

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FARNEY CLOSE SCHOOL**

Bolney Court, Bolney, West Sussex

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126139

Headteacher: Mr B Robinson

Reporting inspector: Alan Lemon  
20165

Dates of inspection: 16.10.00 – 19.10.00

Inspection number: 186393  
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:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bolney Court Bolney West Sussex
Postcode:	RH17 5RD
Telephone number:	01444 881811
Fax number:	01444 881957
E-mail address	farneyclose@pavilion.co.uk
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Eynon
Date of previous inspection:	04.12.95

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alan Lemon OIN: 20165	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art	What sort of school is it?
			How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
John Fletcher OIN: 8941	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Linda Wolstencroft OIN: 22821	Team inspector	English Music Special Educational Needs	How effective is the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance?
Kathleen Cannon OIN: 27058	Team Inspector	Information Technology Spanish	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students?
Val Hider OIN: 1458	Team inspector	Science Religious Education Residential Provision	How adequate are the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources?
Roger Parry OIN: 20247	Team inspector	Geography History Personal, social and health education	
Janice Funnell OIN:18959		Design and Technology Physical Education	How good are the opportunities for pupils' personal development?

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International  
Upperton House  
The Avenue  
Eastbourne  
BN21 3YB

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Inspection Quality Division  
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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Farney Close School is an independent residential special school for up to 78 boys and girls with Statements of Special Educational Needs related to their emotional and behavioural difficulties. None are identified as having additional special educational needs. There are currently 57 pupils on roll; 40 boys and 17 girls, who are referred to the school mainly by local education authorities in the south east of England and London. Five pupils are black, mainly of Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils whose English is an additional language. The large majority of pupils' attainment on entry is below the age-related expectation. The attainment of a few pupils is broadly in line with that expected for their age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Farney Close School is an effective school. Overall, by the time pupils leave they have achieved well, particularly when this is set against the disrupted education and barriers to learning they have experienced. Their attitudes to learning are good and they form very good relationships. Teaching is effective. Pupils are cared for and supported well and they receive a very good residential experience. The school has a good educational direction set by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Farney Close School gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is good and is steering the school firmly in the right direction towards improvement and raising standards.
- The very good relationships achieved with pupils that gives them the respite and support they need, while enabling teachers and all staff to be effective in helping the pupils.
- The very good residential provision that contributes well to pupils' personal development and their capacity to learn.
- The good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- The very good range of extra-curricular activities available for all pupils.
- The provision of good personal, social and health education.
- The specialist accommodation for information technology, design and technology, music, art and geography.

#### **What could be improved**

- The more effective use of lesson time by shortening the length of lessons or by teachers planning effectively to use all of the time productively.
- The more effective use of information technology across the whole curriculum by teachers planning its use into lessons and through training and support developing their confidence and expertise in the educational applications of information technology.
- The strategies for promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum.
- The consistent use of the assessments of pupils' progress to inform planning of their curriculum.

*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 was last inspected in 1995. The improvement made since then is satisfactory. There has been a good improvement in the quality of the curriculum and music is now available. The programmes of study in most subjects are now of good quality and are kept up to date. The steps taken to raise the standard of pupils' numeracy have led to satisfactory improvement in this provision. Numeracy is addressed effectively in mathematics teaching but not promoted consistently or well across the whole school. There is now a library but because of limited access and an inadequate range of books and other resources it makes little contribution to pupils' literacy skills. The improvement made on the length of lessons is

unsatisfactory. Teachers are not always planning to make use of all the time available. However, teaching has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced. Teaching and learning in English have improved satisfactorily overall. In lessons, pupils are achieving more in speaking and listening and in reading. The introduction of drama since the last inspection has contributed well. The provision for literacy across the school has improved satisfactorily. Teaching and learning have improved well in mathematics. Teaching has improved in geography and physical education. There was limited access to information technology in subjects across the curriculum at the time of the last inspection and this is still the case. The accommodation and resources for information technology has been improved very well recently but at the time of this inspection were not in use. The new specialist classrooms are a very good improvement. Learning resources have been improved well in several subjects. The rate of exclusions has been significantly reduced, which represents a good improvement.

## 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 14	by age 16	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	B	Very good	A
Reading	C	B	Good	B
Writing	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	C	C	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C		

Pupils of all ages achieve well. The results in GCSE and other examinations compare very well with similar schools. This trend has been maintained in the time since the last inspection. While the school is now actively gathering information on pupils' progress it has not set whole school targets to improve their performance. In English pupils discuss their reading in a mature and perceptive manner. They examine the nature of the characters in the text. While they re-draft their writing by hand, pupils are not using word-processing facilities sufficiently for writing and its presentation. In mathematics pupils are confident in applying their good knowledge of number in a variety of contexts. They can measure and draw to scale. Pupils translate between fractions, percentages and decimals. Older pupils add and multiply unlike fractions. All pupils are achieving well in geography, music and physical education. In geography, younger pupils explain what causes of earthquakes and older pupils understand the economics of why some parts of the world are less developed. Pupils recognise composers by their music and perform their own compositions. In physical education pupils are skilled in gymnastics and play team games successfully enough to win regional tournaments. Achievement in information technology is unsatisfactory because it is not used effectively across all subjects. In art, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because they are not taught effectively. There are no clear objectives guiding lessons and lessons are too long, particularly at Key Stage 4, for pupils to sustain their interest and concentration.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are happy to belong to the school and in the best lessons they are keen to be involved in learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons, around the school and in the evenings is generally good. There has been a considerable reduction to the number of pupils being excluded because of unacceptable behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their personal development.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils respond enthusiastically to the opportunities to take responsibility, for example performing a play, but more opportunities are needed to promote personal development.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	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.*

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. It was very good or better in 13 per cent and unsatisfactory in 8 per cent. Teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, geography and personal, social and health education. It is unsatisfactory overall in information technology and art. Teachers use good expertise to enliven the subjects of lessons, which enthuses pupils towards learning. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are employed effectively in the best lessons to get pupils well involved in the work. As a consequence they learn well and behave appropriately. Teachers question pupils well and get them to respond in a thoughtful and serious way to the challenges their questions pose. This develops pupils' knowledge and understanding well. Lesson time is frequently wasted because some teachers do not plan activities to last the length of the lessons, consequently, pupils' interest and concentration is lost.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is reasonably broad and balanced. Elements of the literacy and numeracy strategies are being used with some good results but the strategies are not established in a whole school context.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. However, the provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils acknowledge and celebrate each other's achievements generously. They adopt a serious attitude when discussing matters of importance to them. Pupils are well mannered and show sensitivity and respect towards others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has an effective framework of care spanning the whole day. The residential provision is very good. New assessment

	procedures to monitor pupils' progress are in place and are beginning to give a clear picture of their progress.
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With pupils being drawn from a very wide geographical area the school manages to maintain satisfactory links with parents. The quality of information they receive from the school is good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new senior management is providing good leadership and direction. The many developments that are initiated are yet to be fully established.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The governors are well qualified and experienced to take charge of the school and its charitable foundation. They are committed fully to its aims.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. New approaches have been introduced for analysing and interpreting performance data. A model of self-review has been implemented and the systematic observation of teaching has been established.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school's finances are managed prudently and capital is generated to make necessary improvements to accommodation and resources. Information technology resources are not being used effectively in many subjects. Lesson times are too long, which results in time being wasted.

The school has an adequate number of staff. The accommodation is good. The design and technology workshop is very good and the new information technology suite is excellent. The resources for learning are satisfactory, overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The good teaching, high expectations and the good progress made by pupils.</li> <li>The range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>The friendliness, helpfulness and approachability of the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The more academically able pupils being stretched further.</li> </ul>

Fifteen parents returned questionnaires and eight attended the parents' and carers' meeting. A few parents at the meeting felt their children were not being stretched academically to achieve the standards of which they believe they are capable. Inspectors found that pupils overall are achieving well although in a few instances, for example, science, higher attaining pupils were not challenged sufficiently.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. All of the pupils attending Farney Close School have special educational needs. The nature of these needs will have led to a disrupted education and, in most cases, this will have left pupils with considerable barriers to learning. As a consequence, pupils' levels of attainment are usually below that of most pupils of the same age. A few higher attaining pupils reach National Curriculum levels expected by the age of 14. By the age of 16, most pupils gain a pass grade in one or more GCSE examinations. Overall, the grades achieved in GCSE in 2000 reflect the National Curriculum levels the same pupils attained two years previously. However, the percentage of pupils gaining five A\* - G grades in GCSE is well above that of similar schools. Taking into account all of the pupils' circumstances they have made good progress by the age of 16. All of the pupils finishing their final year of schooling enter for examinations. Many take certificate of achievement tests and the Royal Society of Arts, Initial Awards. In 2000 pupils gained a total of 33 at the pass rate, 36 merit awards and, for the first time, 23 distinctions.

2. Pupils are achieving well by the age of 14 and 16. There is a marked improvement in pupils' achievement overall since the last inspection. In English and mathematics, pupils made satisfactory progress overall at the time of the last inspection. Their progress in these subjects is now good. Strategies for improving pupils' literacy have been effectively introduced since the last inspection and these account for raising standards. Pupils' knowledge and skills with number have improved as a result of good mathematics teaching based partially on using approaches in the National Numeracy framework. Compared with what pupils were achieving at the time of the last inspection, their standards have improved in information technology, history, geography and physical education. In music, pupils' achievements were unacceptably low at the time of the last inspection. Their achievements are now good as a direct result of good teaching. Pupils' achievements in art are now lower. They were satisfactory overall at the last inspection and are now unsatisfactory.

3. Pupils of all ages are achieving well in English. Pupils speaking and listening skills are improved by the high standard of questioning and discussion in lessons and by reading aloud when they share reading. Pupils make perceptive and mature comments. Drama lessons add significantly to pupils' ability to express themselves and to consider other's views. By the age of 14, pupils discuss a story about the effects of peoples' experiences on their behaviour. In role-play they investigate the nature of characters in the text and their questions show they understand the story well. Pupils draft a range of writing and re-draft this to improve presentation. They do not use word-processing or other information technology applications to improve their writing. By the age of 16 pupils have a good understanding of a Shakespeare play and give perceptive answers about the meaning of some difficult phrases used by the playwright. Pupils read aloud fluently and confidently. They make mature contributions to class discussions. In their writing, pupils compare elements of the play with items of news from current newspapers.

