

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Priory Woods School**  
Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique Reference Number: 131425  
Inspection Number: 208550

Headteacher: Mrs Bernadette Knill

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Reporting inspector: R B Thompson  
12668

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708380

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special: Severe Learning Difficulties
Type of control:	Local education authority
Age range of pupils:	4 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tothill Avenue Netherfields Middlesbrough Cleveland TS3 ORH
Telephone number:	01642 321212
Fax number:	01642 326800
Appropriate authority:	Middlesbrough
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Anne Radford
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Bob Thompson <i>(Registered inspector)</i>	Modern foreign language.	Main findings; Key issues; Characteristics; Leadership and management; Efficiency.
Marion Saunders <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>		Attitudes Behaviour and Personal development; Attendance; Support guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the Community.
Aileen Webber	English.	Curriculum and Assessment; Post 16.
Pip Clark	Science; Art.	Teaching; Integration.
David Ward.	Mathematics; Music; Special educational needs.	Staffing accommodation and learning resources.
Ian Naylor	Design and technology; Information technology; Religious education.	Spiritual moral social cultural development; Personal social health education.
Chris Lewis	Physical education; History; Geography; Equal Opportunities.	Attainment and progress.

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants  
Old Garden House  
The Lanterns  
Bridge Lane  
London  
SW11 3AD  
0171 924 1093*

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Overall, pupils and students make very good academic and personal progress.
- Pupils' and students' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Relationships between pupils, students and staff are excellent.
- Pupils' and students' attendance is very good.
- The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. The teaching, which is predominantly very good, is very well supported by the special support assistants, and has a significant effect on pupils' and students' progress and achievement.
- The school delivers a good, well balanced, broadly based and relevant curriculum, which is well planned. Assessment of the curriculum is very good.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- Targets set in pupils' and students' individual education plans are specific and realistic.
- The literacy strategy is very good, and the work permeates across the curriculum. The numeracy strategy is equally effective and is working well.
- Procedures for monitoring pupils' and students' progress, personal development, discipline and good behaviour are very good.
- The school's provision for the pupils' and students' spiritual, social and cultural development is very good. Provision for moral development is excellent.
- Parents involvement in their children's learning is good, and there are strong links with the community.
- The governors and headteacher of the school give very clear strategic direction to the work of the school. There is a strong team spirit engendered by the headteacher who offers excellent leadership to the school.
- Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are excellent. All staff are deployed very well throughout the school, and the school makes good use of its finances and resources.
- The ethos of the school is excellent.

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Accommodation for teaching of science and design and technology is unsatisfactory.
- II. Time-tables are not always accurately represented, nor are they always taught as stated.
- III. Annual reports to parents are variable, not always reporting what pupils and students know, can do and understand.

**Priory Woods school is a very good school. The many strengths far outweigh the few weaknesses of the school. The governors' action plan will set out how these weaknesses are to be tackled . The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of the pupils and students at the school.**

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. Management of the school is now very good, leadership is exceptionally good. The school action plan has been fully implemented. The quality of the curriculum has improved. Provision for equal opportunities across the curriculum has improved, giving all pupils with extra special needs better access. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is very good and sometimes excellent. Teaching, and the team-work between teachers and support staff is a strength of the school and enhances the progress that pupils and students make. Progress made by pupils and students in their personal, social and health education has significantly improved and is now very good. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils and students is now very good. Relationships in school are excellent. Accommodation has improved significantly since the school re-located to Priory Woods site. Learning resources are now very good. Staffing has improved, both in number and quality of staff. Progress made by pupils and students has improved in most National Curriculum subjects and is now very good overall. Provision for pupils' and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. School's procedures for supporting and guiding pupils and students are very good. The quality of the school development plan has improved and all priorities of the school are well linked to the plan, monitored and evaluated. The school is in a very good position to make further improvement.

## WHETHER PUPILS ARE MAKING ENOUGH PROGRESS

Progress in:	By 5	By 11	By 16	By 19	
Targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*		B	B	B	<p style="text-align: center;">Key</p> <p><i>very good</i>            A</p> <p><i>good</i>                    B</p> <p><i>satisfactory</i>        C</p> <p><i>unsatisfactory</i>     D</p> <p><i>poor</i>                    E</p>
English:					
listening and speaking		A	A	A	
reading		B	B	B	
writing		B	B	B	
Mathematics		B	A	B	
Science		A	A	A	
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)		B	A	A	

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



## QUALITY OF TEACHING

	<b>Overall quality</b>	<b>Most effective in:</b>	<b>Least effective in:</b>
5 - 11 years	Very good	Information and communication technology, art, religious education	
11 - 16 years	Very good	Religious education, art, Information communication technology, physical education	
Post 16	Very good	Personal, social and health education, Information and communication technology	
English Mathematics Science	Good Good Very good		
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	Very good		

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

The quality of teaching across the school is predominantly very good, with 100 per cent being satisfactory or better; 90 per cent is good or better, and 49 per cent very good or better. Examples of excellent teaching are seen in art, information communication technology, mathematics, personal, social and health education and religious education. Very good teaching is seen in all core subjects of English, mathematics, science, religious education and information communication technology. Science, information communication technology and art are exceptionally good. Teachers and support staff work very well together. Teaching is a strength of the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' and students' behaviour is very good
Attendance	Pupils and students' attendance is very good. They love to come to school and they are rarely absent.
Ethos*	There is an excellent ethos in school.
Leadership and management	The school is very well managed, leadership is excellent. There is very clear direction and very good team spirit. Arrangements for professional development are excellent.
Curriculum	There is a good, well balanced and broadly based curriculum. Assessment is used well.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision for the development of pupils' and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Staffing and resources are very good. Accommodation has vastly improved.
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	Support and guidance of pupils and students is very good, with effective monitoring and promoting of good behaviour by all staff.
Partnership with parents and the community	The quality of information to parents and parental involvement in their children's learning are good. Links with the community are very good. Integration with main stream schools and local colleges is satisfactory overall.
Value for money	Given the high standard of education provided, the very good leadership and management of the school, the very efficient control of finances and the very good progress pupils and students make, the relative low unit cost, the school gives very good value for money.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the School	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Children like coming to school.</li> <li>● The school keeps me well informed.</li> <li>● The school is very approachable.</li> <li>● I am encouraged to participate in the work of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A couple of parents would like more work</li> </ul>

Two parents attended a meeting before the inspection and were very supportive of the school. Forty five questionnaires were returned by parents, analysed and found to be equally supportive of the school. Several parents were working in the school during the inspection week and were interviewed by inspectors. The inspectors support the very positive opinions of the parents' comments.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The high standard of education should be further improved, as follows:

The school and the governing body should ensure that:

- accommodation for science and design and technology is upgraded to enable all programmes of study of these subjects to be taught;  
*(Paragraphs: 136 and 154)*
- resources for design and technology are increased, particularly resistant materials, equipment and tools;  
*(Paragraph: 154)*
- all class timetables are accurate and are reflected in the work in the classroom;  
*(Paragraph: 49)*
- reports to parents indicate clearly what pupils know, can do and understand.  
*(Paragraphs: 53, 77, 153, 173, 183 and 214 )*

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

- \*. Increase the number of administration staff in relation to the number of pupils on roll.  
*(Paragraphs: 89 and 96)*

\* **INTRODUCTION**

\* **Characteristics of the school**

1. Priory Woods school, formerly known as Carisbrooke school, opened in November 1997 as a result of being re-located within the local education authority. The school opened with predominantly the same governing body, staff and pupils. Priory Woods brought with it the action plan from Carisbrooke and has fully implemented all issues from that plan. This is therefore considered a further inspection of the school.

2. Priory Woods school, inspected as Carisbrooke school May 1996, is the only school in Middlesbrough designated for pupils with severe learning difficulties. The school relocated to its present site in November 1997. It is located at the eastern edge of the town, within the East Middlesbrough Education Zone. The school catchment area covers the whole of the unitary authority. There are also 20 pupils from out of the borough, these, with the exception of two pupils, came to Priory Woods school before the disaggregation of Cleveland County under the re-organisation of local government.

3. Priory Woods school has achieved 'Investors in People' status.

4. Planned places have risen slowly over the last five years, from 127 to 132. However, at the beginning of this academic year the new intake significantly outnumbered the leavers. The number on roll is currently 137. The local education authority has agreed to temporarily fund an additional teacher until the end of the financial year.

5. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 55 per cent, well above average for this type of school. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is 13 per cent. The level of authorised absence last year was below average for this type of school at 6.3 per cent. There was no unauthorised absence.

6. Since the move to new accommodation, the school has restructured the organisation of classes to provide subject-based teaching for pupils in the upper school. Pupils are grouped according to key stages for National Curriculum foundation subjects.

7. The school curriculum has been rewritten to incorporate statutory requirements fully. Since the last inspection, the main focus of the school has been to improve teaching and learning by implementing a system of monitoring, of both the curriculum and the quality of teaching. With support from the East Middlesbrough Education Action Zone, the school provides a variety of out of school activities. These include a computer club, art and craft clubs, gymnastics club and a rambling club. The school is particularly proud of its approach to curriculum development, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The local education authority acknowledges the expertise in the school and this has resulted in several members of staff being asked to contribute to local, regional and national workshops relating to literacy and numeracy.

8. Priory Woods school is fully committed to the integration of pupils where it is appropriate. Two primary classes integrate four days each week with a local primary school. Another primary class integrates one and a half days each week with a different primary school. Several Key Stage 4 pupils take part in some lessons each week in a local comprehensive high school. Post 16 students spend time in colleges, and one half day at a school for moderate learning difficulties for vocational studies.

9. The school mission statement states:

‘Working together at Priory Woods we aim to provide a stimulating and challenging environment which will enrich and enhance the pupils’ learning and life experiences’.

10. The main aims of the school are to:

- \*. recognise the individual needs and talents of each pupil and to provide opportunities to develop their intellectual, moral, physical, social and creative capacities;
- \*. ensure that the curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and yet is flexible and relevant to the varying needs of our pupils;
- \*. monitor the standards of pupil achievement and the quality of teaching;
- \*. measure, assess and record the progress of each pupil to ensure that each pupil achieves to his or her full potential.

1. Aims for staff and parents, are to:

- \*. provide an environment where the personal and professional development of staff is encouraged and where good practice is shared and enjoyed;
- \*. foster an ethos where parents can feel welcome and involved in the life of the school.

## 12. Key indicators

### External Accreditation, July 1999

#### Royal Society of Arts (RSA)

Key Stage	Module	Number of passes
Key Stage 4	Numeracy: Units of measurement	6
Key Stage 4	Communication: Providing personal information	6
Post 16	Numeracy: Recognising and using money	10
Post 16	Communication: Obtaining information	10

#### Accreditation for Life and Living (ALL)

Key Stage	Module	Number of passes
Key Stage 4	Personal Skills; Follow a personal routine	7
Key Stage 4	Numeracy: Recognise routine events	7
Post 16	Communications: Respond to an auditory stimulus	5
Post 16	Numeracy: Understand giving and receiving	5
Post 16	Home management: Prepare food	5

#### Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)

Module	Number of passes
Using a video camera	10
Making and receiving telephone calls	8
World of work preparation	6
Self assessment	6
Crossing a minor road	1
Shopping skills: visiting shops	2
Shopping skills: purchasing an item	2
Shopping skills: shopping in a supermarket	4
Household cleaning	2
Experiencing a college link course	2
Human body Unit 1	5
Child development	5

## Attendance

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

Authorised	School	%
		6.0
Absence	National comparative data	8.0
Unauthorised	School	0
Absence	National comparative data	1.0

12.

## 12. Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## 12. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	49
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## 12. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 12. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 12. Attainment and progress

1.It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against age related national averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements, annual reviews, behaviour plans and individual education plans (IEPs) as well as from lesson observations.

2.Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in pupils' progress across all subjects of the curriculum, in particular English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, religious education, geography, history, art, music, modern foreign language and personal, social and health education. In design and technology, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. There is no evidence of significant differences between the key stages.

3.Progress in English skills is good across all the key stages of the school except at Key Stage 3, where it is very good. In reading and writing progress is good across the key stages. In speaking and listening, progress is very good across all key stages.

4.In Key Stage 1, pupils identify objects by name and recognise initial sounds. Lower-attaining pupils are starting to respond positively to speech. In writing, higher-attaining pupils are developing a pencil grasp. In Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to match letters accurately, recognise letters by shape and sound. Lower-attaining pupils experience sensory materials to develop response and communication skills.

5.In Key Stage 3, progress is very good. Pupils write sentences with capitals and full stops. They recall stories and complete missing words in sentences. There are good examples in class of the pupils' very good progress in speaking and listening, where pupils undertake role-play in dramatic situations. This reveals a maturing vocabulary and a developing understanding of language. In Key Stage 4, progress continues to be good. Pupils develop their communication skills in all aspects of English work against targets set for them in their individual education plans. Higher-attaining pupils write simple sentences without assistance and read independently, choosing books for pleasure. Lower-attaining pupils possess pre-reading recognition skills with pictures and symbols.

