

INSPECTION REPORT

Sunnydown School

Caterham

LEA area: Surrey

Unique Reference Number: 125458

Headteacher: Mr M Armstrong

Reporting inspector: Alistair Bates

21737

Dates of inspection: 18-22 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708365

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Boys
School address:	Portley House 152 Whyteleafe Road Caterham CR3 5ED
Telephone number:	01883 342281
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Dean
Date of previous inspection:	December 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alistair Bates, Registered Inspector	Mathematics; History; Geography; Physical education; Modern foreign language; Special educational needs.	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Efficiency.
Vivienne Phillips, Lay Inspector	Personal, social and health education.	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Partnership with parents and the community; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Averil Anderson	English; Art; Religious education; Music	Leadership and management; Curriculum and assessment.
James Berry	Science; Design and technology; Information technology; Equal opportunities.	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Residential provision.

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The Office for Standards in Education
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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection and despite their specific learning difficulties pupils attain GCSE results close to national averages in the range A – G at the end of Key Stage 4.
- Progress is very good in English. It is good in most other subjects of the National Curriculum.
- Teaching is very good overall.
- Learning support assistants provide very good support for pupils' learning and behaviour.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and develop their self-confidence to tackle unfamiliar work and to overcome their specific learning difficulties. Relationships are very good.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- The residential provision is good and supports pupils' personal development well.
- The school benefits from good relationships with the local community.
- Despite the long-term absence of several senior staff the management of the school has ensured that standards have been improved.
- The school provides good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils in year 11 are currently making unsatisfactory progress in mathematics. The lack of appropriate assessment records means that pupils in other year groups are only making satisfactory progress in the subject compared to good progress in other subjects.
- II. The school does not provide music and a modern foreign language to pupils as required.
- III. The senior management team and governing body have not developed effective means to judge the quality of teaching, learning or the curriculum or to judge the cost-effectiveness of their decisions. Financial planning is unsatisfactory. The governing body does not act sufficiently as a 'critical friend'.
- IV. A whole school approach to assessment has yet to be implemented to ensure consistency in all subjects.

The school's many strengths considerably outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis for the governing body's action plan.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards of attainment and progress have improved in nearly all subjects. The quality of teaching has improved considerably. Accommodation has improved. Music and a modern foreign language are not currently being taught. A whole school assessment policy has been introduced but is not yet fully implemented. Despite the long-term absence of some members of senior staff the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Whether pupils are making enough progress

Progress in:	By 16		Key
Targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B		
English:			
listening and speaking	A	<i>very good</i>	A
reading	A	<i>good</i>	B
writing	A	<i>satisfactory</i>	C
Mathematics	C	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	D
Science	B	<i>poor</i>	E
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	A		

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

Pupils make good progress in most subjects. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 is below national averages (especially in English) but by the time pupils leave the school their attainment is much closer to national averages at GCSE in the range A-G. Pupils make very good progress in developing their literacy skills and in overcoming their specific learning difficulties. The only unsatisfactory progress is in mathematics in Year 11.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
11 – 16 years	Very good	Learning Support	Year 11 mathematics
English	Very good	Reading	
Mathematics	Satisfactory		Year 11
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	Good		

Teaching is very good overall. During the inspection teaching was very good or excellent in 40% of lessons, good in 40% and only unsatisfactory in 2%. The main strengths of teaching were the teacher’s understanding of the pupils’ individual needs and the range of strategies used to meet the pupils’ specific learning difficulties. Where teaching was outstanding it was well supported by the use of assessment so that pupils were able to make significant gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good overall. Most of the pupils behave very well most of the time.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn; staff are committed to encourage independence and self-confidence. Relationships are very good.
Leadership and management	Good overall. The leadership provides clear direction and purpose but currently lacks rigorous methods to judge the quality of its work. The governing body is supportive but is not sufficiently involved in setting the direction for the school.
Curriculum	Good. It is well planned in most subjects. Music and a modern foreign language are not taught currently as required in Key Stage 3. The whole school approach to assessment has not been implemented. The residential provision is good.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social development are strengths of the school. Spiritual and cultural development are weaker but satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good levels of staffing. Accommodation has improved and there is a good range of resources.
Value for money	Good.

**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

- Behaviour is good.
- The school encourages more than daily lessons.
- Parents recognise that the school supports pupils' academic and social progress.
- Parents felt well-informed about pupils' progress.

What some parents are not happy about

- A few parents are concerned about how the

The inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views. While accepting that occasionally things go wrong there is no evidence that the school is dismissive of parents' concerns. The governing body is taking appropriate action to improve its complaints procedures.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue to improve and raise standards the governing body, senior management team and staff need to:

- improve standards in mathematics (see paragraphs **90–93**) by:
 - improving the quality of teaching of mathematics in year 11 to ensure that pupils make better progress;
 - improving long-term assessment and record keeping to ensure that planned work takes account of the pupils' prior attainment;
- meet statutory requirements by the teaching of music. If a modern foreign language is not to be taught, the school should use appropriate procedures to disapply pupils from this requirement of the National Curriculum(see paragraphs **144–145**);
- implement and co-ordinate the whole-school approach to assessment based on examples of good practice within the school;
- introduce more effective procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school (paragraphs **64–68** and **76**). This will include:
 - identifying the costs of proposed developments and including these costs in the school development plan. This plan should then be directly linked to the school budget;
 - introducing procedures to measure the cost-effectiveness of decisions;
 - the governing body becoming involved in assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of the teaching, curriculum and day-to-day management of the school;
- ensure that statutory requirements for the prospectus, annual report to parents and collective worship are met (see paragraph **72**).