4. Pupils of all ages are achieving well in mathematics. By the age of 14, have the confidence and competence to use number in a wide variety of contexts. Pupils understand fractions, decimals and percentages and when solving problems using these, make a good estimate of the likely answer. Pupils use a protractor to measure and draw angles to calculate bearings. They draw map routes accurately using a centimetre scale. By the age of 16, pupils have a good understanding of the mathematical information and challenges found in everyday circumstances. They read information from tables and calculate times. Pupils use a variety of metric scales, measuring in centimetres and kilometres, grams and kilograms. Pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between percentages, decimals and fractions. Higher attaining pupils are fluent in converting between these measures although not always knowledgeable about simplifying fractions. However, these pupils add and multiply fractions correctly. Lower attaining pupils find working with fractions difficult. In numeracy lessons these pupils are not always sure how to solve simple number problems.

5. Pupils of all ages are achieving well in geography, music and physical education. Pupils are achieving well in science, history and religious education up to the age of 14. By the age of 16 their achievements in these subjects are satisfactory. In geography, by the age of 14, pupils know the various elements that contribute to weather. Their knowledge of the Earth extends to using latitude and longitude on a map to locate major volcanoes. By the age of 16, pupils classify industries into distinct groups and from this understand why some parts of the world are less developed economically. In music, pupils, by the age of 14, make compositions, which they perform together on keyboards or by singing. They record their work and use information technology to refine compositions, for instance, by adding a drum sequence to a melody. By the age of 16, pupils know how an orchestra is structured and recognise the sounds different instruments make. They know musicians have composed music in different styles and can link a composer to a piece of music. In physical education, some pupils have levels of skill that meet the age appropriate expectation. By the age of 14, pupils combine a range of movements in gymnastics. They work together to develop a gymnastic display. In science, the same age group conducts scientific investigations by observing, analysing and recording results. They make predictions about outcomes of experiments and test these against the evidence they collect. Pupils know that living organisms are made up of cells and compare the cell structures of animals and plants. By the age of 14 know from their history lessons that political decisions to go to war have horrific consequences. From the evidence of photographs they understand the deplorable conditions of the trenches in the First World War. In religious education know about the different ways of worship and celebration associated with different religions.

6. Pupils' progress in information technology is unsatisfactory overall as a consequence of the lack of opportunities they have to practice and develop skills using information technology resources in each subject of the curriculum. Pupils are achieving well in discrete information technology lessons. They are responding positively to the high expectations and challenge set by the teacher. By the age of 14, pupils use the desktop publishing facilities of a computer to design and print brochures and posters. Higher attaining pupils create spreadsheets and databases. They retrieve, amend and analyse the information using the correct programme facilities. By the age of 16 pupils use computers to model three-dimensional designs and they use word-processing to record their work. Pupils' achievements in art are unsatisfactory because they are not taught effectively. Lessons are planned without clear objectives for developing pupils' knowledge and skills. Lessons, particularly at Key Stage 4 are too long and are not a productive use of that time.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. The vast majority of pupils show good attitudes to the school. They are happy to belong to the school and are made keen by the very good relationships that exist and the wide range of activities that are available. As a consequence, pupils adapt well to the school routines and most pupils respond positively to the encouragement they are given by the staff in every aspect of their development. In lessons, many pupils take a genuine interest in subjects and very often steadfastly persevere with the challenges they are presented with in learning. Year 10 pupils, for example, took great care writing up a science experiment and were very proud of their work when it was finished. In another lesson they got very involved and constructively discussed the merits and demerits of restricting Olympic competition to amateurs. Discussions with individuals revealed a majority happy to enter conversations in a mature way. However, on the few occasions when pupils do show poor attitudes it is sometimes because they are not challenged by the work in lessons.

8. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is satisfactory overall. In the small number of lessons, mainly involving some Year 11 pupils, behaviour was sometimes rude and offensive and caused significant disruption to learning. In most lessons the interchanges between pupils and with staff are courteous and civilised. Pupils' behaviour around school and in the evenings is good. The majority of pupils are pleasant and behave in an orderly manner. Pupils understand and respect the behaviour code and respond enthusiastically to the points scheme and to the public celebration of effort and achievement. The site, buildings and property are very much appreciated and respected by pupils who follow health and safety rules sensibly. During the inspection a group of boys were keenly involved in repainting parts of their residential bungalow.

9. There are only a few incidents of bullying at the school. Harassment and bullying are dealt with effectively and the school stays very vigilant in its response to incidents. All pupils take part in exploring the consequences of bullying and harassment in personal, social and health education. There were no incidents during the inspection. Over recent years and until recently the use of exclusion by the school had risen to very high levels. Since the appointment of the new headteacher the number of exclusions has been halved. In the last half term there were four temporary exclusions made for appropriate and justifiable reasons.

11. Relationships between pupils and all adults are very good. This is a strength of the school and has a significant influence on pupils' personal development, learning and the standards they achieve. Pupils trust and respect adults and turn to them readily for support. There are particularly strong bonds with the care staff. For instance, pupils were very much at ease and keen to be involved in the rehearsals for the forthcoming pantomime being promoted by care staff and there was a very positive exchange between one boy and a residential social worker over a game of pool. Relationships between pupils are generally good. Pupils support each other, work collaboratively and share with each other, for example, equipment and materials in lessons. A Year 9 boy was particularly patient and helpful explaining to a girl a shorter method of multiplying numbers in their mathematics lesson.

12. The majority of pupils make good progress in terms of their personal development during their time at the school. The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example helping with class and home routines, taking part in school assemblies, and representing the school in musical productions and at sporting events.

Most pupils respond proudly to the challenge of taking on responsibility and to the opportunities provided to represent the school and to contribute to the life of the school community. At meal times throughout the day, food is served in the way of a cafeteria and pupils make their choices from a selection of foods. Pupils are orderly and remain calm as they wait for their meal. The meal times provide a good opportunity for pupils, care staff and teachers to relate to each other. The school is starting to look at more ways in which there can be increased opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and initiative in order to enhance their self-esteem and preparations for life after school. Pupils' personal, emotional and social development is encouraged well through personal and social education lessons, which provide opportunities to reflect on actions and their impact on others.

13. Pupils' attendance is good. There are a small number of pupils who frequently fail to return after the weekends. The school stays vigilant in monitoring these boys and is effective in getting them to the school as soon as possible. Attendance on a Monday morning can be below 95 per cent but is usually well above this level for the rest of the week. Punctuality during the school day is good. Lessons start and finish promptly and as there is a break after each lesson no time is lost to movement around the school. The good attendance and punctuality contribute positively to pupils' progress and the educational standards achieved.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. Teaching is good overall. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons, very good or better in 13 per cent and unsatisfactory in 8 per cent. Overall, these percentages represent a satisfactory improvement in teaching since the last inspection. There is now considerably less unsatisfactory teaching and unlike the last time there is now no teaching of poor quality. The amount of good or better teaching is similar. The quality of teaching and learning are better in Key Stage 3. Teaching and learning are not as good in Key Stage 4 largely as a result of some Year 11 pupils not always responding well in lessons and at times behaving unsatisfactorily. In some instances long lessons result in a loss of pace, interest and concentration. Teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, geography and personal, social and health education. It is good at Key Stage 3 in science, history and religious education. Otherwise teaching is satisfactory except in information technology and art where it is unsatisfactory at both key stages.

15. Pupils are being taught the skills of literacy satisfactorily although the introduction of a whole school literacy strategy is at an early stage of development. Nevertheless, there is, in particular, a significant contribution across the school to developing pupils speaking and listening skills. Teachers often get pupils very involved through good questioning. This encourages pupils to think deeply and to share their knowledge and opinions. Drama, introduced since the last inspection, is also helping pupils learn to express themselves in appropriate and effective ways and to listen to and appreciate other's views. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well in several subjects. In history, for example, a list of key words on display is frequently referred to and in geography the teacher gets pupils to read aloud, write notes and discuss topics. In religious education, while pupils generally are using their literacy skills, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to write at greater length. In personal, social and health education, Year 11 pupils learn to write curriculum vitae, fill in forms and write formal letters. Pupils who find reading difficult receive additional help from classroom support assistants during the day, which boosts their skills. The school has created a library since the last inspection but it is not being used effectively by teachers to develop pupils' research skills or extend their literacy more generally. Pupils are being taught the skills of numeracy well in mathematics lessons, which is a good improvement since the last

inspection. However, the support for pupils' numeracy across the curriculum could be more effective if a numeracy strategy, currently at a planning stage, were introduced. In some science lessons pupils collect data, measure times and record work as graphs such as bar charts. Higher achieving pupils make databases and spreadsheets in information technology.

16. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of what they teach is good overall. In many instances they apply this expertise well and create interesting lessons that enthuse their pupils. Activities are often presented in an interesting and engaging way as a consequence; this creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom and pupils are often keen to learn as a result. In mathematics, teachers use their knowledge well to explain work clearly, which inspires confidence and, if pupils do not understand immediately they are not dissuaded from persevering until they do. Equally, teachers' good geographical knowledge ensures that the content of these lessons is always appropriate to the pupils. It leads to the close questioning, which tests and builds pupils' knowledge and understanding and makes these lessons challenging. In the best lessons overall, teachers use their good subject expertise to set high expectations, particularly with regard to pupils making a good effort with challenging tasks. In a geography lesson, for example, Year 11 pupils learned to use choropleth mapping as a technique for illustrating complex data on urban life.

17. Lesson planning is satisfactory overall. In the most effective lessons it is good in identifying for pupils what their learning objectives are and this helps assure them about what they have to do. All pupils' needs are being met well in the most effective lessons. Teachers plan a variety of tasks for English lessons that help maintain pupils' interest and the work involved is matched well to the targets in pupils' individual education plans. Learning objectives are clear in most mathematics lessons and activities are planned sometimes to be very well varied and pupils find they can work continuously for the whole lesson. But if teachers' planning does not fully consider the long time given to lessons then pupils' concentration and effort is lost, time is wasted and pupils' needs are not being met effectively. In a large number of instances lessons are too long for what is planned. Without the variety of work and making full use of the time available, teachers find it hard to sustain pupils' interest. This occurs in mathematics, science, design and technology, art and Spanish lessons.

