more focused way in groups. Children learn to make towers of bricks, counting or listening to the teacher counting 'one-two-three', and get pleasure from knocking them down. Opportunities are taken throughout the day: for example, counting songs are sung in music, and each spoonful of flour and sugar was counted in biscuit making. Children work well independently in activities using construction kits. Some use simple mathematical language, such as 'biggest' and 'smallest'. They can name and match circles, squares and rectangles, and begin to sort by colour or size. Some are able to count to five.

77. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop well. They learn to distinguish between textures, and investigate materials closely. When working with flour, sugar and syrup, they move it through their fingers and make patterns. They sample ingredients when they are cooking. In the dark room, children play with florescent stickers on their fingers, looking very intently as they move them around. One child uses a roller ball and switch successfully to make things happen on the screen. Children know about the geography of the school, and explore the local community. A topic on home and families helps them develop an understanding of their immediate and wider families, as do prepared books of photographs for each child where most children recognise their own photograph.

78. Children's physical development is good. They enjoy their time in the swimming pool and gain certificates as they make progress. They learn to move around the pool, to float and kick their legs with support. A few begin to learn to swim and use floats. In physical education lessons, children begin to understand that a warm-up is necessary. They imitate animals, moving in sympathy with the music being played, copying the examples of the teacher and showing awareness of space by not bumping into others. They dance and march in time and really enjoy moving to music. They help put the apparatus away at the end of the session. The outdoor area is used well to encourage physical development and some learn to pedal tricycles. Some children begin to dress and undress themselves independently.

79. Creative development is encouraged very well. Children draw, paint, and use paper and material to make collages. They make splash paintings and handprints. They press shapes from play dough and make prints with coloured foam or sponges. Paint, modelling materials and printing develop an awareness of colour and shape, which is used well to support mathematical development. Their use of tools improves as they cut, stick and join different materials.

80. There are very good opportunities for children to express their ideas and communicate their feelings. They listen well to music, where very good teaching introduces an early awareness of notation through the effective use of symbol cards. This prompts pupils to play their instruments as a team in response to different picture cards being raised, and they listen and watch attentively for their cues. Rhymes and songs are used to reinforce language, mathematics and social development. Children gain a great deal from imaginative play in the home corner. They improve their vocabulary and their understanding of the world.

81. Lesson planning is very detailed and linked closely with individual education plan targets. All activities are planned jointly with the learning support workers, each of whom knows their role at a given time and can substitute should the need arise. Assessments are made throughout the day and recording is very thorough.

82. The leadership and management of the foundation years provision are good. There is a detailed scheme of work covering the early learning goals, which seamlessly links into the National Curriculum. This is supplemented by a highly structured assessment system, which builds on the baseline assessment of each child on admission. There is a good variety of suitable resources, including information and communications technology, and sensory rooms. The indoor accommodation is good, although the outdoor play area is not easily accessible to one group.

ENGLISH

83. The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils' make good gains in developing their English and literacy skills. The standard of teaching is very good or better at Key Stages 1 and 2, which is reflected in the very good gains made by pupils in their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 3, where pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 4, and judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, which is good. At Key Stage 4, pupils work towards nationally accredited schemes and a number have gained certificates in basic literacy. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

84. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils made good progress in their speaking and listening skills, but less progress in their reading and writing. This has improved so that pupils now make good progress overall.

85. At Key Stage 1, and from a low baseline on admission, pupils make very good gains in their speaking and listening skills. They develop and extend their knowledge of the alphabet. Teachers have high but realistic expectations. Good question and answer sessions encourage all pupils to fully participate, and they sit up straight or raise their hands to be chosen for the answer. Well-structured and balanced lessons retain pupils' interest and develop their concentration skills, and they try hard to complete written exercises neatly and accurately. Higher achieving pupils write nursery rhymes such as Rock-a-bye Baby independently. They read back their work and identify rhyming words. Less able pupils trace over letters or undercopy written sentences and, with help, begin to understand similarities between word sounds. At the end of lessons, all pupils participate very well in a class reading session where they supply missing rhyming words. Pupils with differing abilities are well catered for, and higher achieving pupils extend their knowledge by working independently on interactive computer stories or reading quietly.

86. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress. The high quality of teaching and imaginative lesson planning provide a good structure for pupils to develop their vocabulary, and they enjoy shared and guided reading sessions. Learning support workers provide very good support in all aspects of lessons, for example working closely with visually impaired pupils to ensure that computer programmes use enlarged texts, and that reading wedges are correctly positioned to aid pupils' visibility. Pupils use scissors and glue to cut and paste words to pictures, which improves their hand and eye co-ordination skills. Lower achieving pupils begin to draw a controlled line in freehand, while more able pupils begin to write words and sentences. Where the teacher uses memory-matching games at the end of lessons

to reinforce what has been learned, pupils respond with enthusiastic interest and enjoyment. They make good progress in their reading skills, and some pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the text by explaining what has happened in the story so far. Higher achieving pupils use dictionaries appropriately to look up words such as 'bough' and to correct their spelling of 'brakes' to 'breaks'. Lower achieving pupils use picture clues to help them follow new text.