6.In mathematics, progress is good across all the key stages. It is very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. In Key Stage 1, lower-attaining pupils experience the beginnings of numeracy. They recognise one, when blowing out candles. Higher-attaining pupils place pegs on a pegboard to represent numbers up to five. They also count spoonfuls of flour and use language such as inside and up.



7. By the end of Key Stage 2, good progress is evident. Pupils are counting to 20 and undertaking subtraction work by singing songs such as 'Five green bottles'. Pupils set places at meals for five people, have a knowledge of 'bigger' and 'smaller than', and identify numbers on a large keypad calculator. Lower-attaining pupils are beginning to have an awareness of space. They recognise and follow a balloon rising.

8. By the end of Key Stage 3, progress in mathematics is very good. Higher-attaining pupils recognise two dimensional and three dimensional shapes. They name a cube, hexagon, cylinder and cone. Pupils have an understanding of number bonds, which two numbers added together make ten. They count back from twenty and count in tens. Some lower-attaining pupils match objects one-to-one. In Key Stage 4, progress continues to be very good. Pupils double numbers mentally, using Bingo and dice games. Good use is made of real money in the school shop.

9. Progress in science is good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 it is very good. This progress embraces all aspects of science teaching including investigations. In Key Stage 1, pupils express interest in changes that take place in the environment. They look through telescopes and coloured cellophane. In Key Stage 2, lower attainers make progress from sucking to blowing through a straw, whilst higher-attaining pupils identify which objects can be pushed and pulled in a study of forces. By Key Stage 3, pupils build a ramp and carry out tests on motion. During this experimentation they predict results. Lower-attaining pupils predict which objects will float and which sink. In Key Stage 4, pupils have gained considerable knowledge over time. Work reveals a very good level of progress and accuracy in predicting results. General investigative skills are increasing and showing noticeable improvement. Presentation of work is to a high standard.

10. Progress in information communication technology is very good in all key stages throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils select symbols on a concept keyboard and organise themselves in the information and communication technology suite. They are able to follow a story board with headphones and move the mouse to select and click on programmes. By Key Stage 2, lower-attaining pupils use the touch screen, they know the routines associated with the information and communication technology room and name parts of the computer. They accurately select buttons which link sounds to pictures and understand what the keys do. Lower-attaining pupils begin to activate the computer with a touch switch. By Key Stage 3, pupils are operating the computers confidently and working on alphabet recognition programmes. They work effectively against their targets in the individual education plans. By Key Stage 4, pupils develop adept skills at using the mouse to control the cursor, selecting programmes and printing out written work.

11. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), progress is good in Key Stage 1, satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. This progress is reflected in the growing maturity and understanding of the pupils. It is evident in the pupils' increasing capacity for self-help, independence and community skills, and is illustrated by their ability to participate in a school council in the secondary department.

12. In religious education, progress is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. In geography and history, progress is good across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. In art and physical education, progress is very good across all key stages. In design and technology and music, progress is satisfactory across the school. In modern foreign language, progress is good in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4.

#### **24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

13. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are very good. Pupils throughout the school show a high level of enjoyment during lessons and are pleased at their own successes. They also obtain pleasure from the success of others. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils participated enthusiastically during a counting song in a numeracy lesson, and during a Key Stage 2 drama lesson all pupils tried hard to undertake the activities suggested by the tape. In a Key Stage 4 circle time, there was spontaneous clapping of pleasure when a fireman's hat was passed around following a story. Pupils respond well to the encouragement to make choices of materials as in art lessons and nearly always persevere with the tasks they are given. They concentrate well whilst listening to their teachers and on their own work. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' ability to work independently since the previous inspection.

14. Within classrooms, behaviour is very good. Pupils respond well to the system of tokens as rewards which can then be exchanged for small items at the end of the week. Star of the Week certificates are also awarded for both achievement and effort and pupils show pleasure at receiving these. During lunchtime, pupils behave sensibly whilst lining up in the hall, and outside play is good natured. Pupils show very good respect for property in the way they use the resources within the school and the existence of very good displays around the school. Pupils are very polite and hold doors open for both adults and fellow pupils.

15. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and an outstanding strength of the school. The excellent team-work between staff clearly contributes to the ethos of the school which encourages sharing, mutual support and respect for each other. Pupils frequently demonstrate small acts of kindness toward each other; taking the hand of a distressed friend or moving an object to within reach. Pupils willingly share equipment, as seen in a Key Stage 2 music lesson when sharing instruments, and they help each other in the day-to-day routines, such as putting on coats.

16. At all ability levels pupils are given good opportunities to consider differences in preference and beliefs. Within religious education, lower-attaining pupils are given opportunities to explore taste and texture, whilst in another class pupils consider the story of the Good Samaritan and what it means to them. Pupils respond well to these opportunities. After seeing a video of children in Ethiopia who had never seen an apple tree, pupils participated in a sponsored run around the playground to raise money to send apple trees to those children perceived as less fortunate.

17. Pupils' personal development is very good. Throughout the school, pupils undertake a range of tasks such as taking the registers to the office and helping with morning drinks, and all pupils have an opportunity to participate in one or more of these tasks. There is a recently established school council in the upper part of the school with representatives elected by their peers, and students at Post 16 are given increasing responsibility for organising themselves. The personal development of Post 16 students is particularly enhanced by their attendance at local colleges and another local school.

## 29. **Attendance**

18. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in attendance, which is now very good. From reception to Year 6 attendance is 93 per cent and in Years 7 to 11 it is 94.3 per cent. There is no recorded unauthorised absence.

19. Transport arrangements are efficiently organised and lessons are generally able to start on time at the beginning of the day, and do so during the day.

## 31. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### 31. **Teaching**

20. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and teaching is now a strength of the school. Teaching is predominantly very good and makes a positive contribution to the progress pupils and students make.

21. At the time of the last inspection only 75 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better and 33 per cent was good. Now 100 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, 90 per cent is good or better and 49 per cent is very good or excellent. Two of the main features contributing to the improvement are the quality of planning and classroom management strategies which ensure that time is used efficiently and that all pupils and students are fully involved in learning.

22. The high quality of teaching reflects the ability of staff to manage effectively pupils and students who are, consequently, confident, highly motivated and behave well. Teachers have a good command of the subjects they are teaching and are skilled in meeting the needs of pupils with additional special needs and with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Throughout the school the teachers and support staff work well as teams to provide a stimulating and motivating environment in each class.

23. In Key Stage 1, teaching is always satisfactory and in 38 per cent of lessons are very good or better. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in information and communication technology and mathematics. Lessons are very well planned which, along with the good team-work between teachers and skilled support staff, ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and good progress is made. Teachers have high expectations for both learning and behaviour. Time and resources are used very well, with very good use made of rhymes and singing to help maintain attention and concentration. Pupils' progress is well assessed and regularly recorded, and the information is used to assist in future planning.

24. In Key Stage 2, teaching is always satisfactory and in 80 per cent of lessons it is good or better. Examples of very good teaching were seen in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education, music, art and particularly in science where it was consistently very good. Teachers plan lessons well using their excellent knowledge of pupils and regular assessments to make sure that their teaching is at an appropriate level for pupils with a wide range of abilities. All staff use signing very well to support learning. The very good variety of resources and objects of reference used in an imaginative way help to maintain pupils' attention and aid progress. Effective use is made of questioning to ensure that everyone is actively involved and to check understanding. Behaviour management strategies are very good and are used well across the school. The vigilance of all staff and early intervention reduces any potential disruption to a minimum.

25. In Key Stage 3, teaching in 96 per cent of lessons seen was good or better. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in art and religious education and very good teaching in English, information and communication technology, mathematics and physical education. Lessons are very well planned against the age-appropriate programmes of study of the National Curriculum. The very good relationships and calm positive atmosphere, where every individual contribution is valued, builds pupils' confidence and self esteem. This in turn encourages full and active participation so promoting good progress. Teachers use a very good variety of resources and visual aids to keep the lessons interesting and maintain the pupils' motivation. There is very good teamwork between all staff, with the classroom assistants supporting both learning and behaviour.

26. In Key Stage 4, all teaching seen was good or better. An example of excellent teaching was seen in mathematics. Teachers have high expectations and use their very good knowledge of the pupils to ensure the work is both challenging and well matched to their differing abilities. Lessons are carefully planned and well organised. The innovative and sometimes exciting use of resources keeps pupils interested and focussed on their tasks, and helps to maintain good behaviour as well as to facilitate good progress. Very good use of questioning ensures that all pupils are actively involved and makes them think for themselves, coming up with their own answers and solutions to problems.

27. In Post 16, the majority of lessons seen were good and 33 per cent were very good or better. An example of an excellent lesson was seen in personal, social and health education, when students used their senses to tell whether food was fit to eat or not. Lessons are very well planned and detailed. Assessment and recording are very good. Relationships are very good, allowing for a sense of humour and enjoyment. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, and students are challenged to deepen their understanding of the tasks required in adult life such as shopping and organising money.

28.The strategy of the literacy and numeracy programmes is proving effective. Lessons are well prepared and planned, and taught with a lively and enthusiastic approach which ensures that pupils pay attention and concentrate, so promoting progress.

29.The skilled support staff are well used, being very much part of a fully integrated teaching team. They support both learning and behaviour and have a positive effect on pupils' progress.

30.Homework is given throughout the school as felt appropriate, particularly in English and Personal, Health and Social Education. Through the good use of home-school books parents can support the learning of their children and make a valuable contribution to their progress.

#### 42. **The curriculum and assessment**

31.The curriculum overall is good and at Post 16 it is very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The breadth of subjects covered and the relevance of the curriculum are very good in all key stages. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and religious education, information communication technology and personal, social and health education programme are taught as separate subjects at all key stages. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of exciting and motivating experiences both out of school and with people visiting the school. For example, an inflatable planetarium came to the school for the pupils to view the 'sky at night', pupils have visited a glass factory, taken part in orienteering and sailing, and a theatre company performed 'Macbeth', 'The Tempest' and 'Beauty and the Beast'. The curriculum is very relevant for all pupils. For example, there is an appropriate emphasis on the very good National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The personal, social and health education programme is also very good.

32.The balance of the curriculum is good, at Post 16 it is very good. The amount of time for lessons in all key stages is sufficient and this is an improvement since the last inspection. For Key Stages 1 and 2, there is a topic approach for some subjects, including science and design and technology. Sufficient time is given to science, history and geography for the pupils to make good progress. However the school is aware that the time given to design and technology means that pupils can make only satisfactory progress. There are plans to develop food technology and this is recognised in the school development plan. In Key Stage 3, higher-attaining pupils are taught a modern foreign language on a regular basis and lower-attaining pupils take part in multi-cultural experiences.

33.In Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils take part in guided option choices, for example drama, humanities and citizenship.

34.The school also provides planned opportunities for integration for some pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 into local primary schools, Key Stage 4 pupils into a local high school, and Post 16 students into local colleges.

35.The curriculum for students at Post 16 is very good. A large proportion of the work is planned around the accredited courses followed by the school, and students work on relevant life skills, such as making and receiving telephone calls, using a video camera, crossing the road and shopping. The work clearly develops their skills in the four core areas of communication, numeracy, information communication technology and personal development. Students have the opportunity to take part in very good integration links with local colleges, where their work includes horticulture and independent living. Students also take part in newspaper production and photography at another college. Students with complex and profound and multiple learning difficulties also follow an appropriate curriculum, which includes a sensory approach, is motivating for the pupils and is relevant, broad and balanced. They also have opportunities to follow a nationally accredited course.

36.The planning of the curriculum at all key stages and Post 16 is good. The school provides good monitoring of the curriculum, which includes the chair of governors working alongside the local educational adviser to monitor subjects and observe teaching. There is a governors' curriculum sub-committee, which plays a regular and active part in monitoring the curriculum and pupils' progress. All subjects have policy documents and schemes of work, although these are still being developed for music and design and technology, including food technology. There is a distinct difference in the curriculum and experiences provided for primary and secondary pupils and also at Post 16. The very good accommodation provides subject specialist rooms, a hydrotherapy pool and a sensory stimulation room, all of which contribute to the range of the curriculum provided. There is a good use of subject specialist teaching for the older pupils. Classes are well organised to ensure that pupils are taught in key stage groups, and lower-attaining pupils are taught in separate class groups with appropriate approaches.

37.The planning of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is very good; it provides clear learning objectives for pupils of differing abilities and guides teachers' work well. Schemes of work are good overall. Individual educational plans for English, mathematics and personal, social and health education programme fit together well within lesson objectives. However, the written timetables for each class are confusing and do not reflect the good curriculum planning. This makes it difficult to monitor the breadth and balance of the curriculum being provided and to ensure that classes are following their timetables consistently.

38.The curriculum provides equality of opportunity for pupils of different gender, ability and background and the school's co-ordinator monitors the curriculum opportunities of these different groups of pupils. Pupils with complex and profound learning difficulties have the opportunity to work towards accredited courses. They do not have a modern foreign language experience on a weekly basis but they take part in termly multi-cultural experiences. There have been courses on Italian, Spanish and Dutch cultures, and most recently on Muslim topics. A support assistant provides additional support to pupils and their families who speak English as a second language. The organisation of speech work through the National Literacy Strategy ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to improve their speech and language work, and they all have a full assessment carried out by the speech and language therapists.