18. The approaches used by teachers to support pupils learning are good. The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and there is an open and friendly exchange. There is little hostility and any reluctance to learn is usually swept away with some encouraging words. Such a positive dialogue enables teachers to get pupils thinking and fully involved in lessons. It also means they can engage a variety of challenging approaches to learning that pupils will readily accept and enjoy. Teachers often frame challenging questions, which succeed in capturing pupils' interest and gets them to share confidently what they understand or are not sure about. Very good questioning in English, for example, leads to pupils into discussion and to understanding the complex text they read in class. In the best mathematics lessons, teachers start well by explaining and demonstrating number operations and techniques of solving problems. As they proceed, this is reinforced with effective questioning which creates lively discussion with pupils and a real interest in completing work successfully. Good questioning is a feature in Spanish, helping to reinforce and build on pupils' vocabulary. A role playing approach in history is used well to deepen pupils' knowledge of historical figures. In the discussions that ensue they learn something of how difficult it was to choose the right policies while having to consider the conflicting interests of the time. Teaching in art is unsatisfactory because the teacher introduced the work of an artist at too high a level and with limited strategies to aid their understanding so pupils failed to gain much. Pupils were not questioned about what they understood, which would have given clues on good ways to explain what pupils needed to know. As a result they were not interested and made little progress. Teachers use most of their classroom

resources satisfactorily. However, other than in information technology and music lessons, the use being made of information technology resources is unsatisfactory and in effect this means pupils are not learning to a satisfactory standard. The value of classroom support assistants to pupils' learning is satisfactory but is variable. In English, classroom assistants sometimes make a significant contribution but are not as effective when their role is not clearly specified by the teacher. However, they are briefed well in information technology on the lesson objectives and are therefore able to offer effective help to pupils. Classroom assistants are used well in design and technology, for example, helping pupils with intricate work and with reading.

19. The strength of relationships means that pupils are managed well most of the time. Teachers, generally, are confident in being firm and setting expectations for good behaviour and co-operation. They adopt a calm and friendly approach to which most pupils respond positively. Occasionally problems arise because a lesson lacks clear aims and does not get off to a good start. At times teachers do not use management strategies effectively and at times, for example, with some Year 11 pupils they get a poor response despite their best efforts.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

20. The school provides a broadly balanced and satisfactory range of opportunities for learning, which are relevant to the needs of the pupils. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. All the pupils at Key Stage 4 are encouraged to gain accreditation through GCSE and Certificate of Achievement examinations. In addition to following examination courses, the pupils at Key Stage 4 select courses from a range of life-skills options leading to Associated Examination Board accreditation.

21. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education are fully met. All but one of the key issues raised in the previous report has been addressed satisfactorily and music has been added to the curriculum. The length of the school day has been increased at both key stages and now provides an appropriate amount of taught time. Newly built classrooms are contributing to the school's provision for music, design and technology, and information technology. Since music has been added to the curriculum it has quickly developed into a strength. However, the length of lessons persists as a shortcoming from the last inspection and is still adversely affecting the quality of teaching in several subjects. Teachers are not planning to make full use of the time available. The pace of some mathematics, science, design and technology, Spanish, and art lessons is lost as a consequence and time is wasted. The time allotted to physical education falls short of the recommended time for all pupils.

22. There is much good planning in subjects although the common aspects of study concerning basic skills, the use of information technology, are not considered adequately. Each plan is monitored regularly by the curriculum co-ordinator, which ensures they remain comprehensive in what pupils are given to study. Subject policies are due for revision and this is scheduled in the school improvement plan. The current schemes of work are mostly good and they have been updated to meet the new National Curriculum programmes of study. Within the 24-hour curriculum, there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which strongly supports and extends the school day.



23. Pupils' basic skills are promoted satisfactorily, mainly in English and mathematics through the attention given to literacy and numeracy. The framework of approaches contained in the National Literacy Strategy is partially assimilated in teaching across subjects and the school's literacy strategy is continuing to develop, for example, by further training of teachers. Teachers make good use of questioning to draw pupils into discussion, which leads to a good development of their speaking and listening skills. Pupils' numeracy is promoted well in mathematics lessons but it is not effectively supported across the whole school. While the school's resources for information and communication technology have been improved since the previous inspection, their use to support learning in most subjects is unsatisfactory. Other than in information technology lessons, the school's information technology resources are not used in other subjects except in music where pupils use computers to help them compose. Information technology is used to an extent in design and technology, where some pupils use it to draw designs. The school's provision for personal and social education is good, and the pupils show a developing sense of awareness on topical matters, arguing well for example, for or against capital punishment. A balanced programme of sex education and drugs awareness is also provided through this subject.

24. The range of extra curricular activity is very good and contributes well to pupils learning and personal development. They are very well organised, in particular the programme of evening activities provides strong support to the physical education curriculum. This is reflected in the pupils' recent successes in the Surrey Schools' Sports competitions. Swimming, walking and cycling enhance and extend the pupils opportunities for physical exercise.

25. Links with the community are satisfactory overall. Careers education is satisfactory at both key stages, with planned input from local careers advisers. The majority of the pupils at Key Stage 4 participate in work related experiences. The provision for vocational education and college link courses is restricted by the unsuitability of available courses at the local college.

26. In the 24-hour curriculum, a high priority is given to the development of the pupils' social and personal skills. This includes encouraging the pupils to make choices and take on a degree of responsibility for their lives, which is matched to their ages and abilities. Staff share good relationships with the pupils and provide excellent role models.

### **How good are the opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?**

27. The school's policy on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development addresses each curriculum area and other aspects of school life. The school offers a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can develop. There is provision within the curriculum planning for spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues to be addressed within the programmes of study for each subject. Throughout the inspection examples were seen of this policy in practice.

28. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues, for example, what it would be like to be in someone else's shoes. Opportunities for the development of topics within a planned lesson are usually taken by teachers, so that, for example, current tensions in the Middle East are used for reflection. Each class receives one lesson of religious education a week, which offers opportunities for pupils to learn about different religions and different aspects of

worship. Visits to places of worship of different religions take place. There is no daily act of collective worship although there is a room where the whole school meets regularly, twice daily, which would be suitable for such an event. During the time of this inspection the religious education teacher took an assembly where aspects of spirituality were addressed.

29. Opportunities are taken by teaching and residential staff to raise and discuss issues of morality. The good relationships between staff and pupils offer a safe environment in which to do this. Opportunities in most lessons but especially in religious education history and science are used to discuss moral issues. Pupils respond well giving thought to their arguments. When the teacher takes the role of 'devil's advocate' pupils have to extend their reasoning or rethink their original position. Many topics discussed are topical and relevant and sometimes within the pupils' own experience so that they take an interest in the debates. Staff sets pupils good examples when they challenge bad language and anti-social behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to help each other. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and when effective pupils engage and make progress. Staff encourages support and takes an interest in individual pupils, their work and achievements.

30. Pupils are polite to adults, visitors and mostly to each other. In lessons they are careful with equipment, can share resources, help each other and accept help in return. Some pupils are able to work together to achieve success with a project. They acknowledge and celebrate success and achievement in other pupils. In lessons they can discuss social issues and the dilemmas faced by individuals with difficult decisions to make. Pupils can be sensitive to others' needs. They are well mannered in the dining hall and generally about the school buildings and grounds. They are aware of the rules of the school, the rewards and sanctions and abide by them. Pupils' success is appropriately rewarded and celebrated and their work is displayed around the school in communal areas and classrooms.

31. In class teachers take opportunities to address cultural issues. Pupils make visits to cultural events and visit places of worship that extend their understanding of different cultures, traditions and beliefs. They develop an understanding of their own culture, for example, through music and literature. However, the multicultural dimension of the school is underdeveloped. The pupils' cultural and spiritual development is well supported through modern languages and music.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

32. The school takes care of its pupils well and this helps pupils to learn and contributes to the good standards they achieve. Pupils are well protected by the good procedures for their health and safety and Child Protection. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. It works extremely effectively with a range of therapists and support agencies and the benefits of these relationships are evident in the individually tailored care and guidance packages provided. As a result, pupils are happy; feel safe and secure and there is good evidence to show that the vast majority are enjoying and benefiting from the education provided. The well being of the pupils is uppermost; all staff support and help pupils effectively.

33. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. There are clear targets for pupils' personal development and progress against these is regularly recorded as a result of observation, input from therapy specialists and following formal and informal discussions between teaching and care staff. Targets are regularly reviewed. Teachers and care staff knows pupils' targets for personal development well. The

school has good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. Attendance is closely monitored by class teachers and the headteacher is personally involved in ensuring pupils not returning after the week-ends are quickly brought to school.

34. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. The behaviour policy outlines clear behaviour expectations and effective procedures for promoting the code which are consistently applied by all adults in the school. The daily points scheme enables the school to effectively monitor individual pupils' behaviour on a daily basis. All staff make good and frequent use of praise and encouragement and there is celebration of achievement, effort and caring behaviour in assemblies. The school is an orderly community in which all pupils value rewards and commendations greatly, show pride in their achievements and respect behaviour expectations. The school has good procedures in place to deal with bullying and is effective in eliminating all forms of oppressive behaviour. In cases of disruption there are clear procedures which are followed consistently by all staff, indeed high levels of skill are shown by staff when dealing with extremely challenging and difficult behaviour. There is a high level of tolerance for the frequent use of foul and inappropriate language as admonishment tends to lead to debate which leads to disruption of teaching and learning time.

35. The school's provision for monitoring pupils' academic performance is satisfactory. There is an appropriate policy in place, which sets out clearly the assessment systems to be used.

36. Baseline assessments have been established for all areas of the curriculum and subject staff undertake these when pupils first arrive at the school. The school carries out appropriate national end of key stage tests. The achievement of individual pupils in most subjects of the National Curriculum is assessed at the end of each programme of study. These procedures for assessment have been recently introduced and have not yet impacted consistently on individual teachers planning. The information currently completed is collated and maintained by subject teachers and is developing into a useful picture of pupils' progress over time which is informing both the annual review of pupils' statement of special educational needs and the annual report to parents. However, assessment is not being used consistently throughout subject to plan curriculum. This aspect is unsatisfactory in science, design and technology, geography, Spanish, art and religious education.

37. Individual teachers keep records of work that has been covered. Reading and spelling tests are undertaken regularly. Where pupils receive individual support for reading support staff follow a programme of work set by the literacy co-ordinator and keep records of the work undertaken. This is discussed informally with teachers. Targets are not set for individuals and there is currently no procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of this work.

38. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils. These are based on the objectives in the pupils' statement of special educational needs. The format is clear and straightforward. However these plans could go further in helping pupils with their learning. Currently targets focus on literacy and behaviour and whilst these are appropriate areas for most pupils the targets are not focussed well enough to enable progress in these areas to be tracked. Nor do they enable teaching staff to address individual learning needs through lesson planning. At this time one member of staff is responsible for all pupils' targets. Other staff are not sufficiently involved in setting or discussing these targets. Plans are in place to begin using commercial computer software to address these areas.

39. The residential provision at the school is very good. The care provided is good. Pupils' welfare is foremost and the residential care staff are well informed about each pupil. At the end of each school day there is good communication between teachers and care staff to

share any issues or concerns related to individual children. All pupils have care plans, which are updated annually. Child protection procedures are in place and well understood. Good links have been established with the local Social Services liaison officer. All pupils are given a guidance pack when they arrive. In addition, counsellors come into the school and children are free to phone their social workers. The arrangements for complaints are clear and understood by pupils. They are advised by staff and given publications about sex education the misuse of drugs as part of the residential programme of education. The routines of the school give pupils a good and secure structure for the day providing opportunities to dress casually after school and a comprehensive list of activities to choose to be involved with in the evenings.

