

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CHADSGROVE SCHOOL**

Bromsgrove

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 117062

Headteacher: Richard Aust

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Potheary  
21765

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 188820

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Meadow Road Catshill Bromsgrove Worcestershire
Postcode:	B61 0JL
Telephone number:	01527 871511
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Mrs. S J Bushby, MBE
Date of previous inspection:	3 June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21765	Mrs P Potheary	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further?
9619	Mr R Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18498	Ms D Morris	Team inspector	Art and design Music	Outreach
22821	Ms L Wolstencroft	Team inspector	History Religious education Personal, social and health education	
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22948	Ms M Vallis	Team inspector	Special education needs English	
3055	Mr C Tombs	Team inspector	Foundation stage Physical education	
4989	Mr L Lewis	Team inspector	Mathematics Modern foreign languages Post-16	
32055	Mr G Davies	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Geography	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Chadsgrove is a special community day school for 120 pupils aged 2 to 19 years who have a physical disability. There are 112 pupils on roll, 13 of these are part time. One hundred and five are of white UK heritage, and seven from a wide variety of other ethnic groups, all of whom speak English. Thirty-two pupils have free school meals, which is typical for such schools. One hundred and four pupils have a statement for special educational needs and eight are currently being assessed. In addition to their physical difficulties, 31 pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties, 12 have visual impairment and almost half have speech and communication difficulties. Twelve children are in the care of public authorities. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The school administers an outreach service for 180 pupils with physical disability in 110 schools. The school is involved in 12 national and local initiatives to provide additional resources and opportunities. There have been no exclusions in the previous school year. Pupils come from North Worcestershire, Dudley and Birmingham.

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

Chadsgrove is a very good school with many good and several excellent features. Teaching is usually good and often very good or excellent, leading to good and very good achievements and progress for pupils. Leadership and management are very good, particularly in improving the quality of teaching and the curriculum and in securing a high quality environment. In light of the progress made by pupils, the quality of the curriculum and teaching, the value added in terms of extra-curricular provision and post school destinations, and the efficiency overall, the school gives very good value for the money it receives.

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

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality for all pupils but especially for those who are older, leading to pupils of all ages and abilities achieving well in the full subject range.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. It offers a host of high quality experiences to help pupils develop and grow into capable young people both academically and personally.
- The attitudes of pupils are very positive, respectful and enthusiastic, they work hard and maintain excellent relationships with each other and staff.
- The very high quality of accommodation and resources contributes significantly to the overall success of the school.
- Very good leadership and management have ensured that the school is strong in all significant aspects and continues to improve and develop in meeting the needs of a changing population.
- Outreach provision is very well organised and supports some very good provision for pupils with physical disabilities in mainstream schools.

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

- Pupils with significant additional barriers to learning such as visual impairment or speech and communication difficulties do not always have equal access to all parts of the curriculum. In addition they are not always able to contribute in line with their abilities because the specialised methods and equipment available are not consistently used.
- Pupil performance data is not collated or analysed in a way which enables school management to identify and support the progress of different groups of pupils efficiently.

*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 June 1996 and there have been very good improvements since then, with all Key Issues fully addressed. The quality of teaching has been raised significantly, the curriculum now meets requirements and is of a high quality, provision for post-16 pupils is more suitable and good assessment is well and consistently implemented. Pupils now all make at least satisfactory but usually good progress.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key
speaking and listening	B	B	B	B	very good A
reading	B	B	B	B	good B
writing	B	B	B	B	satisfactory C
mathematics	B	A	B	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	B	B	B	B	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	B	

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

The school sets targets for 75 per cent of all pupils to improve by at least 5 per cent on their aggregated scores for all subjects. Sixty-seven per cent of pupils reached this goal and 76 per cent of pupils made some progress. The target does not allow for pupils of different ages, abilities and aptitudes to progress at different rates and as such is too broad in its scope. In view of this and the achievements shown by individual pupils the school made good progress towards meeting its goals.

Attainment on entry is well below national averages. It is also below that of similar schools because the cohort is more complex and 25 per cent of pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Pupils' achievements and progress are good overall in the foundation stage, in all key stages and for students post-16. Pupils with additional and complex barriers to learning such as visual impairment and speech and language difficulties also make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils in the foundation stage of learning usually achieve well and make sound or good progress in all the areas of learning but especially in their physical development. Achievement and progress for pupils of all ages is good in English and communication, mathematics, personal, social and health education, music, geography and history. In science, achievement is good and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is good and very good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Very good achievement is evident for all age groups in physical education, art and design, modern foreign languages and design and technology. Post-16 students make very good progress especially in their personal and social development, work-related learning and sporting achievement. Several pupils achieve well in externally accredited courses and they all move into further education or Social and Education Centres

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, they work very hard, show enthusiasm for their lessons and aim high in their goals.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms

Pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and during visits. They clearly and consistently show consideration, and tolerance towards others.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is of a very high standard. They show responsibility and take the initiative without being asked. The quality of their relationships and the respect they show for adults and each other is excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average for similar schools and is good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall with close to half of all teaching being very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. In English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, teaching is consistently good and in science it is very good overall. Teaching has very many strong features. For example, teachers plan well, show good subject knowledge, have high expectations and use exciting resources so that lessons are fast paced and highly motivating to the pupils. Pupils respond by being very enthusiastic and working hard. Teaching assistants play a significant role in understanding the pupils very well and helping them to make progress confidently. Relationships are excellent between staff and pupils because of calm, respectful responses by teachers and teaching assistants. This helps pupils to want to do their best and in many lessons their attitudes to learning were excellent. In a few lessons the slower pace, lack of consistent signing or preparation for some specialised needs contributes to a slower rate of progress for some pupils. However the specialised need of pupils with additional or complex barriers to learning are very well catered for in the majority of lessons so that all pupils, whatever their difficulties or abilities, are able to learn well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The good curriculum provides a host of engaging opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge to a high standard. Extra- curricular activity is especially good, enriching the lives of many of the pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	Provision for pupils to develop an understanding of their growing place in the world, their responsibilities towards themselves and others and the differences between right and wrong is very good. This is set very well in a cultural and multi-cultural context and enhanced by some very good planning to show the wonder in the world and of others' achievements.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after each and every pupil very well. It is especially good in understanding their individual progress, supporting their personal growth and caring for their physical needs. Assessment is thorough and allows some very good lesson planning for individual needs. The systems for gathering information are complex. They give a good view of overall progress but do not support a clear analysis of how different groups of pupils perform to enable future programmes to support them fully. The school works well with parents, involves them well in school and in helping children at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff are a very strong team who ensure that the work of the school is monitored effectively, planned co-operatively and improved continuously through very clear leadership.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all statutory duties, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and takes an interest in the pupils and their activities. They work well to support school developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good performance management system, which leads to very good improvements in the quality of teaching. Pupil performance is monitored and good targets set, but the information does not give sufficient detail of the progress made by different groups of pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans the use of resources very well to support high standards and very good improvements, always seeking the best value. The headteacher is particularly successful in attracting additional grants to the school to significantly improve the environment and range of activities. Staffing accommodation and resources for learning are all very good.

## 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 way their children like coming to school</li> <li>• The approachability of the school</li> <li>• The progress pupils make</li> <li>• The quality of the leadership and management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small minority of those who replied would like to see more out-of-school activity</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with the views of parents, which were almost all positive about all aspects of the school, but especially their children's attitudes to school, the way the school welcomes them and the quality of leadership and management. The issue of after-school activity mainly concerns a small group of children with the most complex difficulties. The inspectors agree with this concern but find that the school is working to improve this provision.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils' achievements and the progress that they make in lessons are good in the foundation stage, in all key stages and for students post-16. Pupils with additional and complex barriers to learning such as visual impairment, autism and speech and language difficulties also make good progress overall and generally achieve in line with their abilities. Progress in lessons was always at least satisfactory, usually good and was very good in almost half of the lessons observed. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when achievement and progress, although satisfactory overall, were unsatisfactory in almost a third of lessons.
2. Pupils in the foundation stage of learning usually achieve well and make sound or good progress in all the areas of learning but especially in their physical development, which is very good. Their achievements include improved speech, communication, mobility, understanding of the world around them, numerical and social skills.
3. In English, pupils' achievements are usually good in all age groups. In mathematics and personal, social and health education, achievements are also good and progress is good overall for pupils of all ages. In science, achievement is good and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. Achievement in information and communication technology is good and very good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Very good achievement is evident in physical education where pupils develop at every level, some to compete in national competitions. Achievements in art and design, modern foreign languages and design and technology are consistently very good. Achievements in music, geography and history are also good. All subjects support the good progress made by pupils in their communication skills.
4. Post-16 students make very good progress especially with their personal and social development and work-related learning, but also in literacy, numeracy and sporting achievements.
5. Pupils' progress is judged by the school on a range of measurements, but mainly on an aggregate points system of the 'P' scales, (which measure progress towards the early stages of the National Curriculum) and National Curriculum levels. These measures, alongside pupils' individual education plans, Statutory Assessment Tests, standardised tests and public examinations, show usually good progress over time for most pupils. Comparisons with results in other schools for pupils with physical disabilities are not valid, because of the high proportion of pupils with either severe or profound and complex learning difficulties. In addition, almost all pupils who can achieve in a mainstream setting are supported by the outreach team and are no longer placed in the school. Attainment on entry is usually well below national levels.
6. The school's performance targets last year were based upon a 5 per cent improvement in the aggregate points system mentioned above for 75 per cent of pupils. This was not reached, although 76 per cent of pupils did show an increase and 67 per cent achieved the target. This measurement is not refined enough to account for the expected rates of progress for different pupils and does not show which subjects, gender, age or ability groups make the most or least progress. The target setting system itself is inappropriate and needs refining to help reflect better the good progress made by pupils.

7. In English in the foundation stage, all key stages and at post-16, pupils make good progress over time in communication skills, speaking and listening, reading and written work. Pupils with the most profound difficulties quickly learn to make choices, show recognition of people and events and use objects, pictures and pre-recorded messages to make their point. As they get older the pupils who can speak show a very good ability to discuss issues with maturity and sensitivity. The development of communication is slowed for a very small group of pupils due to a limited use of current communication technology. In addition, progress is slowed for other pupils in some lessons because their communication programmes are not followed by all staff, or are not incorporated into the planning and practice of all lessons. Pupils all relate well to books and show a great enjoyment and enthusiasm for stories and information. The highest attaining pupils read well and research information on the Internet and from the library. Good writing skills develop well from an early age and from the earliest levels, not only the secretarial skills of writing and typing well and accurately, but also communicating information and ideas enthusiastically and clearly.
8. In mathematics, pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1, 3 and 4 and very good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils develop good number skills, from the earliest stages of recognising and counting the numerals to achieving good grades in national assessment tests and for a few achieving in line with national expectations. There is ample evidence of good and very good progress in understanding and working with shapes and some exceptionally good work in representing information on graphs and charts. Pupils of all abilities achieve well using their mathematical skills in the everyday world, shopping, cooking, managing money and comparing, measuring and estimating height, length and weight.
9. In science, the good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and the very good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 are evident in a host of skills. Pupils at the earliest stages of development show good progress in recognising the different properties of materials, such as texture, temperature and flexibility. Most pupils learn how to test their ideas and measure the results well. All pupils develop a good and growing understanding about their own bodies and the environment. The oldest and highest attaining pupils achieve well in nationally recognised examinations. The significant factor is the very large range of ability and the way that all pupils are enabled to achieve well and make progress at their own level.

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

10. The school has maintained the high standards of behaviour and the very positive attitudes that pupils were displaying at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils continue to display a very high level of commitment to the school and their work, and relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils enjoy school life and participate as fully as they can in lessons and other activities.
11. Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are very good. They take part in activities very enthusiastically. Pupils try very hard in lessons, in assemblies and in oral work or where lessons include class or group work. They are always keen to contribute to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. They listen and watch carefully when they are being given instruction. This was evident in the school assembly when the theme was to have trust and confidence in your own ability and certain pupils re-enacted part of the story to reinforce the theme. They understand and explain what is expected of them and what they have to do to achieve it. On the occasions when they

do not have immediate access to adult support, they show the capacity for individual initiative and independent learning skills.