87. At Key Stage 3, pupils have a sound knowledge of the days of the week, and say these from word recognition cards. They develop their spoken vocabulary through new cards and question and answer sessions, and reinforce their knowledge of newly learned words by writing them in simple sentences. Higher achieving pupils write without aid, while lower achieving pupils trace or copy over dictated sentences. Pupils with physical difficulties receive help in guiding their pencil. All pupils are encouraged to read at every opportunity, and they keep records of what have read. These show a steady progression through a commercial reading scheme that is both age and ability appropriate, and builds on pupils' vocabulary of high frequency words. However, lessons sometimes lack sparkle and warmth, and there is little humour to encourage or motivate learning.

88. Pupils at Key Stage 4 follow examination syllabuses, and much of their work in English is related to learning everyday literacy skills. For example, higher achieving pupils learn to write letters or hand-write their personal statements for their National Records of Achievement. Other pupils know how to address an envelope properly. They develop their speaking and listening skills through simulated and actual telephone conversation. All pupils have their own reading records, and these show good progress in reading abilities. Their spellings improve, and there is evidence in their work and on classroom walls that they make good use of word processing to improve their reading, spelling and presentation skills. Older pupils develop an awareness of language in other cultures by e-mail, using words and symbols to communicate with schools in Czechoslovakia and France.

89. At all key stages, pupils are encouraged to record their off-site visits, such as that to a Roman museum, where Key Stage 2 pupils carefully wrote and illustrated their reports.

90. The standard and quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection, and there is now a whole school approach to reading continuity, with the introduction of supportive commercial schemes at each key stage. Although some staff use signing as a means of communication, this is inconsistent overall, although good use is made of symbol cards. There is now good use of modern technology to support English and literacy, and there have been significant improvements to the library.

91. The strengths of teaching lie in the well-planned and structured lessons and the very good relationships between staff and pupils, and this is reflected in the good gains made by pupils. All staff have a good knowledge of pupils' abilities, and this is supported through the very good use of pupils' individual education plans and the ongoing monitoring and recording of each pupil's progress against pre-National Curriculum levels.

92. The National Literacy Strategy is well established in the school, and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. It is used well across the curriculum, and supports learning in religious education, where speaking and listening skills are emphasised when discussing religious artefacts, and in vocabulary building and word recognition in geography, science and art. Where teachers use TEACCH methods, there are good examples of pupils'

spontaneous contributions to lesson evaluation sessions. Aspects of music are linked to speech, reinforcing pupils' understanding of rhyme and rhythm, while flashcards with everyday words such as stop, start, quiet, or loud reinforce word recognition and meaning. Further opportunities to support reading skills are used in information and communication technology and in English where pupils use interactive computer stories with competence and confidence. At all key stages, pupils enjoy listening to stories and follow up group reading sessions with smaller editions of the Big Book.

93. The teachers' monitoring and recording procedures are good overall. The information is used to inform subsequent lesson planning as well as providing input into the whole school assessment of English, which in turn informs the curriculum and its development. The subject co-ordinator is an English specialist, but although English and literacy are monitored through termly evaluation sheets and annual curriculum planning, the co-ordinator does not monitor the teaching. There is speech therapy input for two and a half days per week.

94. The library is well laid out with appropriately designated areas for younger and older pupils and students, and a record book records the borrowing of pupils and staff. However, there is no section dealing with careers. There is a small area for private study, which also houses a computer and printer. Subject resources are good overall and modern technology is used well to support English and literacy.

95. Policies to support the subject are in place but, although literacy strategies are embedded within the whole school curriculum, there is no separate literacy policy. Current schemes of work at Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory, and are being revised to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum. However, there are no schemes of work at Key Stage 3. Examination syllabuses determine the schemes of work at Key Stage 4. The development of schemes of work at Key Stage 3 and a policy for literacy are areas for development. However, the school's provision for English is good overall.

MATHEMATICS

96. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are good overall. Pupils make very good progress through Key Stage 1. They make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 and good progress through Key Stages 3 and 4. In lessons and over time, pupils' progress and achievement range between very good and satisfactory, reflecting the quality of teaching.

97. At Key Stage 1, many pupils are able to count to ten. Higher achieving pupils count on and recognise zero. They know the difference between up and down, long and short and have an understanding of on and off. They can recognise and name a circle, square, rectangle and triangle, and know primary colours. Lower achieving pupils count to three and sort using primary colours.

98. At Key Stage 2, higher achieving pupils count to 50. They are beginning to add two two-digit numbers. They recognise the difference between the signs for addition and subtraction. Some pupils can tell the time to the hour. Lower achieving pupils are able to sort by colour and count to ten with support.

99. Pupils at Key Stage 3 can copy numbers to 20 and count to ten. Some pupils can tell the time to the half hour. At Key Stage 4, higher achieving pupils can add to 20 and subtract from 20 using counters. Some can give change of 10p and measure short lengths to the nearest centimetre. They know place-value for tens and units and recognise all coins. Lower achieving pupils can match numbers and add to six with counters and adult support. Most pupils know the sequence of the school day, the days of the week and the months of the year.

100. There are some examples of the use of mathematics in other subjects. These include counting pupils on and off the coach on a visit to a Gloucester Cathedral in religious education, counting strides to measure the distance a bean bag is thrown in physical education, and, during registration, counting the number of pupils present and then calculating the number absent. However, opportunities to incorporate this aspect into all subjects are missed as it is not consistently planned into lessons, nor does the mathematics documentation include suggestions that might support its inclusion.

101. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils are generally keen to learn. They settle quickly to their lessons and enjoy the stimulus of the short mental arithmetic session that begins most mathematics lessons. Attitudes and behaviour are usually very good and occasionally excellent. Pupils have a good rapport with their teachers and work in a mutually supportive atmosphere. Most take pride in the presentation of their written work, and books and files are usually well maintained, though not all work is dated and fully annotated.

102. Teachers' knowledge of mathematics is at least satisfactory and often good. A wide range of appropriate learning opportunities is used. Lesson planning is in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers set good, realistic and achievable individual targets. Most teachers have high expectations of both work rate and behaviour, which, together with the timely use of praise and encouragement, enables lessons to move along well, with no time wasted. Teachers make frequent assessments of pupils' learning, and record these well. Weaknesses are observed occasionally in lessons, when higher achieving pupils are included in a group of pupils at a less advanced stage of the work, or when pupils are kept waiting, to have their written work checked or explained, while the teacher is occupied with another pupil. Most teachers make very good use of the last few minutes of the lesson to review the work covered by pupils, to allow some or all to relate what they have done or learnt, and thus gain encouragement from others for their success and effort. Some teachers also allow time to preview what pupils will be doing in the next lesson.

103. Overall, there has been good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. The policy and scheme of work for the subject have been reviewed, revised and re-written within the philosophy of the National Numeracy Strategy, and in-service training has been used very well to introduce this throughout the school. Subject co-ordination is good within the delegated responsibilities, though these do not yet extend to the monitoring, evaluation and development of all areas of the subject. The monitoring of the attainment and progress of all pupils, and some groups of pupils, and the setting of targets are very good features in this subject. There are improved resources for learning in all key stages.

SCIENCE

104. Achievement in science is very good in Key Stage 1. Pupils develop good observational skills and skilful questioning by teachers deepens their understanding of materials. For example, they distinguish between solids and liquids and know that the texture and shape of spaghetti changes when it is cooked. They learn to recognise the parts of the body and to use relevant scientific vocabulary in science lessons.

105. Achievement is very good in Key Stage 2, where pupils build on scientific vocabulary and learn to describe what they see in more detail, for example when they collect and observe snails. They learn to respect and care for the environment and living things, such as small creatures and plants that they collect and study in lessons. Because they are provided with plenty of opportunities to carry out practical investigations, pupils learn to handle equipment safely and carefully. They learn to listen carefully and describe what they hear. They know that the ears detect sound and that sounds are transmitted to the brain to be interpreted. They know the term 'vibration' and that sound results from a tuning fork being tapped, but are unsure of the underlying scientific principle.

106. Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 3. Pupils continue to develop vocabulary and to consider the environment and the importance of protecting natural life. They become aware of food chains, and record the sequence of events in a simple food chain.

107. Achievement is good in Key Stage 4. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of how their body works, and know the parts of the body related to sexual development in puberty. Because of the excellent teaching of this aspect of science, pupils are able to discuss sensitive issues openly and ask questions when they do not fully understand.

108. Pupils with complex needs benefit from the sensory science curriculum provided. They make good progress in recognising textures, sounds and observing light, and often delight in the total experience of the sensory environment, which includes music, water, light and aromatherapy.

109. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning in science. Because their minds are stimulated by interesting experiences and they are challenged by activities and questions, they concentrate well and demonstrate enjoyment in lessons. Relationships with teachers are very good and often excellent, so pupils are well behaved and co-operative. Their personal development is very good because they are encouraged to think and to take responsibilities, such as when they handle plants and small animals.

110. The quality of teaching is very good. In just under half the lessons seen it was good; it is sometimes excellent, and never less than satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, which they communicate in interesting ways to pupils so that they enjoy their lessons. The very effective teaching methods they use and their very good knowledge of pupils results in good and sometimes excellent quality of learning. They conduct lessons at a good pace so that pupils concentrate and are stimulated to think. Teachers involve all pupils effectively in lessons with interesting and challenging activities to keep them alert and attentive.

111. The curriculum provides a broad and relevant experience for pupils, with the sensory curriculum adding an effective and stimulating dimension in which pupils become aware of their own bodies and the senses.

112. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good. Lessons are often spiritually uplifting, and pupils express delight in the things they observe in science, such as the sight of colourful plants and the feel of some objects. Pupils have opportunities to work together and have conversations that encourage social development. They are expected to be polite and respect each other and they respond very well to these expectations.

113. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, and there has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. Work is appropriately assessed and the information is used to plan future lessons. There have been improvements in the guidance provided for teachers through appropriate schemes of work. A sensory garden has been created, and the organisation and quality and range of resources is good. The role of the co-ordinator to monitor teaching of the subject has not been developed because insufficient time is provided for this.

114. The shared commitment of staff to improve, and the positive steps which are being taken to plan for the new curriculum next year, indicate that the school is well placed to raise standards further.

ART

115. Art is taught throughout the school. At Key Stage 4 and Post 16 it is within a modular approach. As highlighted in the last report, around the school there are many colourful displays which demonstrate good pupil achievements and the positive way in which art supports learning throughout other curriculum areas.