Although the aspects below are currently satisfactory, the school might also improve:

- planning for spiritual and cultural development (see paragraphs **44** and **48**).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Sunnydown School is a community special school for boys aged between 11 and 16. At the time of the inspection there are 68 pupils on roll. All pupils have statements of special educational needs that identify that they have specific learning difficulties. A number of pupils have additional special educational needs including disorders on the autistic continuum or emotional and behavioural difficulties.
2. The school serves the whole of the Surrey local education authority area. At the time of the inspection, 35 pupils have weekly boarding places. The need for this provision results from difficulties in transporting pupils on a daily basis rather than the need for residential provision on statements of special educational needs. The residential provision means that it is not possible to make comparisons with the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. There is one pupil who speaks English as an additional language. This is well below national averages for all schools.

3. In the eighteen months prior to the inspection, the school has lost three senior members of staff due to long-term sickness and secondment, but has not been able to appoint permanent staff to replace them. Therefore the current deputy headteacher and senior teacher are fulfilling their roles on a temporary basis. As a result a number of temporary teachers (5) are being employed at the time of the inspection.
4. The school aims are:

'Every pupil at Sunnydown is treated as an individual having been referred to us for a unique reason.

The objectives of education should be to help young people develop the abilities to live and work in the world; to be creative, flexible people; to be able to make independent judgements and act on them; to be autonomous active citizens.

We aim to deliver a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum to every pupil. We develop the talents and skills of each pupil, whether physical, artistic, academic, technical or social,

- to enlarge a pupil's self-esteem and self-image by providing him with opportunities to succeed;
- to foster effective home/school liaison for the benefit of the pupil and his family;
- to prepare the pupils to be active citizens in the wider society beyond school;
- to create a caring environment in which our pupils can be secure.

The aim of all the staff is to enhance the performance of the individual's recreational, social and educational behaviour

The teaching and care staff will present many new experiences and challenges, and various methods will be adopted to motivate the pupils in an attempt to increase his knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding.

Education is a life-long experience and we aim to prepare the pupil for a world beyond compulsory schooling.

We hope to foster not only a feeling of self worth but also to encourage each pupil to benefit society at large.

Thoughtfulness and consideration towards others is an important concept at Sunnydown.'

1. The previous inspection took place in 1995. It recommended improvements for provision in modern foreign language, music and food technology, improvements in assessment, recording and reporting, improvements in school assemblies and in the school accommodation. Recent priorities in the school development plan have included the appointment of a new mathematics teacher and develop the curriculum including numeracy, implement the new assessment policy, the development of clear management roles and establish procedures for monitoring, review and evaluation.

6. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	18	18	0	18

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or Above	Boys Girls Total	1 0 1	3 0 3	4 0 4
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School National	5.5 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	17 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	22 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School National	0 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	0 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	0 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys Girls Total	4 0 4	2 0 2	7 0 7
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School National	22 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	11 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	39 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School National	0 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	0 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	2 No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.

.....

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

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	19	19	0	19

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils	Boys	2	19	19
achieving	Girls	0	0	0
standard specified	Total	2	19	19
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	10.5	100	100
	National	No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.	No comparisons for pupils with specific learning difficulties.

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of <i>such pupils</i> who achieved all those they studied:		Number	% Success rate
	School	14	100
	National		100

6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	12.1
	Unauthorised	School	Not available
	Absence	National comparative data	3.6
			Not available

6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	4
	Permanent	0

6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	40
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