40. Residents relate well to the childcare staff. They are encouraged to develop their independence and self care skills, by following good routines such as showering regularly. Independence training sessions on themes such as bullying are provided by a youth worker and there is a proposal to establish a group to discuss and promote girls' interests. Residents are praised and rewarded for positive responses. There is a strong ethos of caring, shared responsibility and support for each other in preparation for adult life. Resident pupils take responsibility for collecting their laundry, tidying the lounge, washing up dishes and watering the plants. These jobs are done well and help in developing the residents self esteem, sense of caring and personal responsibility. The rewards and sanctions are displayed in each house. Care staff ensure that sanctions are used appropriately. Resident pupils are given opportunities to make personal choices through the good range of daily leisure activities in the evenings. In addition, there are opportunities to visit off site places of interest, sporting activities or to join local groups.

41. The care manager and the deputy headteacher work very well together and there are joint planning sessions for professional development and training. These include National Vocational Qualification courses; courses for managing pupils behaviour and counselling training. This provides good links between care staff and teachers. There is a weekly telephone contact with the parents or carers and they have the opportunity to visit the school whenever they wish. Some of the parents or carers attend the annual reviews. Most come to special events held during the year. These include activities such as Christmas play and governors' meeting and the summer open achievement day when pupils receive awards.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

42. The school has satisfactory links with parents and carers, which contribute positively to children's learning and development. As a residential school with a wide catchment area it is difficult to develop as close and interactive partnership with parents and carers. Nevertheless, responses received indicate satisfactory support of the school overall and positive comments about the progress made with their children in terms of personal development and academic progress. There is agreement amongst the parent body that the school is welcoming and that staff are willing to spend time discussing pupils' development. Some concerns were expressed in the parents' meeting over academic standards. The inspection team found that academic standards are satisfactory overall but agree that in a minority of lessons the more able pupils are not being stretched. Formal and informal contacts with parents are effective and these ensure that parents and carers are kept well informed about the progress and development of their children. The school does not formally consult the parent body to determine satisfaction with the provision or to seek views and ideas but does ensure that views expressed at informal contacts are taken into account. Whilst all comments received are generally positive about the school it is particularly notable how many refer to improvements in behaviour, satisfaction with care arrangements and

pleasure at the range of extra curricular activities provided.

43. The majority of parents and carers visit the school three times each year, for the annual review meeting, the Christmas play and in the summer for the open day. Attendance at the annual review meetings is very good. The new annual reports are of a good standard providing clear statements of what pupils have achieved against their personal targets and against national curriculum levels and giving good advice on what has to be done to improve further. The school is quick to contact homes should any difficulties arise with pupils' personal development, attendance or academic progress. Because most parents and carers live at significant distances from the school, the school is limited in what it can do to involve parents in the day to day life of the school. Similarly, the school does not generally organise events to promote a broader understanding of what is being taught and so encourage involvement in learning at home, but staff are always available and willing to discuss matters on the telephone. The school is very proactive in ensuring parents are fully aware of all information relating to personal development, therapy programmes and medical treatment, but is less so with regard to academic achievement.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

44. The leadership and management of the school are good. The quality of leadership and management has been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are both recently appointed. The transition to new leadership has been carefully managed, for example, the deputy headteacher has had a long period of induction during which she has assimilated much about the school and the pupils. As a result, the school has maintained its equilibrium and has gained a fresh impetus on which it is now moving forward. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have quickly established a partnership through which they are setting a good direction for the further development of the school. The deputy headteacher brings mainstream school experience and that is proving very valuable to how the school sees its priorities. At this stage much of the development is yet to be fully embedded. The pace of change has quickened and the expectations placed on all staff are now being raised. The staff, as a whole, possesses a common sense of purpose. A good understanding exists of the distinct work carried out in the classrooms and the residential provision. The integrity of the team has not been affected adversely by recent changes in the staff group and they have coped well with the inspection.

45. Through the strategies they have initiated so far, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have set about ensuring appropriate weight is given to pupils' academic progress alongside that of pupils' personal development. There is a commitment to, and action being taken on, systematically monitoring the quality of teaching. This has contributed to the improvement in teaching since the last inspection. Regular staff meetings are now held to discuss the curriculum and these are developing in their effectiveness. Key issues for development are being identified, for example, the means of implementing performance management, a model of self-review and the analysis and interpretation of pupils' performance. The headteacher and deputy headteacher see these as providing a sound foundation for whole-school target setting in the near future. The information on pupils' performance is presented well in a clear tabular and graphical form. While it is new, it nevertheless is beginning to provide the school, subject co-ordinators and each teacher with a detailed picture of pupils' attainment and progress. While whole school target setting has yet to be implemented this will provide a sound basis for doing so.

46. As a consequence of new leadership the aims and values of the school are revitalised and can be seen in good measure in very many aspects of the school's work. The development planning process is good. It reflects the commitment to improvement by ensuring all of the essential priorities for realising higher standards, better provision and stronger leadership and management are being addressed. All staff are involved in the planning process. Subject co-ordinators take charge of managing and developing their subjects by applying an action planning approach for making improvements, for example, updating policies and programmes of study to take account of the new National Curriculum. This planning process also helps decision-making on the use of subject budgets. Overall, the contribution of subject co-ordinators to leadership and management is satisfactory. English, information technology, music and religious education are well led but the leadership in art is unsatisfactory. While the co-ordinators are performing useful roles these are not set out in clear terms as a job description. This was pointed out in the last inspection report. Such a definition of responsibilities would help review and evaluate the effectiveness of their contribution to the work of the school.

47. The governors' play an effective part in ensuring the school realises its aims and that it continues to provide the services and quality of provision that meets the special educational needs of its pupils. They are constituted from the directors of the school's charitable foundation, and other co-opted members. As an independent school it is wholly dependent on attracting local education authorities to place pupils there. The governors are therefore particularly concerned to maintain and develop the school. Most recently this has led to building new classrooms, which provide specialist areas for design and technology, information technology, art and music. The governors are kept well informed about the school's work through reports and minutes of meetings. They visit the school regularly and, as one of the governors lives on site, this provides a frequent means of communicating and informally monitoring the work of the school.

48. The strategic use of the school's resources is satisfactory and this standard of financial planning has been maintained since the last inspection. Sound planning and the prudent use of finances have enabled the governors to accumulate and target large sums for the capital development of key specialist accommodation, which has brought improvements particularly in raising the standards pupils achieve. The new building has only just been completed. The new music room is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and behaviour. The new information technology suite containing up to date resources was not used during the inspection because of technical problems but is about to open.

49. In several areas the school is making effective use of its resources. The governors have sensibly taken the step to enhance some salaries to help the school attract and retain staff. This aims to avoid the ill effects of high staff turnover and temporary staff. The use being made of a regional sports organisation and sporting events is contributing well to pupils' achievements. Equally, the school's grounds and its immediate locality are used well for geographical fieldwork and the room now designated for geography has helped to raise pupils' standards. However, the use of resources is unsatisfactory in other areas. At the present time the accessible information technology resources are not being used satisfactorily to support learning across the curriculum. The length of some lessons is too long for the activities planned and time is being wasted. The organisation of the library does not enable pupils to develop appropriate research skills and is not currently used by pupils to support the development of literacy skills. The efficient use of the multi-gym equipment is limited until enough staff are trained to use it. At present only the newly appointed deputy headteacher is appropriately qualified.

50. There is a satisfactory number of teachers to cover the full range of the National

Curriculum. There is a temporary teacher for science currently and the school is seeking to appoint a teacher of food technology. Until recently the school had a very stable teaching staff. Given the nature of the school and its geographical location, recruiting new teachers has proved to be difficult. However, the school has made appointments recently and will have its complement of full time staff in January 2001. In the meantime, the school is using experienced temporary teachers. All teachers are qualified with the exception of the religious education and history teacher whose teaching qualification is not recognised in this country. With the exception of one teacher, who is following a course on speech, language and communication difficulties, no other teacher has an additional qualification in special educational needs.

51. Teachers have the opportunity to pursue professional courses to enhance their teaching and learning and to meet the needs of the pupils. There is a satisfactory number of support staff. Some have attended a support staff course in order to develop their work. Support staff are not always clear about their role and responsibility in the classroom. Teachers' planning is not always explicit on the work required of support staff.

52. The new deputy head had received a good induction over an extended period of time before assuming her full responsibilities. This was a very effective exercise in becoming acquainted with the procedures and policies and getting to know the staff and governors. However, there is no formal programme set out for the induction for new teachers although the school intends to provide one shortly. There is also no formal induction, nor plans for such for temporary staff, including classroom assistants. New residential care staff are given a planned induction by the Head of Care.

53. The attractive, well-maintained accommodation and grounds establish a positive environment for effective teaching and learning. There are good facilities including a new teaching block for design technology, information technology, music and art. The food technology room has been extended for theory and a new geography room has been created. The food technology room is used at this time as there is no teacher for the subject. There is an excellent sports hall and multi-gym, which encourage pupils' learning both in the day and evening. Unfortunately, the school's field because of its condition is unsuitable for games. An area within the school grounds has been set aside and developed to create a 'living classroom'. This is well used in science, to study life and living processes.

54. The library, although bright, is small and the resources barely adequate. It does not provide an environment appropriate for developing research skills. The library is used for homework but is not seen by staff and pupils as a resource base to enhance independent learning and personal study. The learning resources are satisfactory overall for the curriculum and range of pupils. In history, geography and information communication technology resources are good. In religious education, the resources have been improved since the last inspection.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

To continue the improvement of the school the headteacher and governors should:

- (1) Make effective use of lesson time either, by shortening the length of lessons or, by ensuring that all teachers plan their lessons in order that all of the time is used effectively for learning.

(See paragraphs: 5, 15, 47, 66, 71, 75, 94 and 99.)

- (2) Take immediate steps to ensure that information technology resources are put to good use across the whole curriculum leading to pupils learning the key skills and using them to aid their learning by:

- Training and supporting teachers in using information technology in their subjects.
- Ensuring through close monitoring of teachers' planning and their lesson that information technology is included and used well.

(see paragraphs: 5, 16, 21, 47, 55, 58, 60, 66, 70, 73, 77, 93, 100 and 112.)

- (3) Ensure there are effective strategies that all teachers use to promote all pupils' basic skills in numeracy across the National Curriculum.

(see paragraphs: 13, 21, 63 and 67)

- (4) Develop the use of the assessments in science, design and technology, geography, Spanish, art and religious education in order to guide curricular planning in these subjects by providing a good diagnosis of what pupils do well and how they might improve.