116. Pupils' achievements are good at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher achievers demonstrate dexterity in using tools, for example controlling and using pencils and paint brushes for drawing and painting, and working with clay. Pupils show skills in cutting and sticking to make collages using, for example, cellophane for water. Their drawings and paintings show an increasing ability to portray features, such as the shape of people and parts of the face. They experiment well with colour. They are able to look at a picture of sunflowers by Van Gogh, talk about colours and shapes, and some produce pictures of sunflowers in a similar style, after examining real flowers.

117. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher achievers are using with confidence an increasing variety of materials, such as pencil, charcoal, crayons, chalks and various kinds of paints. In pottery, they are able to roll and press out clay, either flat or in a former, and to impress different shapes to make patterns. Some can select different glazes and decorate their articles. No art was seen at Key Stage 3.

118. Teaching in art is good across the school. Teachers and learning support workers have good subject knowledge as a result of well-focussed in-service training and support from the co-ordinator, and careful monitoring by her of pupils' work. Learning support workers are integrated well into this planning process and every activity within the lesson, so that they offer very appropriate support and sometimes taking an important lead in managing separate

groups. The management of the groups is good, with clear routines for learning and a good use of time and resources. Activities are clearly graded to respond to pupils' increasing abilities as they progress through the school. Pupils' basic communication skills are reinforced well through skilful questioning and discussion of what pupils see and what they have done.

119. Teachers make good use of work in other curriculum areas to encourage pupils' knowledge and appreciation of multicultural and cross-curricular artwork. A visiting African art and music group stimulated work on African art, and pupils have decorated totem poles as part of their studies of Native Americans and didgeridoos as part of their work about Australia. They have made and decorated an elephant as part of their work on India and a Sphinx as part of their work on Egypt.

120. Pupils are always very interested in what they have to do and are very keen to learn. They concentrate well throughout lessons and their behaviour is very good. Relationships between teachers, learning support workers and pupils are very good and there is a happy, busy atmosphere in art lessons.

121. The subject is led very effectively by the co-ordinator, who is currently on leave, and in the meantime by the acting co-ordinator. Curriculum planning and schemes of work are good and pupils' progress is monitored well. Good use is made of new technology, in the form of digital photography, in order to record pupils' achievements but this not used formally to record their progress. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching. Accommodation and resources are good and are used well, though storage is limited, as are books and CD-ROMs for pupils' individual research. Art has improved well since the last inspection, when the teaching was judged to be variable. The curriculum was not fully developed at the time of the last inspection, but it is now well organised, with clear schemes of work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Achievement in design and technology in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils learn to use scissors and card to make models, and begin to develop an awareness of colour and shape. They build on these skills in making good progress in Key Stage 2. For example, they make mobiles to represent the sun, a rainbow and clouds, which involves cutting around shapes and recognising colours. When they make toast, pupils learn to use electrical equipment and to serve toast to their friends. The occasion is used to develop social skills and conversation, and pupils learn to take responsibility when they use a rota system to carry out tasks. They learn to make choices, for example about the toppings to put on toast, and to use knives safely for spreading. Pupils extend their knowledge of materials and learn to add decoration to textiles using batik methods.

123. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 with simple hand stitching when they make decorative mats. Pupils make good progress in learning to plan and prepare simple meals in Key Stage 4. More able pupils purchase and prepare the ingredients to make shepherd's pie. They use equipment such as knives and cheese graters safely and competently, and learn to operate cookers and clear up after themselves with reasonable independence. They make very good progress in learning about hygiene when they prepare food. Pupils are successfully entered for the Bronze level CREST award, where their

achievements are assessed by external examiners. They make good progress with learning to plan their work and to draw their designs for clay tiles. They learn new techniques when they construct them, and carry out simple evaluations of what they have learned from the project. Pupils learn to communicate their ideas effectively using symbols and words.

124. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, and the quality of learning is very good because they know their pupils very well and prepare interesting and appropriately challenging work. Teachers take every opportunity to develop social skills and to increase vocabulary. They expect pupils to measure ingredients accurately, for example when they make cakes, and to recognise shapes when they make mobiles so that learning about number and shape becomes meaningful. Lessons are well structured so that pupils build skills and knowledge through practical experience which they remember.

125. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, and this encourages their co-operation. They treat pupils with care and respect. Teachers work very effectively in partnership with learning support workers who, for example, often record what pupils know when the teacher asks questions. Pupils respond very well to high expectations of behaviour because they respect, trust and like their teachers.

126. The curriculum provides relevant experiences for pupils, but there are not enough opportunities to work with a wide enough range of tools and materials. This is particularly so in Key Stages 3 and 4 where the lack of specialist accommodation restricts activities. There is not enough emphasis on design work or on the use of resistant materials and structures.

127. The management of the subject is satisfactory and there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils now have opportunities to enter projects for externally accredited awards, and the quality of teaching has improved significantly.

GEOGRAPHY

128. It was possible to observe only a few lessons of geography during the week of the inspection. Judgements are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' records and discussions with staff and pupils. In lessons and work seen, standards of achievement and pupils' progress are good overall; they are very good at Key Stages 1 and 2. No judgement could be made at Key Stage 3.

129. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to travel safely on roads in the community. They understand the operation of pedestrian lights and can recognise pictures and symbols of traffic lights. They are able to walk and shop in the local village under the guidance of teaching and support staff.