.....
2

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

6. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

6. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

6. **Attainment and progress**

2. The pupils' specific learning difficulties and other additional special educational needs mean that they have often experienced difficulties in learning at other schools prior to their admission to Sunnydown. Baseline assessment, carried out by the Learning Support Team, shows that on admission at the beginning of Key Stage 3 their attainment is well below national averages for all children of this age, particularly in English. There is no comparative information for other schools for pupils with specific learning difficulties.
3. By the end of Key Stage 3 the pupils' attainment, is closer to, but still below national averages for pupils in mainstream schools. Standard assessment information shows that in English pupils' attainment is lower than in other subjects due to the literacy demands of the test. In other subjects, such as mathematics and science the pupils' attainment is generally at least one National Curriculum level below national averages. In practical subjects such as art and physical education the pupils' attainment is in line or close to national expectations.
4. By the end of Key Stage 4 examination results in GCSE are below national averages for pupils in mainstream schools in the range A* to C. This often results from the pupils taking the foundation papers which offer a lower range of grades. Attainment in the range A* - G is higher than national averages for all pupils, particularly in the single award science. The pupils often gain higher grades in more practical subjects such as art, design and technology and information technology. GCSE results, although dependent on the abilities of the particular group, show an improvement over the last 3 years, particularly in information technology.
5. The school does not use any form of analysis to interpret its own success. However an analysis of the 1999 GCSE results compared to the results of the same pupils in end of Key Stage 3 assessments shows very good progress in English, information technology and design and technology and good progress in geography and science. Progress in mathematics was not as good as in other subjects. Inspection findings support this analysis
6. Pupils make very good progress in English in both key stages and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They make particularly good progress in their literacy skills, initially through the very good teaching in the Learning Support department and also in English lessons. Pupils gain confidence in speaking and listening and this is reflected in their very good progress. At the end of Key Stage 3 pupils are confident to read aloud to the class and explain specific ideas. They listen well to each other in discussions. Examination results in oral English at the end of Key Stage 4 show that pupils are able to make effective presentations of their material to an audience of strangers, answer questions and explain their point of view.
7. The pupils' progress in reading is very good across the key stages which is again an improvement on the last inspection. They read a variety of texts including a range of plays by Shakespeare and novels by Dickens. All pupils have reading targets as part of their individual education plans and make good progress towards these, either in Learning Support lessons or in class reading. The pupils' good progress in reading enables them to make progress in other subjects, for example in history where they are confident to tackle a range of sources. As the teachers are all aware of the pupils' individual reading needs, these are well supported in other subjects which are used as a means to consolidate progress in reading.
8. Progress in writing is also very good at both key stages, representing an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn to organise themselves and their work. By the end of Key Stage 3 they can write

for a variety of audiences for example, newspaper reports or personal letters. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are able to draft and redraft their work, including using information and communications technology to improve their presentation.

9. Pupils in Key Stage 3 and Year 10 make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Pupils learn to use the four rules of number and to apply their knowledge to solve problems and tackle new materials. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils can interpret fractions and know that they represent a form of division. Pupils are confident to interpret data and present it in a variety of forms such as bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. Progress is better in those lessons where work is planned for individuals based on clear assessment of their prior attainment. The absence of a whole school recording system, together with the newness of the teachers means that pupils are sometimes required to complete work that they have completed successfully in the past. This difficulty is particularly evident in year 11 where progress is unsatisfactory as a result of unsatisfactory teaching that means that the work is too easy for some pupils and too difficult for others. Standards in mathematics have not risen significantly since the previous inspection.
10. Standards have improved in science. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have developed their knowledge of specific scientific concepts such as work and are able to carry out class investigations. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have developed their skills and are able to carry out individual investigations by asking questions and then testing their hypotheses.
11. Standards have improved considerably in information technology as a result of improved teaching and greater access to computers. Progress is good in both key stages. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in the local agreed syllabus for religious education, again an improvement since the previous inspection.
12. Standards have improved in other subjects. Progress is good in art, history at Key Stage 3, geography and physical education. Pupils make good progress in personal, social and health education lessons and as a result of support for this area in other lessons such as supported study and through the tutorial system, they make very good progress overall. Progress in design and technology is satisfactory due to changes in staffing. Music and a modern foreign language are not taught.
13. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, particularly the targets set for literacy by the Learning Support department. A significant number of pupils have additional special educational needs including emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils make good progress towards their individual targets either through planned programmes of behaviour modification or the intervention of special support assistants to provide support during lessons. There is a single pupil who speaks English as an additional language who is making good progress.

18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

14. There has been an improvement in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development since the last inspection. Attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils take real interest in their work, especially when tasks match their capabilities and are part of a lively lesson. From soon after their arrival in the school, most pupils begin to enjoy learning, in many cases, after a history of failure and negative attitudes to schoolwork. They begin to like reading as a result of early success with suitable books and very skilled teaching. They learn to concentrate for long enough to finish their work. Most pupils listen to the teacher and do what is asked, with help, where necessary. By Year 11, they have very impressive levels of motivation and take appropriate pride in their work. Older pupils have confidence and greater skill in offering their ideas and trying to solve problems. They begin to choose books and resources such as computer programs for themselves even when their additional special educational needs make this difficult for them. Pupils' concentration improves from Year 7 to Year 11. Attitudes to work are very good as a result of the school's very positive approach to ensuring pupils experience success in learning.
15. Behaviour is good, as parents suggested. High standards of conduct are typical and the majority of pupils

behave very well most of the time. In most lessons the behaviour of most pupils is impressive and supports rapid progress. A very few pupils misbehave in a minority of lessons, in spite of good efforts by staff to encourage everyone to concentrate on work and this prevents the class from making more than satisfactory progress. In one or two cases, misbehaviour is linked to additional special educational needs, which are generally managed well. In a very few cases, individual pupils choose to be difficult and to ignore the codes of conduct followed by everyone else. When this continues and the school has exhausted efforts to change a pupil's behaviour for the better, or the pupil endangers others, the school excludes him, as appropriate. Most pupils are polite to adults and helpful to visitors. Mealtimes are very good social occasions. Pupils can be trusted. They take care of the school, its resources and their belongings.