12. Pupils' behaviour is very good and they demonstrate highly socialised attitudes in lessons which helps them focus on their work and support others to learn. They show respect for others' efforts and celebrate one another's achievements. There is a high level of mutual support, and when working together pupils help each other with consideration and sensitivity. For example, in a Key Stage 1 geography lesson when the pupils had to find their way around the school, they helped each other and applauded each other's success in the plenary session.
13. Outside lessons, pupils' behaviour is also very good, contributing to a calm, orderly atmosphere around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors and approach them appropriately. They form friendships in the school and participate in clubs organised during the lunch period and many after-school activities. They identify well and show confidence with their peers from mainstream schools in after-school clubs.
14. Pupils show very good levels of personal development during their time at the school. When, as part of their daily routine, pupils undertake tasks of responsibility such as helping set out equipment, acting as messengers or supporting a friend with their work, they carry them out willingly and well.
15. Relationships are excellent; there is obvious respect by pupils for each other and for staff. Pupils of all ages greet each other, staff and visitors, cheerfully. They are pleased when staff and visitors engage them in conversation. Rarely does an individual dominate in class or in discussion at the dinner table and there is great tolerance of other people's point of view.
16. Attendance, at around 90 per cent, continues to be above the national average for similar schools and that is good. The medical conditions of some pupils mean that the authorised absence for the preceding year has been unusually higher than normal. Punctuality is good and lessons start and finish on time.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall with a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching. Teaching is good for pupils of all abilities including those with additional and complex barriers to learning.
18. Teaching is excellent in 12 per cent of lessons, very good in 34 per cent, good in 39 per cent and satisfactory in 15 per cent. Although there is a high proportion of very good teaching for pupils of all ages, teaching is good overall for pupils in the early years and up to the age of 11 and very good for pupils aged from 11 to 16 and students post-16. The quality of teaching for pupils with significant additional special educational needs is usually good. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall and 27 per cent was unsatisfactory.
19. In English, mathematics, history, geography, religious education, music and personal and social education teaching is consistently good. In science, information and communication technology, physical education, art and design, French and design and technology it is very good overall. There is no subject where teaching gives rise for major concern and this is a significant strength of the school. These results were obtained despite teacher changes and replacements just before the inspection.

20. The school has successfully ensured that work in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education is embedded very well into the planning for all lessons. Care is taken at every opportunity to build and develop these emerging skills throughout the day. In addition the very good use of information and communication technology, as a tool to support and stimulate learning is a strong feature of almost every subject and many lessons.
21. Teachers have a good range of strategies to promote learning for pupils with significant additional special needs. They are imaginative in their use of resources, frequently using cooking to stimulate the senses of taste and smell or using familiar or exciting objects or materials to stimulate recognition and understanding. The teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate a very good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils and work is well adapted to their needs. This is very obvious in physical education where specialised equipment and excellent planning mean that every pupil has a programme, which develops their skills and abilities to the full. Braille and other well-prepared tactile resources are used to help visually impaired pupils join in fully with many lessons. The main weakness in teaching in a few lessons, for a few pupils with speech and communication difficulties, autism or visual impairment is an inconsistent use of the specialised strategies available. The use of signing, objects of reference and electronic aids are evident and usually well planned, but they are not used at all times by everyone involved with particular pupils. In addition a few lessons are not planned to cater for the needs of all pupils. This means that in a few lessons pupils cannot take full advantage of the lesson or contribute appropriately and this is unsatisfactory.
22. Where teaching is good, very good or excellent there are many strong features. Lessons are well planned, well paced, varied and interesting. This means that pupils enjoy their work and are able to keep focused, learning at a good rate. In physical education and art for example, activities are fun and involve the pupils from the beginning. The work of teaching assistants is well planned and their excellent knowledge and care for the pupils ensures that the support really helps them progress during the lesson. In one English lesson the excellent encouragement given by the teaching assistant gave the pupil confidence to write a beautiful description of her ideas. There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve, but lessons also take account of the very different learning abilities of the pupils and so all pupils work towards goals, which are realistic and allow them to experience success. This in turn makes them keen to work harder. Relationships in all lessons and the ability of all staff to respond to pupils calmly and supportively means that excellent attitudes and behaviour were witnessed throughout the week.
23. Even in the good teaching there are elements which can be improved. In the few lessons where teaching was satisfactory, there are several weaker features in addition to those mentioned regarding pupils' with additional special educational needs. These include a lack of pace, where too little has been prepared. In one English lesson pupils lost interest and became restless because they had to wait too long between turns with little to do. In a few mathematics lessons targets are set for pupils, but the strategies to help them reach those goals are not clear and pupils cannot progress easily towards them. In one art lesson too much was done for the pupils and insufficient time was allowed for them to do it for themselves. During history, pupils found it hard to share their ideas because time set aside for discussion was too short. These weaker elements were not universal and did not adversely affect the quality of one particular subject, or the progress for one particular group of pupils.

24. However, the list of strong features in teaching is long. The good use of homework, very good display of pupils' work, useful and constructive plenary sessions, thorough and careful assessment and recording of pupils' achievements, very good and often excellent use of resources to help pupils relate to the subject, are but a few. All of these contribute to the good and very good progress and achievements of the pupils. A major feature of the excellent lessons was the excitement, joy and wonder created to help pupils value themselves and others and the world around them.

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

25. In the previous inspection report, the curriculum was identified as an area of concern with regard to its breadth and balance for pupils over seven. There was also concern that the post-16 curriculum was not distinctive enough. Since then considerable work has been carried out and very good progress has taken place. The curriculum is now good throughout the school. It covers all of the relevant National Curriculum areas including personal, social and health education, sex and drugs education and each class has a balanced timetable. There is very good enrichment from an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and pupils over 16 have very good opportunities relevant to both their age and future needs.
26. The curriculum offered to pupils with additional or complex learning needs is good. It has been broken down into very small steps in line with their rate of learning. Individual programmes to meet personal, educational, or social targets and medical needs are incorporated smoothly into daily routines such as mealtimes. The school does operate a clear and effective equal opportunities policy, which means that all pupils regardless of race, background, gender, ability or religion receive an appropriate and similar high quality education and are fully included. Pupils with sensory impairment, autism or speech and communication difficulty usually have specialised teaching programmes and support, and their access to the curriculum is good for the majority of their time. However, due to an inconsistent use of agreed strategies and a limit in the use of communication technology, a few of these pupils cannot join in all lessons equally with their peers.
27. The school has introduced the literacy and numeracy provision well and this ensures good and often very good teaching of basic skills for all pupils. There have been sensible adaptations and good use has been made of external training and mainstream techniques where appropriate. Good co-ordination in all departments has ensured that both English and mathematical skills are used very effectively in all subjects.
28. The school has always had good provision for extra-curricular activities. This is now very good. The school-based curriculum is enriched with a variety of experiences that increase pupils' confidence and provide opportunities that they would not otherwise have. Despite problems of distance and transport, after-school events include excellent sports activities within the school sports club. Collaboration with Bromsgrove School results in the excellent 'Grove Busters' youth club. In addition the school has developed an outstanding range of activities from ice-skating to bowling and cinema trips. Among many events, the 'Kielder Challenge' is an opportunity for pupils to take part in an exciting programme of adventurous activities. There is a more limited range of activities offered for pupils with more complex needs although the school is gradually increasing these. All of the activities are highly regarded by pupils, parents and the local education authority and their development has contributed to the success that the school has had in reaching the second round of the Schools' Curriculum Award 2001-02. The school

also organises residential visits regularly including water activities weeks, trips to France and skiing to Austria.

29. Although no careers teaching was seen during the week of the inspection, it is clear that provision is very good. The outcomes, ensuring that all students are appropriately placed when they leave school, are excellent. A close working relationship with 'Connexions' the new careers service and very good planning and work placement arrangements contribute to a rich and very effective programme. This prepares students very well for adult life and successful future placements. Students at Chadsgrove have realistic but high expectations and contribute well to planning their own futures. The development of accreditation since the last inspection has been impressive and continues to grow. The school can now rightly boast of external accreditation within most areas of the National Curriculum. Accreditation includes the Certificate of Educational Achievement, Key Skills, 'Towards Independence' and GCSE. The plans currently being implemented will ensure that every area of the curriculum will be appropriately accredited by 2003.
30. Links with the community are very good indeed and there are well-prepared transition arrangements. The school participates in local music and dance festivals and work placements for older pupils rely heavily on very good relations with local businesses. The enterprise shown is only matched by the effective use of the resulting funds to enhance the school environment and the pupils' curricular experience,
31. Similarly, Chadsgrove links well with all local schools and colleges. Collaboration with a range of state and private schools contributes to additional sporting and social activities. Community service students from Colmers Farm School and Bromsgrove School provide assistance with the school on a weekly basis and a wide range of colleges collaborate in the development of courses for Chadsgrove students. All of this work is backed up with excellent working relationships with many professionals from social services, health and careers. The work towards including Chadsgrove pupils into mainstream schools is very good. Links with the local first school were seen in action during the inspection week and is of a high standard. During their annual reviews all pupils are asked to consider inclusion possibilities. The school now has the procedures in place to increase inclusion opportunities for all pupils.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

32. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It is enriched by a wide range of activities and linked to all subjects of the curriculum
33. Regular school assemblies provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on spiritual issues. In one assembly the beautiful solo singing of some pupils, evoked an atmosphere of calm and the desire for peace. In lessons pupils are amazed and delighted when a pupil demonstrates working disco lights he has made unaided. Religious education lessons contribute positively to pupils' spiritual development. They have the opportunity to appreciate the richness and diversity of many faiths in learning about festivals such as the Chinese New Year, Easter and Diwali. Pupils are encouraged to share success and pride in their achievements.
34. Provision for moral development is very good. All adults provide good role models and pupils learn from these examples. During the inspection one class of pupils considered the difficulties in the life of a child from Afghanistan. A lifelike doll shared class activities, sitting in the group with the pupils. If problems arise then the pupils discuss the issues

and learn how to resolve them rather than simply react; this takes place in circle time where children support each other with their concerns.

35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. The school's programme for personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution. Staff are consistent in the high expectations they have of pupils' social behaviour. At lunchtimes pupils sit in groups, sharing the events of the morning whilst they eat. Staff expect pupils to care for one another and as a result pupils are willing to help one another by, for instance, collecting or retrieving equipment out of reach of less mobile pupils.
36. Provision for cultural development is very good. The school has links with a Finnish school, members of which have visited the school. Pupils use email to contact their friends abroad, keeping up regular communication. Pupils develop respect for different cultures whilst studying world faiths and begin to develop an understanding of the significance of objects associated with them such as the menorah's place in the celebration of Hanukkah. An appreciation of art and music is encouraged, with pupils working in the style of a range of well-known artists such as Monet or Clarence Cliff. The excellent emphasis on performance and performing arts pervades all of the school's work, not only encouraging pupils and students to sing, play and recite in front of an audience but to grow in their own confidence as valued members of the community.

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

37. There are very good procedures for supporting pupils' welfare with some excellent features. Parents agree that the school supports children well.
38. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils are very good. Transport arrangements have been improved since the previous inspection. The number of specifically designed coaches has been increased and also the size of the collection area at the front of the school. This has improved the efficiency of delivering and receiving the pupils at the start and end of the school day. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the school's policy on the subject and there is a designated member of staff with responsibility for fire drills, which are carried out regularly. First aid is provided by the school nurses during the school day but there is a lack of staff qualified in first aid during after-school activities. The caretaker is conscientious in his day-to-day management of any safety issues that are raised by staff. The food provided by the catering staff is of a high standard, plentiful and nutritious. The day-to-day menus offered are varied and designed after consultation with the pupils, the vast majority of whom have lunch provided by the school.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. Registers are kept and separate records also used to record and follow up the movement or absence of pupils throughout the day for medical and other reasons.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive conduct are very effective. There is a behaviour policy that is well understood and consistently applied by staff, including the Children's Superintendents at lunchtime. All staff respond to the actions of pupils with calm and respect and the school is a self-disciplined, harmonious community, where the pupils thrive. Rewards are given frequently for positive behaviour, and pupil management by teachers and support staff is very good overall. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment.