39.The provision for pupils with additional educational needs is good. Pupils with complex needs have an appropriate curriculum using sensory approaches. It includes a focussed programme of learning, which is well supported by their individual educational plans (IEPs). Pupils with visual impairment are supported by the visually impaired service, and the school follows the advice carefully. The school provides, and implements consistently, specific programmes for pupils with challenging behaviour; these are supported, where necessary, by advice from educational psychological service. There is very good support from therapists who work well together with the school to meet the pupils' needs. A consultant paediatrician, and a full time school nurse ensure that pupils' medical needs are met.

40.The provision for pupils' extra-curricular activities is very good. Out of school activities, supported by East Middlesbrough Educational Action Zone, include a computer club, art and crafts clubs, sailing club, gymnastics and rambling clubs. There are opportunities for older pupils to attend an outdoor-activity-centres and residential courses.

41.Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good overall. In Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 procedures are good. In Key Stage 4 and Post 16 they are excellent. Baseline Assessment is carried out, and the school and the Governing Body have been involved in target setting. Individual educational plans have a consistent format and incorporate planned learning objectives and teaching strategies. They show clearly the progress pupils have, or on occasions have not, made towards individual targets. Regional 'Small steps' assessment procedures are used very well in English and mathematics to provide a clear framework for teachers to assess what pupils know, understand and can do. In other subjects assessment varies from very good to satisfactory and in music it is unsatisfactory. Reporting to parents in annual reviews is very good for English and mathematics. In other subjects it is variable and frequently only describes what pupils have experienced or, occasionally, what they will experience next, rather than clearly stating pupils' knowledge, and skills in different subjects.

42.In Key Stage 4 and Post 16 procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, which are centred around accreditation, are excellent. Pupils in Key Stage 4, start working towards these courses and continue, Post 16. They have opportunities to work towards Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) National Skills Profile and Records of Achievement and Accreditation for Life & Living Skills (ALL). The school is planning to become an accredited centre for National Skills Profile. External assessors' comments demonstrate that the school is seen to provide excellent organisation and record keeping. At college, students follow plumbing courses which are accredited by the school, and they have also started to work towards Teesside Region Open College Network accredited courses (TROCN). The school has plans to investigate the possible use of Oxford, Cambridge and RSA (OCR) Certificate of Achievement Courses in mathematics and English and to look at the possibility of some pupils taking General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in art.

43.The use of assessment to plan what pupils will learn next is very good overall. In Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 it is good, and in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 it is excellent. English and mathematics make good use of assessment as an aid to planning; in other subjects the practice is variable. The excellent accreditation in Key Stage 4 provides a framework to plan what the pupils will learn.

44.Curriculum and assessment procedures have shown considerable improvement since the

last inspection. The amount of time available for teaching is now sufficient in all key stages. Learning objectives, particularly in English and mathematics, are now clear and focussed. For example, a modern foreign language is now taught, and programmes of study for curriculum subjects are broad and balanced. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have an appropriate leavers' programme, which is being developed further.

## **Integration**

45. Overall the quality of integration is satisfactory. The school has links with two primary schools, a comprehensive school, an Modern Learning Difficulties school and two Colleges of Further Education. In Key Stages 1 and 2, eighteen pupils go to Hemlington Hall school for four full days a week, and eleven pupils in Key Stage 2 go to Caldicotes school for one and a half days, a week along with their class teachers and classroom assistants. In both these schools the pupils benefit from social interaction and a different environment. However, because integration into lessons is severely restricted, valuable opportunities are missed to enhance the pupils' learning experience. Integration in Key Stage 4 is good. Each half term four pupils in Years 10 and 11, supported by a classroom assistant, go to the Ormesby Comprehensive School for selected lessons and social contact. Provision for the integration of Post 16 students is very good. They attend vocational courses at the local school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties school, as well as a wide range of courses in the two further education colleges. The school is aware that there is no integration for pupils in Key Stage 3, but has plans to establish further links in the near future.

## **Equal opportunities**

46. There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection with regard to equal opportunities for pupils at Priory Woods. A co-ordinator has been appointed across the school. A brief policy has been produced with staff collaboration which includes some guidelines for teachers and support assistants.

47. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) now have access to a wide and balanced curriculum. They are included, where appropriate, in a wide range of lessons and make more visits outside the school. The school has specific plans for PMLD pupils to transfer to adult life. The school is working with Accreditation for Life and Learning, and is planning to use the Cleveland Support group to develop facilities and support for pupils with PMLD.

48. The school now offers a broad and balanced curriculum to all its students from Key Stage 1 to 4 and an appropriate vocationally based curriculum, Post 16. The school also promotes opportunities for integration for its pupils and students with severe learning difficulties (SLD), where practicable, in Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 plus Post 16, in local mainstream schools and colleges.



49.The school serves the interests of ethnic minority pupils and students well. Multi-cultural events are held in the school such as a Muslim week, culminating in the festival of Eid, and Hindu assemblies celebrating Divali. A multi-cultural support assistant supports staff and pupils very effectively. Support staff delivering aspects of physical education and physiotherapy communicate with pupils with PMLD, in Urdu.

50.Equal opportunities issues are discussed regularly by staff and there is informal monitoring at key stage co-ordinators and lower and upper schools management meetings. In-service training has been organised and the school is auditing materials to ensure that equal opportunities permeates working practices.

### **Special educational needs**

51.The school provides well for pupils with complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties, those with specific physical and sensory impairments, and those who need particular medical treatment.

52.There is good provision of cross curricular approaches in the teaching, for example multi-sensory stimulation; and this is used well. In classrooms, good attention is paid to wheelchair posture, suitable attachments, head rests and tables. Staff are sensitive to pupils' variable moods, for example when caused by particular medication. Some pupils who have sensory impairments have designated support assistants. In the dining hall, photographs are displayed of correct feeding arrangements for pupils. In some classrooms, there are special areas in which distractible pupils may be taught. Special medication is usually given in the pupil's own classroom, by the school nurse, to minimise disruption to lessons. This works well.

### **64. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

53.The school has greatly strengthened its provision since the previous inspection. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is now very good.

54.Spiritual development in particular has been improved by a much more positive, whole-school approach. There are regular assemblies that have an act of worship and have a suitable Christian emphasis. They also include appropriate attention to other faiths. As well as celebrations for Easter, Harvest and Christmas, there are events to mark Eid, Divali, Ramadan, and the Jewish Calendar. Assemblies also support moral, social and cultural development within a well-planned range of topics. Religious education is taught to each class and the syllabus has a balanced multi-faith approach that effectively supports pupils' spiritual awareness. The vibrant ethos of the school places great emphasis on the recognition of personal identity and achievement in a way that is spiritually uplifting. This is evident from the many displays of pupils' work, in their records of achievement and in the awarding of certificates for personal success in assembly. Subjects such as music and art also give effective support to pupils' spiritual awareness.

55. Very strong support is given to moral and social development by the personal, social and health education programme that is taught extensively alongside other subjects in the lower school, and as separate lessons in the upper school. Pupils know right from wrong and follow school rules. Aspects of social and health education are also taught which, together with a good policy and approach for behaviour, gives additional guidance for the promotion of social skills. There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff and many examples of pupils accepting responsibility and extending their levels of independence.

56. Social development is further promoted by the various opportunities for integration into local schools and the college of further education. These events help to raise pupils' self-esteem and social awareness. Social development is extended in many subjects, particularly in physical education where they learn dressing skills, co-operation and collaboration, and in English and mathematics where they learn many basic life skills, communication skills and shopping skills.

57. Very good cultural awareness is provided through a range of experiences. A particularly fine example is the multi-cultural week held in school during which there were many opportunities for pupils to experience at first hand such things as Asian dancing, visiting a mosque and dressing in Muslim costumes. In art, music, geography and French, awareness is raised by comparing and contrasting aspects and artefacts of different cultures from other countries. Many visits are made to the local community and further afield, to museums, theatres and historical sites and these widens pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own cultural heritage.

58. A local authority support worker for bilingual and multi-cultural education works at the school two days a week and helps pupils and their families to a better understanding of variations in cultural backgrounds, and assists with communications between cultural groups.

## **70. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

59. The school's arrangements for the educational and personal support and guidance of pupils is very good and shows an improvement since the last inspection. Formal procedures through individual education plans for assessing and monitoring both academic progress and personal development are very good and the informal monitoring conducted through the strength of the relationships at the school is excellent. Targets for each pupil are clearly displayed in classrooms and are consistently applied. There is very good liaison with supporting agencies and pupils benefit significantly from the close working arrangements between the school and health professionals. Advice regarding careers starts at the lower end of the school and there is good provision for personal guidance for pupils from Key Stage 4.

60. The school has a very good behaviour policy which emphasises the need to create an environment conducive to good behaviour. There are clear guidelines for staff on appropriate strategies to use as rewards and sanctions for behaviour. These are clearly displayed in the classrooms. Pupils in the senior school understand and respect the coloured-card system of reward and sanction which is well applied. The behaviour policy has an explicit statement concerning violent behaviour, and the school's policy on restraint is

currently being reconsidered as part of a local authority review. There has been appropriate training for staff in the use of restraint and there is a good system for recording any incidents. The school has a clear statement regarding bullying.

61.The school has worked hard to improve attendance and has been successful in this. The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good.

62.The school has good procedures relating to child protection, and staff have received appropriate training. The school has taken a pro-active approach toward pupils' safety within the well-devised programme of personal, social and health education, which makes a very good contribution to both pupils' well being and to their personal development.

63.Since the last inspection, the school has moved to new premises. The health and safety issues raised at that time no longer exist. The current buildings and facilities are cleaned and maintained to a high standard, and formal health and safety procedures are in place and adhered to. The school has given a high priority to ensuring the security and safety of pupils. The arrangements for first aid and medical support within the school are very good, as is the provision of advice and support to parents through a range of clinics and workshops. There is good attention to safety for those pupils on visits and attending other establishments.

64.The school places a very high emphasis upon the well-being and health and safety of its pupils and is very successful in providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all.

76.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

65.Overall the quality of information to parents is good. The prospectus is clearly written, as is the governors' annual report to parents. Individual education plans meet requirements and there is an appropriate home-school agreement. The annual reports on pupils' progress, however, do not consistently provide adequate detail in subjects other than English and mathematics, of what pupils have achieved.

66.The school actively encourages parents to support their children's learning and parental involvement is good. The use of the home-school diary is very good. A few parents help in school; with swimming, in the library or on outings, whilst many more actively participate in the school's 'Parents Meet Staff' organisation, which raises funds and holds social events. Coffee mornings are held before pupils change classes to enable parents to meet the new members of staff, and there have been curriculum sessions to explain new initiatives such as the literacy hour.

67.The school has very good links with the local community and these are used to full advantage to enhance pupils' attainment and personal development. The Post 16 students enjoy work experience opportunities through a link with Tollesby school, which provides access to both a new environment and the opportunity to learn practical skills such as

decorating. Courses at both Teeside College and Middlesbrough college provide students with a very good opportunity to acquire additional skills and to work with students from elsewhere. The local environment is also well used to promote pupils progress, a good example being the project on the river Tees.

68. Art from the school is displayed in the community, which both increases the community's understanding of the school and encourages pupils to continue producing high quality work. The school participates in the Middlesbrough Youth Council and welcomes a significant number of work-experience pupils into the school. Since the move to the present site, there have been increasing links with the adjacent high school, and pupils from Ormesby school designed the Priory Woods logo.

## 80. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 80. Leadership and management

69. Since the school re-located to Priory Woods in November 1997, the headteacher, governors and staff have worked industriously to ensure that all OFSTED Action Plan targets have been achieved, and that the key issues raised in the previous inspection have been resolved.

70. The enthusiasm and team spirit engendered by the headteacher ensures that the governors and all staff, including those with management responsibilities, contribute to the quality of education provided by the school and to the overall very good progress made by pupils and students. An excellent ethos has been created, with a commitment to raising pupils' and students' attainment and progress. All pupils and students are valued and encouraged to achieve to their full potential, regardless of need or disability. The school provides good equality of opportunity. Girls, boys, those from ethnic minorities and those with additional special needs make at least good progress in all key stages. There is good evidence of many recent initiatives being developed well, such as the implementation of the school's literacy and numeracy strategies in a way which ensures success for the pupils and students.

71. There is clear commitment to high achievement and this supports very effective teaching and learning. Relationships at all levels are excellent. The very strong leadership of the headteacher provides excellent, clear educational direction for the school, this view is shared and very strongly supported by the governing body, whose vision for the school is to develop it into a centre of excellence for special education. The governing body is most effective. Governors are very well informed and are most supportive. They are clear about their statutory duties and are effective in their role as critical friends of the school. This support is welcomed by all staff. There are appropriate and properly constituted sub-committees for finance, personnel and operations. These report back to the full governors' meetings. The system is very effective. The governors have a very clear view of the school. The school complies fully with all statutory requirements.

72.The communication systems of the school ensure that the school aims and values are understood and practised by all. The consistency with which they are practised is reflected in the work of the school and enhances pupils' and students' progress. All staff are valued equally and made to feel that their contributions are appreciated.