(see paragraphs: 34, 72, 76, 89, 94, 101 and 113.)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Expand the library and its use so that it has adequate resources and an effective role in all pupils increasing their interest in reading and acquiring better skills, in particular, information-processing skills and enquiry skills. (see paragraphs: 47, 52 and 53)
- Review the time allotted to physical education to ensure the school fully matches the National aspiration of two hours each week for every pupil. (see paragraphs: 19 and 109)
- Increase the clarity of targets written in pupils' individual education plans so they assist the process of assessing pupils' progress that helps teachers plan effectively to meet the individual needs of pupils. (see paragraphs: 36)
- Describe in clear terms the strategic role to be performed by subject co-ordinators in order that they understand their responsibilities and that their performance can be monitored and reviewed. (see paragraphs: 44, 67 and 101)



## 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	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13.4	38.6	40.0	8.0	0	0

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	57
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	57

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	7.77	School data	3.42

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	4
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	52
Any other minority ethnic group	0

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	24	2
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	36	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.4
Average class size	6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1833880
Total expenditure	1833608
Expenditure per pupil	32168
Balance brought forward from previous year	295382
Balance carried forward to next year	295654

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

57

Number of questionnaires returned

15

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	33	7	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	40	0	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	53	27	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	33	20	20	0
The teaching is good.	33	53	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	27	27	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	40	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	40	7	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	40	7	13	0
The school is well led and managed.	47	40	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	40	7	7	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	73	20	7	0	0

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

All parents completing the questionnaire find the school friendly and approachable and most say their children like the school. Most have a positive regard for the quality of teaching provided and inspectors agree it is good. Most parents think teachers have high expectations and their children make good progress. Some parents in the meeting expressed concerned their children are not being stretched to achieve as well as they could at GCSE. However, inspectors found that pupils are achieving well and that the school's GCSE results are much better than similar schools. Parents and carers attending the meeting said the education their children are getting at Farney Close School was better than the previous schools their children attended. In particular, they appreciate the wide range of activities available to their children outside of lessons.

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

### **ENGLISH**

55. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the teaching and learning of English since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved and now is good for pupils of all ages. There are improved opportunities for pupils to discuss the texts they are studying and relate the situations in which the characters find themselves to their own lives. Resources in classrooms have improved and are now satisfactory. Drama has been introduced since the last inspection. This has made a significant contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. As required, a library has been established and, while there is a developing stock of appropriate books, the quantity is barely adequate for the number of pupils in the school. The organisation of the library does not enable pupils to develop appropriate research skills and is not currently used by pupils to support the development of literacy skills.

56. Pupils of all ages make good progress. In lessons, pupils are achieving well. Over time pupils' written work shows good progress in the development of presentation skills and in the accuracy with which they write and spell. Pupils are confident speakers. In lessons they make perceptive and mature comments on a range of topics. They question and reflect aloud on the implications of the actions of the characters in the texts that they study. In drama lessons they co-operate as groups to produce thoughtful and demonstrative pieces which are well received by their classmates. Good opportunities for discussion and debate are a feature of all learning in English.

57. Pupils, by the age of 14 achieve well. They work on a range of texts. Pupils younger than 14 study a story written for them and discuss the effect of experiences on people's behaviour. They use role-play to ask and answer questions of characters in the text. They undertake these roles confidently and ask searching questions of one another. They show how well they understand the story by the questions they ask and the answers they give. By the age of 14, pupils study the story of Oliver Twist. They listen carefully, following the text with the reader. They discuss the differences between the text they are using and Dickens's original from which they read comparative passages. Pupils read aloud confidently and most make few mistakes. Pupils undertake a range of written work. Little use is made of information technology to support the accuracy and presentation of work.

58. By the age of 16, pupils' achievement is good overall. Up to the age of 16, pupils study a Shakespeare play. They make good oral contributions to the lessons showing a good understanding of the story behind the action. Pupils give perceptive answers to questions about the meaning of some of the more difficult phrases used in the play. Understanding of the motives of the central characters is developed through written assignments, which are drafted and redrafted. Pupils compare elements of the play they are studying with current news items from newspapers. Drama forms a part of the curriculum for pupils up to the age of 16. They participate in role-play activities, which gives them opportunities to explore relationships between adults and children and to discuss the effects of events on those relationships. By the age of 16, pupils study a modern text in which the central plot is focused on relationships between different sections of society. Pupils make mature contributions to the class discussion and read aloud with confidence.

59. There are a few pupils who are avid readers and read widely for information and for pleasure. Most pupils, however, read little beyond the texts, which they study in lessons. Out of school some pupils read tabloid newspapers and specialist magazines which reflect their interests. Some older pupils enjoy novels and read for enjoyment during their leisure times. Pupils whose reading skills are less well developed are supported by classroom assistants who work with them regularly both in lessons and individually. The effectiveness of this support would be further increased if the work planned set clear time limited targets for achievement, which enabled pupils, support staff and teachers to closely monitor individual progress.

60. The promotion of pupils' writing, whilst systematically undertaken, does not make sufficient use of information technology for younger pupils whose presentation skills are less well developed. Pupils draft and redraft written work by hand and older pupils have used information technology to present written work in attractive and interesting ways.

61. Literacy is well promoted across the curriculum. Pupils use a variety of methods of recording. Good use of questioning across subjects by teachers provides significant opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills. During the week of the inspection pupils were auditioning for a Christmas production. The National Literacy Strategy has not yet been assimilated into the department. Some training has been undertaken by a member of staff but planning for its introduction and consideration of its impact for wider school development is still at a very early stage.

62. For pupils of all ages the quality of teaching and learning is good. Where teaching is good or very good planning is clear and relates to targets on pupils' individual education plans. Teachers make very good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding of the challenging and sometimes complex texts that they study. Teachers plan a varied range of activities for pupils to undertake in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to question and discuss elements in the texts, which interest or concern them. In their work, the classroom assistants contribute to pupils' learning by supporting pupils in the tasks set for them. Their support would be made more effective if teachers always ensured they fully included the role of classroom assistants when planning a lesson. Materials are well chosen to support pupils' learning and interest. This was particularly noticeable where pupils, studying a story called Great Uncle Stilton, were very excited when they suddenly understood the implications of an element of the story. The use of information technology in English was not seen during the inspection. Dictionaries are accessible to pupils but pupils choice of one at an appropriate level is not always sufficiently well directed to ensure successful use. Relationships in the classroom are very good. Pupils congratulate one another on good work. They recognise the quality of each other's oral contributions in lessons, which focus on a shared text and in drama activities. Where teaching is good pupil management is firm, fair and pupils are clear of the teacher's expectations. Where it is unsatisfactory teachers are not consistent in the management strategies that they use and pupils do not concentrate on what they are to learn. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are enhanced by the high standard of questioning and discussion within the classroom and by the reading of the chosen texts. Teaching in drama lessons significantly adds to pupils' ability to express themselves and to listen to and consider other's points of view.

63. The department is well managed. The teachers work closely together to make a reflective and enthusiastic department. The scheme of work is appropriate to the needs of the pupils and the newly introduced baseline assessment procedures are in place. Classroom resources are appropriate and texts studied by pupils are well chosen. The department has clear direction and has identified the grammar as an area for development.

## MATHEMATICS

64. The large majority of pupils entered for GCSE gain A\* - G grades and these usually represent a half of all 16 year olds in the school. This trend has been sustained over several years although in 2000 a few pupils for the first time gained higher grades. This reflects the higher levels of attainment these pupils achieved in the national tests two years previously. All pupils entered for a Certificate of Achievement test passed and good proportion gained merits and for the first time distinctions. Overall, these results mean that pupils have made satisfactory progress between the age of 14 and 16.

65. Currently, by the age 14, pupils are achieving well in lessons. Teaching is effective and consequently, pupils are learning well. The work pupils have done over time shows their mathematical knowledge is being made secure through revisiting topics such as using and working between percentages, fractions and decimal values. Pupils calculate on paper, 50 per cent or 25 per cent of 24 and beforehand make good estimations of the likely results and are confident about getting the right answers. This shows they have acquired the mathematical concepts and skills to solve problems, which represents a good improvement on what pupils could do at the time of the last inspection. In Year 9 pupils measure angles of bearing with a protractor and map routes accurately using a centimetre scale. They use simple methods of data gathering such as tallying and analysis of data in bar graphs or pie charts. Pupils' knowledge and use of number is good and they make good progress. The shortcomings in numeracy identified in the last inspection are now being addressed effectively in mathematics lessons. However, the support for pupils' numeracy across all subjects, while satisfactory, is not as effective because a whole school strategy is still at a stage of development and yet to be established. In mathematics lessons, teachers use good approaches, ensuring that pupils understand number in many of its applications. They discuss and demonstrate number operations and problem solving methods well, with the result that pupils have the confidence and competence to use number in a wide variety of contexts. Pupils in Year 8 have memorised multiples of numbers such as the value of 7 multiples of 9. They know that a factor is a number that can be divided equally and confidently identify factors up to 12. By the end of Year 9 they solve multiplication of higher numbers setting out their computations clearly on paper. Pupils add, using values over 1000 and multiply with decimal numbers. They convert grams to their decimal equivalent in kilograms and find the right number operations to solve simple problems.

66. By the age of 16, in the lessons observed and in the work pupils have done over time, most pupils are achieving well. In the case of a small minority of Year 11 pupils because they refuse to be motivated or interested, despite sound teaching, fail to achieve anything significant in the course of a lesson. In Year 10, where pupils are currently achieving well, they understand clearly the relationships between percentages, fractions and decimals. Higher attaining pupils are fluent in converting between these three measures although not as secure in reducing large fractions to their simplest form. In Year 11, higher attaining pupils know the method for adding and multiplying fractions. Lower attaining pupils are not fully conversant with the idea that a fraction is a part of a whole and find fraction work difficult. Pupils have a good understanding of the mathematical information found in everyday situations. They read information from timetables such as buses and trains. They can read and calculate times. Pupils use a variety of metric scales like measuring in centimetres and kilometres or grams and kilograms. In special numeracy lessons for lower attaining pupils, some have difficulty finding the correct number operation to calculate the cost of 10 items at 14 pence each. Others are fluent in their use of computation and accurately work out number

problems clearly on paper and in their heads, for example, quickly calculating what 4 items at £1.20 each costs.

67. The teaching seen in lessons at both key stages is good overall, which is a marked improvement since the last inspection. The recent deployment of staff to teach the subject, following the departure of a mathematics teacher, has been successful in ensuring pupils continue to learn effectively. Both teachers have good mathematical expertise and work hard to raise standards. They are able to explain mathematics in a clear way and so add to pupils' knowledge. Because of this, lower attaining pupils in Year 10 learned to recognise the correct number operations for solving how to share a sum of money equally. Teachers are well informed about what pupils know, understand and can do and, together with the very good relationships built with pupils, they set high expectations and appropriate challenges. This leads to pupils in Year's 8 and 9 quickly developing a positive response to mathematics and they concentrate well on lesson tasks. As pupils get older most have increased their interest and gain a sense of achievement. As a consequence, pupils largely behave well. Very good relationships leads to pupils co-operation, which works to get the most reluctant involved and to sustain them when they find the work particularly challenging.