41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. There is a wealth of information available about every small step each pupil makes in each area of the curriculum. This is reinforced by formal testing, for example by reading or spelling tests or, for some pupils, through National Curriculum tests at ages seven, eleven and fourteen. The information gathered does enable subject teachers to plan work well so that it suits the needs of the individual pupils. Very good systems have been devised to assess the achievement and progress of pupils with complex special needs. These start at a very early level of development and continue until they link with National Curriculum levels. Good assessment is also available for pupils with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Sometimes, so much information is being collected that systems becomes overloaded and are not readily accessible. This is especially the case with English and mathematics. In addition some standardised tests duplicate information available elsewhere and do not link easily to the programmes of study. The result of this is to obscure the work of the school management and subject co-ordinators in analysing and improving the progress of different groups of pupils to inform future curriculum planning.
42. The regular reviews of targets supplement the more formal annual reviews. These assist the teachers in incorporating the new targets into their curriculum planning. This is done well. Annual reports are pleasingly individual and these, combined with specialist assessment such as physiotherapy or speech therapy, help give parents a good picture of their child's academic and physical progress through the year. The majority of parents attend the annual review, which is the focal point of assessment. Those who are unable to attend usually submit their views in writing. After considering progress over the year and reviewing the previous year's targets, three new targets are set, usually in the areas of English, mathematics and personal development.
43. Through ongoing discussions, close observation and regular recording, teachers and teaching assistants show very good knowledge of the needs and abilities of pupils, with the exception of some communication needs. The end of most lessons includes a review of progress when achievement can be shared and strengths and weaknesses quickly noted down. The best practices are quick and efficient and help staff plan future learning. There is no overall co-ordinator of assessment, with each subject co-ordinator being responsible for assessment within their department. Some systems are more efficient than others, the best being readily accessible and understood by those needing to find information quickly, such as supply staff. The collection of work to provide evidence of progress over time is at an early stage of development.
44. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and social development are good. Individual education plans contain targets for personal development, often at the suggestion of parents. A weakness is that pupils are not automatically included in their own target setting at the time of annual reviews. However, through Records of Achievement, a good percentage of pupils select their own personal, academic and social targets. These celebratory Records of Achievement are one example of the many ways the school promotes and records pupils' independence and success. All staff record achievement making particularly good use of photographic evidence. All success is celebrated informally or more formally through the awarding of certificates in assemblies or the presentation of awards for significant achievements.

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

45. Parents' views of the school are very positive. The very small number who attended the pre-inspection meeting and those who returned the questionnaires are satisfied with the quality of education provided; they view Chadsgrove as a very good school. The

school itself has initiated its own questionnaire at regular intervals since the previous inspection and parents have consistently supported this view. Their children love coming to school and parents agree that the school raises their child's self-esteem and expects them to work hard and achieve their best. Effective links have been established between the school and home and a very large proportion of parents feel comfortable with approaching the school about any problems they might have. These features have a positive impact upon pupils' learning.

46. The quality of information sent to parents is good overall. It includes an outline of curriculum topics for the ensuing period in a regular newsletter and this is valued highly by parents. A separate letter is sent home to parents of children in the early years section of the school and there is also a home-school diary that appears well used. The school prospectus is an informative, illustrated document and there is a comprehensive annual report from governors, both of these publications meet statutory requirements. Since the previous inspection, the school has attempted presentation evenings for subjects of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology but the school would have wished for a better response from parents. The parents' evenings held to review their child's progress, are very well attended, as are those clinics organised for their medical needs. End-of-year academic reports are found helpful by parents.
47. The parents' involvement in their children's learning at home is good. At least three-quarters help with reading and other homework that is set for the older pupils and this has a positive effect on attainment. Parents are not actively encouraged to help in school although a few do, as well as on school outings. Coffee mornings for parents of children in the early years section of the school, are held at monthly intervals and half of those parents eligible, attend. The school has attempted to form a parent teacher association but this to date has been unsuccessful.
48. The school liaises well with the parents of pupils with additional complex special needs and with specialist staff who support them. There is good co-operation in the drawing up of programmes such as feeding and exercise to ensure that these necessary procedures are carried out efficiently whilst ensuring pupils' full access to the curriculum. Parents are sometimes concerned about the amount of time available for therapies such as speech and language. Time is limited but support staff and teachers are trained well to implement programmes under specialist guidance.

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

49. The headteacher, governors and key staff manage the school very well. The headteacher shows very strong leadership and a clear view of the direction in which the school should be heading. The headteacher has established a high quality environment and a flexible organisation, which will serve the educational needs of this diverse and changing population of pupils well into the future. The high standards evident in every aspect of the school's work are a result of this clear direction. The school's core aims and values are reflected very well in the warm, purposeful and successful atmosphere, which are present in all areas of the school. The very high number of awards, which include the School Achievement award, the Safe School award, the Eco-Schools award, the Sportsmark award and the Health Promoting School award give a flavour of the attitudes, concerns and successes of the school as a community. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when there were significant shortcomings in the management of several areas, notably curriculum and the roles of senior staff.

50. There is a clear definition of roles within senior management with overall curriculum responsibility being managed very effectively by the deputy headteacher and heads of department. Good lines of communication and regular consultation ensure that all staff make a contribution to the organisation and objectives of the school development plan and so support the very good improvements achieved.
51. The governing body is fully supportive of the school and shows a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. It fulfils all statutory duties. One governor is a regular visitor, hearing pupils read, and another visits each week to support a community project. Others show support to specific projects. Governors do not have oversight of individual subjects but do set annual targets and ensure that finance and premises issues are dealt with efficiently.
52. The system for monitoring the quality of teaching is very well organised. Senior staff undertake formal observations and have been instrumental in bringing very good improvements to the quality of teaching throughout the school and in every subject. In addition, the subject oversight by co-ordinators focuses on subject based strategies and supports the high quality of subject teaching observed. The performance management system is fully in place and is good in supporting this system of developing the high quality of teaching. The extremely diverse range of pupil ability and special educational needs which are all provided for to a high standard and the number of lessons observed as very good and excellent are a direct result of this work.
53. The school has good, clear objectives for development, which are linked to the monitoring of pupil performance. However the data produced is not organised to show the performance of different groups of pupils. This means that the objectives lack the detail necessary to target different groups more efficiently. This results in a difficulty in meeting the whole school targets, because they are not suited to the rates of progress for all pupils. For example, when performance in mathematics was seen to slow down, a system was bought in to help strengthen pupils' progress and improvement followed. However, the school does not know, specifically, which age groups, gender, ability or social groups require the most help. Therefore the arrangements to ensure full educational inclusion for all pupils are not secure. The school recognises this as the next stage in their development of performance management and educational inclusion.
54. The shared commitment by governors, senior management and all staff to continue improving and developing the provision offered is very good. The fact that so much has been achieved since the last inspection indicates that the capacity to succeed is also very good.
55. Financial planning and management are resourceful and very effective and this has led to improved accommodation and resources for pupils, which have a significant positive impact on learning. The headteacher and governors have set up a clear system of budget planning. A finance sub-committee undertakes detailed oversight and meets regularly. They have up-to-date information to guide their decisions. The deficit of the previous year is because of funding for staff absence costs. The school development plan is an effective working document for forward planning. It clearly links decisions on spending to educational priorities and includes success criteria to evaluate outcomes. This is a notable improvement since the previous inspection. Money is appropriately allocated for staff training, subjects and departments within their forward planning and in line with priorities in the school development plan. Day-to-day financial procedures are very good.

56. Specific grants, such as Standards Fund and National Grid for Learning are used very well to create opportunities to promote pupils' learning. In addition, the headteacher is particularly skilled at bidding for non-statutory funding, which benefits the school enormously. For example, Lottery funding to install an excellent outdoor adventure play area and £100,000 raised from charities and sponsors, towards a new multi-sensory room. School fund accounts are properly and regularly audited but there has been no recent audit by the LEA.
57. The school makes very good use of all available data to compare its performance, costs and staffing with that of similar schools and to provide best value. It consults widely on major changes in practice or organisation, for example, when disbanding the special needs department, and it ensures contractors compete for work, for example when deciding to lease the new computer suite after consideration of rival bids from major ICT suppliers. With the exception of some basic school administration and some under-use of alternative and augmentative communication aids for pupils with communication and sensory impairment, the school is making effective use of new technologies, including ICT, electronic mail, multimedia compositions, data analysis and Internet applications.
58. The school has a very good level of staffing to meet the demands of the curriculum and to allow it to establish class sizes appropriate to the needs of the pupils. Teachers are particularly well qualified and experienced. Nearly all have additional qualifications in special educational needs and many teach their own specialist subject for part of the week. This provides quality and rigour to curriculum planning and teaching in most areas of the curriculum. There is a suitable number of teaching assistants, who also have a good range of qualifications and/or experience. Teaching assistants make an invaluable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and progress. The effectiveness of teamwork in the management of care, behaviour and learning is very good. The two technicians, midday assistants and the minibus escorts and drivers all contribute enthusiastically and effectively to the school's provision and care for the children. Teaching and non-teaching staff roles and responsibilities are very clearly set out in job descriptions. The school makes very good use of students and other volunteers to increase the number of support staff.
59. There are a large number of specialists such as physiotherapists, speech therapists, nurses and sensory impairment teachers who support the work of the school very well and contribute significantly to helping pupils access the curriculum and improve their skills. However the strategies developed by the visual impairment specialist are not always consistently and regularly shared with all staff to ensure a whole school approach to the needs of individual pupils. In addition staff training in communication techniques is not regularly updated for new staff. These are weaknesses which slow the progress made by a few pupils.
60. Overall, the induction of all staff, including midday assistants and school escorts is good, though informal. New staff and volunteers who may help in classrooms are suitably inducted into their specific roles and overall systems. A useful development would be the introduction of a staff handbook and a more formalised system of induction so that its effectiveness can be monitored and evaluated. The school is well served by its administrative staff. They provide a warm welcome to the school and their unobtrusive efficiency contributes to its smooth running.
61. The school is purpose built and accommodation is now very good and an improvement on the previous inspection. There are now separate toilet facilities for boys and girls

over the age of eight and the school now complies with the requirements of the Education [School Premises] Regulations 1981. Changing facilities have been greatly improved since the previous inspection and this ensures privacy, particularly for older pupils. Classrooms are an appropriate size and the early years area has been extended. It is now less cramped and is sufficient to fully use the range of equipment available. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school continues to be very well maintained and cleaning is of a very high standard.

62. Specialist teaching areas have been extended and improved since the previous inspection. The recently refurbished information technology room and multi-sensory area continue to be well used. The art and design technology and food technology rooms have been completely refurbished and a music room has now been developed. The outside environment has been significantly enhanced by the addition of an excellent sensory maze, adventure play area and an environmental wild area. All of these are used a great deal to support work in the subject areas. The standards of wall displays are very good and effectively support learning. The main library area is conveniently placed and is well used by pupils to research, select books or just browse. Also a refurbished science area is planned. The post-16 students do not currently have a common room in which they can assemble at break and other times. This is a weakness which means that they do not experience the more mature environment to suit their age and stage of development at all times.
63. Resources to support learning are very good and have also been instrumental in providing an excellent range of facilities, which significantly enrich the curriculum. The two new play areas have been funded by the local golf club and the National Lottery. The development of ICT resources has been aided by finance from local industry and the school already has over £100,000 towards a multi-sensory room, supported by a range of trusts and local interests. Electronic resources to support communication for a few pupils are too limited.
64. Many resources are of very high quality and are used effectively to support all areas of the curriculum. Resources are particularly good in science, physical education, art and design, information and communication technology and in design and technology. A major strength is the wide range of additional visits and extra-curricular resources that are used. For example, the school makes the best possible use of local galleries and theatres to promote the arts. Resources in design and technology and information and communication technology are strong. However for a few pupils there is insufficient provision and use of electronic communication aids to help them progress at a faster rate. The reliability of hardware supports teaching very well and enables some very good progress in these subjects.
65. A very special resource recently acquired is the Kaleidoscope from the Dome in London. This is being very well used to promote interaction and increase pupils' self-confidence in communication and movement. It has also been used effectively to promote high quality artwork around the school. Physical education resources provide many varied opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills. They are very beneficial to the very good sports club, which runs weekly after school. Pupils from the school and the local community join together to improve their swimming and trampolining skills. Resources are effectively stored and very clearly support very good learning across the school.