73.The senior management team of the school, is fully aware of the many strengths and the few weaknesses of the school and have strategies in place to further improve the high quality of the school even further. The school development plan is an effective tool. All school developments are linked through the plan. All professional and personal development of staff is also linked directly to the plan. Staff development is excellent and much appreciated by all staff. Induction works very well and is appreciated by staff who have received this support.

74.Teaching and curriculum development are effectively monitored and evaluated by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and members of the governing body. The chair of the governing body monitors and evaluates the quality of education in lessons, accompanied and supported by the school's advisor. This practice is very much appreciated by the governors and the school and works well.

75.The school has made very good progress since the last inspection, and is very well placed to make further improvement and continue to provide a very good quality of education for its pupils and students.

#### **87. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

76.There is a sufficient number of staff to teach the curriculum, and the size of teaching groups is varied to meet the differing needs of the pupils. Teachers are well qualified and experienced, with relevant subject and additional specialist qualifications. Very effective use is made of teachers' subject knowledge, as for example in art and music, where some classes are exchanged. Where teaching is non-specialist it is never less than satisfactory. There is a very good balance of gender and also of length of teaching experience. The great majority of teachers are very experienced in this type of school. Overall, subject co-ordinators have a reasonable amount of non-contact time and staff deployment is very effective.

77.The school provides a sufficient number of classroom support assistants who are deployed appropriately, according to the particular needs of individuals and teaching groups. These assistants are well trained and experienced. They provide support of excellent quality. The teams involve all categories of staff, including the nurse, visiting therapists and administrative officer who are wholly integral to the school, and whose contributions are valued equally. For a school of this type and size, the time allocated for administration is at present low.

78.Procedures for the induction of new staff are very thorough. They are managed well by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. New staff are very well supported by a mentor, and through regular meetings with co-ordinators and heads of key stages. The school operates its own effective system of appraisal, which also promotes teachers' overall professional development. Individual professional development is strongly linked to priorities clearly identified in the school development plan. This feature, together with an increase in the level of classroom support, represents an improvement since the last inspection.

79.The inadequacies of accommodation identified in the last inspection have been very well rectified by the move into the new building. Accommodation overall is very good. Classrooms are generous in size, and are designed flexibly to allow for the necessary variety of groupings for the effective teaching of the curriculum. The range and quality of specialist areas is also very good. These include a hydrotherapy pool, rooms for science, art, music, technology, a hall for physical education, and designated accommodation for physiotherapy, speech therapy and medical care. The main room for science and technology is inappropriate for teaching. This inadequacy of provision has an adverse effect on the delivery of design and technology.

80.The grounds of the school are well kept and contained by a secure fence. The whole school is maintained to a very high standard, much to the credit of the caretaking staff. The excellent displays of pupils' work and photographs of them in action, both in classrooms and around the school, contribute well to the overall ethos.

81.Overall, learning resources for the subjects are satisfactory. They are very good in art and excellent in physical education, but unsatisfactory in design and technology. There is an information technology suite with an excellent bank of up-to-date computers, which are used to teach the subject. Classrooms also provide good access to computers to support particular subject teaching. An attractive and welcoming library is satisfactorily stocked with a satisfactory range of non-fiction books. Fiction books are kept mainly in individual classrooms. Resources are well organised for easy access. In some subjects, especially mathematics, teachers supplement manufactured resources with home-made items and collections of objects for counting and measuring. The school makes very good use of the local environment and arranges adventurous visits further afield to enrich pupils' and students' learning. Very good use is made of all resources. The provision and use of resources have improved since the previous inspection. These improvements represent a good contribution to the very good progress pupils and students make, and also towards their personal and social development.

### 93. **The efficiency of the school**

82.The governing body has established formal financial procedures, which comply with the local authority's financial regulations. There is a register of pecuniary interests. Financial arrangements are reviewed annually. Staff have been well trained to understand the operation of the financial regulations. At the time of the last inspection, the school required 98 per cent of its budget for staffing. This has improved, staffing cost are now around 85 per cent, allowing the school more control over how it spends its budget.

83. Financial planning is very good and is well monitored and evaluated by the school and the governing body. The staff and the governing body work effectively together to construct the school development plan, giving a feeling of ownership to all. The priorities set out in the plan, which underpins all aspects of the school, are fully costed. High quality information prepared by the school secretary and the headteacher is regularly presented to the governors' finance committee, who in turn present this to the full governing body. This procedure is welcomed by the governing body and accurately monitors spending.

84. The financial controls of the school are very good and procedures are very effective and efficient. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school's efficient secretary ensures the smooth running of day-to-day organisation. Administration gives positive support to the main purposes of the school, ensuring that teachers are free to focus on their work. However, the hours allocated to administration are too low for a school of this size. Private funds are carefully audited.

85. Staff have clear roles, current job descriptions and delegated responsibilities. Roles are now more clearly defined and staff have received in-service training. Teaching staff are deployed well. Learning support staff are deployed extremely effectively. Arrangements for the professional and personal development of staff are excellent. This impacts upon the high quality education provided for pupils and students and enhances positively the progress they make. The teamwork between teachers and learning support staff is outstanding and supports the good and occasionally very good progress made by pupils. Accommodation has improved dramatically since the school's re-location. The school uses its new accommodation well.

86. Resources have improved since the last inspection. Resources for information communication technology, physical education and art are excellent and used very well. Across the curriculum resources are now of sufficient quantity, quality and used effectively. Many resources are made in-house by staff to match the needs of individual pupils and students. This works well, the effective use of resources is reflected in the good progress achieved by pupils and students.

87. The school successfully achieves its stated aims and provides a facility much valued by parents, pupils and students. Most pupils enter the school with significant learning difficulties and underdeveloped personal and social skills. Considering the good progress made by pupils and students both in their academic and personal development, the pupils' very good attitudes towards learning and the high quality of teaching, the very strong leadership of the school, the very high standard of financial planning, control and efficiency, the relatively low unit cost, the school gives very good value for money.

99. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

99. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

99. **English**

88. Overall, the pupils make good progress in English across all key stages and Post 16, and in Key Stage 3 they make very good progress. Progress in speaking and listening is very good for pupils of all abilities and in all key stages is well supported by signing. Programmes of work are well planned with the speech and language therapists. Pupils' progress in reading and writing is good, supported by the National Literacy Strategy and the use of symbols. However, progress in writing for higher-attaining pupils is restricted, as there are fewer opportunities to use writing for a range of different purposes.

89. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening across the school. In Key Stage 1, higher-attaining pupils listen and respond to stories and songs, recall recent events in response to questions and assume the role of familiar characters, such as a bus driver or policeman. Lower-attaining pupils vocalise in response to familiar voices and express likes and dislikes with facial and body gestures. They point to the shelf in response to the question 'Where is Humpty Dumpty?' and also show anticipation of parts of the story by vocalising and gesturing. In Key Stage 2, higher-attaining pupils say what they like to do and take part in role-play, where they show a developing awareness of characters and dialogues. By the end of the key stage, higher-attaining pupils listen carefully, follow instructions and respond creatively to movement and drama tapes. Lower-attaining pupils are helped to press a horn at the appropriate part in the story of 'Mr. Bumbleticker's Bumper Sticker'.

90. In Key Stage 3, higher-attaining pupils role-play buying a ticket from the cinema office. They look at the person they are talking to and give an appropriate answer. By the end of the key stage they give a short talk about a personal event to a small group. Lower-attaining pupils are given encouragement and helped with signs, to give 'one word' answers. In Key Stage 4, in drama lessons, higher-attaining pupils talk about the character they imagine, prompted by objects taken from a suitcase and discuss this with the whole class at the end of the lesson. Lower-attaining pupils match a real key to a picture of a key, in response to the classroom assistant's instructions.

91. Pupils make good progress in reading across all the key stages. In Key Stage 1, higher-attaining pupils recognise their own names, by using the capital first letter and a sound prompt. Lower-attaining pupils, copy the sign for objects such as 'fish' and 'dog' and recognise pictures. In Key Stage 2, higher-attaining pupils match the letters with the sounds for 't', 'p', 'n' and 's'. By the end of the key stage, higher-attaining pupils know all their initial sounds and begin work on the middle sounds; but they are not taught that two letters make one sound (digraphs) such as 'oo' and 'ee' and this affects their progress. Lower-attaining pupils recognise objects by name.



92. By the end of Key Stage 3, higher-attaining pupils read from simple reading schemes. They show confidence and correct themselves when they make mistakes. In Key Stage 4, higher-attaining pupils read well, using picture and phonic cues well. They build phonically regular consonant-vowel-consonant (c-v-c) words but do not have strategies for reading words with digraphs or trigraphs, two letters or three letters making one sound. Lower-attaining pupils work on pre-reading skills, for example they recognise their own and other pupils' photographs and indicate choice by squeezing a classroom assistant's hand.

93. Pupils make good progress in writing. In Key Stage 1, higher-attaining pupils attempt to write over letters, with adult prompts. Lower-attaining pupils make marks with their fingers in sand. In Key Stage 2, pupils write letters in response to letter names, make circular movements and develop pencil control by making circular movements. By the end of the key stage they build words and make their own, simple sentences.

94. In Key Stage 3, higher-attaining pupils write sentences with full stops and capital letters, and create sentences with a sentence building board. Lower-attaining pupils complete the missing words from a list in order to complete sentences. Pupils with complex and profound learning difficulties are helped to collect window, door and roof outlines to put onto a house. In Key Stage 4, higher-attaining pupils record the details of characters, given by the group, spelling accurately without help. Lower-attaining pupils write over dots and copy underneath writing.

95. Pupils' response to English and drama is very good across the school. Pupils listen well and have good relationships with teachers. They are familiar with the routines of the National Literacy Strategy and this gives them confidence to contribute well in these lessons. They show enjoyment of lessons and concentrate well. Older pupils use their imagination well in drama lessons. For example, they take objects out of a suitcase and imagine the kind of person that owns them. They encourage each other when they are shy or unsure about giving answers or taking part in activities.

96. The teaching of English is good across the school and in Key Stage 3 it is very good. The teaching of speaking and listening is very good and the teaching of reading and writing is good. The use of classroom assistants is excellent, for example, they take the lead role in small-group work, within the National Literacy Strategy. They also sign alongside teachers during the reading of stories from 'Big Books'. Where teachers use symbols, signing and objects of reference to support literacy work, pupils make very good progress. However, in some lessons this is not consistent. For example, finger spelling or signing is not always used when a new concept is being introduced. Pupils' behaviour is very well managed and the few pupils with challenging behaviour are well integrated within the lessons. 'Story sacks' are used very well and these provide an imaginative sensory approach to the work, so that all pupils are able to gain enjoyment and learn well from the lesson.

97. Good techniques are used to help pupils to create sentences; they include answering the questions: 'When? Who? Where? Why?' with a sentence building board. However, higher-attaining pupils do not have many opportunities to extend the skills they have gained to creative writing and writing for a range of purposes. The teaching of reading ensures that pupils gain a good sight vocabulary and are confident in building regular words, which are made up of 'consonant-vowel-consonant' e.g. 'sad, fat and fit'. However, they are not taught that two letters can make one sound, for example in the vowel digraphs of 'oo', 'ee' and 'ar', and so are unable to build words using these sounds, such as 'moon', 'feet', or 'car'.

98. The curriculum for English is good. There is a suitable balance between speaking and listening and reading and writing. The teaching of literacy, for example vocabulary extension, within other subjects is very good. Good use is made of a commercial scheme designed for pupils with learning difficulties and this provides a clear framework for teachers. The National Literacy Strategy is very well planned, with clear learning objectives, and ensures that pupils of all abilities have equal access to literacy work. Good joint planning with the speech and language therapists provides work on articulation, grammar and social skills, which is delivered by teachers within the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils' targets in individual educational plans are included well within lessons.

99. The curriculum for pupils with complex and profound difficulties is also well planned, with appropriate sensory approaches, and includes work on communication, pre-reading and pre-writing, through Individual Education plans which provide a clear focus for the work. The curriculum is extended well by visiting drama workshops and the school has identified the need to further develop the drama curriculum. For example pupils in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 are taught very similar lessons. The extension of writing work for higher-attaining pupils also needs to be developed. The reading curriculum needs to be extended to include the teaching of vowel and consonant digraphs at an earlier stage, in order to give pupils confidence in reading a wider range of unfamiliar words.

100. Procedures for assessment are very good. The regional 'small steps' system is used well to clearly demonstrate what pupils know, understand and can do within the three attainment targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing. This in turn is used effectively to plan what the pupils should learn next. Speech and language therapists carry out detailed annual assessments with all pupils, which provides guidance for teachers in their programmes of work within the National Literacy Strategy.

101. English makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example drama workshops presenting Shakespeare contribute to their cultural development. Programmes of work developed with the speech and language therapists provide a very good contribution to the pupils' social development. For example pupils learn how to be a good listener in 'Social Speaking' and practice using eye contact, and speaking politely within role-play in shops.

102. The leadership and management of English are very good. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very good and teachers have been well trained and are confident in this work. The co-ordinator has enabled all teachers to use signing and symbols and sensory approaches to support their 'Big Book' work. The accommodation is very good.