130. At Key Stage 2, pupils can identify appropriate symbols to denote weather conditions and know what types of clothing need to be worn in different conditions. Pupils study a map of the world, and higher achievers can correctly locate the major continents. They learn about the animals that humans have bred for food, and that different countries grow different crops and breed different animals.

131. At Key Stage 4, pupils begin to understand the various routes around the local town. They know where the bus stops to pick up passengers, and are aware of the major businesses in the town. The Comenius Project enables pupils to learn about their country in relation to France and the Czech Republic. They know that France is famous for its food, and learn about some of the foods eaten by the French.

132. The response of pupils to lessons is generally very good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are pleased to show their work to visitors. They are patient in lessons and wait their turn. On occasions their behaviour is exemplary, enabling the lesson to be well paced so that they make very good progress through it.

133. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 3. The quality of teaching in other key stages is very good, and occasionally excellent. Lessons are well planned and prepared, using pictures, symbols and objects of reference made by pupils in previous lessons. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach it with enthusiasm. Learning support workers are deployed effectively, enabling pupils at differing levels of ability to be given appropriate learning opportunities. In the best lessons there is an excellent ethos for learning; it is interactive, interesting and challenging. Teachers manage these lessons expertly to maximise the learning opportunities. Good use is made of computer software to support lessons on weather and climate.

134. Resources are now adequate, and a very good programme of visits is organised in all key stages. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator feels that the subject is better established within the curriculum than at the time of the last inspection. Nevertheless, she has no free time to effectively monitor the progress of the subject overall, and there has been no in-service training over the past three years. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

HISTORY

135. It was not possible to observe any lessons of history during the inspection. From work seen and discussions with staff and pupils, it is clear that achievements and progress are at least satisfactory.

136. Younger pupils understand the past and present from a study of pictures of their own families and those of staff. Lower achieving pupils are able to sequence events on the school timetable. Pupils begin to recognise some of the differences between life in ancient Egypt and life in modern England. Higher achieving pupils can make comparisons between life in Victorian England and our own times, using clues from clothing, buildings and types of work. They are aware that social and working life has changed.

137. The curriculum for history is good and includes visits to a folk museum as well as local churches and other historic buildings. The school has adequate resources to deliver the subject, and these are added to by artefacts collected by staff.

138. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. Resources have improved, in particular the collection of historical artefacts. A scheme of work is now in place and is currently being reviewed for the new Curriculum 2000. There is insufficient time to enable the subject to be effectively monitored and evaluated, currently by the deputy headteacher, but the school is expecting to appoint a new co-ordinator soon.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

139. Achievement in information technology is good. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection because teachers are now more confident in using new technology and there are more computers in the school. Pupils make good progress in learning to word process their work to communicate information clearly, and this leads to improvement in literacy skills. They use CD-ROMs as sources of information.

140. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress with mouse control and use it to pick up and drop icons on screen. They bring up a menu and, with help, select the program they want. Pupils are learning to insert CDs into the drive and use computers to improve their work in mathematics, for example carrying out subtraction on screen.

141. Pupils continue to build skills and knowledge in Key Stage 2. They become more familiar with the keyboard, and those who are unable to use a standard model learn to use a concept keyboard. They know that the space bar produces a gap between words, and their skills in mouse control improve. One group of pupils made good progress in using a CD-ROM for an interactive story and in understanding what computers can be used for. In science lessons, they use a CD-ROM to learn about parts of the body.

142. In Key Stage 3, computers were not seen in use and there was no evidence of progress. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 4 with word processing and in reinforcing work they have done on the formation of sentences.

143. Pupils enjoy using computers, working patiently and persevering to complete tasks on screen. They are careful with equipment and work safely. Pupils are very well behaved and polite. They take turns to use the equipment. Through using computers, pupils make good progress with learning to work independently.

144. The quality of learning is good and sometimes very good. Teachers are well organised so that pupils have access to machines and know that their turn will come to use them. In Key Stage 2, teachers have the clear objective of letting pupils work independently, and work is well matched to targets identified in individual education plans. Teachers plan their lessons well to include interesting and motivating activities that challenge all pupils. They encourage pupils to think for themselves and to solve problems. Teachers introduce lessons clearly so that pupils know what they will do and what they are expected to achieve in the lesson. Tasks are explained very clearly so that pupils understand and have confidence to work on their own whenever possible. Effective support is provided by learning support workers who understand the needs of pupils and manage them very well. There are effective evaluation sessions at the end to check understanding and to reinforce learning.

145. The curriculum has significantly improved since the previous inspection, and offers a range of activities relevant to the needs of individual pupils. There is scope to extend this range as teachers improve their own skills and knowledge, for example in using computers to control external devices.

146. The experience and progress of pupils are recorded, and systems for monitoring these are being developed. Regular meetings of staff are held to discuss progress but, as yet, assessment information is not used sufficiently to inform the planning of future work.

147. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, but the subject co-ordinator lacks time to monitor teaching. There has been good development of the subject since the previous inspection. Improvements are ongoing and more are planned for next term when a new co-ordinator takes up post. Schemes of work are in place for the current curriculum, with planning underway for the changes to take place in September. The aims for the subject support the school's aims, and there is a shared commitment between staff to improve standards and provision. Learning resources are accessible and there is at least one computer in each room. In-house training has been provided for staff, who now feel more confident about using IT. Particularly good use is made of digital cameras to record the work and activities of pupils, with the pictures used as a further stimulus in lessons.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

148. Modern foreign languages were not taught at the time of the last inspection. They are now taught from year 9 of Key Stage 3. Planning is satisfactory at Key Stage 4 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. The curriculum is currently centred round the European Union Comenius project, which aims to put schools in touch throughout Europe. The school has ongoing links with a school in Brittany and one in the Czech Republic, and they communicate via e-mail, fax and post. In order to do this, pupils use Widget symbols with appropriate vocabulary in English, French and Czech underneath and, as a result, are acquiring a very good understanding of the cultural similarities and differences between the three schools and their areas. Some language skills are being acquired through this, although pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4.

149. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils know a few words of Czech and French. By the end of Key Stage 4, the higher achievers have a wide vocabulary of key words relating to the classroom, themselves and to their families and the neighbourhood. They are able to visit Gloucester Cathedral, for example, and to send details of the main features to their partner schools and to ask if they have a cathedral locally and if it has similar features. Some pupils are able to use words in conversation.

150. The teaching within the Comenius project is good overall. The project is well planned, with appropriate activities that match the needs of pupils well. The use made of Widget symbols to communicate between the three countries is excellent, and pupils show no inhibitions about trying to communicate and to give information to their opposite numbers in the other schools. The chosen areas of communication - everyday life and the surrounding neighbourhood - relate well to pupils' work in local geography and history. The aspects of pupils' own lives and interests are also well chosen and motivate pupils well. They are delighted to tell fellow pupils in France and the Czech Republic of their interests, likes and dislikes, and to hear theirs in return. Very good use is made of information and

communications technology. Having said this, the opportunities for pupils to practice their vocabulary through speaking and listening to French and Czech are limited and not structured well enough. This is partly due to the unsatisfactory subject knowledge of the teachers. However, pupils' enthusiasm to do this is amply demonstrated to visitors. It is a very worthwhile project, which promises to develop pupils' language skills well over time.

151. The project is well managed by the co-ordinator, but the curriculum is not yet fully accessing the relevant programmes of study of the National Curriculum, especially at Key Stage 3. Language resources are unsatisfactory, especially audio and video materials and CD-ROMs and reference books about the countries concerned.

MUSIC

152. The provision for music is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good overall, and these standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make good gains in their musical awareness through a range of relevant experiences. Policy documentation realistically meets the needs of individual pupils, and is linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Its aims are well implemented through effective lesson planning and schemes of work. Music continues to be used across the curriculum and in the sensory room to support and enhance pupils' learning.

153. At Key Stage 1, the very good teaching, well-planned lessons and good preparation promote learning by encouraging pupils to use a range of instruments with confidence. They identify and name instruments, such as a xylophone and giant triangle, and match sounds to types of weather, using soft bells for sunshine or a drum for thunder. They begin to develop an awareness of rhythm using pitter-patter sounds to denote rainfall. Much work is linked to other subject areas; for example, having seen and heard a didgeridoo in music workshops, pupils listen to Aboriginal music and make their own instruments in practical lessons, which consolidates their knowledge while promoting cultural awareness. They make very good progress.

154. One lesson was seen at Key Stage 2, and the quality of teaching was satisfactory. However, photographic evidence of pupils' participation in visiting musical workshops and 'SoundBeam' experiences, indicates that they make good gains in their musical knowledge. They develop a tolerance of sound and an awareness of rhythm and beat by using a range of percussion instruments and a resonance board. Some pupils use cards with signs and words to direct percussion playing. They make satisfactory progress in playing keyboards and singing.

155. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 is satisfactory. Teachers plan musical experiences for pupils by offering a programme of differing musical styles, ranging from rock and roll to classical and multi-cultural sounds. However, the subject is offered more as a leisure activity than a progressive development of musical knowledge.

156. The teaching of music for pupils with additional and specific learning difficulties is good. They are withdrawn for group sensory sessions, with music used as a medium for expressing emotions. Younger pupils are encouraged to get a feel for music, including children's songs, using body movements to sway in time with melodies. Older pupils work in the sensory room, and here the teachers' good use of sound and light provides a relaxing environment for pupils to reflect on musical experiences.

157. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and pupils work hard to meet teachers' realistic expectations. They listen well and respond appropriately to the teachers' requests or directions. At the end of lessons, each pupil takes responsibility for putting equipment away in its correct place. However, there is no music specialist in the school and opportunities for learning individual instruments are limited.

158. Music is well managed and provision is satisfactory. There is ongoing monitoring and recording of pupils' achievements. Individual education plans are used to match lesson content to pupils' needs, and the music co-ordinator uses termly evaluation sheets to monitor the subject over a two-year rolling programme. These are used to inform curriculum planning and schemes of work, which are currently being revised to incorporate the forthcoming requirements of the new National Curriculum. There is an adequate range of good quality resources, although there is no designated music room, and this impacts on learning in other classrooms. Some use is made of modern technology, but not enough to support the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Standards of achievement in physical education are good, with some very good features. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 3, but teachers' records and reports support this judgement.