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

66. In order to continue with the very good improvements since the last inspection and to raise standards further the governors and headteacher should:
- (1) Secure better access to the curriculum for pupils with significant additional barriers to learning, such as visual impairment and speech and communication difficulties, and also ensure better ways for them to contribute in line with their abilities by:
    - a. ensuring that all staff are using the specialised methods and systems in place; (paragraph 21)
    - b. ensuring that the specialised needs of individual pupils are addressed in all lesson planning; (paragraph 21)
    - c. seeking to develop consistently applied whole school approaches to the specialised needs of some individual pupils; (paragraph 26)
    - d. ensuring that training in specialised methods and equipment is up to date; (paragraph 59)
    - e. increasing the use of electronic communication aids for particular pupils. (paragraph 64)
  - (2) Analyse pupil performance data in a way which will enable management to identify and support more efficiently the progress of different groups of pupils. (paragraph 53)

## **ADDITIONAL FEATURE**

### **THE OUTREACH SERVICE**

67. The outreach service at the school is very good, and is a significant strength. The service was set up almost two years ago to provide support and guidance to mainstream schools so that pupils with physical disabilities could be maintained in their local schools. The service currently supports 180 pupils in 110 schools across north and east Worcestershire, working in combination with a support service from another special school serving pupils in the south of the county. The Outreach Service is fully the responsibility of the senior management of Chadsgrove School.
68. The quality of teaching and support is very good and teachers have high levels of expertise. They offer individual support to pupils, staff and parents, and provide resources and equipment to make learning easier. Because of the very high quality of the provision, pupils make very effective gains in learning. For example, in one school, a pupil was observed learning to use a writing aid. The outreach teacher worked carefully with the pupil and the learning support assistant, explaining the various features and enabling the pupil to successfully write simple sentences. His pride and pleasure at the completed task were evident, and the improvement in presentation caused by the writing aid raised his self-esteem considerably. In another school, the outreach teacher was observed offering helpful guidance in a design and technology lesson in which a pupil had difficulty using scissors to cut fabric. The resources and support offered enabled the pupil to succeed at the task, alongside his peers. The service is very effective in ensuring full inclusion by modifying tasks, identifying potential difficulties, and providing training for support assistants. Support teachers are clear about what they want pupils to achieve and specific targets are regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure that very good progress is made. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress and access within each school.

69. Leadership of the outreach service is very good. Monitoring of practice is formalised and observation of teaching and learning takes place annually. This ensures that the quality of the provision is consistent. Weekly monitoring systems are well used to inform about pupils' progress. The service is monitored by a steering group, which is a multi-disciplinary team. This ensures that educational and health issues are given equal priority. A high level of training is provided by the outreach service. For example, an eleven-week course organised by outreach staff and accredited by University College Worcester recently provided training for up to 80 people. Over 100 staff in mainstream schools have received training and advice in manual handling techniques from Chadsgrove's six accredited trainers, organised by outreach staff. Training course evaluations are very positive, and show the value of the provision for the local community. The service successfully negotiates building and resources requirements in local schools where necessary, and the effective alterations in some schools have enabled pupils to take a full and active part in local school life.
70. The newly developed outreach service is funded separately from the school, and procedures for monitoring expenditure are secure. Procedures for monitoring the cost effectiveness of the provision in terms of the outcomes pupils achieve are not yet fully established. At times, there is inefficient use of teacher time, which has been identified by the service as an area for future development by extending the role of teaching assistants.
71. Liaison with partner schools and with parents is very good. Links have been firmly established with other support services, and with the health service. This ensures that all aspects of pupils' needs are effectively provided for.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	109
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	66

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	13	37	43	16	0	0	0
Percentage	12	34	39	15	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	112
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0002

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	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

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

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.2
Average class size	8.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	38
Total aggregate hours worked per week	957

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	1,240,529
Total expenditure	1,316,526
Expenditure per pupil	12,420
Balance brought forward from previous year	64,209
Balance carried forward to next year	(-)11,798

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	98
Number of questionnaires returned	30

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	20	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	30	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	47	3	0	33
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	77	20	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	13	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	77	20	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	87	13	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	37	10	0	0

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The parents and carers have a very positive view of all aspects of the school. They particularly like the leadership and the way the school is managed and feel very comfortable to approach the school. All parents report that their children like coming to school. The findings of the inspection team support this view. A small minority of parents would like to see more activities outside of lessons. The school does provide a good range of interesting activities for most pupils, but is more limited in what is offered for pupils with the most complex needs. They recognise this and are working to improve after-school provision for this group.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

72. The school's early years provision caters for children from age 2 to 5. All children have significant special needs and are admitted to school to meet the requirements of their statements of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection there were 13 children on roll, all part time who are placed in one of three early years classes, depending on their age and the severity of their special needs. Most, but not all children, are admitted to the main school at the age of five.
73. Children achieve well and make good progress in the nursery and reception years. This is as a result of teaching that is consistently good and occasionally very good, and because staff know children really well, assess their differing early experience carefully, and build on what they already know, understand and can do. This good progress and achievement applies to all groups of children in nursery, reception and mixed-age classes. It prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education. While the majority of children are making good progress in the 'stepping stones' towards each early learning goal, one or two high attainers are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
74. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of children's special needs and how children learn most effectively. They work closely with parents by means of home/school diaries, newsletters, coffee mornings and parents' meeting, a parent/carers' handbook and by actively seeking their opinions. As a result children feel confident, secure and valued. They plan in great detail and include reference to children's individual education targets so that the same activity is presented to children in a variety of ways to allow for their different learning styles. There is very good teamwork between the teacher, teacher assistants and therapists so that the quality of learning is maintained. Very good multi-cultural resources, including those in the community, are used well to enhance children's learning. Pupils' profiles contain samples of pupils' work and photographs, which have been carefully stored, dated and annotated and clearly demonstrate good progress and achievement over time.
75. There have been good improvements in the foundation stage since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are now consistently good and a comprehensive policy is in place, which informs all its work. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has full regard for the areas of learning and early learning goals. This is supported by improved and effective assessment procedures. Accommodation and storage areas have been significantly improved and are now good. An outstanding outdoor adventure playground and sensory garden are additional improvements, which help the children to have fun, learn and begin to join in. The department benefits from strong and enthusiastic leadership and a committed staff. An area of further development should include the adoption of alternative and augmentative communication aids, including the consistent use of signs and symbols for those children with sensory impairment and/or severe communication difficulties.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

76. Teaching for children's personal, social and emotional development is consistently good and consequently children make good progress in developing confidence and self-esteem, in forming relationships and seeing themselves as part of the class and

lower school community, in learning to behave appropriately, and in self-help skills. Aspects of personal and social education permeate the whole curriculum, both formal and informal, in lessons, assemblies, at playtimes, meal times and travelling to and from school. The welcome routine is an important part of the day incorporating a warm greeting, a sense of belonging, hanging coats and bags up, calling the register and counting the number present. The 'Hello' song is accompanied with photographs so pupils can identify themselves and other pupils. Children are encouraged to make choices, for example, whom to sing to first. There is good reinforcement of numeracy, when counting the ages of pupils or counting out drinks. The teacher and teacher assistants are positive role models in what they say or do. Higher attaining children drink independently from cups and are aware of what is happening around them. Lower attaining children are dependent on adult support but make eye contact and respond to their name.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

77. Teaching in communication, language and literacy in the early years is good overall and children make satisfactory and often good progress in developing communication skills, and the language for thinking and for reading and writing. Teachers use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum and provide good models themselves in the use of clear unambiguous instructions and by encouraging conversation while children are playing. Classrooms are rich in print and colour and reasons to communicate. Children are given every opportunity to listen and to speak and to represent ideas in their activities. Every response is sensitively interpreted and valued. Teachers link sounds and letters through songs and rhymes from a range of cultures. They help pupils understand text by reading big book stories like 'The Pig in the Pond'. Good questioning, for example, "What do you think happens next?" helps children to predict endings. Children are confident and at ease in this learning situation. One comes to the front and with a soft toy clearly recites the nursery rhyme 'Old Mother Hubbard'. Good resources, in the form of big books, drums, instruments and soft animal toys, motivate children to take part and to learn. However, weaknesses in teaching are in the inconsistent use of signing and in the lack of careful planning to help a visually impaired pupil access the story. The speech and language therapist gives valuable support in developing individual programmes for certain children.

### **Mathematical development**

78. Teaching to help children's mathematical development is good. Children gain mathematical ideas and an understanding of the language of mathematics as they sort and match different objects, complete a number/rhyme worksheet and sing and count 'Five Fat Sausages'. Higher attaining children are developing an understanding and recognition of more or less and numbers one to five. One lower attaining child makes good progress, and gets very excited, when he realises that by touching the computer screen he can change the images. Children develop confidence and an understanding of the time and order of the day when they know what is first, next and last, or when the teachers recap on the activities of the morning or afternoon. This they do well, confirming children's progress and understanding and celebrating individual achievement, however small.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79. Consistently good teaching develops children's knowledge and understanding of the world well. Staff set a good example by being curious, enthusiastic and investigative. Finding out about the world is exciting! Older children learn their way about school and

the different sounds that can be heard, with reference to a map and school photograph. Good use is made of a digital camera and tape recorder to record the experience and places of familiar noises like the kitchen, hall and swimming pool. A visually impaired child makes good use of handrails to travel independently. Younger children learn from exploratory play, for example mixing sand and water, blowing bubbles through a tube, matching shapes and making sounds. They show an interest and enjoyment in information and communication technology and have many opportunities to use touch screens, overlays, and switches in the classroom and in the light room.

### **Physical development**

80. Children make very good progress in developing their physical control, mobility and co-ordination as a result of good and very good teaching and a wide and relevant range of gross and fine motor activities. Children enjoy the experience of swimming and make very good progress in acquiring confidence and basic water skills. This is because of the teacher's expertise, very good support in the pool and very good facilities and resources. They progress well in developing their mobility, balance and confidence when climbing, rolling and crawling around the soft play area. Children enjoy sessions outside when they learn about large and small toys. They improve their balance and co-ordination, social and personal skills and their use of space when riding specially adapted tricycles or when exploring the adventure playground. Children are encouraged to make choices and develop independence because very good resources and equipment are well organised. Regular opportunities to develop body awareness and relaxation are provided through the gymnastics and movement lessons often accompanied by music or through sessions in the light room. Fine motor skills develop appropriately as a result of high levels of encouragement and support and challenging activities. Children learn to hold crayons, pencils and paintbrushes correctly, to colour within lines or overwrite or underwrite their names or cut with scissors with increasing accuracy. There is good support and liaison with the physiotherapists who work with children on individual programmes.

### **Creative development**

81. Children's creative development is good because teachers allow children to develop their own ideas and value their efforts. In music, they join in favourite songs and show an interest in the way different musical instruments sound. They explore and learn how, by making their own instruments, they can change sounds, for example by putting more dried peas in one shaker or by banging a drum with a different implement. In art they explore different media and materials when making constructions, collages, paintings and drawings. Their work is valued, celebrated and displayed for everyone to see. Timely interventions by staff, support children and help them develop confidence in making choices and in developing appropriate vocabulary as they talk about their 'creation'. In physical education they imitate and create movement in response to music, for example marching like soldiers or moving slowly like giants.

### **ENGLISH**

82. Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school across all areas of the English curriculum. Learning is good because teaching is good. The National Literacy Strategy has been incorporated well into the curriculum, and is taught to pupils up to the age of 14. The only significant weakness is the lack of sufficient means of communication for a very few pupils with additional complex special needs such as those with severe cerebral palsy or autistic spectrum disorders, which slows their progress at times.