Classrooms are spacious and extra rooms are used well for small group work. The library is a large, pleasant room. Resources for English are good. The National Literacy Strategy is well resourced with 'Big Books' and 'Story Sacks', and suitable supporting materials for word and sentence level work. The range of books in the library is satisfactory and the school is aware that some books need to be replaced with others that are more up to date. However, there are few simple switch devices for communication in use, and this restricts opportunities for pupils with little or no speech to develop their communication skills.

103.English shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Learning objectives were previously reported as being unclear and they are now a strength of the National Literacy Strategy. There was some unsatisfactory teaching and progress, and now all progress and teaching is good or very good. Literacy was inconsistent across the curriculum and it is now very good. The curriculum now gives clear entitlement to all pupils. Assessment, previously reported as being 'clear', is now very good.

104.English makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

## 116. **Mathematics**

105.Pupils have improved their progress in mathematics since the last inspection. Progress is now very good, as pupils move from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 4.

106.In Key Stage 1, lower-attaining pupils, most of whom have profound and multiple learning difficulties, recognise the difference between one and more than one. They learn this especially in their greeting and registration session where they are counted in and given a place in the group circle. Much of their learning comes through song and rhyme, for example 'Five little speckled frogs'. Most of these pupils indicate a choice from two objects, either by pointing, looking or using a switching device. Higher attainers at this stage count to three and understand the idea of 'more' or 'less', which they learn by manipulating playdough and arranging groups of objects. By the end of Key Stage 2 lower-attaining pupils have consolidated notions of 'bigger than' and 'smaller than', they sort objects according to colour and recognise numbers by tracing over them. Higher-attaining pupils count the number of beeps on the telephone, many count to ten and begin to record their work.

107.By the end of Key Stage 3, lower attaining pupils can build a tower with three blocks, count to three by placing objects in containers, and understand the notion of cause and effect, when they use the music keyboard and simple powered toys. Some of these pupils recognise the difference between a square and a circle, and a few perceive more complex shapes, as they complete jigsaw puzzles of moderate complexity. Higher-attaining pupils, at this stage, make especially good progress in learning the names of shapes, including cube, cylinder, cone and hexagon. They count forward to 20 and back again, count in twos to 20 and in tens to 100. Most pupils subtract from numbers up to 10 by counting on and some tell the time to the quarter hour. Very good progress is especially evident in this key stage.

108. By the end of Key Stage 4, many lower-attaining pupils have consolidated their notions of cause and effect and permanence, when, for example, they make objects move and track the movement, and 'find' objects which are hidden under a cloth by the teacher. Some pupils understand similarities and simple sequences in activities, which require them to match a square or a cylinder to another shape which is the same. Higher-attaining pupils, at the end of this key stage, continue to count in twos, recognise odd and even numbers, and understand how small numbers are doubled. They attempt to solve 'mental' problems, for instance by discovering that a number when doubled cannot result in an odd number. Much emphasis at present is placed on numeracy, which underpins pupils' knowledge and use of money, shape, space and measures. In Key Stage 4, pupils work towards the early grades of the Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts accreditation (OCR).

109. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good in the first two key stages and very good in Key Stages 3 and 4. They are very well behaved, show genuine interest in their work and co-operate well with staff. Older pupils work well together in groups. They respond well to praise, and many of them, including lower-attaining pupils are very pleased to share their successes with staff and visitors. Most take good pride in their work and a number of pupils in the older classes work diligently on their own with reduced supervision.

110. The quality of teaching across the school has improved since the last inspection. It is good overall. Two out of seventeen lessons were judged as excellent, five very good and ten good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In the best lessons, the teachers plan in very fine detail and ensure that every pupil in the class is working hard to the best of his or her ability. Classroom support assistants are fully informed and involved, often functioning as teachers of small groups. Work is well matched to each pupil and a brisk pace is established and maintained throughout the lesson. Also in good lessons, pupils' work is constantly assessed in fine detail, and they are told frequently how well they are progressing. At present homework is not formally set in mathematics, but this is being considered.

111. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator has introduced the numeracy strategy very effectively and almost every teacher is fully conversant with and competent in applying this new initiative. The strategy has placed a greater importance on whole class teaching and flexibility of pupils' skills in calculation. During the inspection there was a particular emphasis on numeracy, partly as a result of this. Nevertheless, schemes of work represent a broad and balanced range of activities as recommended by the National Curriculum. Pupils' mathematical achievements are effectively reported in the annual reviews and reports to parents. Occasionally, written reports to parents are insufficiently clear and detailed.

112. Learning resources for the subject are satisfactory across all key stages. Many resources are home made, or include collections of objects for counting, measuring and for attracting pupils' attention. These in particular are very effective. Teachers make very good links with other subjects, for example identification and counting of objects used in physical education, counting songs in music and notions of greater and smaller in science. In some classes, computer programmes are used to help pupils identify numbers, and to add or subtract.

113. The whole school mathematics curriculum is good. There is a well-written policy document which includes broad aims and a progression of steps for each area of learning. Teachers further refine these steps in their lesson plans, and for each pupil the detailed steps are included in individual education programmes. Small progressive steps are coded and included in pupils' assessment sheets. The lack of balance in the curriculum identified in the last inspection has been corrected. Mathematics assumes a place of importance in the school and has a very positive effect on the social, moral and cultural development of pupils at all stages. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum, especially in science and physical education.

## 125. Science

114. Throughout the school, progress in science is very good, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Progress in Key Stage 1 is very good. Teaching is mainly through experience, so that by the end of the key stage pupils have explored a variety of different materials and experimented with their properties finding out that some are soft and can change shape like dough or playdoh while others are hard such as dry clay. They have planted seeds and observed them grow, the higher attainers know that plants and animals need food and water and most pupils understand they must treat living things carefully so as not to hurt them. Most can activate switches to move battery operated toys or to use computers. They are aware of the changing seasons and colours in the world around them. They have been introduced to forces and motion; the lower attainers begin to grasp, pull and push objects, whilst the higher attainers experiment with force and motion moving objects by pushing and pulling.

115. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress. They are beginning to develop sufficient interest and confidence to carry out their own investigations. In one lesson when they were exploring transparent and opaque materials some pupils set up simple experiments to find out for themselves whether they were able to see through them or not. The higher attainers begin to make informed guesses. For example, based on their knowledge of forces, they were able to predict that a gate would need to be 'pushed' in order to close it. The lower attainers have experienced the effect of forces on themselves, such as the hot and cold wind from a hair dryer, and can search for a light or sound source indicating their understanding by body movements or facial expression. Most pupils recognise and name parts of a plant, and identify things that grow from a group of animate and inanimate objects. All pupils have experimented with magnets, and, having carried out a simple experiment to check their predictions, the higher attainers know that some materials are attracted and some pushed away.

116. By the end of Key Stage 3, the majority of pupils are developing a basic understanding of scientific investigation. They realise that any predictions need to be tested in a controlled and fair way and the results recorded, although they find this last process difficult. An example of designing such a test was seen in a lesson when pupils had to determine whether adjusting the height of a ramp would affect the speed of a toy car. They decided that they must always use the same car during the experiment in order to make it a 'fair' test. Everyone has made a simple electric circuit, some with adult support, and has succeeded in

making a bulb light up. The higher attainers have experimented with different materials in the circuit to find out whether the bulb would work. Pupils know that some materials can change their state under certain conditions; the lower attainers felt their wet hands become dry when blown by hot air from a hair dryer, whilst the higher attainers recognised that ice or chocolate melt and turn to liquid when warmed, whereas jelly sets hard when cold.

117. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have consolidated their previous learning. Exploring and discussing the similarities and differences between substances, their various properties and their uses, for example, different building materials. They understand about themselves as human organisms, they study bones and teeth in particular, and how and why they need to be looked after. The majority can handle simple data and make lists and charts, for example recording the number of people around the school who like different foods. Pupils have explored solids, liquids and gases and know they can change their state under certain conditions. They understand that the liquid in a thermometer moves up and down and the higher attainers can recognise this is a way of measuring the heat of things. The majority can record information and manage to read information from a table of results, with varying amounts of guidance and support. The lower attainers continue to be presented with a wide variety of experiences developing their awareness of themselves and the world around them.

118. Pupils attitudes and behaviour in science is always good and as they get older very good. They listen carefully, follow instructions and concentrate for increasing lengths of time. They are proud of their efforts and celebrate their own and others achievements sometimes voluntarily clapping. Most pupils will wait patiently for their turn, share resources, work independently and sometimes together if required. The lower attainers give eye contact and respond well to different stimuli indicating their likes and dislikes or understanding by facial expressions or body movements.

119. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in the quality of teaching which is now consistently good, often very good and occasionally excellent. Lessons are well planned and taught at a good pace matching the needs of the pupils. Teachers' knowledge of their subject is consistently good and the supportive, encouraging atmosphere which they provide raises pupils' confidence and self esteem so ensuring full involvement and participation. The overall high quality of teaching promotes the good progress of the pupils.

120. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been extended to include all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum for all key stages. This is good. The policy has recently been revised and a scheme of work produced. In Key Stages 1 and 2, science is taught over a two year cycle within a cross-curricular thematic framework, linked to technology in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 3, it becomes a discrete subject delivered over a three-year cycle. In Key Stage 4, for the majority of students, it is taught over a two year cycle but for the pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties it is taught over a five year cycle planned up to the end of Post 16. Assessment is good and is developing well by the use of the 'Brick Walls' system which help teachers to predict their forward planning. Every pupil has an individual file which includes photographic evidence of achievements. Pupils with additional special needs have equal access to the full curriculum; work is carefully differentiated and they are well supported by the skilled classroom assistants.

121. Science makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The exploration of the natural world provides many opportunities for wonder

and amazement as when watching bubbles float and burst, dough rising or looking at the changing colours of the landscape through coloured cellophane. Moral values are promoted through learning to look after and care about all living things and developing an understanding of the need for 'fair' tests. Social development occurs through sharing, listening to others and working together. The cultural aspect is less evident but science is involved in the multi-cultural weeks tasting different foods and discussing all the different colours and materials.

122.The subject is well managed and taught in a positive ethos. There has been good progress since the last inspection enhanced by the introduction of monitoring of both planning and teaching.

123.Most teachers teach science. The attendance of the co-ordinator and two other members of staff on the 'Space Project' course is already having a positive effect especially in the teaching of explorative and investigative science, where very good progress is being recorded.

124.There is a specialist room for science, but it is too small and often used as a thoroughfare, which makes it unsatisfactory. Most of the subject is taught in classrooms. However this does not have any serious impact on the delivery of the whole curriculum. Resources are good and easily accessible. Pupils go on a variety of outside visits such as farms, parks and Butterfly World, and there have been visits to the school from the police dogs and the Floating Point Science Theatre.

## 136. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Art**

125.There has been a considerable improvement in art since the last inspection. Progress is now very good across all key stages.

126.Throughout the whole school, pupils are given opportunities to explore and investigate a wide variety of materials and substances using many different media to produce both two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. They are consistently encouraged to appraise their own and others work, gradually developing a basic understanding of art and, in some instances, recognising why certain techniques evolved, such as aboriginal art used as a means of communication.

127.In Key Stage 1, pupils make very good progress exploring colour, shape, texture and form. They can choose from a wide range of materials both new and recycled and use a variety of media. By the end of the key stage, all pupils, both higher and lower attainers, have had equal opportunities and experiences. They have created displays using many different materials. For example, paper, foil, glue, paint, food such as sugar, flour, sweets and pasta shapes, natural things such as leaves, flowers and feathers, and recycled materials such as boxes, corrugated paper and plastic. They have made prints with paint on their own hands and feet, wallpaper patterns using potatoes and pan scrubs, as well as interesting sculptures.

128.By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are becoming confident in developing their ideas and increasingly able to produce recognisable images. They look at themselves moving in a

mirror, practise with a bendy doll and then make sculptures out of pipe cleaners in various moving positions. These are covered in modroc, mounted for display and used as models for the pupils to make observational drawings of their own moving figures. They select appropriate shapes to make a picture from a model, such as a house, choosing best-fit pieces for windows and doors etc. Using recycled plastic boxes, buttons, sweets etc, they have worked with three-dimensional shapes making musical instruments, for example shakers and stuffed old socks to make toy snakes. They begin to appreciate the work of famous artists, producing their own paintings in the style of Monet.

129. During Key Stage 3, pupils continue to extend their understanding of art and are taught to use sketches to record their observations before creating the final picture. They know about Aboriginal art and its function as a means of passing on information, understanding that the traditional colours had to come from nature and the paintings would be on tree bark. To replicate this they chose to use tissue paper and glue to make imitation bark, invented their own symbols for words and made a story written on paper bark, in Aboriginal style. They have made a tessera using sponge shapes which they designed from an original Roman mosaic. They appraise their own and others work, identifying those parts of a picture or work which they see as special or outstanding. An exhibition was organised to show paintings of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh, which was seen by staff, parents and governors. All pupils have designed heraldic shields, which they use as their personal identification within the Key Stage 3 classes.

130. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils are confident to express their own ideas and are more critical of their work. When making relief pictures of African people designed from photographs one student insisted that she alone would leave her pipe cleaner figure without clothes, the result looking very close to a genuine African painting. Using a papier-mache technique all students have made small bowls which they intend to take home as Christmas presents. They become more skilled at choosing appropriate tools and materials for a task and know the difference between various forms of glue and why they are used for specific purposes.

131. Pupils' response to art is always good and often very good. They behave well, listen carefully and follow instructions. As and when required, they work independently or together, sharing equipment such as glue or paste. They respect and value their own work and celebrate the achievements of others, sometimes clapping spontaneously. Pupils actively participate in class discussions and, as they get older, are confident enough to put forward their own ideas.

132. Teaching is always good, usually very good and occasionally excellent. All lessons seen were taught by the specialist teacher. The well-planned lessons were taught with enthusiasm, using innovative techniques and resources in order to achieve the co-ordinator's aim, to make art 'fun'. Relationships are excellent and the encouraging and supportive atmosphere ensures that everyone is fully involved, growing in confidence and self esteem. The contribution of every pupil or student is respected and valued and all their achievements are celebrated.

133. The curriculum is broad and balanced covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The scheme of work provides guidelines at all key stages, including for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.



134. Art makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' express their wonder and amazement at the world around them through observing nature and also in their growing appreciation of the work of famous artists. Art displays around the school, where pupils can celebrate their own and others achievements, along with pictures from artists such as Gauguin, Lowry, Monet and Van Gogh provide them with an attractive and ever-changing environment in which they can experience the beauty of things around them. Moral development is promoted through appreciating and looking after the work of others and understanding about the need to care for all living things. Socially they work together, help each other and most respect the objects and displays that are made. There are a wide variety of multicultural opportunities with Aboriginal art, African art and full involvement in the school's multi-cultural weeks.

135. The subject is well organised and managed. The specialist teacher takes all the art for the pupils in the Priory Woods building, but not for those in Hemlington Hall during primary integration. The co-ordinator ensures that there is close liaison between the two groups and monitors both planning and teaching.

136. The specialist art room provides a good environment for the teaching of art, and resources are very good. The pupils and students go out on several visits and also have people working with them in school such as the Artist in Residence who will visit the school before Christmas.

148.  
**technology**

**Design and**

137. By the end of each key stage progress is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to recall the names of items of basic kitchen equipment. They know that they have to wash their hands before handling food. With adult support, pupils cut up fruit using a knife. They understand simple routines in a kitchen, such as where utensils are kept. In Key Stage 2, pupils use Unifix blocks to help them measure units accurately. They cut lengths of doweling using a saw and make a simple toy following and understanding a basic design. Whilst making puppets, pupils choose suitable materials. They use Lego to assemble a simple gear and know how it works.

138. In Key Stages 3 and 4, in food technology, lower-attaining pupils recognise, name and choose appropriate utensils and ingredients for making a sandwich. They understand what they have to do, listen to instructions and carry them out with adult support. Higher-attaining pupils design and make a 'car' from junk. They remember the names for parts of a car, such as an axle, and what it does. They use hand-tools safely to saw, drill and measure, when making make a car chassis from doweling and card.

139. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are generally good. They work hard and persevere at the tasks set. They work well alongside one another and sometimes work in a group or in pairs successfully.

140. Teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2, and very good in Key Stages, 3 and 4. Despite limited resources and unsatisfactory facilities for the design and making aspects of the subject, teachers show good skills and make the best of what they have. They are enthusiastic and

this helps to motivate pupils. Very good use is made of the skills of classrooms assistants, who give good support to teaching and often have small groups to teach on their own, which they do very well.

141.Improvement has been made in curriculum, and in the facilities for food technology, which are good, since the previous inspection. Although some curriculum documentation is in place, the new co-ordinator has rightly identified an action plan that aims to review and to ensure uniform curriculum provision across the school. Food technology is taught principally as part of personal, social and health education, and is not an integral part of the design and technology curriculum. This is unsatisfactory and needs to be addressed within the schemes of work. Accreditation is not fully in place for pupils at Key Stage 4. The annual school report gives sound information as to what pupils have covered in the curriculum but does not deal with progress made, which is unsatisfactory.

142.Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The designated workshop is unsuitable and unsafe for the use of larger equipment as the room is a thoroughfare to other parts of the school, and there is insufficient storage space. Resources for use with resistant materials, equipment, tools and materials, are unsatisfactory.

### **Information and communication technology**

143.Teachers have increased in their knowledge and confidence in using information and communications technology since the previous inspection and this has significantly improved the overall provision. Progress is very good overall and pupils gradually increase their skills with sometimes very good or excellent examples in each key stage. Pupils are well challenged and motivated by the activities set for them.

144.By the end of Key Stage 1, progress is good. Most pupils know how to use a touch screen. They understand the routine of the information and communication technology room and know what they have to do. They develop good skills of selecting. They follow a story on screen using headphones and interact with switches to move to the next part of the story.

145.By the end of Key Stage 2, progress is very good. Lower-attaining pupils use a touch-screen to change pictures or sounds and are aware of cause and effect. Higher-attaining pupils recall the names of a 'mouse' and use it to select on-screen items to assemble the shapes of a face. They can exit and shut down the computer program.

146.By the end of Key Stage 3, progress is very good. Lower-attaining pupils use a 'plate' switch to activate music and a visual display. They use an electronic piano keyboard to make and record musical sounds. They show their reactions to changes in sounds and lights by facial expression and gestures, when using sensory equipment in the sensory room. Higher-attaining pupils become quite skilful at using a keyboard for typing. They can space words and letters, select upper or lower-case, select font and size, edit and delete.

147.By the end of Key Stage 4, progress is very good and often excellent. Higher-attaining pupils know and understand about the Internet and what an e-mail is. They type in their identity codes and passwords. Many retrieve e-mail messages and send their own replies in a link with a local primary school. There are good examples of pupils using research and retrieval of information on the internet to support their work in other subjects, for instance, during a project in history on Captain Cook. With the help of a specially adapted microphone, lower-attaining pupils voice patterns alter shapes on screen.

148.Pupils are always thrilled and delighted to be in the information and communication technology room and using the computers. Their attitude and behaviour is very good. They co-operate extremely well with staff, accepting their advice and taking turns as requested for use of the equipment. They respect the information and communication technology room and the equipment in it; they know that it is special and understand rules for safety and use of the computers. Some older higher-attaining pupils are beginning to develop independent skills and to be responsible for their own work.

149.Teaching is mostly very good, sometimes it is excellent. This is in large measure due to the excellent technical and teaching support provided by the technician. Teaching is supported by expert knowledge, it is well organised and prepared with excellent collaboration between classroom teachers, assistants and the technician. From the moment pupils enter the information and communication technology room they are enthralled and challenged by the tasks put before them. Very careful explanations and instructions are given and there are very high expectations of pupil involvement and behaviour. Software programs are matched very well to the abilities of pupils, so that they motivate and sustain interest as well as promote new skills. Some use of information and communication technology to support basic literacy and numeracy occurs, but this could be extended further. Particularly good, is the way that digital photography is being used by teachers to provide immediate recall and direct visual images of pupils' work and achievements across all subjects. Teachers use word-processing, Clip-Art and desk-top publishing techniques to effectively support the visual display of pupils' work across many subjects. Further opportunities could be made to use information and communication technology to extend skills in other subjects.

150.There is a good curriculum that takes advantage of the new networked hardware, and of software programs available in the information and communication technology room, and the subject is well managed. Resources are very good and encompass a wide range of equipment and software, and in particular to support assistive technology. The technician also adapts equipment and software to meet the specialised needs of many pupils so that they can use information and communication technology and benefit from the curriculum. There are good plans to extend the range of software, to ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to make incremental progress, and to provide a computer systems for each classroom. There are not enough communication aids for non-verbal pupils. Assessment of pupils' abilities is satisfactory, but relies on general statements and there is no check of pupils' progress at each key stage against specific criteria to ensure that they make incremental gains in skills. The co-ordinator has suitable plans to introduce a whole-school recording format.

151.Information and communication technology has a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## 163. **History**

152. Progress in history is good across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, but pupils work was scrutinised, together with teachers' plans, records, assessments and reports to parents. A considerable amount of photographic evidence was available for inspection. In Key Stage 1, higher-attaining pupils had visited a church and taken rubbings from gravestones. Pupils had examined old and new toys to note the differences and they had engaged in simple role-play looking at how servants dressed and worked in the past, lighting fires and looking after wealthy people. Lower-attaining pupils had experienced the change of the seasons and touched and felt household goods from different times.

153. In Key Stage 2, progress is good. Lower-attaining pupils hold and feel old toys from different ages such as spinning tops. They taste different drinks. Higher-attaining pupils in this key stage visit an old school room and make comparisons with the modern rooms in school. Pupils dress up in nineteenth century costume and sit at school desks and use slates.

154. In Key Stage 3, progress ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall, it is good. Lower-attaining pupils study railways. They blow a whistle to start a model train and observe that the train carries objects. Pupils are able to signal the train to stop. Higher-attaining pupils know that fire and water make steam. Some know that George Stephenson had built one of the earliest locomotives called 'Locomotion'. They had seen the engine in Darlington museum and knew that the steam forced the piston in the cylinder thereby making the locomotive move. One pupil knew that the Rocket ran on the Manchester and Liverpool railway and that the model train in use in the classroom was powered with electricity. Pupils use a good range of vocabulary in this key stage. Other pupils study the discoveries of Captain Cook, visit his house and school and draw maps of his travels. They have looked up the 'Endeavour' and Cook's explorations on the internet.

155. The teaching of history in Key Stage 2 is good. Lessons are well prepared and planned. Teachers used real materials imaginatively, to bring home experiences to children. Patience, organisation and good communication skills characterise the teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a very good knowledge of their pupils. In Key Stage 3, teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject, plan and prepare work carefully in accordance with the National Curriculum programmes of study. These programmes are suitably modified to meet the pupils abilities. Very good use is made of museum visits and artefacts in the classroom. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, communicate effectively and manage classes very well, with patience and good humour.

156. Pupils response ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall in Key Stages 2 and 3, response is good. Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons. They are responsive, concentrate well and are very well behaved. They co-operate well with one another taking turns and working well with the staff. In one lesson, a pupil had a violent fit which the staff handled carefully with good control and sensitivity.

157. There is a very good and relevant curriculum in place. The subject has a clear policy and an appropriate scheme of work. The policy and scheme place the pupil at the centre of the learning. The scheme is based upon Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum and the small-steps scheme. It is practically based and meets pupils' learning needs. It takes the pupil's immediate experience of life to build and develop historical concepts. This is excellent practice.

158. History is well led. There are two history co-ordinators in the school; one for the primary department another for secondary. The policy and scheme have been drafted by the whole staff and finalised by the two co-ordinators. The policy and the scheme are well constructed with reference to Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum. They are balanced and appropriately adapted for pupils' learning difficulties, in relying on the wealth of local history to stimulate understanding and interest.

159. Both co-ordinators provide imaginative and enthusiastic support for the staff. The primary co-ordinator has conducted an audit of staff work and highlighted the historical topics in drawing up the scheme of work in the department. She is planning a school museum and a photographic timeline to trace the history of the pupils as they move up through the school. The secondary co-ordinator is responsible for all the history teaching in the department and has developed useful cross curriculum links between history and physical education, geography, information and communication technology and art. Both co-ordinators have received useful and appropriate in service training in the subject and use outside resources and visiting speakers very effectively. At present, the work in history in the school is reviewed by the co-ordinators but the teaching of the subject is not yet monitored in classes by them. However, the scheme of work and the regular meetings that take place between the co-ordinators ensures continuity and good planning and support across the primary and secondary departments.

160. There is a limited budget for history in both the primary and secondary departments. The co-ordinators rely on other sources to supplement the artefacts and materials in the school. Both departments have sufficient resources which are of good quality and have been chosen with care. Visits to sites of historic interest are used well to enrich pupils' historic experiences and underpin their understanding of the subject. Visits have been made to local museums such as Beamish, the Cook Museum, Hartlepool Quay, Preston Park, Darlington Railway Museum, the Roman Fort at Arbia and Hadrian's Wall. Excellent photographic displays of children's activities in the classrooms and corridors further enhance this subject, as do the beautifully painted heraldic shields in the hall.

161. Records of work undertaken in history are kept for all pupils. Their work is marked and displayed prominently. There is no external accreditation of the subject at present, although this is under review. However, the quality of the annual reports to parents is varied and not always satisfactory. There is little reported regarding pupils' progress and some students, both SLD and PMLD, do not receive an annual report in this subject.

162. Since the last inspection considerable improvement has been made in the teaching of history. It has been introduced throughout the school with vigour, intelligence and imagination. It contributes very well to pupils' social, moral and cultural understanding and is an emerging strength of the school's curriculum.

174.

## **Geography**

163. Geography is taught in Key Stages 1 and 2 through topics. In Key Stages 3 and 4 it is taught as a discrete subject. During the week of the inspection, the timetable did not allow for the inspection of lessons other than in Key Stage 4, as the history module was being taught. However, pupils work, photographs, and teachers' records, lesson plans and annual reports across the key stages were scrutinised to evaluate progress in the subject.