16. Relationships throughout the school are very good and provide a very strong foundation for its work. The atmosphere is welcoming and positive, reflecting a real sense of community. There is a very high degree of trust seen in the mature way most pupils speak to adults about their difficulties or about any conflict with other members of the school community. Older pupils are very good at supporting younger ones and ensuring that they are looked after, for example, in football games with bigger boys. Team games and collaborative tasks in class show that pupils are able to work together and co-operate very effectively when necessary
17. The pupils' personal development is very good. From the time when most pupils join the school in year 7, their personal development progresses very well towards a level of independence and self-confidence at the end of Key Stage 4 that is comparable with peers in other schools. They arrive with little insight into their difficulties, with a strong sense of failure and with a focus on what they cannot do. Success with learning soon boosts self-confidence. Pupils learn to think about their own and other people's feelings. They show increasing respect for values such as honesty and fairness, in line with the priority the school gives to their social and moral development. They show growing acceptance of rules and conventions that enable them to feel secure and enjoy life within clear boundaries in or out of school. Personal development is very good and is very well promoted by the school.

22. **Attendance**

18. Attendance overall is satisfactory. The school takes in significant numbers of pupils with a history of poor or erratic attendance linked to their particular difficulties. In most cases the school is successful in encouraging pupils to feel confident and very keen to make progress by attending regularly, in spite of their difficulties. Most pupils come to school and arrive on time unless they have a very good reason for missing sessions. A very few pupils continue to have problems with attendance, which include refusal to come to school, or not being ready on time for the transport provided. When individuals are late, it delays transport for others and makes it difficult to achieve a settled start to the school day for everyone. The school works hard to minimise the effects of absenteeism and lateness on pupils' progress, but in one or two cases there is little it can do to improve this without co-operation from home. Improvements in attendance since the last inspection, including transport arrangements and recording procedures, have been satisfactory. The school has recently begun to record attendance in the afternoon.

23. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

23. **Teaching**

24. Teaching is very good overall and a major strength of the school. During the inspection it was very good or excellent in 40% of lessons. It was always very good or excellent in lessons in the Learning Support Department. It is good in English, science, information technology, religious education, art, history, geography, physical education and personal, social and health education including supported study lessons. During the inspection it was good in 40% of lessons. Teaching is satisfactory overall in mathematics and design and technology. The only unsatisfactory teaching (2%) took place in mathematics in year 11.
- 24.
25. Where teaching is good, the teachers subject knowledge enables them to present their material in a way that recognises the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties. For example, in science key words and concepts are clearly identified by being placed on a separate board adjacent to the main board so that pupils can refer to them during the lesson. In a very good lesson on Macbeth the teacher highlighted the key phrases in the text being studied and ensured that the pupils were able to concentrate on the key ideas. The main feature of teaching in design and technology is the subject expertise of the temporary teachers which enables them to demonstrate appropriate techniques well.
- 25.
26. The teachers know the individual pupils well. Much of this comes from the very high quality of teaching by the Learning Support Team, the results of which are used to identify the individual literacy needs of the boys. In the Learning Support lessons pupils are provided with a balance of materials that enable them to be initially successful and therefore able to gain confidence to tackle new and unfamiliar materials using strategies that they know to be successful. Pupils are therefore able to identify their own progress and gain enthusiasm for their learning. In other subjects teachers and special support assistants are aware of the abilities of the individual pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the special support assistant worked very closely with an individual pupil with additional special educational needs to enable him to remain focused on the task in hand.
- 26.
27. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' performance and of their behaviour. In physical education pupils are expected to ensure that they bring the correct equipment and are expected to participate throughout the lesson. In a very good history lesson, the pupils were expected to apply their everyday knowledge of marketing techniques such as advertising to the development of significant machinery in the textiles industry during the Industrial Revolution. In small groups, pupils questioned each other about the developments as if they were taking part in a television interview. Pupils were able to role-play the part of Richard Arkwright, explaining the benefits of the new technology.
- 27.
28. The pupils are generally well behaved. This often results from the good behaviour management strategies of the teachers and special support assistants. A number of pupils have additional behaviour needs and these are well managed, usually by the combination of a good awareness of the individual coupled with appropriate words of encouragement. The pupils behaviour is also well managed by providing work that is interesting and challenging, for example in art where the pupils concentrate hard to reach the required standard. Pupils are made aware of the expectation of their behaviour and respond well, for example when walking to the swimming pool on the adjacent school site.
- 28.
29. Teachers' planning varies in quality. In some areas, such as in the Learning Support Department, in English and in information and communications technology it is very detailed and identifies the prior attainment of the pupils and clear targets to be achieved by the end of the lesson. These targets are made known to the pupils and they are able to recognise and judge their own progress. For example, in an excellent information and communications technology lesson this enabled the teacher and special support assistant to provide individual support varying the vocabulary used to different pupils according to their ability. At the end of the lesson, the teacher was able to congratulate the individual pupils in reaching their identified targets. In some other subjects, planning is briefer and the teachers rely on their informal knowledge of the pupils to ensure that the planned activities are appropriate.
- 29.