83. Achievement and progress in speaking and listening are good throughout the school. Pupils listen cheerfully to well read stories and poems, joining in with words and actions. Pupils in the lower school volunteer to recite nursery rhymes such as 'Old Mother Hubbard.' Their vocabulary is developing well because of good teaching and more able pupils speak in complete sentences, justifying their answers when prompted. Pupils in the middle school contribute initial sounds for 'I Spy' and recite poems expressively after listening to their teacher with sustained interest and pleasure. They are beginning to use language creatively and effectively as when a pupil, finding some difficulties with his work, commented "I'm stalled". Speech and communication continues to develop for a range of purposes in the senior school. A Year 7 pupil remarked that a friend was 'someone who's there if you're sad and can't keep it in'. Drama opportunities are seized upon enthusiastically, with pupils demonstrating that expression and gesture convey meaning as well as voice. A small number of pupils in the upper part of the school discuss and debate issues, such as abortion or the holocaust, with the maturity and vocabulary expected for their age group in mainstream schools.
84. Pupils with additional or complex barriers to learning such as cerebral palsy, autism or visual impairment usually make good progress in English because teaching is of a high standard and they are motivated to work hard. However, aids to help them communicate, such as the 'Picture Exchange System' or the use of signs, signals and symbols are not used consistently by all staff. This means that the progress of these pupils is slower at times. Generally the very good experience and knowledge of the teachers and teaching assistants means that in most lessons these pupils are not disadvantaged. In addition the high quality of specialist support, particularly from the visual impairment team and the communication co-ordinator, ensures that all pupils have some appropriate access to lessons. However, these pupils are not always helped to understand or contribute equally alongside others in all lessons and this is a weakness. In addition the lack of electronic communicators for one or two of the most able pupils with limited speech has an adverse effect upon the overall development and progress of this very small minority of pupils.
85. By the age of seven, pupils are achieving well in reading. They want to read because teachers make reading such fun. One pupil with no speech laughed with delight as he activated a switch to make noises to accompany a story. They make progress because they are taught letter names and sounds and how to build up words. Some pupils read short sentences and recognise all the names in the class. "We don't need that one, J. isn't here", said one pupil. They know how books work and recognise book language such as author, page, word and illustrator. Achievement and progress in reading continue to be good in the middle school. Teachers never forget that the primary purpose of reading story books is for pleasure. Because pupils enjoy the stories so much they try hard to read, anticipating the story from clues such as pictures and context and making good use of increasing phonic knowledge. They recognise that information books have contents and index pages. Most reading books and materials are age appropriate and this has helped to ensure that achievement is good in the senior school. "This is going to be fun", said a Year 7 pupil as he happily anticipated the class reading session. It is noticeable how carefully pupils listen to their classmates who find speaking difficult. There is good practice to support regular shared reading with a family member for homework, which reinforces skills learnt at school. The good use of information sources such as newspapers, reference books and the Internet help older pupils compare and extract information from a range of sources.
86. Pupils' achievement in writing is good and sometimes very good. The youngest pupils who are physically more able improve their pencil control, making good attempts to

follow guidelines when colouring and tracing over handwriting patterns. Well chosen writing implements such as stubby crayons help pupils with poor motor control. By the end of the middle school, pupils are learning to be writers and their achievement here is very good for more able pupils, building on the hard work that has gone on earlier in the school. The work is challenging and well presented and is drafted and re-drafted carefully, using pens or word processors with enlarged keyboards where necessary. In response to Thomas Hardy's 'On I Went' one pupil wrote ' ..... Through/The gate there was a bay/ It is only open in May - the May Bay/under the sun's ray.' Good strategies for teaching spelling ensure that many one- and two-syllable words are spelt correctly. Writing skills are good in the senior school and continue to be very good for more able pupils. Teachers stimulate pupils to write and encourage them to record their ideas, thoughts and knowledge in a variety of interesting ways such as charts, graphs, play-scripts or mini-books. An emphasis on good presentation gives pupils pride in their work and has encouraged them to present it as well as they can using whatever method is most appropriate for them. More able pupils demonstrate their talents through extended writing. One exceptional writer chose for his information topic 'How to get a girl friend' and ended his writing account 'all long lasting relationships are built on trust and love so this will take a long time to accomplish but I have faith in you so go forth and have a successful life.' A pleasing number of Year 11 pupils succeed well in the nationally accredited Certificate of Educational Achievement. This year 60 per cent of pupils passed at level 3 (distinction) and 40 per cent gained level 2 (merit). The standard of work and organisation of files were congratulated by the examiner. Also for the first time three Year 11 pupils gained Key Skills Communication level 1.

87. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. All teaching is at least satisfactory with more than 80 per cent being good or better. A third of the large number of lessons seen were very good or excellent. Teachers convey obvious enthusiasm for English and have very good subject knowledge. This was particularly well displayed when a group of younger pupils with complex special needs laughed with amazement as a balloon, rubbed on their clothes then stuck to the ceiling. In this class, as in many others, information and communication technology was used very effectively to enable pupils to match digital images of themselves on screen with photographs. In an excellent and challenging poetry lesson pupils of 11 quoted Dylan Thomas and wrote in the style of Thomas Hardy. Teaching assistants contribute very well to learning through activities such as interpreting pupils' speech or acting as scribes. They liaise well with teachers to assess progress. Oral and written assessment is good although sometimes over complicated. Relationships between adults and pupils are so good that pupils' behaviour is excellent, contributing significantly to good learning and ensuring happy lessons. Planning is thorough and well matched to pupils' age and interests. Status is given to their work by its good display and through very good preparation for external examinations. In the satisfactory lessons weaknesses are apparent. For example, the pace is too fast or too slow in some parts of the lesson or the needs of all pupils are not met equally so that pupils with problems of communication cannot participate in lessons as well as they might. In one lesson pupils were presented with too many stimuli too rapidly and had insufficient opportunity to express their preferences.
88. Teachers are enthusiastic about the National Literacy Strategy. It has been implemented well in the lower and middle school and recently for younger pupils in the senior school. It has helped to raise achievement in literacy and has been very well supported by a good range of resources. Although not planned specifically, all areas of the curriculum contribute positively to literacy and to communication. For example, in mathematics pupils choose different numbers beginning with 'T' to answer questions and older pupils make telephone calls from a public call box. In design and technology,

pupils read instructions and plans and use words, symbols and pictures to read a list of ingredients,

89. English is well led by an enthusiastic, committed co-ordinator who leads a very large team by good example. She monitors lesson plans and pupils' work and has some opportunity to observe teaching. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by drama. Good opportunities for social, moral and cultural development exist through theatre visits, book weeks, visiting poets and writers and through the sensitive choice of texts. The library is central, attractive, well used and stocked with a good range of books at all levels. They have been screened to avoid bias or stereotyping and reflect life in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society.
90. Areas for development are to rationalise assessment systems and to ensure equal access to the curriculum for all pupils through use of communication aids. Improvement since the last inspection is good. There are significant improvements in teaching and in the progress pupils are making.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. Mathematics is a strong subject across the school and is particularly good for pupils aged 7 to 11. Achievement is very good for this age group and for others at the school it is good. Teaching reflects achievement and is particularly good in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection very good progress has been made in the quality of teaching, the quality of the curriculum and the progress pupils make. Assessment has also improved and supports teaching and pupil guidance well but it is time consuming for teachers. Resources are also good although there is a lack of age appropriate materials for pupils in Key Stage 3.
92. Achievement in mathematics is good and it is very good for pupils aged 7 to 11. The youngest pupils show recognition of numbers, confidently count to ten with a few recognising numbers to 50. They learn to add on numbers, work out who is the tallest in the group and measure in metres and centimetres. The highest attaining pupils measure and work confidently with numbers in line with their peers in mainstream schools. In the middle school very good progress is seen as pupils begin to learn their tables, subtract decimals and work with fractions. All pupils work well with money, most recognise coins and as they get older begin to understand their value. Pupils with the most complex and profound difficulties in all age groups make good progress in their ability to recognise and match objects, pick out familiar numbers and choose the correct shapes. They are helped to understand the relationships between things and develop a good familiarity with concepts such as large and small, up and down, and full and empty. By the senior school the highest attaining pupils have made further good progress. They represent their work using charts and graphs and Venn diagrams, and show a good understanding of whether information is clear, accurate, attractive and simple. Most pupils by this age use computers well to design and display their work. The most able mathematicians in the senior school have achieved well and are in line to obtain challenging GCSE examination grades. Many are in line to do well in the national examinations linked to their mathematics scheme.
93. The quality of teaching is good and is very good for pupils aged 7 to 11. Where teaching is best, planning and resources concentrate on the inclusion of all pupils in the learning process. This was very evident in a lesson with 7- to 8-year-olds with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) where pupils were involved in a skittles game to enhance counting. Although the group observed were wheelchair bound they had a special chute attached to their chairs, which allowed them to aim and release a noisy

big balloon at the skittles and count how many had been knocked over. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and each task is full of interest and challenge. Other PMLD pupils use a soundboard, which they tap to make number patterns. In this activity pupils were encouraged to make choices thus supporting their independence training. Across the school the plenary sessions at the end of a lesson are of high quality and praise for achievement is given. Information and communication technology is very well used to meet the needs of those with the greatest learning difficulties. In one lesson there was excellent use made of a touch screen to make the bugs disappear. Another program helped pupils with their counting skills by using the rhyming song 'This old man, he played one' etc. Signing was used extensively in this lesson to support developing speech. In another very good lesson there was an excellent balance between completing work in their exercise books and the use of information and communication technology to consolidate and extend understanding. The use of information and communication technology in the best mathematics lessons was excellent. Where achievement was slower the teacher's planning did not do much more than indicate the targets set and little of how these were to be attained.

94. Mathematics and number are used well across other subject areas. Computer programmes are closely matched to ability and there is good feedback to pupils as the teaching assistants record the percentages of success. In other subjects, such as English, songs and rhymes are used to promote counting. In addition, early morning routines, lunchtimes and all other subjects take care to support and enhance the growing understanding of number, shapes and measurement as it occurs throughout the day.
95. The subject co-ordinator is a non-specialist who is applying enormous energy and enthusiasm to the development of the subject. She has received excellent support from the local education authority in addition to her National Numeracy Strategy training. Leadership and management are very good with the newly appointed co-ordinator producing a very good subject development plan, which will be monitored by the headteacher. The main thrust of development is to be concentrated at classes with pupils aged 11 to 14 and focusing on the National Numeracy Strategy. This will require new resources following an audit of what is available and some training for teachers working with this age range. Current resourcing levels are good across the school and teaching benefits from the large number of computers available. Resources for the course leading to external accreditation are excellent. Pupils aged 11 to 14 have a primary bias in their resources, which the school recognises as being inappropriate. In other areas of the middle and lower schools resources are good with a wide range of small apparatus to support the teaching of number and money. However, assessment procedures, although detailed and informative, are cumbersome and not easy for all teachers to use well. This is recognised and a further priority is to look at alternatives, which will make them easier for teachers to use for informing future learning and planning.

## **SCIENCE**

96. Provision in science is very good; the subject is very well managed and shows significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement in the subject is very good overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils achieve well and make good progress and from the age of 11 they begin to make very good progress.
97. By the age of 7 and 11 good progress is made as most pupils learn to name the different parts of the body and what they are for. Higher attaining pupils by the age of 11 are learning to recognise and spell words in the scientific language, including 'growth',

'water', 'seeds', 'roots and 'erosion'. They learn about conditions of decay in fallen leaves and dead animals which help micro-organisms grow. Pupils make good progress in understanding the world around them when they learn how to make yeast grow.

98. Pupils with the most complex needs in all key stages are helped to recognise various materials such as sand and rock through the way they feel. They are helped to experience changes as things are heated or cooled and choose which ones they prefer or show which is hot and cold, for example. By the time they reach the upper school they recognise different sounds and learn about themselves in their environment. They also develop a good understanding of the need to care for themselves by eating nutritious food as well as learning how to protect the environment by limiting the degree of pollution and recycling resources.
99. By Key Stage 3 the majority of pupils make good progress in understanding the properties of materials such as metal and wood by experimenting with them. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate very good achievement when they set up simple investigations to test the absorption of paper for example. They are also adept at applying their prior knowledge in solving rudimentary problems. Most pupils demonstrate, through discussion, an understanding of some concepts of science and they know what constitutes a fair test. For example, in the lesson on energy for higher attaining pupils, they had to know the different forms of energy; sound, light and movement. They understand this energy is stored and how it is released to help us do what we need it to do. Pupils learn about their body maintenance, materials and their uses, electricity at home and at work, plants, fuels and energy, earth and atmosphere, light, living systems (ecology) as well as the environment.
100. At Key Stage 4, most pupils continue to make progress with the majority demonstrating that they can design experiments, make predictions and record them by drawing or by writing. For example in an excellent lesson observed, pupils studied that the more reactive metal can displace another metal from a compound, know the reactivity of five metals and understand the meaning of alloy and make a circuit from a diagram. At this stage, they understand the difference between the soluble and insoluble materials and are able to carry out experiments to investigate the materials. They study the changing temperatures and climatic conditions, and the importance of these for planting and harvesting of crops. They know the importance of sun, air and water. In Year 11, they develop very good understanding of the environment in more detail through the concepts of composition and pollution. Results in the Statutory Attainment Tests show good progress in both key stages. At Key Stage 4, many pupils achieve the Certificate of Achievement and at present ten pupils are working towards the 'Entry Level' Oxford and Cambridge and RSA Examinations. Pupils can use this as evidence of their understanding of basic scientific concepts and skills equivalent to a GCSE foundation level standard.
101. Teaching is of a consistently high standard for younger pupils, with some excellent teaching in the middle and senior school; it is very good overall. Teachers take good care to ensure that pupils understand safety precautions, for example when using scissors and glue. All the lessons are very carefully planned with a variety of strategies and approaches, which fully extend the pupils. For example, in one lesson meticulous planning enabled one pupil to feel the change in bread after toasting. Lessons are well prepared with a wide range of readily available resources that enable pupils to develop their work independently to a high quality. In one lesson on electrical circuits, each pupil had their own box of resources. Teachers prepare work for the pupils with the most complex learning needs carefully ensuring that there is good support to help them

achieve well. In a lesson on energy, work on running and swimming was presented in small steps so that everyone could understand the ideas. Very good relationships, careful attention to detail, and high quality support from teaching assistants all contribute to the good and very good teaching of science throughout the school. Pupils are given homework on a regular basis to supplement and reinforce their work in the school. This is well organised and regularly marked.