164. In Key Stage 1, progress is good. Pupils recognise the shape of a house on a computer screen and map. They recognise the colour of a post box and draw it. Higher-attaining pupils use a computer to draw buildings near their home. Maps of the school and the neighbouring area are made out of different materials. Groups visit rivers and railway stations. They walk around Stewart Park and make maps depicting bridges, steps, trees and ducks.

165. In Key Stage 2, progress is good. Lower-attaining pupils visit woodlands and experience the scent and texture of plants as part of their sensory experiences. They explore the school grounds and experience temperature changes. They look at the people who help us. Higher-attaining pupils look at Middlesbrough and undertake a topic on the town and its transport. In both key stages, pupils are involved in the travels of a Teddy Bear to different countries. They look at maps and pictures of these different countries.

166. In Key Stage 3, progress is good. Lower-attaining pupils experience travel in the area and higher-attaining pupils study the Tees Valley. They are involved in making a model with mountains, waterfalls and lakes. They study rivers and their crossings; fords, ferries and bridges. Some pupils have travelled on a boat from the Transporter bridge in Middlesbrough up the estuary and studied the docklands, cranes and boats. More detailed work on rivers has included investigations as to how river water carries mud and silt. One group studying the river in different parts of its course have thrown a bottle into the waters to study the effect of flow and river movement. Pupils have also been involved in a sponsored run to bring relief to Ethiopia after studying the effects of drought in that country.

167. At Key Stage 4, progress is satisfactory. Some lower attaining pupils recognise and name various vegetables and fruits. They learn about which shops specialise in selling these products.

168. Pupils' response to geography at Key Stage 4 is good. They are enthusiastic about their work. They display interest in activities, behave well and co-operate with their teachers and support staff.

169. The teaching of geography is good. Lessons are well planned. They relate appropriately to the programmes of study in the National Curriculum, but they have been effectively adapted to meet the learning requirements of the children. Teachers use various artefacts to good effect and are able to explain concepts clearly and simply. They motivate the pupils well and manage classes effectively.

170. Geography is taught throughout the school. The curriculum is very relevant. The subject has a clear and balanced policy and scheme of work that is based appropriately on the National Curriculum, and it takes into account the pupils' learning difficulties. Reference is made in the scheme to links with other subjects, such as literacy, MFL, English, science and information and communication technology. There are two geography co-ordinators in the school; one for the primary department, the other for secondary. The co-ordinators have collaborated effectively, worked hard and imaginatively to produce the policy and schemes of work for the school. Although they do not monitor work directly in the classroom, they do monitor the curriculum. Through this continuity is ensured.

171. Assessment is good. Accurate records are kept of the topics covered in this subject. However, the quality of the annual reports to parents is varied and not always satisfactory. There is little mention regarding pupils' progress and some pupils, both SLD and PMLD do not receive an annual report in this subject.

172. The co-ordinators have a limited budget for this subject, but sufficient resources have been accumulated in the school which are of reasonable quality. Extremely good use is made of the neighbourhood to develop geographic skills. Visits have been made on the North Sea by sailing ship, to the town of Middlesbrough, to the River Tees and the immediate environs, Stewart Park, Saltburn station and to the docklands.

173. The co-ordinators provide positive and imaginative support to the other staff teaching the subject. Excellent use is made of art and photographic display and there is a growing use of information and communication technology to support the subject.

174. The study of geography has improved and has been well established since the last inspection. It links well with other subjects and contributes positively to pupils' cultural, moral and social and personal development. It is an emerging strength of the school's curriculum.

186.

### **Modern foreign language**

175. French was not reported in the last inspection report, as French was not taught in Carisbrooke school. Since the school re-located to Priory Woods, French is taught on a weekly basis to the higher attainers in Key Stage 3. Lower attainers in Key Stage 3 and all Key Stage 4 pupils take part in termly 'French weeks'.

176. Progress made by pupils over both key stages is satisfactory. Pupils greet each other and staff, say if they are boys or girls, if they feel well or not. They listen carefully to tapes and respond accurately to commands. They re-cap their range of vocabulary, covering number, colours, fruit and drinks. They identify the days of the week and months of the year, and take part in role-play, shopping at the market. They enthusiastically join in signing French songs.

177. During the week of inspection, French was seen only in Key Stage 3, with higher-attaining pupils. Pupils' response and attitude to French is good. They show enjoyment in lessons, respond with great enthusiasm, concentrate well and persevere to complete tasks. They behave very well and are quick to celebrate their own and each others' successes,

occasionally breaking into spontaneous applause. Their recall of past work and vocabulary is remarkable. One pupil who had been hospitalised for nine weeks and was in his first lesson of the term, recalled vocabulary he had been taught before going into hospital. They take some responsibility for their own learning, by playing table games, in French, using resources respectfully, taking turns and playing by the rules.

178.The quality of teaching is good. There is satisfactory subject knowledge, good use of the target language, very good knowledge of individual pupils. Lesson are brisk, changes of activities are well timed, there are good resources, many made in-house to match needs of individual pupils.

179.There is a comprehensive French policy document and the scheme of work is developing well being broken down into small steps, linked closely to the school's literacy strategy of listening and responding, speaking, reading and responding and writing. There are also good links with the school's numeracy strategy ensuring pupils count both in English and French.

180.French makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Music**

181.Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in music. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards in the upper school were judged to be unsatisfactory.

182.No class music lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, however, there is evidence of pupils' response to music in other lessons and in a song session for the lower school. Lower-attaining pupils respond well to music, especially to action songs and singing games. They understand the stories implied in songs, for example 'Walking in the jungle' and 'A world outside my window'. Some pupils have a sense of fast and slow, loud and soft and most respond by making movements when there are sudden changes of volume. A few pupils join in correctly with the melody and words of songs. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recognise well-known signature tunes. Some can identify these from the first few notes of the introduction. Pupils play sounds on simple percussion instruments in action songs and some express clear preferences for particular instruments. Although very few pupils sing well in tune, most know a good range of songs, which they perform with good rhythm and obvious enjoyment.

183.By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils make satisfactory progress in extending their knowledge of songs which they perform enthusiastically. Pupils enjoy singing. They appreciate that songs express different feelings when performed louder or softer, and, with help, they sing an easy two-part carol. They also play simple percussion instruments with sensitivity, although they lack skill in playing to a beat, or playing rhythmic patterns. Lower-attaining pupils show good responses to musical sounds made near to them, and some appreciate different expressive elements in recorded music which is used as a background as they make sounds on instruments.

184.By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils make satisfactory progress in singing. Higher-attaining pupils sing in two parts with some confidence, and the majority remember well all the words



of lengthy songs. However, they do not play to a beat or perform rhythmic patterns sufficiently well. Lower-attaining pupils respond very well to changes of speed and mood in the music they hear. Most pupils participate in American action songs with great enjoyment.

185. Pupils' responses in music lessons are good overall, and very good in Key Stage 4. They respond with enjoyment to songs and to music on tape, and most try hard to achieve higher standards of singing and playing. They are clearly pleased when they make successful individual contributions in lessons, and they enjoy a taking part in a group. Low-attaining pupils, in particular, show deep responses to particular sounds and to particular styles of music. In the many lessons where music is used to teach language, number and colour, they clearly gain much from using rhythm and rhyme as reinforcement.

186. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good and very good teaching. Although not all class teachers are confident in the subject, most are prepared to sing, play and initiate activities. Where possible, classes are exchanged to exploit the particular skills of some teachers, for example guitar accompaniment. In most music lessons, a good pace is maintained and teachers are clear about their aims. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection in terms of pace and planning of lessons. In many lessons, classroom assistants use their voices and rhythmic skills with great enthusiasm in order to enthuse the pupils. Teamwork in lessons is excellent.

187. The subject is not yet co-ordinated sufficiently well across the school. A draft policy has been prepared, and although this makes broad recommendations and suggestions for activities, it is not yet specifically geared to the needs of this particular school. Teachers, therefore, cannot identify targets for year groups and individuals, and, consequently, progress in all aspects of music is limited. In spite of this, there is a great enthusiasm for music in the school, and the provision for pupils' appreciation and therapeutic response is very good.

188. There is a specialist music room, with a satisfactory range of resources which are used very well. Music is also taught in classrooms and in the school hall. A number of musicians have visited the school recently. These include the school's music service brass ensemble, the police band and a professional harpist.

189. Music makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural life of the school.  
201.

## 201. **Physical education**

190. All the elements of physical education are taught throughout the key stages, where appropriate, and pupils make very good progress in all key stages.

191. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' progress is very good overall. Lower-attaining pupils enter the swimming pool, float on their back with support and help from staff. Higher-attaining swimmers float on their back with buoyancy aids and kick their legs to aid propulsion. Higher-attaining pupils explore elements of physical education equipment, and find different ways of balancing and jumping on and off balance beams and steps. Very agile pupils are well co-ordinated and move around the equipment at speed and with confidence.

192. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is very good. Lower-attaining pupils pass balls and rolls of different texture to members of staff. They stretch hands and legs on request. Some hold onto and explore objects, others bounce on a trampoline whilst being supported. One pupil can walk a few steps in a mechanical walker. In swimming, some pupils dip their heads in water and lunge for the rail whilst being held. Higher-attaining pupils move and change direction in movement. They have good body awareness and physical control. Others are able to roll, catch and bounce balls, change direction quickly in movement and respond with quick reflexes to commands. Pupils step in and out of hoops, move round hoops with one leg inside. Other pupils have developed sufficient control to adjust the weight of their steps whilst walking and running.

193. By Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils' progress is very good. Lower-attaining pupils move confidently in water, some without help. One pupil could swim a few strokes without help. Others lie on their front and back with floats and propel themselves forward by kicking their legs. Higher-attaining pupils move with agility. They warm up for physical activity. Many turn and run adeptly. They position themselves in groups. Many pupils can throw, catch and bounce balls with accuracy. Many pitch balls and bean bags at the right length. In dance, pupils move rhythmically and with good co-ordination. They make good shapes whilst following imaginary activities to music. Many are able to bend and stretch with good flexibility. Others count bounces on trampolines, climb under and over objects, crawl with speed through a tunnel and do forward rolls.

194. Pupils' response to lessons is very good overall across the key stages, with some excellent response in Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 3, their response is never less than excellent. Pupils dress appropriately for activities, warm up, and observe health and safety rules. The pupils co-operate with staff enthusiastically and the majority are very well behaved. Pupils enjoy the various aspects of physical education and manage to concentrate well on activities for significant periods of time. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, they are co-operating well in taking turns. In Key stages 3 and 4, they are happy to share equipment and are appreciative of the staff's involvement, looking for praise and reassurance. Pupils behave very sportingly during activities, applauding one another's success. In Key Stage 3, and often in Key Stage 4, the response and behaviour of pupils is exemplary.

195. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good. The majority of teaching is very good across the key stages. In Key Stage 3, it is never less than very good. Where teaching is at its best, all pupils are working hard for considerable periods of time as a result of the skilful encouragement given by the teacher or support staff. Staff have a good knowledge of their subject, praise pupils for their achievements, and provide well-organised

lessons that follow the National Curriculum programmes of study. Staff enjoy excellent relations with pupils and always observe the necessary safety recommendations. In Key Stages 3 and 4, staff link Personal, Health and Social Education well with their work, telling pupils about their health and heart rate. Staff always have high expectations of effort and behaviour from pupils during physical education.

196. The subject has a clear policy which is a useful guide to the work across the school. A scheme of work exists based on the small steps curriculum prior to Key Stage 1, and the Key Stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum guidelines. All the relevant activities of athletics, swimming, dance and games are covered by the scheme of work, including adventurous activities for the older pupils and appropriate activities for pupils with PMLD.

197. The subject is co-ordinated across the school by a single co-ordinator. The co-ordinator drafted the scheme and policy with help from staff. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor progress in classes directly, but is briefed by senior staff. He is in the process of drawing up an action plan to evaluate the subject. Although there is evidence of much good work undertaken by teachers across the primary and secondary phase the co-ordinator is not always aware of activities in the secondary department which means that continuity, although good at present, is not monitored rigorously enough. The co-ordinator has undertaken some professional development.

198. The co-ordinator holds a small separate budget for physical education and there are excellent facilities inside the school, including a hydrotherapy pool and two school halls. The equipment is of excellent quality and there is a plentiful supply of items ranging from sophisticated trampolines and lifting devices to bouncy castles and a generous supply of footballs, hoops and games equipment. This equipment is checked annually in accordance with the Local Authorities Health and Safety procedures, but the co-ordinator was unaware of this. Staff are aware of the equipment available and the co-ordinator is in the process of auditing materials for staff use.

199. The facilities for physical education and games outside is limited to playground space and a small area for shooting practice in football, but there is no football pitch. The school council has rightly raised this issue as a source of concern.

200. Good use is also made of surrounding facilities to support the subject, including the Neptune Swimming Pool in Middlesbrough, facilities in mainstream schools and colleges and the Lane Head residential centre at Lake Coniston. Pony riding is also available for a large number of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 on a weekly basis. This is a popular activity and does much to enhance the confidence, co-ordination, self-esteem and understanding of pupils.