160. At Key Stage 1, pupils behave confidently and safely in water. Non-swimmers move around in the water gaining confidence, beginners cheerfully float with buoyancy supports, and higher achieving pupils move confidently about the pool with and without support, some swimming the length of the pool happily and with purpose. During the session observed, one pupil swam the width of the pool unaided for the first time and gained the admiration and praise of all.

161. At Key Stage 2, pupils begin sessions with a warm-up and clear away apparatus at the end. They understand the idea of competition and race each other in pairs. With help, they measure distance to see who has thrown a bean bag the furthest. They understand the need to work within the rules for the activity.

162. At Key Stage 4, pupils join with a class at the local secondary school for a fortnightly lesson. They integrate very well and understand working as a team, playing within the rules of the game and accepting the referee's decision without dissent. They improve their skills and techniques in throwing, catching and hitting, with the higher achieving pupils reaching standards that are close to national expectations. Pupils with additional and complex difficulties attend riding lessons at the nearby indoor riding school. They show their enjoyment by verbal expression, smiles, and use of their eyes and head movements. All have developed and improved their sense of balance so they can complete a number of tasks whilst on horseback, to add variety to the session.

163. Teaching and learning are good at all key stages; there is a good level of teacher expertise and a high level of pupil enthusiasm. Learning support workers work very well with teachers to ensure that all pupils participate as fully as possible. Swimming is improved since the last inspection as classes now have separate sessions, so that numbers in the pool at any time are much lower. All adults take part, working with and supporting pupils in the water, encouraging and praising them for their efforts. As a result, all pupils really enjoy the lessons and make good progress. Key Stage 4 pupils benefit from the knowledge and skills of a specialist physical education teacher at the local secondary school, where they combine with one class for regular lessons. This helps to increase motivation and develop pupils' skills. Good use is made of other off-site resources in addition to horse riding. While on residential visits, pupils experience and take part in adventurous activities such as abseiling, archery, canoeing, caving, go-karting, orienteering, quad biking, rock climbing and the zip-wire.

164. The quality of teaching throughout the school is never less than good, and is very good in half of the lessons seen. Teachers set realistic goals and, through praise and encouragement, help pupils to achieve them. Pupils enjoy physical education and want to improve and do more. Relationships are very good, and sometimes excellent, enabling high levels of co-operation, including those pupils who often have difficulty working with others collaboratively. All pupils are well managed with warmth and affection, and lessons are conducted with inconspicuous but very high regard for safety, so that pupils work safely and at a good pace. Teachers provide a wide range of activities where pupils may practise their basic skills. There is good assessment and recording of pupils' skills, especially in swimming where the school has its own proficiency award certificate system. As a result, teachers are well aware of what their pupils know, understand and can do.

165. The subject is well led and managed. The curriculum for physical education is well planned, and includes appropriate access to the National Curriculum. Swimming is given high priority and the school is very successful in developing pupils' confidence in the water and their ability to swim. However, the subject co-ordinator has too little time to monitor the work of her colleagues and the progress of pupils throughout the school. Resources are satisfactory, but the small, general-purpose hall that serves as the gymnasium is unsatisfactory for Key Stages 3 and 4 as it limits the range of activities possible. The outdoor area suitable for team games is also limited.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. It was possible to observe only a few lessons during the week of the inspection. Judgements are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, as well as teachers' records and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards of achievement and pupils' progress are good overall, and very good at Key Stage 1 where some excellent teaching was observed. Pupils remember the name of the Hindu God, 'Ganesha' and know that Hindus worship in a temple, known as a 'Mandir'. Through visits to local churches, they learn about Christian ceremonies, such as christening, wedding and baptism. They make very good progress in their learning through excellent lessons, in which they act out important ceremonies, such as the Hindu family prayer time and the Christian ritual of christening.

167. At Key Stage 2, pupils are able to retell stories from the Bible that the teacher has read. On a visit to the local cathedral, they respond well to a sensory trail designed by the co-ordinator for religious education. This enables them to experience the awesome size of the building and the characteristic smell and feel of marble and stone, candles, brasses and wood carvings around and within it. They experience a time of reflection during the visit. They look at the life of both Jesus and Mohammed, and begin to understand that both Christians and Muslims celebrate special occasions and place a high value on prayers to their God.

168. At Key Stage 3, pupils discuss Christian parables such as the 'Good Samaritan', and reinforce their understanding of right and wrong through role-play. They make good progress in understanding the importance of friendship and caring for others through such parables. At Key Stage 4, pupils know that the Holy Qu'ran is the Muslim equivalent of the Holy Bible, and that Muslims must wash their hands before reading it. They use symbols and pictures to extend their awareness of festivals such as weddings, Diwali, Hanukah and Ramadan. Good use is made of visits to Christian places of worship, to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of Christianity in English culture.

169. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and on visits is very good. They are keen to answer questions and listen respectfully to stories and explanations of the key world faiths they study. They enjoy lessons and, in the best lessons, are fully engaged in the process of teaching and learning. They respect the views of others and are very supportive of one another. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

170. The quality of teaching is very good overall, and excellent at Key Stage 1. Visits and lessons are well planned, offering a wide range of activities to support the learning of pupils with differing special needs. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and effort; the good relationships they encourage in lessons support those expectations well. They make very good use of religious artefacts and resources to support learning. They plan for opportunities to develop pupils' basic literacy skills, and make good use of question and answer sessions to check pupils' learning and improve their listening and speaking skills. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and take responsibility for some aspects of their learning.