102. Very good management and strong leadership is demonstrated by the co-ordinator who is constantly seeking ways to improve subject teaching through visits to other schools, attendance on courses and monitoring of the subject in school. The school has a science policy and a comprehensive scheme of work that is constantly revised and updated. Resources are very good with a new laboratory planned within weeks. Specialist teaching by the co-ordinator in Key Stages 3 and 4 and certain lessons at Key Stage 2 contributes to the very high quality of lessons for these groups. Good use is made of ICT to develop the subject. The school has purchased a data logger and a computer microscope for pupils' use.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. Provision for art and design at the school is very good, with many excellent features. Pupils achieve very good standards in all aspects of the subject and benefit from the very good teaching and learning resources available. There has been very good improvement in provision and standards in art and design since the last inspection.
104. Younger pupils in the lower school, develop their art skills through an exciting range of activities, and by using high quality resources. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy decorating their Diwali pots with shiny paper, glitter and coloured shapes. The highest attaining pupils are able to use glue sticks and scissors independently as they make their own choice of decoration. They concentrate hard, and achieve very good standards as they communicate their ideas. They are able to work independently at almost the entire task, and show pleasure at the finished item. Other pupils benefit from good quality support as they spread glue with their hands and indicate a choice of decoration. Evidence from past work shows that pupils in these year groups develop their art and design skills through a wide range of appropriate activities in which they use paint, textures, clay and card to share their ideas.
105. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make very good progress in art and design. They show in-depth thought as they make choices, and work very hard. For example, in one lesson, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were observed making very good textile pictures to tell the story of bonfire night. They showed mature interaction with adults as they discussed their pictures, and were clear about why they wanted to use certain resources, such as 'bark' and 'straw' to make the bonfire, and 'glitter' to make the fireworks. They used colour and different textures in an evocative way to create the greatest impact. In another lesson, pupils were making puppets to fit characters from a story. Pupils assembled materials and manipulated resources very well as they tried hard to ensure that they used the right resources to represent the story. Pupils in this year group begin to offer comments on their own work and on the work of others. They make valid suggestions as to how their own work could be improved.
106. In the middle school, pupils achieve very well, benefiting from high quality teaching and provision. They develop very good understanding of the work of many artists and benefit from the rich artistic culture that is prevalent in the school. In one lesson, the pupils in Years 8 and 9, for example, were observed studying the work of Keith Haring. They developed very clear understanding of his work and picked up his theme of using

two ideas as they made three-dimensional images from two-dimensional plans, using Mod-Roc, fabric and paper. Very high quality teacher skill and knowledge have a significant impact on pupils' achievements. The highest attaining pupils were able to experiment, combine, select and manipulate the range of materials to create their own ideas. They extended their knowledge through observation of the artists' work. Other pupils benefited from high quality guidance to achieve good outcomes.

107. Older pupils in the upper school achieve very high standards as they work towards their examinations. In one lesson, pupils with profound difficulties were able to create pictures based on Handel's 'Water Music'. Because the teacher and learning assistants were excellent facilitators, this group of pupils were able to show awareness of cause and effect in a creative process. They were able to use brushes appropriately to produce their piece of work. Excellent teaching and use of resources have a very positive impact on the learning of pupils in the upper school. The multi-sensory approach used is very successful in promoting high quality experiences in which pupils develop their skills very well.
108. The quality of teaching in art and design is very good overall, with excellent teacher skills and knowledge, particularly in the senior department. Teachers enjoy teaching the subject and make very good provision of some exciting resources to enable pupils to think for themselves, make choices and develop their designs. For example, in one lesson in the upper school, pupils were practising their designing and making skills for their examination. The teaching methods enabled pupils to undertake their own research, choose from a wide range of media, and practise and improve their three-dimensional models with minimal help and support. They were enabled to make their own decisions because of the very good organisation and planning. The very positive relationships within art promote high quality behaviour and enjoyment and ensure that pupils across the school have excellent attitudes to their artwork. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology to develop pupils' skills, and the use of the digital camera to record work is very good. Occasionally, though, teachers do not use technology sufficiently in lessons to enable lower attaining, or more physically challenged pupils, to achieve higher levels of independence. At these times, too much is done for pupils and their ability to choose for themselves is limited.
109. Resources and accommodation in art and design are a major strength and have a very positive impact on standards. Very good use is made of them in support of learning. The excellent art displays around the school provide a colourful and exciting backdrop to the school day, and are an excellent record of pupils' past work. They show the very good range of activities that pupils across the school have access to. The range of visits linked to art work are also a major strength.
110. Art and design makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The lighting of Diwali candles in the Diwali pots made by the youngest pupils in the school was a very special moment in their day.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Provision for design and technology at Chadsgrove is very good indeed. The development of the design and technology curriculum, the resourcing of the subject and the expertise shown by the staff teaching it are strengths of the school. All pupils make very good progress in planning, making and evaluating. Teaching identified as 'effective' in the last inspection report is now uniformly very good and accreditation has developed well since 1997. Food technology is also of a similar high standard as a result of very good teaching and imaginative planning by teaching staff and teaching assistants.
112. By the end of lower school, higher attaining pupils easily produce artefacts such as fire engines from Lego blocks and three-dimensional models of plates of food. They string beads into long necklaces, build towers using play blocks and complete table and floor jigsaws up to 20 pieces. Pupils with more complex difficulties develop grasp, focus on the operation of placing one brick on top of another and explore textures. All develop mixing and planning skills in food technology.
113. All groups of pupils make very good progress through lower and middle school. By the age of 11, higher attaining pupils are independently planning and modifying their designs and production of greetings cards. They have become confident in the use of a range of basic tools, from vices to heat guns and recognise the health and safety requirements in both the workshop and kitchen. Those with complex learning difficulties use scissors, mixing bowls and files with appropriate support. Despite mobility and co-ordination difficulties, they fully participate in the making as well as the planning of, for example, a Christmas card with moving parts
114. Design and evaluation skills develop very well through senior school for all pupils. They become increasingly able to follow through a recipe for mince pies and pizzas or a plan for plastic toy packaging. The inspection team was impressed by the way in which all pupils were able to explain what they were doing, why they were doing it and how they wanted to modify their original design. These developing skills culminate in very good results in the newly developed externally accredited course. All seven students passed and four received merits with comments such as 'a good range of interesting project work'.
115. Design and food technology teaching is very good throughout the school and this underlies the good and very good progress made by pupils. It is characterised by the emphasis on choice, the development of independence in all pupils and very detailed programmes of work with good assessment. The work is highly motivational and the guidance is very well informed. Very good work is undertaken by teaching assistants throughout all departments. Lessons observed included 5-year-olds developing their own recipes using a computer with voice synthesiser, pupils with very complex learning difficulties following recipes for a range of cakes and biscuits, and a very good lesson in which local volunteers assisted the class teacher in developing control models starting from a full electric railway system. There were many occasions when pupils expressed real wonder at the use of technology.
116. This very good provision is the result of very good leadership by the co-ordinator and the resourcefulness of all staff teaching design and technology. The curriculum is very good indeed and well modified for the different groups within the school. Resources, material and human, are used very efficiently and imaginatively. One useful area for development now is that of using control technology within the kitchen and extending

design and technology work to assist in the development of access opportunities for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. Achievement and progress in geography is good overall with many very good lessons observed. It is good because the quality of teaching is consistently good or better and there is very good use made of the local environment. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection, in particular the introduction of accreditation in Key Stage 4 as well as the development of a policy for teaching the subject.
118. In all key stages, pupils with the most profound and complex learning needs achieve well. Initially they show recognition of their environment and as they get older begin to know where they are. As they progress through the school several can choose which way to go, showing a keen interest in changes around them. They join in with trips and activities contributing by using the correct words, helping to make work for displays of the current topic such as the rainforest and showing a keen and sustained interest in familiar subjects.
119. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is steady, pupils' complete geography as part of topic work linked to other subjects and show a developing understanding about the environment and how to make it safer. Good progress is made during Key Stage 2 when pupils investigate the wider area outside the school and their home as well as covering various aspects of life. For example, contrasting the local area to a seaside resort like Llandudno. During a visit to the river Severn when many areas were flooded, pupils demonstrated a good insight into the extent of the devastation the floods had caused.
120. In Key Stage 3, pupils make good progress in studying foreign countries, the weather, the environment and population as well as various local studies. For their Certificate of Educational Achievement coursework in Key Stage 4, pupils study people and their environments, where they live and work as well as tourism and the environment. Pupils of all abilities achieve good understanding of concepts such as the reasons for changeable weather in this country and other parts of the world. In their workbooks they show an increasing skill in map drawing and interpreting the maps. In Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils used Ordnance Survey maps to plan a nature trail, seek leisure facilities in the area and plan day trips. In this exercise, pupils working in groups, showed a growing understanding of the relationship between different areas of the town and the facilities that are provided for the community, for example recreational centres, playing fields and swimming baths. One group planning a day trip said they had to inquire if there were facilities available for the disabled before deciding on their location.
121. The quality of teaching was consistently good or better. The very good use of local resources and visits bring the subject alive and as a result pupils were highly motivated. For example during a visit to a local church, pupils were fascinated to watch masons repairing the church walls. Advantage was taken to teach the pupils the distances between places as well as the fact that the stones came from a quarry in Scotland. These lessons were well planned to meet the different needs of all the pupils. For example, some very good preparation to support the special learning needs of pupils with visual impairment meant that one pupil was able to feel the contour of a map and read by Braille the key words.
122. Assessment is satisfactory and suitable to support lesson planning. The teachers expect a high standard of work, which is evident in the thoughtful recording and researching of the subject in pupils' books. Class work is reinforced well by homework.

123. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has sound knowledge of the subject and has planned the syllabus well to meet the need of the wide range of pupil ability within the school. The main strength in planning is the strategies used to support the language needs of the pupils. The routine of introducing specialist vocabulary is very good practice with clear coverage of new words on the board that enables the pupils to understand the basic concepts. There is evidence of very good liaison with other departments on cross-curricular work, not only in developing literacy skills, but also in history, science, humanities and personal, social and health education as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The school has an excellent conservation area with a maze and pupils use this for their geographical study.