68. The approaches used by teachers are good and match carefully the needs each pupil has in learning. There is a good focus on securing pupils knowledge and understanding of mathematical principles, which allows pupils to apply their skills more widely. Both teachers take time to explain and demonstrate and they make much use of the board to illustrate what they mean. Year 10 pupils, for example, learned from seeing how unlike fractions could be added or multiplied together. This is supplemented very effectively with questioning and dialogues that promote speaking and listening effectively. The exchange helps pupils acquire and use good mathematical vocabulary. It also exposes pupils' knowledge and understanding and both teachers adjust their contributions, which ensures pupils are learning what they need to. Pupils gather enthusiasm and serious engagement with the mathematical problems being posed. They suggest possible solutions, explain their routes in finding an answer and happily go to the board to demonstrate their procedures to the class. When the teaching is very good pupils are kept productive for the entire time and their learning benefits. Lessons are well varied to hold pupils' attention. However, in several lessons, because they are of a long duration and not varied sufficiently, the pace of work slackens off, time is wasted and pupils often lose their concentration. While information technology is intended to provide interesting and alternative routes to learning and mathematics programmes are good, it is not being used by teachers to good effect.

69. The mathematics co-ordinator has had training related to the National Numeracy Strategy, which has contributed to better standards in mathematics lessons but it has not yet led to numeracy being promoted effectively through other subjects. The co-ordinators leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The continuous process of action planning leads successfully to the development of resources. However, the role and responsibilities of subject co-ordination are not defined in enough detail, a consequence of which is the necessary improvements have been slow to realise.

## **SCIENCE**

70. Pupils make good progress up to the age of 14 and then satisfactory progress up to the age of 16. In the National Curriculum tests at 14 in 2000, three pupils gained grades in

line with national averages for science. In GCSE, 11 pupils gained A\*-G grades and one pupil gained a C grade.

71. Pupils of all ages are developing their scientific enquiry and investigation through using observation skills, analysing and recording results. At the same time, they make predictions and see whether evidence matches predictions. They recall facts and respond well to questions. By the age of 14, pupils understand that all living organisms are made up of cells. They can describe the differences in cell structures of animals and plants. They understand the process of digestion and how an alkali neutralises acid. From their experiment the majority understand the causes of indigestion and remedies. By the age of 16, pupils can explain about the habitats of living creatures and how organisms are affected by environmental factors. They carry out investigations with wood lice and make observations and predictions about the creature's movements in dry and damp, and light and dark conditions. In an investigation regarding acids and alkali, they understand the pH levels in foods and chemicals.

72. Pupils' literacy is supported well through reading scientific text and vocabulary. In some lessons very good emphasis is placed on correct spelling, sentence construction and the use of commas and full stops. In addition, there is a good exchange of ideas and thoughts through lively discussion. Pupils copy writing from the board, which restricts their opportunities to construct their own sentences for recording experiments. Pupils' numeracy is supported in some lessons when they record results of tests in the form of graphs and bar charts. They use data and record the time using a stopwatch. Insufficient use is made of information technology, although some of the graphs made by pupils were presented using a computer. The new science text and reference books provide a good resource to enhance enquiry skills and learning. However, the library is not used effectively to further scientific investigation and pupils' independent learning skills in science.

73. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are good for pupils up to the age of 14 and satisfactory beyond that age. The best lessons are characterised by effective planning and the purpose of the lesson follows the scheme of work and when the objectives are made clear, pupils understand what they have to do. As a consequence, most pupils respond well and are interested in a range of practical work planned. In some lessons, good explanation and demonstration are matched to pupils' learning needs. Good questioning and answers stimulate pupils' thinking and provide opportunities to explore pupils' understanding. This leads to pupils listening carefully, trying hard when answering questions or undertaking investigations. In some lessons, the pace is slow. In these lessons, pupils lose concentration and interest. This is not helped by the length of the lessons, which are too long for some pupils. Some older pupils' motivation is generated by the preparation for examinations. This had a good effect on their attitude to the subject. The occasions when the pupils' response is less than satisfactory is the result of poor matching of tasks to their abilities, inconsistent and ineffective behaviour management and of little involvement in practical activities. The work planned for pupils of all ages is not sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils.

74. The science co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced. The subject is well managed and there is a good scheme of work. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development by dealing with issues on the misuse of drugs and alcohol; the health risks of smoking and the conflicts arising from environmental and ecological issues. The subject policy is out of date and needs to relate to the new national developments, which is being addressed by the school. There is a baseline assessment policy in place for when pupils first come into the school. In addition, there are procedures in place to assess pupils' progress although the use made of assessment to plan the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Learning resources are well used and accessible. The science block provides a good



learning environment for the subject.

75. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement in science. The progress made by pupils is better. They are given some opportunities to present their work using information technology but more opportunities are needed. Science is now making a satisfactory contribution to pupils personal development. Resources have been increased for practical, cross-curricular and investigative materials. Additional books, both text and reference have been purchased.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

76. Pupils of all ages are making satisfactory progress. Pupils, at the age of 16, gain a Certificate of Achievement accreditation and in 2000 most pupils passed with a merit or distinction. Pupils are familiar with the process of designing a brief for a project and evaluating their work afterwards. By the age of 14, pupils use small hand tools for cutting and shaping wood. They know what a fret saw is and use it to make wooden jigsaw shapes to realise their designs for a puzzle. Some pupils use information technology to draw their designs. Pupils recognise a range of wooden kitchen utensils, suggest ways they have been shaped and describe how their particular design makes them functional. By the age of 16, pupils are making models in preparation for their finished projects. Most mark out and cut materials, for example, acrylic when making a toy, although lower attaining pupils need support when measuring and marking out. Some good examples of pupils' personal and social development are seen when pupils co-operate by working together, and by sharing resources and ideas. They also accept help from adults and other pupils.

77. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and help the pupils to consolidate previous work using questioning effectively and making connections within the subject area and sometimes to other curriculum subjects. There is not enough attention to supporting pupils' literacy and numeracy in the course of lessons. Where lessons are well planned and the pace good, pupils learn well, particularly in acquiring practical skills, for example, making a meal, which is healthy, well balanced and aesthetically pleasing. However, the absence of a specialist food technology teacher currently limits pupils' access to the subject at GCSE level. Overall, pupils enjoy the practical aspects of design technology and food technology and learn satisfactorily as a consequence. The length of lessons is too long and pupils' concentration and motivation often wanes. Most pupils complete their work long before the lesson ends and the time there afterwards is wasted. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and by the use of praise, encouragement and individual help, enable pupils to achieve the targets for the lesson. Learning support assistants are used productively in lessons to support the learning needs of pupils with additional special educational needs, for example, assisting pupils with fine motor co-ordination and literacy difficulties. Pupils are aware of health and safety aspects of the practical side of both food and design technology and learn to use a variety of tools safely.

78. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The standards achieved by pupils have been maintained, as has the quality of teaching. Resources have improved and are now good. A new teaching block containing a specialist design technology room has recently been opened. It is well equipped with hand and power tools and a small library of technology textbooks suitable for the age and ability of the pupils. The food technology room has been improved is well equipped and now has a separate area for theoretical work. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. However, the assessment procedures, which are satisfactory are not being used constructively to inform the planning of pupils' future work.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

79. The school's accommodation and resources for information technology have improved considerably since the previous inspection. However, although the teaching of discrete lessons is good and within these sessions the pupils make good gains in their computing skills, the use of modern technology as a tool to support learning across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

80. Pupils of all ages make good progress in information technology lessons. By the age of 16, pupils take a Certificate of Achievement examination, with a small number of the higher achieving pupils being entered for GCSE.

81. In information technology lessons the quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes very good. The teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and effective teaching strategies create a warm and relaxed atmosphere, which promotes learning. Lessons are well organised and no time is wasted in setting up equipment. By the age of 14, pupils use desktop publishing skills with confidence, producing attractive flyers and posters to their own design and for specific purposes such as a Halloween party or the school's Christmas play. Classroom assistants have a clear understanding of the lesson aims and provide effective support around the room. The higher achieving pupils create spreadsheets and databases and know how to retrieve, amend or analyse information appropriately. The teacher's very good knowledge of the pupils and their relevant ability enables the good management of the pupils with additional special needs, and lesson planning incorporates detailed attention to specific needs.

82. By the age of 16, pupils respond well to the teacher's high expectations and realistic levels of challenge and make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of modern technology. Imaginative lesson planning allows the pupils to link their computer design work to design technology, and they extend their work to other lessons by making three-dimensional models of package covers or clocks for example, having previously designed these on the computer. They record their work using word processors. Effective planning together with good behaviour management and an appropriate use of humour ensures that the majority of pupils remain motivated and on task throughout the session. Staff are consistent in their approach towards challenging behaviour, and disruption is treated with firmness and fairness.

83. The subject policy is due for review but schemes of work are good and are appropriately linked to the school improvement plan. These are matched to the National Curriculum as well as on examination courses. Lesson planning is informed through the teachers' records and this is satisfactory. The pupils' progress is monitored on a termly basis through assessment tests but there is no evidence that this informs curricular development or planning. Accommodation is excellent, with a very recently built and well-equipped computer suite to replace the previously noisy and ill-situated computer room. However, due to technical difficulties, the suite is not yet fully operational and networking facilities are incomplete. There is a good range of software and peripheral hardware to support the whole school curriculum. However, several teachers lack training and confidence in using these applications. The role of subject co-ordinator is currently undertaken by the co-ordinator for

design and technology. He has a high degree of expertise in computer technology. The informality of his co-ordinating role has led to confusion over areas of responsibility and is an issue for the school to address if the subject is to maintain consistency and develop within the whole curriculum. An appropriately experienced member of the care staff supports information and communication technology in the role of technician.

## HISTORY

84. Pupils achieve well by the age of 14. History is a new subject this term for pupils beyond the age of 14. Their achievement is satisfactory.