30. Teachers use resources well to support the learning. In geography the teacher provides a range of literacy methods to reinforce key ideas and concepts. This includes the use of diagrams, crosswords and word-searches together with other sources such as video. In religious education, the teacher uses a range of texts and the limited range of available artefacts well to introduce ideas and to provoke discussions. Special support assistants are generally used well to support pupils with additional special educational needs or to work with small groups of higher attaining pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 7 all members of the classroom team made notes on the attainment of individual pupils.
31. This was a good example of effective use of day-to-day assessment. Often teachers use questions to introduce the lesson topic, reminding pupils of past learning and setting the context for the lesson. Teachers are able to develop the pupil's initial responses and consolidate past learning. Teaching is better when the pupils' progress through the lesson is recorded accurately, as in the Learning Support lessons and the records are used to inform the next stage of planning.
32. In the only unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection, the teacher lacked accurate information on the pupils' past attainment and therefore the lesson content was either too easy for higher attaining pupils or too challenging for the lower attaining pupils. Inappropriate resources were used and explanations were confused. As a result pupils were unsure of how to approach the work and lost confidence in their own ability.
33. Homework is used effectively to support learning in most subjects. Teachers have a good range of techniques to ensure that the pupils are aware of the requirements of the task and the strategies that they are to use. Teachers are consistent in their expectations that the homework will be completed. A small number of parents, at the pre-inspection meeting, felt that pupils did not fully understand the homework set. This was often the weekend homework for pupils who board during the week although these pupils are well supported when at school.

33. **The curriculum and assessment**

19. Overall the curriculum provided by the school is good. Breadth and balance is satisfactory. The emphasis on literacy is very relevant to the specific learning difficulties of the pupils. Music and a modern foreign language are not taught. The school therefore does not meet its statutory requirements. There has been little improvement since the last inspection, although the governing body has conducted a survey of parental opinion. This supported the school's position on not teaching a modern foreign language. However, the school does not disapply pupils at Key Stage 3 through the annual review process. The school has taught music in the past but has been unable to appoint a specialist teacher and does not currently teach the subject.
20. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of life. There is a good range of GCSE and other accredited courses. Several of the year 11 pupils visited colleges of further education during the inspection and, having passed the relevant examinations have realistic expectations of gaining entry. Careers guidance is of a high quality and includes a well planned programme of work experience, including environmental work or placements in local primary schools, which adds further relevance to pupils' studies.
21. Initially all pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work on their specific learning difficulties in the Learning Support Department. Various forms of support have been trialled within the school but individual withdrawal has proved the most effective in improving both pupils' literacy and their self-esteem. As pupils progress support is gradually withdrawn. Withdrawal timetables are reviewed termly to ensure that pupils do not always miss the same lesson. This is a most effective and efficient way of supporting pupils and ensures they make maximum progress. The sessions are very concentrated and the work of the Learning Support Team underpins the work of the rest of the school. The school meets the specific learning difficulties of its pupils very well.
22. The curriculum offered in English, Learning Support, information communication technology and

personal and social education is very good. It is good in science, art, history, geography, physical education and religious education and satisfactory in mathematics and design technology where long term absence of senior staff has had an impact on planning.

23. Appropriate schemes of work are in place in all curriculum areas. While long-term plans often lack detail, medium term plans are good. The majority of short-term plans are good, although a few are sketchy, lack sufficient detail and do not represent the high quality teaching they support. Where records of work covered have not been adequately kept difficulties arise if staff are unexpectedly absent for extended periods of time, as has happened in school recently. The mathematics department is experiencing such problems at present and this is having an adverse influence on pupils' progress.
24. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and trips. They are well recorded through photographs enabling pupils to reflect on their experiences in a positive manner. Boys are involved in regular competitive sports fixtures with other schools and the school has a history of success in these competitions. Day pupils are welcome to join residential pupils in after school activities and many do so. Such activities include sailing, rock climbing and swimming. This is only possible if pupils can be collected afterwards as transport cannot be provided to take pupils home afterwards. Residential and day visits play a valuable part in the pupils' personal and social development. They are well used to complement work done in school, for example, in English and art after visits to watch Shakespearean plays and to national art galleries.
25. Pupils continue to benefit from the school's very effective homework policy. Parents and school liaise well to ensure its success. Homework diaries are checked on a regular basis and continue to play a valuable role in the teaching of self-help and organisational skills. The homework set is relevant to pupils' studies and is well supported by staff. However, a small number of parents identified that not all teachers set homework that the pupils can complete independently and this can cause difficulties, particularly at weekends.
26. Assessment and record keeping is good in most subjects but the lack of a formal whole-school approach remains a weakness. Staff know their pupils and their needs exceptionally well but over-rely on the information stored in their heads to assist them in their planning. Individual teacher assessment is good but independent, informal methods are used and in emergencies leave new teachers with little evidence of what has actually been taught and what pupils know, understand and can do. For example, in mathematics the lack of effective individual records results in pupils repeating work that they have completed in previous classes. Some higher attaining pupils then become bored because their work is not at the correct level. Under normal circumstances teachers use their records and assessments of pupils' progress very well to plan and teach the curriculum. The school's assessment policy is clear about its aims, who should contribute to assessment and it provides useful guidelines for marking pupils' work. However it is unsatisfactory in that it is yet to be fully implemented and remains a target on the present school development plan. Assessment was a key issue from the last inspection and the school acknowledges that it has made little progress to implementing the policy.
27. Baseline assessment is most efficiently and effectively carried out by the Learning Support Department when pupils enter the school. Their findings are shared across the school and form the basis of pupils' work and individual education plans. The continuous assessment scheme used within the Learning Support Department is very good.

42. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

28. There has been satisfactory improvement in the school's support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as a result of a strong focus on moral and social behaviour. At the last inspection, a key issue was developing the spiritual dimension of school assemblies. There has not been enough improvement in this.

29. The school gives good support overall to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for moral and social development is particularly strong, whereas provision for spiritual and cultural development is weaker, but satisfactory. There is no planned approach to help pupils develop insight into different values and beliefs through opportunities to reflect on their experiences and feelings. Religious education lessons give pupils an appropriate knowledge of key ideas from different world faiths and a chance to compare their own beliefs and viewpoints with these. The lessons make a good contribution to development of spiritual awareness, but without support from other areas of the curriculum, it is not enough to ensure high quality provision. There are very few opportunities provided for pupils to experience awe-inspiring moments. Sometimes a special story or account of someone's experiences moves them, as with descriptions of life in a South African school, but this is rare. The lack of music as a curriculum subject is a particular disadvantage because pupils do not have the chance to listen to pieces of music that express different moods and encourage them to reflect on their own feelings and experiences.
30. The school promotes the pupils' moral development very well through its everyday routines and the way people relate to each other. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong very clearly. They are given every encouragement to consider other people's rights and feelings, sometimes through well-chosen stories in lessons such as English and at other times by staff explaining exactly what the school expects of them and why. For example, a quiet word in the playground about playing together co-operatively rather than in a way that leads to someone being hurt, helps to reinforce the school's code of conduct and ideas of fairness and respect.
31. The school attaches particular importance to the pupils' social development and supports it very strongly and consistently in all its work. The quality of relationships among very committed, dedicated staff, is a significant factor in this. Their priority is to ensure that pupils flourish whatever their previous experience of education. Pupils are encouraged to relate constructively to others and to feel part of the school community. They value being part of the school team in competitive sports. In all areas of the school boys are helped to learn to be co-operative, to develop self-discipline, to understand the need for rules and to recognise their responsibilities to themselves and others. Lessons and extra-curricular activities, together with residential provision for boarders all contribute very positively to social development.
32. There is satisfactory support for pupils' cultural development, particularly through art, geography and history. Pupils learn a little about their own cultural heritage and are introduced to others such as Aboriginal art and life in Roman times. Occasional experiences such as visiting a Hindu temple and working with an artist in residence exploring a variety of styles and cultural influences are valuable. The lack of music, drama and planned opportunities to learn to appreciate the diversity and richness of their own and other traditions limit pupils' knowledge and experience of culture.
47. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
33. Provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is good and makes a considerable contribution to their academic and personal development.
34. Pupils' academic progress is monitored and supported by form tutors, often during the tutor periods that take place at the start of each day. The small size of the classes and the tutors' good knowledge of the individual pupils leads to effective sessions. The homework diaries are checked carefully and these together with the homework support charts provide important links between pupil, tutor, teacher and parents. The diaries highlight problems, which are then tackled by the pupils and tutor. Good academic and personal support are offered to individual pupils throughout the day by the special support assistants who accompany particular groups.
35. Pastoral support is good for all pupils, especially for resident pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are generally warm and open, leading to an atmosphere of trust where useful advice can be sought or given. Pupils are prepared for entry to the school with an induction day offered to year 6 and a very informative pupil induction handbook. All staff are well aware of the special individual needs of pupils.

Consequently they change their approach so as to guide them towards successful academic and social outcomes and to build their self-confidence. Pupils and teachers set targets together. Visiting specialists provide effective careers advice and pupils are given work experience in year 10.

36. Pupils receive guidance on a wide variety of appropriate issues, including sex and drugs education, through the well-structured personal, social and health education programme and the tutorial system. Aspects of behaviour, including bullying are considered and related to the school context. There is a good behaviour policy, which is usually consistently followed by staff. It seeks to reinforce what is good and to build relationships and confidence, whilst providing appropriate sanctions for wrong doers. The policy is supported by the clear home school agreement, which sets out what pupils should receive and what they should contribute.
37. Child protection procedures are good and are dealt with through a designated teacher. All staff receive appropriate training concerning the issues and procedures involved. However, most pupils are unaware of how to contact Childline as no information is on display. Systems for recording attendance are satisfactory and there are suitable checks and follow-ups for pupils who are absent.
38. Pupils' health and safety are well catered for. Food is varied and of good quality. There are two medical rooms with a sickroom and a trained first-aider is always available. Medicines are safely stored and efficient records are kept. The buildings are clean and are adequately heated and ventilated. There are regular fire practices, which are recorded. All electrical equipment, including that owned by pupils is checked. There is risk assessment and a careful observance of safety precautions, which is especially evident in the critical areas of the science laboratory, the design and technology workshop and physical education.
39. The good practices identified in the last inspection have been maintained and extended. The individual and longer-term social needs of pupils are now identified and more comprehensively monitored. Annual reviews have been improved and there is now a sickroom.