## **HISTORY**

124. There has been a good improvement in history since the last inspection when it was reported that progress at Key Stages 3 and 4 was unsatisfactory and work did not always cover the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Teaching is now good overall, pupils generally make good progress and the subject is well managed with good appropriate programmes of study.
125. Pupils with complex and profound learning needs also make good progress throughout the school. For them the subject is closely related to their own world and the passing of time. The youngest pupils in this group show recognition of those around them and their own belongings. They are helped to make good progress in telling the difference between one activity and another which, as they get older, leads them to anticipate what is going to happen next during the day. Through good use of photographs of activities and events in their immediate past they begin to show an understanding of something that has happened and enjoy the stories related to real events in their own lives. The oldest pupils in this group are able to recognise past events in the lives of others close to them, their families and friends. They show a keen interest in differences between their own world and the past such as Victorian clothes and equipment. When Ancient Egypt was studied they were helped to recognise pyramids by feeling the shape.
126. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well and make good progress, for example by studying Ancient Egypt, using the word 'pyramid'. One group used clay to model the shape. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a good understanding of chronology. They are also able to discuss and handled toys from Victorian times. Pupils showed they understood why some of the toys were very different to the ones they play with today. They could recall work they had done on the lives of poor and wealthy children at the time and knew that poor children would have had few toys. They also know that girls were encouraged to play with dolls and related toys because as one pupil said 'so that she knows how to do the life'. This demonstrates good progress over time. In Key Stage 3, pupils have been studying life in Britain during the time of William the Conqueror and have also made good progress. They know that William's basis for ruling was power, protection and provision for example. Some higher attaining pupils can explain the principles of the feudal system. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that older pupils at Key Stage 4 achieve well. They follow an accredited course and study the Depression and the following events of World War Two. The results from previous years show that most pupils gain accreditation in the subject, the most recent group having gained a number of merits and distinctions.
127. Teaching is good overall. Where lessons are most effective, teaching is excellent. In one such lesson observed, pupils understood very clearly that the King took taxes from

the people to fund activities such as war and defence of the country. The teacher began the lesson by asking for pupils' pencil cases and then proceeding to take an item from each. Pupils watched with increasing irritation until one pupil exclaimed 'That's what the soldiers did!' The whole class then suddenly understood how the people would have felt. This lively introduction was followed by carefully chosen activities using a range of different resources which ensured that all pupils could complete the task. Where teaching is less effective too many activities are planned which results in pupils not having sufficient time to discuss and review what they have learned.

128. History makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development through events that bring the subject to life. On one of these occasions pupils were involved in a re-enactment of the escape of Bonny Prince Charlie, where each class in which he took refuge, had to decide whether to reveal his hiding place. Pupils also visit a number of local museums and other places of interest and the school has had visits from a local historian who had talked to pupils about the local nail making industry.
129. The leadership and management of history are good. Appropriate monitoring of planning and teaching takes place and the monitoring process overall also includes collection of work and ensuring that visits meet the requirements of the topics. A recently developed and high quality scheme of work has been introduced for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Resources are also good especially the use of historical artefacts, local visits and engaging pictures and stories.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

130. Provision for ICT and pupil progress within this subject is very good and often excellent in the lower and middle school. For pupils and students aged 11+, it is always good and is developing well. This represents very good development since the last inspection in terms of both resourcing, teaching and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.
131. Pupils progress very well through the lower school. At the age of five higher attaining pupils already use the mouse, tracker balls and touch screens effectively. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties are beginning to make intentional movements to locate an image on the screen, select, for example, between two pictures, and show developing confidence in the use of the computer. In addition, all pupils have had experience of the wider uses of ICT in the form of radio, video, control devices and simple communicators and switches.
132. All pupils make very good progress as they go through the middle school. They all have access to the full range of experiences within the subject through alternative switches and skilled teaching assistant support. By the age of 11, pupils with complex learning difficulties have a high degree of confidence in using the computer. They wordprocess their names in different fonts, start to develop control skills which will be important for them in many aspects of life, and use CD-Roms and the Internet for illustrations to stories. Higher attaining pupils show independence in developing a five- slide presentation using PowerPoint, produce posters, such as 'Aid to Africa' and use graphical modelling to explore how objects can be used to describe and record events.
133. This progress provides a very good basis for work in the senior school, where all pupils continue to make good progress in the full range of the ICT curriculum. Pupils with complex difficulties continue to progress in their use of switches, their ability to look at the screen, to react and to make decisions relating to their own work. Higher attaining pupils show increasing ability to retrieve information from CD-Roms such as an interactive encyclopaedia. They write poetry and narratives using a wide range of word

processing skills. Control techniques develop well using a wide range of floor-based devices. Mathematical skills develop through the use of shape and computation programs. All pupils have access to digital still and video cameras and a significant number use these independently to back up work in lessons. Some mathematical development and progress is currently limited by the lack of, for example, appropriate graph plotting software.

134. The good and very good progress throughout the school occurs because of the teaching and teaching assistance which is uniformly very good and sometimes outstanding. Excellent resources enable teachers to provide experiences for all pupils that are meaningful and satisfying. From the very start, teachers ensure that young pupils experience success rather than frustration, helping them to become accustomed to work that is matched well to their level of ability and backed up with skilled advice and suggestions. Thus, in a very good early years lesson, pupils with very complex difficulties responded to their name, tracked projections and sang into a microphone in the multi-sensory room, which is a model of its kind. Very good preparation and planning was evident in one middle school English lesson. Four computers were set up with a program adapted to the needs of different pupils and allowed them to write their own poems. Similarly, in a very good French lesson older pupils finishing early were provided with a lotto game on the computer which reinforced aspects of French food and drink. The very good teaching throughout the school is characterised by the high standard of planning, individual support, very good resources and the willingness of all staff to incorporate ICT into their own lessons.
135. The significant progress in ICT has arisen from very good leadership from the subject co-ordinators in each department of the school, together with the effective support of senior staff and the governing body. There is now very good provision of resources, both hardware and computer programs. Evidence seen during the inspection emphasised that the school approaches ICT in its widest context, introducing pupils to the full range of ICT experiences. The current provision together with training work carried out for colleagues in other schools makes Chadsgrove a centre of expertise for this aspect of the curriculum. Work is set to continue in providing more effective accreditation for post-11 pupils and to further enhance the growing confidence of subject teachers to incorporate ICT into their subjects.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

136. French is very good at the school. Pupils achievement is very good and by the time they reach the age of 16 they are able to speak the language very well. Teaching is very good and leadership is also very good with the production of subject documentation of the highest quality.
137. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Achievement then was considered to be good and is now very good. Pupils then showed positive attitudes to learning French which are now very good. Teaching was consistently good and is now very good. To improve these areas in an already good quality subject requires enormous effort by the teachers. Their efforts have been obvious during the inspection.
138. Achievement in French is very good across both of the key stages. Pupils aged 11 and 12 make very good progress in learning the French vocabulary and are able to respond orally when questioned by the teacher. They have a very good understanding of the geographical position of France and its proximity to the United Kingdom. Although in the initial stages of learning the language, pupils have already developed correct

pronunciation for the taught vocabulary. As vocabulary is learned it is supported by flashcards or whiteboard writing of the word. A very good percentage of these pupils are beginning to recognise these words in their written form. By age 13, pupils are beginning to write and have made significant strides in developing their competency and fluency in speaking the language. Sixteen-year-olds take the Secondary Certificate of Achievement and last year, everyone entered passed with six achieving distinction level. The co-ordinator is mindful that for some of the younger pupils it will be necessary to consider alternative accreditation to ensure that the most capable in the subject are challenged.

139. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. Lesson planning is a strength which ensures that all pupils are included in the learning process. In one lesson, pupils with a wide range of differing learning needs, were able to access the lesson content because of the well planned use of resources. A blind pupil, for example, was given a map of north-west Europe with Braille type markings of Great Britain, raised dots, and France, raised diagonal lines, to reinforce his appreciation of how close France was to England. Others in this class used globes and a range of atlases to accomplish the same learning objective. Teachers used a high percentage of French when they spoke to the pupils and expected and insisted on a response in the target language. In a class of 14- and 15-year-olds, there was very little English spoken at all. This underlines the very high expectations teachers have for the pupils' learning.
140. Leadership and management of the department by the co-ordinator is very good. Whilst neither teacher delivering the subject are subject specialists they willingly seek advice from the local education authority. This has resulted in the production of subject documentation of the highest quality. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and pupils who do not take the subject have been appropriately disapplied. Assessment in the subject is good and records are well kept. The level of resourcing is good and includes a French program on the hard disk in the computer suite. There is also an interactive CD-Rom 'French Your Way' which has been well used. Accommodation for the subject is very good although there is no specialist room. Both the teachers ensure that the displayed work and experiences in the subject have high priority.
141. The course aim is to get all pupils to visit France. Initially the visit was to Boulogne but the school has now found a farmhouse, with facilities for the disabled, in Brittany. It is run by an English family who insist that visitors speak French at meal times, which becomes a total cultural experience for the youngsters.

## **MUSIC**

142. Provision for music is very good across the school, and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy their music-making activities, the teaching is good and pupils achieve well learning to perform confidently and sing with enthusiasm. The subject contributes significantly to the strong performance skills encouraged throughout the school. Music therapy is provided for selected pupils.
143. Younger pupils in the lower school make good progress. They learn to sing well and remember the words to simple nursery rhymes and songs. They use actions to help them follow the music and join in with enthusiasm. They play instruments to music, and know when to stop. They can play loudly or quietly, as required, and work well in pairs. Older pupils in the lower school and middle school pupils continue to achieve well and enjoy their music-making activities. They sing confidently, know the names of simple instruments, and play with a steady beat. Many pupils can recognise instruments from the sounds they make. They enjoy listening to music and make suggestions about their

own likes and dislikes. Pupils with more challenging difficulties also make good progress, show the same enjoyment of music and develop their social skills through musical games. They are beginning to work in pairs and understand that they are choosing a partner to work with. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to show understanding of playing 'slowly' and know the difference between 'fast' and 'slow'.

144. Pupils in Key Stage 3 achieve well as they create and perform music, using symbols as a starting point. They show good awareness of other members of the class whilst performing, and take care to co-ordinate their contributions. Pupils across the middle school describe and evaluate music created by other groups. Music makes a valuable contribution to their social skills as they learn to take turns, choose a leader democratically, and discuss the tunes they will compose.
145. In the upper school, pupils' good progress is evident as they compose their own pieces of music well. In one lesson, they were observed putting together a performance of a piece of music to sell a product. They work very well in small groups, offering effective suggestions to ensure that the music they compose is evocative enough to make people want to purchase their product. Good use of video enables them to observe and modify their own work, and that of other groups. They make good use of keyboards and show good awareness of the importance of mood, rhythm and tempo.
146. The quality of teaching in music is almost always good. Teachers make the best possible use of the good resources to promote interest and improve skills. Lessons are well planned to take account of appropriate musical activities. Pupils in the lower school are encouraged to develop their social skills through music, as teachers organise many musical games in which they work in pairs. Pupils also benefit from the good teamwork in classes and good quality support and activities as they learn to listen carefully. In lessons which are satisfactory, pupils sometimes spend too long waiting for others to respond so that the pace and learning slows. Occasionally the use of taped music for singing means that some pupils are not always able to keep up with the speed of the songs and joining in is then difficult for them. The focus on performance is a strong feature of the successful teaching which really helps pupils to gain confidence and a deeper understanding of the meaning of music as they sing and play instruments together.
147. In the majority of lessons pupils with additional special needs usually have the support and appropriate tasks to join in fully with the lesson. Staff are sensitive and considerate of the different ways pupils are able to learn, for example making sure that they have instruments they can play well. However, occasionally, not enough use is made of signing or adapted symbols. For example, in one lesson the planning did not include strategies and special materials for one pupil who then could not follow or join in properly.
148. Leadership of music is good, and has led to the implementation of a very good curriculum with many exciting activities. Improving social skills is a real focus of the provision, and some effective group work increases pupils' awareness of others. The curriculum is progressive and is appropriate to age and ability in all areas of the school. It does not yet provide accreditation for pupils in the upper school which has been recognised as an area for further development.
149. A significant strength is the involvement of pupils in community projects and whole-school productions. For example, senior pupils composed a song for the Millennium, which they recorded and entered into a national competition 'Voices of Promise'. They were runners-up and received an invitation to the Dome. Several sound and music

workshops have enriched the curriculum, including a 'samba' workshop for senior pupils in the lower school and pupils in the middle school, and some pupils from Finland who sang a range of songs from around the world. There are many experiences in all key stages to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to hear real musicians and pupils benefit from this enriched musical environment. The school is confidently applying for the Artsmark Gold award this year.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