201. Physiotherapy is provided for pupils with PMLD and other pupils during some physical education lessons. The programme is based on the Tees Health scheme. It is effective and the work is appropriate. In the case of some Asian pupils, instructions are given in Urdu by staff who have learnt the language. This is excellent practice.

202. There is a very good and effective system for recording the progress of all pupils in the various aspects of the subject. Progress is reported in individual education plans and new targets are set. Annual reports are sent to parents which cover the work pupils have undertaken. They do not always report on pupils' achievements and progress, and do not follow a standard form. External accreditation for achievements in physical education is realised by BAGA awards for gymnastic achievements in all key stages and Post 16.

203. The work in physical education has improved since the last inspection. In part this has been due to the excellent resources at the new schools disposal and in part to the abilities of the teachers and learning support assistants working in both departments. Physical Education plays a very successful and important part in the moral and social development of the pupils, as they work together co-operatively sharing time and equipment. Pupils make excellent use of the resources available and clearly benefit from and enjoy their physical education.

### **Religious education**

204. By the end of Key Stage 1, progress is very good. Pupils listen to stories from the Bible and are aware that it has important messages about God. Higher-attaining pupils follow the story of Jesus' birthday and know that Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem and that Jesus was born in a stable. Lower-attaining pupils take part in experiences that help them to become aware of 'self' through using their senses. They are aware of lights being turned out and the lighting of a candle, and grow quiet to show that they understand this a special time.

205. By the end of Key Stage 2, progress is very good. Higher-attaining pupils show progress in remembering the main features of an assembly on kindness and sharing. They can name their friends and show some understanding of what it means to be kind. They know that the Bible is a special book and answer questions about the main points of the story of Jesus' birth. Lower-attaining pupils explore feelings and some change facial expressions to show 'happy' or 'sad'. Some lower-attaining pupils find it difficult to follow abstract images.

206. By the end of Key Stage 3, progress is very good. Higher-attaining pupils have very good recall of previous work and know the names of Jewish religious artefacts such as 'kipahs', and that they are headgear worn by men when they go to pray in a synagogue. By the end of Key Stage 4, progress remains very good. Pupils understand and recall the importance of the Koran to Muslims, and know they must treat it with respect as a special book. They listen to and understand stories about Ramadan, and know that during this time Muslims do not eat food during daylight hours. Lower-attaining pupils in these key stages continue in their experiences to raise self-awareness, by the quiet reflection and enjoyment of music and sensory hand and foot massages.

207. Pupils show very good attitudes and behaviour, and most are interested and motivated to work hard. They listen to stories quietly, and take turns in class activities. They relate well to one another and to staff and show co-operation and sustained hard work to task set.

208. Teaching is predominantly very good. Lessons are well organised and prepared. They provide a good range of activities at suitable levels for pupils' abilities with good use of relevant artefacts and materials. Lessons are lively and hold pupils' interest and are

motivating because teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. Good use is made of praise and encouragement, and teachers have high expectations of pupil participation and behaviour. An example was seen in Key Stage 3 of an excellent lesson that had many of these features present, in which a Jewish game was played and pupils learnt about Jewish customs and religious symbols and objects.

209. Significant improvement has occurred in the curriculum and in the management of the subject since the previous inspection and both are now good. Co-ordinators for lower and upper school departments have been appointed and they work effectively together to ensure a smooth transition between the departments, whilst maintaining continuity and progress. A new policy and scheme of work is suitably based on the local authority agreed syllabus and this has further strengthened the support given to pupils' progress. Planning is very good and covers each half-term and there are themes or topics to be covered each year. An assessment sheet has recently been introduced which should strengthen the reporting of progress when it is applied uniformly across the school. Resources of books and artefacts are now satisfactory.

210. Religious education has a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE)**

211. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, is good overall. Pupils develop good social skills of sharing and taking turns. They learn to co-operate with one another and with adults. They are aware of classroom routines, they understand and use symbols, objects of reference, pictures of objects or activities and signing, for each part of their school day. They make good and often very good progress in their self-help and dressing skills, for instance, when getting ready for physical education or swimming. Pupils consolidate their progress against targets set in their individual education plans, such as for sitting in a group, making choices, waiting turns, not shouting-out, and various other basic social skills. Most pupils make good or better progress in improving their behaviour. This is particularly the case in the reception class where pupils are new to the school. Many increase in their ability to concentrate and apply themselves to tasks. They join in circle time and listen and take part well. They know to be quiet when the sessions changes to time for prayer, and join in with the greetings or going-home songs. At lunch-time, many pupils can feed themselves with support, whilst lower-attaining pupils co-operate well with staff for their feeding programme.

212. Progress in Key Stages 3 and 4, is very good. Pupils take responsibility for performing simple jobs in the classroom, such as making drinks for the group. They understand about money and checking change, when shopping for ingredients to use in food technology lessons. Some pupils take part in meetings of the School Council and know how to discuss issues important to themselves and to others. At lunch-time pupils use the cafeteria services successfully, making choices about their meals, wait their turn in a queue, and enjoy good social interactions and conduct themselves appropriately.

213. All pupils grow in self-confidence and esteem. They develop good social and personal skills, so that by the time they leave school they are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. Pupils respond in a very positive and often excellent way to the tasks

they are set. They often sustain high levels of concentration and perseverance to accomplish them. Behaviour and attitudes overall are very good and often excellent. They co-operate well with one another and with adults, very often working in a group or in pairs, willingly and effectively. They are well motivated to succeed.

214. Teaching is good or better in most lessons, and is very good overall. The main strength of teaching is the detailed knowledge, understanding and awareness of teachers and classroom assistants of the social, medical and learning needs of pupils, and their ability to provide a wide range of very appropriate and challenging learning activities that match these needs. The staff are also very good at consistently recognising and praising the achievements of pupils. Teachers make excellent use of Individual Education Plans to identify and address each pupil's personal and social needs.

215. The good curriculum is well managed with suitable policy and schemes of work in place. Although there is some further work to be completed to make a whole school approach, this is carefully identified in the subject action plan. Separate lessons only occur in the upper school, however, a significant and appropriate length of time is allocated to teaching personal, social and health education in each key stage. Care should be taken that such sessions are not eroded or neglected, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers' records and assessments are good and inform Individual Education Plans and future teaching. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of staff-made materials. Nationally recognised accreditation is suitably provided. Health, sex education and lessons on citizenship are introduced in the syllabus, as appropriate to the individual needs of pupils. All pupils have access to personal educational guidance through links with the local careers service providers.

216. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through their personal and social education is excellent.

## **Post 16 Provision**

217. The education opportunities offered to the students Post 16 is good. The school provides successfully for students with a very wide range of ability. Post 16 students can stay on at school for up to three years. All higher-attaining students attend local colleges for some part of their week. A good range of courses is offered, such as vocational courses, food preparation, independent living skills, newspaper production, photography and horticulture. They integrate well with students and adults at the colleges, and benefit not only from the teaching and courses offered but from the social interaction which takes place. Some attend a local school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties one half day per week for vocational courses.

218. In school, all students receive a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, planned well to meet their individual needs. The Post 16 classes are well managed. Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of the students. Accommodation is satisfactory, being discrete from the rest of the pupils in school.

219. In **English** in their literacy sessions, students identify and name the days of the week and months of the year. Many can number the months and give the ordinal number of the month.

Higher attaining-pupils become more confident in using the telephone and can pass on short messages accurately. Lower-attaining pupils communicate very effectively with known adults, using a combination of gesture, facial expression and a few signs and some sounds which approximate to words. They respond to a single imperative command. Higher-attaining students write their own 'Big Book' about two young soldiers lost in Britain. They act their story and edit a video of it.

220.In **mathematics**, students make good progress when learning how to divide a piece of toast into two equal halves. When working with real money, coins, they are able to recognise and name the coins, count in pence, and find various ways of making up to five pence. They then link this work with their tuck shop, choose, select and buy treats, work out the prices, hand over money and budget their money to last to the end of the week.

221.In **science**, when studying sound, students can identify a range of sounds, and choose the correct instrument from two, after hearing the sound. They know that we hear through our ears and can hear sounds even if we cannot see the sound being made. They know music can be played loud or soft. Students follow Units of Accreditation in The Human Body, Introduction to Electricity and Propagating from Seeds. One student became involved in horticulture at Flatt's Lane Country Park helping to select suitable plants for a garden of different textures and scents, eventually helping to prepare the beds and do the planting.

222.Students make good progress in **art** where they actively participate in making paper mache and press it into a mould, choosing the shape they want. In design and technology, they design and make tactile toys. Post 16, students continue their interest in art through the College links. One student had an opportunity to design a number of small glass pieces, grinding them down to make them smooth, and was finally able to take part in the assembly of the finished stained glass window.

223.Higher-attaining students successfully take part in **food technology** lessons at the local college of further education, whilst lower-attaining students use simple hand tools such as a hammer and saw to make a tactile toy. They make good progress and have an awareness of the purpose of the activity and relax in the workshop environment.

224.In **information communication technology**, where there are excellent examples of the technician adapting equipment to suit individual students, they sit at the PCs for long periods and make good progress against their individual programmes. Lower-attaining students use the information and communication technology room successfully, working on simple individual cause-and-effect programmes with minimum adult support. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress in learning word-processing skills, whilst on the link course at a local college of further education. They understand how to use a QWERTY keyboard and can space and edit their work. Students use simple digital cameras and recall some of the technical vocabulary. They make good progress in their social skills, taking turns and supporting each other.

225. In **music**, students consolidate their awareness of rhythm, identify slow and fast beats, loud and quiet sounds. This work is consolidated in science when they are studying sound. Lower attaining students make good progress in playing the rhythm of their names with help, and most of them show appreciation of degrees of loudness and softness. They also choose instruments they prefer to play, and assemble and decorate simple home-made drums and maracas.

226. In **personal, social and health education**, students make very good progress. When they run the tuck shop, they take turns at being the shop keeper and customer. They are good at budgeting their money to last out the week. In their health education studies they show a good understanding of how to prepare food safely. They remember that bacteria infects food and can make you ill. They use their senses to inspect food to see if it is fit to eat. There is good input from the **careers service**, and where appropriate, students undertake work experience.

227. Students attitudes and responses are good and often very good. They are enthusiastic, attentive, persevere through difficulties, concentrate for long periods of time, give their best and take great pride in their work. They are always quick to support each other and celebrate each others successes, often breaking out into spontaneous applause. In their work they display a wicked sense of humour and try hard to catch out staff. Relationships in classes are excellent.

228. The quality of teaching is never less than good, often very good and occasionally excellent. Lessons are well prepared, teachers knowledge of their subjects and students is very good. Teachers and support assistants work extremely well together. Staff are caring and have a high regard and respect for even the most difficult and demanding students in their care. Individual plans for students are very good and teaching has clear aims and objectives. Staff are well aware of individual needs through excellent assessment procedures. They plan well to address these needs and are very successful in doing so. The good progress that students make is directly linked to the skilful planning and teaching of an appropriate curriculum.

229. Provision for Post 16 students has improved since the last inspection. Joint working with further education colleges has been expanded and improved. The curriculum incorporates elements of the National Curriculum, good practice in Post 16 education and a comprehensive range of external accreditation. The range, suitability and relevance of externally accredited courses has improved since the last inspection. Work experience is appropriately used and is developing.



241. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

241. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

230. The inspection was carried out by a team of six inspectors and one lay inspector. The inspection took place between Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1999. Over 57 hours were spent in classroom observations, and 131 lessons or part of lessons were seen. All classes and teachers were observed.

231. Assemblies were observed. Registrations, play times and lunchtime arrangements were observed. Pupils were accompanied on educational visits. Pupils were accompanied to local primary schools, colleges and an Moderate Learning Difficulties school for integration session. Arrivals and departures were observed daily. Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teaching staff, careers officer, first aider, consultant paediatrician, classroom support staff, pupils, students, governors, parents, lunch time supervisors, the caretaker, the cook, the lady from the horse riding stables, bi-lingual assistant, the school nurse and the school secretary. A sample of pupils were heard reading and others were observed during reading activities.

232. Documentation provided by the school was scrutinised before and during the inspection, a substantial sample of teachers' and pupils' records were examined. Displays throughout the school in classrooms, halls, and corridors were scrutinised. Views of parents were sought through a questionnaire and 45 out 137 (32.8 per cent) returns were analysed and proved to be very supportive of the school.

## 245. DATA AND INDICATORS

### 245. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full- time pupils eligible for free school meals
Year R - 13	137	137	137	75

### 245. Teachers and classes

#### 245. Qualified teachers (YR – Y13)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	7.8

#### 245. Education support staff (YR – Y13)

Total number of education support staff:	29
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	870

### 245. Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	1052951.00
Total Expenditure	1043246.00
Expenditure per pupil	7903.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	34281.00
Balance carried forward to next year	43986.00

245.

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 137  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 45

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	67	31	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	76	24	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	52	43	5	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	60	40	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	71	29	0	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	59	41	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	60	40	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	45	38	12	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	65	33	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	57	41	2	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	84	16	0	0	0

245.

245.