54. **Residential provision**

40. The residential provision is good and results in a happy, cohesive and well run community that helps to develop the pupils' self-confidence and awareness of others. The good atmosphere and ethos originate from a great deal of hard work skillfully carried out by a thoughtful and committed boarding staff.
41. All the staff offer effective support and advice. The boys feel that there is a good choice of sympathetic trustworthy people who are always ready to advise and to help. Care staff are involved in individual education plans and set up monthly social and academic targets with the pupils. Homework is supervised and its' effectiveness increased by the daily homework diary. There are weekly meetings between the care staff and representatives of the senior management to ensure that staff share information.
42. There is an adequate number of experienced and trained care staff. Care staff training needs are identified and suitable training is provided. They contribute to the annual reviews and to the two written reports to parents each year. The House Heads endeavour to meet parents before the boys join the school and keep in regular contact through parents' evenings and informal links. There are regular meetings between care staff and boys to discuss future activities and other matters.
43. The boys are provided with a very wide range of interesting activities, and day-boys often stay and participate in these activities. There is a good balance between physical activities such as wind surfing, ice-skating and "corners" and quieter activities such as cooking, extra homework, and electronics.
44. The accommodation is good. It comprises of two separate areas, one junior and one senior. The sleeping rooms are for small numbers; they are bright and well maintained. Staff and pupils usually ensure that the

rooms, which are checked and cleaned daily, are kept neat. Boys personalise their own areas with posters and bring their own electrical equipment, such as CD players. The school provides each boy with drawers and a wardrobe and appropriate equipment. However, pupils do not have any private lockable space of their own. Both houses have good common rooms complete with easy chairs, television, satellite and video equipment. In addition the senior house has a newly refurbished well-equipped kitchen and a workroom with desks and two computers. Washing and toilet facilities are clean and adequate, except in one junior bathroom where plaster is peeling. Everything is kept scrupulously clean by the domestic staff and any kind of graffiti or vandalism is extremely rare.

45. Effective measures are taken to promote the health, safety and general well being of the pupils. Food is hygienically stored and carefully prepared to present an attractive balanced diet generally with sufficient portions although some boys feel that a more substantial breakfast could be provided. Laundry is regular and the pupils' clothes look fresh and clean. There are well-controlled first aid arrangements with qualified staff and a separate sickroom. There are regular fire practices and testing of alarms and electrical equipment. All adults, who have significant contact with boarders, are checked in accordance with appropriate regulations. Staff are trained in and aware of child protection procedures. Each house has a coin-box telephone, but the privacy of these is inadequate. This is especially true of the junior one: it has no hood and is located outside the Head's office. There are no clear instructions available to pupils to contact Childline nor how to contact the schools' independent listener. At least two staff are always on duty day and night and there are proper procedures for tracking the whereabouts of pupils when they are away from the houses in the evenings.

46. Since the last inspection there has been a very considerable improvement in the boarding provision. Personal and social provision for the individual has been much more effectively provided, monitored and recorded. Social development targets have been introduced. There are closer and more regular links between the care staff and the teachers. Care staff do contribute to the annual review and reports. There is now a sickroom and improved medical procedures. The issue of private storage and telephones remains unresolved.

61. **Partnership with parents and the community**

47. The school continues to encourage partnership with parents as it did at the time of the last inspection. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school does all it reasonably can to keep parents well informed about their sons' progress and encourages them to contribute to annual reviews. It sends home lengthy weekly newsletters. Homework and reading targets are noted carefully so parents know what is expected. In contrast, the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not follow statutory guidelines to ensure that information is given as required and recommended. There is very little to help parents to understand the curriculum, the standards reached, the range of jobs and courses followed by school-leavers and how pupils feel about the school. There is not enough guidance for parents about how to support learning and develop realistically high expectations of what their sons can do.

48. The school works hard at setting up clear lines of communication with parents of all pupils, whether day-boys or boarders. Its approach is positive and constructive. Occasionally the school is not as clear as it could be about why things happen as they do and this can lead to confusion or resentment, as with the boarders' outing to a London theatre. Parents do not understand why day-boys were excluded from the outing. A few parents feel that the school does not respond well to their complaints or suggestions. Some of their criticism relates to incidents in the past when staff in the school and boarding houses were different. There is no evidence that the school has a culture in which complaints and suggestions are heard without care or respect, although staff acknowledge that occasional misunderstandings arise. Usually, these are resolved as soon as parents and staff talk openly and honestly about what has gone wrong. The prospectus and governing body's report to parents do not explain the complaints procedure carefully and a small number of parents are unsure how to complain to the governing body or to the local education authority.

49. Relationships with most parents are very good, whether or not parents are actively involved in their sons'

learning or the life of the school. The vast majority of parents believe that the school encourages them to take an active interest in its life and that it is approachable when problems arise. There are regular opportunities for them to participate in school functions, both social events and meetings to discuss progress. Links with parents contribute positively to pupils' learning by valuing and celebrating successes and where parents are able to give direct help, by involving them in reading with their sons or ensuring that homework is completed satisfactorily.