85. By age 14 pupils have good recall of the names of important people in the past and their influence over events. For example Year 8 pupils name several of the wives of Henry VIII, and accurately name their children. They understand that Henry's marriages to provide a male heir led to religious conflict that lasted into the reigns of his children. They demonstrate analytical skills in deciding which policies Queen Elizabeth 1 should follow to preserve her throne and religion. Pupils understand that conflict between nations over territory and beliefs is a common theme in the study of history. Pupils in Year 9 know that political decisions to go to war have horrific consequences for people. Using evidence from photographs and poetry they understand the deplorable conditions of the trenches in the First World War. Pupils continuing their history studies up to the age of 16 have a satisfactory understanding of time and the sequencing of events. For example, they have knowledge of the development of technology in the twentieth century. They record the names of significant people and events in chronological order on a time-line to visualise the relationships in time. Pupils set these in the context of other notable happenings to broaden their understanding. Some reflect upon the number of major historical events in their lifetime, such as the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown and the Bosnian War.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Three lessons were observed. Teaching was satisfactory in two lessons, and good in one lesson. The teacher has good subject knowledge and understanding. He plans lessons thoughtfully so pupils learn appropriately how to use evidence to determine what happened in the past and why. In a lesson exploring religion in Elizabeth 1's reign the teacher gave the class the roles of advisers to the Queen (played by a pupil). Pupils learned how difficult it is to choose the best policy when there are a number of conflicting aims, and also please the Queen. They compared their advice with the policies Elizabeth pursued to assess their answers. Pupils enjoy such practical tasks that give them direct involvement in past issues. In this lesson the teacher skilfully questioned pupils to guide their decisions, but left the choice to them. He gently managed their enthusiasm and excitement so they followed the task and reached conclusions. Occasionally class management shows weaknesses and less co-operative pupils use openings to waste time. This occurs when the lesson start lacks briskness and clarity, and pupils do not fully understand the organisation of a task. For example when the reasons for working in pairs are obscure to pupils. When pupils leave class for reading or to work with another teacher they miss the work of the class, and this reduces opportunities to progress in history. The teacher makes good use of history to extend pupils' literacy, and allow them to reflect upon some deeper matters. For example in a lesson on army recruitment in the First World War pupils learned the term *conscientious objector*. They considered the reasons why some people believe war is wrong. They learned that others saw this as cowardice, and how this is linked to a 'white feather'. Frequent reference is made to a 'word wall' of new vocabulary from lessons and this helps to reinforce learning and understanding.

The class assistant supports pupils with additional special needs so that they make good progress in history in relation to their individual targets.

87. The co-ordinator is improving the provision of history since that reported at the previous inspection. Pupils receive more opportunities to consider historical evidence, and engage in enquiry activities. However there are too few artefacts for pupils to use, and the use of visits is limited. New book resources and video materials support the subject. The co-ordinator is acquiring suitable CD-ROMs in anticipation of developing information and communications technology in history.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

88. Pupils of all ages achieve well. Pupils, by the time they are 16 meet the expectations of the Certificate of Achievement. About half the pupils entered achieve passes with merit.

89. By age 14 pupils know the various elements that contribute to weather. They keep weather logs for a week using their own observations and information from newspapers and broadcasts. Year 8 pupils write creatively about the formation of rain through a story about the family and friends of "Mr Droplet" gathering to form clouds. Pupils extend their knowledge of places across the world. For example they use latitude and longitude to locate some major volcanoes. They understand how plate-movements result in earthquakes. They use evidence of damage to determine the size of an earthquake measured on the Richter Scale. By age 16 pupils understand some issues on a global scale. For example, they successfully classify industries into different groupings. They use this skill to understand why parts of the world are less economically developed. By drawing graphs from statistical information they see the relationship between types of industry and the extent of development in India more clearly. Pupils understand that patterns of growth in towns have common features and they identify these according to a model. In both key stages higher achieving pupils give greater detail in their written work and present it neatly. Lower achieving pupils' work shows less skill in writing so answers are brief and their lack of confidence results in untidy presentation sometimes. Orally, however, they show that they know and understand the geographical content of lessons. Pupils with additional special needs make good progress in relation to their targets.

90. Teaching is good. It was only possible to observe two lessons in Key Stage 4 because time tabling prevented observation of Key Stage 3 lessons. Evidence was also found in pupils' past work and by talking to them about their learning in both key stages. In both lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was good. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject is very good so that the geographical content of lessons is appropriate to age and ability levels. This also contributes to good questions and skill in using pupils' answers to maintain interest. Teaching is good because planning shows clear learning intentions and these are met. Appropriate resources introduce pupils to new geographical ideas. For example, following discussion on the problems of rural life and the attractions of towns, pupils sorted statements on cards into *push* and *pull* categories. The teacher has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and mostly they respond positively to challenges. For example, Year 11 pupils thought carefully about how to represent data on the quality of life in urban areas. They selected closely matched colours, or graded the same colour to show the range of quality by shading a map of London boroughs. They learned that this skill is called *choropleth mapping*. Higher achieving pupils work productively and make good progress through tackling extension work. Some pupils' behaviour is uncooperative, but

pupil management skills are good so disruption is reduced. However, such pupils learn less effectively, despite good teaching. The teacher through questions and answers monitors pupils' achievement and progress. Evaluation of lessons influences the teacher's plans for future lessons and curriculum planning. Pupils have opportunities to assess their own progress in some lessons. The teacher makes effective use of classroom assistance to enhance pupils' learning. Through geography the teacher develops pupils' literacy skills by reading aloud, discussions, note making from video-film, and new subject vocabulary.

91. The co-ordinator took up the post in September 2000. She is beginning to raise standards and she is clear about her intention to raise them further. The co-ordinator is tracking pupils' achievement by reference to National Curriculum levels as part of a thrust to improve assessment. However, the information derived from assessing pupils' progress is not used satisfactorily to inform planning in geography. She recognises that some pupils are capable of meeting GCSE accreditation in geography at the end of Key Stage 4. Lower achieving pupils meet the requirements of the Certificate of Achievement, some gaining distinction and merit awards. The school's attractive grounds provide opportunities to develop fieldwork further and also the locality for urban studies. There is improvement in achievement and teaching quality since the last inspection. The provision of a dedicated room and new resources assists with raising standards.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

92. The school's provision for the teaching of modern languages at both key stages is satisfactory. The development of modern languages has steadily improved since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and, in relation to their abilities, the pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and use of Spanish.

93. By the age of 16, pupils gain national accreditation through a Certificate of Achievement examination, with the greater majority passing with distinction. However, there is no opportunity for the pupils to enter for the GCSE examination in Spanish, which restricts the successes of the higher achieving pupils.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are planned to include elements of written and oral work, although there is a stronger emphasis on conversational Spanish. The teacher uses skilled question and answer sessions in Spanish to reinforce and build on earlier vocabulary development and pronunciation, and the pupils respond appropriately to everyday instructions such as 'esucha y lee' (look and read). They engage well in simple conversations and by Year 9, they indulge in simple role play exercises with each other, for example, asking and responding to each other with questions such as 'Que te gustaria hacer este fin de semana?' (What would you like to do at the weekend?) Some pupils respond very well, demonstrating their growing vocabulary in complex sentences or identifying similarities between French and Spanish, which suggests a good understanding of languages. Lessons are relevant to the needs and interests of the pupils. For example, by the end of Key Stage 3 they examine the differences between their own teenage life and that of young Spanish people, which supports their cultural and social development.

95. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 4 is variable. It is satisfactory overall, but where the pupils present challenging behaviour, teaching controls and pupil management are not always effective. At Key Stage 4, the syllabus is largely determined by examination

assignments, and standards vary considerably. The lower achieving pupils show little interest in their work, which is often hastily and untidily completed. However, there is evidence that the majority of the pupils take care with their presentation when preparing shopping lists for example or writing out recipes. The higher achieving pupils form well-written sentences to describe their room or write a postcard to a friend. The teacher has a good subject knowledge and makes good use of opportunities to develop the pupils cultural knowledge of Spain, using a range of everyday artefacts and general information to promote and enhance learning. However, at both key stages, although modern technology to support learning is built into lesson planning, its use as a learning tool is ineffective.

96. Although the current policy is due for review, schemes of work are well planned and linked to the achievement levels of the National Curriculum. Work is consistently marked and the pupils' progress at both key stages is carefully monitored and recorded, being used to inform Annual Reviews and reports to parents. However, there is no evidence that assessment informs curriculum planning. Current timetable arrangements for the teaching of modern languages are unsatisfactory. The length of the weekly Spanish lesson is unrealistically long and the pupils' cannot sustain their concentration, interest and motivation, which impact on their rate of progress. The subject teacher is appropriately qualified, and has a good all round knowledge of the Spanish language, culture and customs. Accommodation is satisfactory, and attractive wall displays reflect the pupils' achievements as well as supporting their learning through posters, charts and pictures. From its early developmental stages at the time of the last inspection, the school's provision for modern languages has developed well, and is satisfactory overall.

## **ART**

97. In 2000, all of those entered for GCSE art gained a A\*-G grades, which is similar to the school's results in previous years. Of the number of Year 11 pupils entered for art those that gain A\*-C grades is small. This is due to pupils at both key stages not achieving as well as they ought to.

98. In lessons observed, only in Year 8 was there a satisfactory level of achievement. In this instance pupils' learning was supported by a clear objective to develop knowledge and skills in making tonal drawings. The pupils were given simple but effective resources, namely, photographic self-portraits with heightened contrasts in which they could see clearly how tone can be used to describe form. One higher attaining pupil concentrated well for the entire lesson and drew the outline form, the highlights and shadows in good detail. The standard achieved was near the national expectation for his age.

99. By the age of 14, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Higher attaining pupils make imaginative drawings in response to the flowing lines found in the architecture of the Spanish artist, Gaudi. Lower attaining pupils struggle to find a response through drawing because they do not understand what makes the artists' work special and are not clear what they have to do. Pupils are more confident in drawing and painting when they are looking at what they are working from, for example, an arrangement of fruit or flowers. In their observations of apples and onions they used a range of lines, tones and marks to describe what they saw. The use of the Spanish names for the fruit and vegetables helps reinforce the vocabulary they are learning in their Spanish lessons. However, in art, because lessons generally are more focused on the activity than on clearly articulated learning objectives, pupils are not making progress in steadily developing their knowledge and skills nor understanding of how these can be applied in generating and refining their own ideas.

100. By the age of 16, progress remains unsatisfactory. Pupils have developed their drawing, painting skills and their knowledge of colour to merit a GCSE grade. Their broader knowledge of art is very limited. They rely overly upon working directly from photographic imagery and works of art. A higher attaining pupil made a good analysis of colour in a landscape painted by Vlaminck and used oil pastels skilfully to reproduce the work. However, this and other work is not developed sufficiently in terms of pupils generating personal ideas. Much of their work represents starting points that seldom develop and sometimes it remains unfinished. While pupils use sketchbooks these are seldom a resource of visual notes and ideas that support coursework and final studies. Currently, the standards achieved by some Year 10 pupils are higher than those of Year 11 pupils. A higher attaining girl is using her sketchbook well to explore materials, colour, textures and pattern. The group is confident working on a large scale and has produced bold paintings exploring geometric composition and effects of light.