171. The co-ordinator has a clear sense of direction and purpose for religious education. She has made a significant contribution to the locally county Agreed Syllabus, as well as guidelines for the teaching of pupils with severe and complex special educational needs. Although senior staff monitor teaching, there is no effective monitoring of the subject as a whole beyond checking teachers' plans for subject coverage. Resources are generally good, although there is a need to improve information communication technology applications.

172. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The subject is now taught in all key stages, and teaching has improved from satisfactory and sometimes good at that time to good and sometimes excellent now. Staff in-service training has been identified for a future date. Pupils' learning and their response to lessons have improved as a consequence of the improvements in teaching.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL and HEALTH EDUCATION

173. Achievement and progress over time in personal, social and health education are very good in all key stages. The subject contributes strongly to the very good progress of pupils in their personal and social development.

174. There are few designated lessons in personal, social and health education, but an appropriate amount of time is spent each day in activities to promote social skills. Teachers and learning support workers, including dinnertime assistants, are well aware of the personal needs of pupils. Teaching is usually informal and relies heavily on close team-work between all staff. Appropriate programmes ensure younger pupils make good progress in learning table manners, chewing, eating a variety of foods, and using feeding utensils. Regular snack times help build on skills and provide a context for belonging to the class family.

175. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. There is an expectation that the classrooms will be kept tidy and that resources will be well looked after. Pupils are expected to help and consolidate their sorting skills in doing so. There are very high expectations that children will do as much as they can independently.

176. Older pupils learn to appreciate that they are members of a group, to share and recognise the needs of others, and to recognise their own identity. Pupils are well engaged and build on earlier skills. Sex education lessons in Key Stage 4 are very relevant and successful because of excellent teaching. Pupils know appropriate words for parts of the body, and begin to understand about sexual intercourse and reproduction. There is similar sensitivity in teaching drugs awareness and substance abuse. All learning occurs in a climate of support, with a correct emphasis on social responsibilities.

177. Personal, social and health education is well managed and led. The scheme of work is still under development, but the present informal format provides a good structure to support pupils' progress. Recording and assessment procedures are good, and support the targets set in individual education plans. The school has begun to formally measure the progress that pupils make and set appropriate targets for whole school improvement in this subject. Resources are generally satisfactory, and very good for sex education and drugs awareness. The subject makes an excellent contribution to the very good social and moral development of pupils.

POST 16 PROVISION

178. The provision for Post 16 students has maintained its good quality since the last inspection. Teaching is good, and often very good. Progress is good.

179. Students who progress to the Post 16 programme tend to have the more complex and severe learning difficulties, and a high proportion of the group have additional difficulties on the autistic spectrum of disorders.

180. The curriculum for these students is good, and contains a good balance of leisure, social and life skills, arts experiences and appropriate inclusion of basic skills for adulthood.

181. Progress in areas such as communication, listening and understanding, numeracy, attention skills, ability to interact and work with others is carefully monitored. Challenging targets are set that fully involve parents and carers. Modules on beliefs and awareness of religion have an appropriate Christian emphasis while including the study of other faiths, such as Hinduism. Very good records are kept which are accessible to students, and involve a very creative and imaginative use of photographs.

182. In music, students increase their self and body awareness through simple action songs. The lively pace of lessons ensures that everyone gains maximum enjoyment from the sessions. In the best lessons, effective discussions on what was liked or disliked conclude the session, and consolidate pupils' learning by encouraging them to evaluate their achievements.

183. Teaching is of a high quality. It is never less than good, and is very good in just under half of the sessions seen. Learning support workers and teachers work well as an effective team. Good use is made of pictures to sequence and order events from the past as well as those planned. These schedules enable students to anticipate activities and predict what will be required of them to participate. The pace of every session seen was appropriate, and enabled students to respond as independently as possible. Staff make learning fun for all. A good example of why teaching is so successful was seen in the variety of activities linked to a pizza theme: students designed pizzas on computers, made pizzas to take home, had a classroom display of pizzas and then visited a local pizza restaurant. This sequence of experiences provided a cohesive range of activities that students could relate to well. Every element was carefully planned to ensure each student was able to increase or maintain a skill or understanding.

184. Students are encouraged to be independent and, at their own level, to develop an environmental awareness through very carefully planned visits, which include excellent assessment of any potential risks and opportunities to extend students' mobility. Good use is made of sensory approaches. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students have good opportunities to review sessions. This is a teaching strategy that is used consistently to very good effect. Behaviour and care needs of students are effectively dealt with in an unfussy, discreet way that shows a high level of respect by staff to students.

185. The linking and leaving transition programmes are very successful, ensuring that students and their families make a seamless move to the next stage of their lives. Whilst this important element of the Post 16 programme is well addressed and involves students' families well, the opportunity for students to visit a range of after-school provision with their fellow students is not offered. Accreditation is successfully used, and the school continues to seek appropriate ways to accredit students' achievements. Well attended information evenings are arranged for carers, who greatly value the hard work of the staff team. Students who transfer from other schools at 16 make good progress; parents and carers are pleased with the way the school provides such good continuity in learning.