150. Pupils achieve very high standards in physical education. They achieve very well and make very good progress across the school. This is because teaching is mainly by a specialist, who brings quality, enthusiasm and rigour to the subject. His leadership and expertise is supported by the work of committed and highly effective teacher assistants. As a consequence, pupils work hard during lessons, think carefully about what they do, show high levels of participation and co-operate well with each other.
151. Since the last inspection there have been good improvements in physical education on what was already judged to be an effective subject. Teaching and learning across the school has improved, partly as a result of the co-ordinator's role in monitoring teaching. There have been improvements too, in curriculum breadth and assessment detail, while resources have been maintained at the same very high level. Areas for development include the greater use of the video camera to provide pupils with feedback on their performance, and the consistent use of signing for pupils
152. The very good progress applies to all groups of pupils and of all ages. Indeed, the most prominent feature of the subject is the teacher's determination that all pupils, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, should still have equal access to all opportunities and to experience the excitement and challenge associated with physical activity.
153. All pupils make very good progress in swimming. More able pupils use a community pool and swim competently up to 400 metres using the major strokes. Their achievements are accredited through national association awards. Less able pupils are taught in the small school pool. They make very good progress in learning basic water skills and in learning to relax, because of the one-to-one in-water support of teacher assistants and informed advice given by the teacher. Clear unambiguous instructions, for example, "Push your stomach up Darren and hold your head back" helps one pupil float unaided on his back. The pool is well equipped and this has a positive impact on learning. Electronic hoists lower and lift pupils carefully in and out of the pool. The effective use of good resources, arm bands and floats, enable pupils to independently experience buoyancy, and the timely use of the jet stream gives them the pleasant sensation of being propelled through the water. Swimming at Chadsgrove provides a wonderful experience for pupils and helps them feel active and free. They show by excited shouts, gestures and facial expressions how much they enjoy the sessions. There is total trust in the teacher assistants and teacher helping them. Changing facilities are good, clean, warm and spacious. Teacher assistants ensure pupils are changed with great care, dignity and in privacy. Appropriate emphasis is placed on all health and safety matters. The school makes good use of students and approved voluntary helpers to ensure there are sufficient staff to ensure pupils' safety and welfare.
154. In gymnastics, pupils make very good progress. Good assessment procedures ensure they build on prior skills with confidence. Pupils up to the age of seven, for example, learn different ways of travelling on, under and over apparatus. In doing so they improve

their co-ordination, posture and balance. Good questioning confirms understanding and reinforces speaking and listening skills. Good resources motivate pupils to learn and provide them with safe and appropriate challenge. The use of music and nursery rhymes helps pupils understand parts of the body and changes of pace. Teacher assistants provide support and model appropriate behaviour. Pupils learn to wait their turn and be part of a team when taking part in a relay game

155. Older pupils, working in pairs and groups, some in wheel-chairs, mirror and evaluate each other's performance as they practise, refine and repeat complex movement sequences both on the floor and on apparatus. Senior pupils make very good progress in building up their balance, co-ordination and posture while working on the trampoline. Good coaching tips from the teacher, for example "Bend your knees to stop on landing" and "Keep you heels down while bouncing" means that pupils' performance improves within the lesson. More able pupils use their hands and arms to mount the trampoline from the floor. They build and refine up a sequence of bounces including a seat drop, straddle and tuck jump and a half turn. Less able pupils are carefully helped on to the trampoline by a hoist and enjoy rebound bouncing in the prone position supported by a teacher assistant. While waiting for their turn, pupils requiring physiotherapy are put through their training programmes by the physiotherapy and teacher assistants or are appropriately positioned to ensure comfort and a view of all activities. Similarly, mobility exercises and massage are provided for pupils with visual or hearing impairment by the LEA sensory support service. All pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and high self-esteem. They are very proud of their achievements however small, and work hard to improve their stamina and techniques.
156. The school is justifiably proud of, and promotes, its excellence in sport. A specialist teacher provides very good leadership for the subject. There is a good scheme of work in place supported by effective assessment procedures. The physical education curriculum provides a very broad range of highly relevant learning opportunities, reinforced by an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities, including residential trips and sporting links. Activities include athletics, sailing, canoeing, abseiling, horse riding, skiing, golf, trampolining, volleyball, archery, basketball, sub-aqua, uni-hoc and table tennis. In addition, there are leisure pursuits like darts, bowls, snooker and skittles. The school has been awarded the Sportsmark award from 1999–2001, were winners of the Kielder Challenge in 1999, and takes part in regional and national competitions in basketball, swimming and athletics. A former pupil is a national wheelchair athlete and acts as a positive role model for other pupils. School resources are very good and very effective use is made of community and LEA facilities to extend and enhance the subject. Physical education makes a particularly good contribution to pupils' personal, moral and social development. It continues to be a real and significant strength of the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

157. All pupils achieve well in religious education. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was not always satisfactory. Since then, resources have improved and all pupils receive religious education teaching, and the progress pupils make is now good or very good and resources have been well developed. All classes now have discrete lessons on religious education.
158. The youngest pupils achieve well and make good progress. For example one group listened to a story about Little Bear and how, when he was scared in the forest, Big Bear comforted him. The pupils were able to show they understood how Little Bear felt. They talked about whom they went to if they felt frightened.

159. Older Pupils in Key Stage 1 also progress well as they learn about Hanukkah and the Festival of Light. Pupils begin to develop an understanding of the meaning of the festival through listening to the story of Hanukkah and talking about the pictures they were shown. They became very involved in an activity to make a menorah. Key Stage 2 pupils showed a good understanding when they learned about the Christian wedding ceremony, grasping the principles of promise and caring for one another. In Key Stage 3, pupils show good achievement when studying the sacred texts of a number of faiths such as the Bible and the Qu'ran.
160. The quality of teaching is good overall and lessons are well planned to meet the very special needs of each individual. In one lesson observed where pupils discussed the Bible with a visiting vicar, teaching was very good. Pupils were given good encouragement to prepare searching questions about the bible, which they asked in turn. The visitor gave thoughtful consideration to each question and pupils listened carefully to the answers. The careful planning for this lesson, supported by skilful supplementary questioning by the teacher, helped pupils to understand that the Bible is not one but a series of books written by different authors at different times. Good attention to presentation skills was demonstrated when each pupil was given the opportunity to tell their visitor about a favourite book they had brought to school. Work for younger pupils and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties is planned well using the early learning goals. Teachers use exciting and interesting resources to hold pupils' interests and help them understand. One lesson ended with the lighting of a real menorah. For a very few pupils their ability to discuss and contribute in line with their abilities is slowed by the lack of electronic communication devices. Activities in the lesson are well matched to the age and understanding of the pupils with all pupils acting a part in the ceremony.
161. The management of religious education is good. There is a clear policy for religious education and the scheme of work is based on the locally agreed syllabus and the national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Religious education is established within the overall curriculum and is taught to each class in the school. Assessment is now an integral part of the planning for all groups, and teachers record separately the subject studied and how much has been learned. For pupils in Key Stage 4 an externally accredited course has been introduced.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

162. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). The good achievement across all key stages is related both to the good, very good and excellent teaching and to the well planned and developing programme. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
163. Good progress and achievement is seen in the youngest age groups. In Key Stage 1, pupils sit together to have drinks. They know the routines and sit quietly. One pupil handed out name cards and identified the names of pupils. Older pupils participate in circle time activities. They take turns to tell the group what they have done that day. They know that it is their turn to speak when they are holding the bear. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils work independently on individual areas of the ASDAN Key Steps PSHE programme, understanding that they must present work well to gain accreditation. In Key Stage 4, pupils understand that the rights of individuals are closely related to responsibilities. In one lesson, pupils very clearly understood and could discuss the responsibilities they held at home.

164. These gains in learning are related to the high quality of teaching. In one excellent lesson pupils prepared and delivered individual presentations on their hobbies to their classmates. Teachers' very high expectations of pupils result in confident presentations and the promotion of high self-esteem. Teaching during the inspection was never less than good and in two lessons was very good or excellent.
165. The strong emphasis on personal and social development in all aspects of school life contributes significantly to pupils' progress in this area. The subject is well supported by all areas of the curriculum and is significantly enhanced by many other activities in and out of school. Pupils enjoy the social aspects of eating and relaxing together at lunchtimes. They develop an understanding of social responsibility through participating in school visits to places of interest in the locality and through whole school involvement with a range of charities. Links with other schools are well developed and pupils participate in shared activities both in school and in the community. The impact of personal and social education on pupils is positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave well in and out of lessons and participate in visits outside of the school with enjoyment and confidence.
166. The subject is very well organised and managed. Younger pupils follow a programme which is integrated into other areas of the curriculum whilst older pupils have taught periods during the week. Planning across the school has developed significantly since the last inspection and both primary and secondary departments follow a clear programme. The programme includes sex education and drug awareness. Older pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 follow courses leading to the ASDAN Key Steps Award, Youth Award Scheme and Transition Challenge. The recently introduced citizenship programme is extending opportunities for the development of social skills and understanding. All pupils are set individual targets for personal and social education, which are well monitored and supported.

## **POST-16**

167. Post-16 group students achieve well and progress very well in their special studies such as business organisation and sports. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and the provision is very good overall although it still lacks a separate social area for these older students. There are now formal policies and the aims for post-16 provision are clear and very well taught.
168. All students achieve well and make impressive progress in their learning. For example the independence group respond consistently very well to the challenges set them which includes using a public telephone. This achievement and progress is evident in the mini enterprise work where members of the group elected a managing director and shared roles such as graphic designers, finance directors, sales and marketing managers, delivery people, quality assurance and packaging responsibilities. The group made significant gains in their communication skills as they undertook market research within the school to see what items would be popular and began to produce T-shirts to order. Pupils developed good organisational skills, recording the numbers of T-shirts required and working out the costings. Members of the board then made an appointment to meet the headteacher to discuss the possibility of obtaining a loan. This was a very professional and realistic approach to mini-enterprise giving the students a very good understanding of the wholesale and retail trade. In addition several of the students achieve high levels in their Youth Award Scheme where they gain bronze, silver and gold awards. Students with PMLD in the post-16 group follow ASDAN Towards Independence externally accredited courses.

169. The quality of teaching for the post-16 groups is very good overall and can be excellent. In the excellent lesson observed, the group went out to do their Christmas shopping. The planning of the day was extremely good, enabling parents to contribute money so that their sons or daughters could buy presents. Several bought pyjamas for cousins and the sheer vitality of the occasion caused great excitement. It was considered to be a rare opportunity for those with profound and multiple learning difficulties and physical difficulties to purchase a gift when not being accompanied by their parents. The excellent organisation enabled the most capable students to shop independently. The activity was well planned to cater for different needs and abilities, for example students with sight or hearing difficulties looked for colourful things to buy, listened to a steel band, tasted buns and cakes in the bakers and enjoyed familiar smells and textures. Attention to literacy and numeracy was very carefully organised so that in addition to choosing clothes, make-up and presents, pupils were set tasks to challenge them such as finding a gadget costing less than £5 or a computer game for less than £20. Where lessons for post-16 students are satisfactory rather than good planning lacks flexibility. For example in one lesson, the good use of household machines to engage and motivate students to operate them and become familiar with their different effects was spoiled by a lack of gradual preparation for the more nervous students.
170. The management of post-16 provision is also very good, especially in organising the curriculum. Post-16 students still follow the timetable in place for Key Stage 4 pupils, because their numbers are so small, but it is well planned to suit their needs. In addition, for one and a half days each week the students enjoy a successful separate curriculum, to quote one student "Wednesday is great as we do different things. We all enjoyed the owl man. When the barn owl was close to me it was spooky". The breadth and richness of the curriculum, including personal, social and health education contributes substantially to the growth in pupils' skills and abilities. This term, for example, pupils have used a Chinese takeaway, visited an animal sanctuary, joined a video club, undertaken surveys into disabled access in Catshill and Bromsgrove and bought fishing licences and gone fishing. Visits encouraging a familiarity and confidence with the outside world have also included ten pin bowling and the London Eye, regarded as the 'high spot' in a very good visit to London.
171. The lack of a separate place where students can socialise and mix with their own age group, however, means that their ability to separate from the 'school' atmosphere to feel and become more mature is still too limited.
172. Sport at Chadsgrove plays a significant role in enabling post-16 students with physical disabilities to compete at a challenging level. Perhaps pride of place in the achievements of the post-16 students is their inclusion with pupils from North Bromsgrove High School in the 'Kielder Challenge'. Since entering the heats in 1991, they have reached the finals on nine occasions and have been outright winners twice, the last being 1999, and second on a further three occasions with the last being in 2001.