101. Teaching is unsatisfactory at both key stages. The teacher has a well-developed knowledge of art but this is not translated effectively so that it is accessible to pupils. The vocabulary and concepts used to introduce the work of Gaudi, for example, was beyond the full comprehension of Year 9 pupils. If pupils had been questioned on what they understood this would have helped their work and shown the teacher what more was required to support pupils' learning. As a consequence most lost interest and failed to make good use of time to explore the drawing intended. Lesson planning is unsatisfactory. The objectives for what pupils should learn are poorly expressed and are therefore not attended to effectively in teaching. While pupils are making work they are not focused on its purpose and their work is not linked clearly to a prior or future objective. Therefore, pupils are unable to effectively build up the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve appropriate standards in their work. There are very few teaching strategies in play during lessons to help pupils overcome problems or improve their skills. Demonstrating drawing and painting and showing successful examples of work would help pupils see the standards they ought to aim for. The computer is not used because the teacher lacks the expertise. The limited interactions with pupils are partly explained by a lack of confidence in managing demanding groups and a concern to avoid potentially difficult scenarios. This results in there being limited challenge in the work. A consequence of shortcomings in teaching is that the long lessons lack pace and much time is wasted. This is especially the case in the whole morning or afternoon sessions for GCSE pupils who, left to their own devices, are not always productive and learning at a sufficient rate.

102. The improvement in art since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Shortcomings identified then are still evident. The use of sketchbooks is underdeveloped. The pace of lessons is still slow and there is a lack of engagement with the class as a group. The use of information technology has not progressed and opportunities for making sculpture or other three-dimensional forms have not expanded.

103. The subject co-ordinators' accountability for art is not defined clearly, for example, through a specific job description, so the school's expectations of the role are not obvious. Leadership in the subject is unsatisfactory. However, the recent introduction of systematic monitoring of teaching by senior staff should serve to establish the quality of teaching the school demands. However, a more thorough examination of the long term curriculum planning is needed to point the way towards setting clear learning objectives at each step and an opportunity is provided for in the current action plan for art. The lack of clearly specified learning objectives results in pupils' progress not being assessed effectively. The new accommodation for art provides a first class environment for two-dimensional work.

## **MUSIC**

104. Improvement in music since the last inspection is good. All pupils now have access to music. A well-qualified teacher has been appointed. The curriculum has been developed to reflect the national curriculum and the special educational needs of the pupils. Resources whilst still developing are satisfactory.

105. No music lessons were observed with the younger pupils at Key Stage 3 but from discussion with pupils they clearly enjoy their lessons. Pupils have studied music from around the world. They have recently visited the Royal Festival Hall to learn about drumming using authentic instruments from Bali. Pupils have composed, played and sung together, know the values of some musical notation and talk confidently using appropriate musical vocabulary. Older pupils in the key stage continue work on their own compositions using keyboards. They are able to record and save their own work. They use information technology to help them to develop their compositions, for instance by adding a drum sequence to the melody. Pupils at Key Stage 4 are studying for an externally accredited award. They learn about orchestral groups and some can identify which solo instrument is playing. They learn about the styles of different composers and can begin to identify the composer of a piece of music they hear. Older pupils in this key stage work on individual projects such as a study of jazz and aspects of the history of music. Pupils enjoy the subject.

106. Teaching in music is always satisfactory and in one lesson observed very good. The teacher has good subject knowledge, which is well used to develop pupil's interest and enthusiasm for the subject. The teacher has very good relationships with the pupils and manages their behaviour well. The teacher has a calm and friendly approach to pupils and they respond by settling to work and trying to complete the task they are set. The work is clearly explained to pupils and the teacher has high expectations of the pupils. Information technology is used well to support and develop pupils' learning.

107. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the development needed. The curriculum reflects the National Curriculum programmes of study. An accredited course has been introduced for pupils at Key Stage 4. Accommodation is good. The recently built room provides an appropriate environment, which has a positive impact on learning and behaviour. There are satisfactory resources and these are being developed to meet the needs of the pupils and the development of the curriculum area. There are sufficient keyboards and recent investments have been made in extending information technology resources. The teacher makes ongoing assessments of pupils' progress and regular assessment tasks are undertaken.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

108. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 4 and therefore at this key stage no judgements on how well pupils are achieving or how well they are taught are possible. By the age of 14, pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils display skills in gymnastics and in games that match the national expectation. In developing their own gymnastic sequence pupils plan and combine a number of movements together and use different speeds to enhance their display. They run, twist, spin, turn and roll when doing floor work but encounter greater difficulty in applying their knowledge and skills using large apparatus. They refine the sequence of movements independently in practice. Pupils play in pairs and as



teams. In hockey they practice and use the reverse stick stop technique. Pupils participate in the South East Special Schools athletics competitions and in the Surrey Special Schools sports tournaments.

109. Teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 3. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use to enable pupils to refine their skills. Constant feed back and encouragement from teachers and self-evaluation by pupils helps them, for example, to work on and improve a gymnastic sequence. Teachers consolidate previous work by good question and answer sessions and by linking vocabulary to other subject areas, for example, when talking about aesthetics, axis, horizontal, vertical. Where lessons are well planned and taught pupils learn new skills as in hockey practice when pupils learned to use a reverse stick stop. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. Pupils seek affirmation of their work and some will ask for advice to improve their skills. Teachers take opportunities, for example when lining up and waiting for pupils to finish changing, to discuss the posters on the wall and reinforce learning. Pupils show consideration for others when using shared space and they comment constructively on each other's performance. Some are able to work together to develop a gymnastic display. Pupils take care of the equipment they use and most only needs replacing through normal wear and tear. The attitudes and behaviour of some pupils in larger groups slows down their own and other pupils' progress in lessons.

110. The school has a well-equipped sports hall. It contains a multi-gym, showers and changing rooms. Currently only the deputy headteacher is qualified to use the multi-gym but it is intended that other staff will be trained so that it can be used as an activity in out of school hours. The grounds offer opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities. There is no outdoor football pitch or playing field as the available ground is in an unsuitable condition.

111. The improvement to physical education since the last inspection is satisfactory. The curriculum has improved and the topics covered are now in line with National Curriculum requirements. However, the short time allocated to the subject was highlighted in the last inspection and this has not been satisfactorily addressed. All pupils are allotted one lesson each week for physical education. In addition, a variety of physical activities are offered in extra-curricular time, which combined fulfils the national aspiration for two hours of physical activity a week. However, not all pupils necessarily choose a physical activity each week in extra curricular time. Equally, it is not assured that the extra-curricular activities offered contain the skills tuition and learning opportunities required. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The deputy headteacher has taken over this responsibility recently and brings good physical education expertise and mainstream school experience to the role.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

112. By the age of 14, pupils make good progress and by the age of 16 they make satisfactory progress in the units of study they follow. Themes appropriate to the topic are identified from the locally agreed syllabus to allow progress to be made. Pupils consolidate their knowledge of different religions, learning about the different ways of worship and celebrations within those religions. They develop an understanding of religious beliefs and relationships. They are encouraged to think about their own and others' feelings on the issues of faith.

113. Most pupils have positive attitudes and show interest in the subject. They ask questions to explore their ideas about different religions and beliefs. They relate well to each other and to the teacher. When some pupils are uncooperative and have an intention to disrupt the lesson, the teacher handles the situation with care, sensitivity and firmness.

114. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The teacher has a secure knowledge of the subject and ideas are well presented. Lessons are planned with clear objectives and purpose. They usually begin with the teacher recapping on the previous lesson to ensure pupils recall the facts. Despite the length of lessons, they are well paced, the content is appropriate and all of the time is used effectively for learning. Activities include listening, speaking, reading and writing and the use of vocabulary. Pupils are challenged with good questions and answers and they know how well they are doing with the teacher's use of praise and feedback. There are insufficient opportunities to explore ideas in pairs or as groups, to present information graphically and to use information communication technology. Opportunities for extended writing and tasks for higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenging. The classroom assistant support is not always effectively used to encourage and challenge individual pupils.

115. The subject is well organised. The curriculum is planned to teach themes appropriately linked to the approved Locally Agreed Syllabus. The scheme of work and planning for pupils of all ages enables them to make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of a range of themes. The policy is out of date and needs to relate to the new religious education developments. Satisfactory assessment procedures for religious education are in place, including baseline assessment for new pupils. In addition, the co-ordinator has recently developed ongoing assessment using the programmes of study and attainment targets in the agreed syllabus. However, procedures are new and not yet contributing satisfactorily to guiding curricular planning.

116. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development. They learn about world religions and festivals, for example by visits to places of worship including a synagogue and Buddhist temple. There is co-operation with the English department in planning teaching of social and moral issues.

117. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the curriculum. The use of the Locally Agreed Syllabus is now firmly established and the co-ordinator has developed a range of resources and artefacts including those of most major world religions. In order to support the teacher and provide the breadth of experience for the pupils, new books have been purchased.

## **PERSONAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

118. The provision of personal social and health education (PSHE) is good. The school has a clear policy and an appropriate programme of study for all years. These include the most recent requirements of the National Curriculum, such as citizenship. Each class receives one lesson per week based on a thoughtful arrangement of topics. Teachers promote skills that enable pupils to think for themselves, to manage relationships, to understand moral issues, to accept responsibilities both as individuals and as members of a community. Sex education and drug education are very well taught, and pupils' questions are answered openly, and with sensitivity.

119. Inspectors visited PSHE lessons and they were impressed by the good quality of teaching and learning. In a Year 8 lesson pupils learned many facts about the dangers linked with excessive consumption of alcohol. Pupils formed two lines and one group attempted to pressurise pupils to drink while the other group warned of the dangers. Pupils took turns to walk between these 'walls of conflicting opinions' and decide for themselves where they stood on the topic. Teachers give pupils opportunities to consider some difficult moral issues

such as abortion and capital punishment. They offer good resources that give factual information for lively discussion by pupils. Pupils evaluate the various points of view very sensibly in order to reach their own opinion. Teachers skilfully lead discussions by steering pupils to consider different viewpoints, and they are alert to responses within the class. For example, they discuss with pupils the responsibilities and difficulties of a single parent family.

120. Within the PSHE programme provision is made to prepare pupils for careers and further education when they leave school. In Year 11, pupils learn the skills of preparing a *curriculum vitae*, completing an application form and writing a letter of application for a job among other related tasks. In addition to information given by the school staff, pupils receive guidance from visiting careers advisers. During Key Stage 4 the school arranges work experience placements with local employers. Teachers prepare pupils for this experience and they are debriefed when they return. The employers give a report on the pupils' attitudes and response to a work environment. This is valuable experience that contributes to their Records of Achievement.