50. Links with the community are good and help to extend pupils' experiences of different sports, theatre and the world of work. There are very good relationships with the careers service, colleges and local employers, which help to give pupils very useful guidance on opportunities available to them when they leave the school. There are good links with the adjacent primary schools, including opportunities for work experience and learning to take responsibility for organising activities for the younger pupils. Pupils have benefited from the chance to work with an artist in residence shared with the neighbouring secondary school and from visits to places such as Glyndebourne and Lulworth Cove. The school is a member of an organisation that promotes high standards for pupils with specific learning difficulties.

65. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

65. **Leadership and management**

51. Overall the quality of leadership and management throughout the school is good, although much depends on the personal commitment of the staff to the school rather than formal management. The school development plan recognises the need for improvement of formal monitoring and evaluation. The headteacher, ably supported by the acting senior management team, provides strong leadership and clear educational direction for the work of the school. The acting senior management team is working well together under what have been difficult circumstances with the loss of three key members of staff over the past months and no Head of Care, a role now undertaken by the headteacher. The present workload undertaken by the team is very heavy and too onerous to ensure effective results in the long term but has ensured that standards have been maintained.
52. The governing body takes a real interest in the school and has relevant committees which meet regularly at least once a term. Whilst the governing body supports school functions well, it does not fulfill its role as a "critical friend" because it does not have the necessary information to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. For example, it has not established methods to determine the school's strengths and weaknesses nor does it play an active role in devising and implementing the school development plan. The governing body, in the form of one governor, makes an official visit to the school once a term but individual governors do not have particular subject links. The personnel committee has some involvement with job descriptions but allocation of staffing roles, including the senior management are left to the headteacher. The governing body does not have effective procedures to ensure that parents know how to raise concerns that they may have and how to contact a parent governor.
53. There is good support for teaching and informal monitoring of the quality of the school's work. However, due to staff absence there is no rigorous approach to the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. Monitoring of teaching is carried out in an informal way with no records kept of post lesson discussions kept. There is no appraisal system in operation but the senior management team is aware of the need and value of one. It is therefore difficult for the senior management team to evaluate progress in teaching over time. Job descriptions are in evidence but few are dated or signed. Subject co-ordinators work hard and provide clear leadership for their departments but do not produce detailed subject development plans where the costs of future developments are identified.
54. The aims of the school are evident in all areas of its work and are achieved with great success as shown by the contrast between the oldest and the youngest pupils. The growth in self-confidence and self-esteem as well as in literacy skills is very evident. Pupils achieve success in all areas of school life and leave ready to

take full advantage of future opportunities.

55. The development planning process is satisfactory overall. The development plan, which identifies eighteen current priorities, is largely the work of a member of staff who is currently absent. In supporting the teaching and learning in the classroom the current senior management team has not completed the planning process or evaluated whether it has achieved the targets set in the plan. These are generally appropriate and include key issues from the last inspection which are as yet unresolved. The plan identifies percentages of success in achieving targets but the success criteria for these judgements are not clarified. The development plan does not identify the costs of proposed changes nor does it have dates for the start or completion of targets within the life of the plan. The monitoring of targets within key areas is delegated well to relevant groups and committees.
56. The school has maintained its very positive ethos throughout its recent difficulties. It has a relaxed but very purposeful atmosphere and pupils and staff alike work very hard to ensure success. Much of the positive ethos must be credited to the initial work of the Learning Support team who enable pupils to gain confidence. This enables the rest of the school to provide a safe haven in which pupils may take advantage of their new skills to make progress.
57. Annual reviews of statements of special educational needs are carried out effectively and efficiently with due consultation with all relevant parties. The governing body does not fulfill its statutory obligations with regard to the teaching of a modern foreign language and music, collective worship, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.
58. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Although some of the key issues from the last inspection remain, this is because of the long-term absence of key members of senior staff. The priority of the acting senior management team has been to maintain and improve standards of teaching and learning and this has been achieved. The school is well placed to continue to improve and develop effective procedures to monitor the quality of its own work.

73. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

59. As at the last inspection, the school is adequately staffed with teachers who have qualifications in special educational needs, including specific learning difficulties and in the subjects of the curriculum. The match between qualifications, experience and current responsibilities of staff is satisfactory and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively, except at the end of Key Stage 4 in mathematics. The support and care staff are very well qualified, experienced and highly skilled. The school has been successful in establishing a very strong sense of teamwork among teaching and non-teaching staff, which has enabled it to give good support to new and temporary staff during a period of enforced change. As a result, any gaps in formal arrangements for professional development are filled by the high quality of support colleagues give to each other. Informal arrangements for induction, appraisal and training of staff are good and help them to be effective. Opportunities are missed to ensure that formal procedures are established to plan for and evaluate the professional development of staff strategically. The workload of individual staff who have accepted additional responsibilities temporarily is very heavy and cannot be sustained indefinitely without costs to themselves and the effective management of the school.
60. The accommodation has been improved greatly since the last inspection by the provision of new art and science rooms, better quality outside classrooms and an all-weather pitch for outdoor games lessons. Overall, the accommodation is now of good quality and is well maintained. There is a good range of resources, including computers, to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum. Books are plentiful, match pupils' capabilities, age and interests and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Resources such as marker pens, spelling games and software used in support lessons, promote rapid progress in reading and writing.

75. The efficiency of the school

61. Although the headteacher, school administrator and governing body have effective means for budget setting and monitoring expenditure, financial planning is unsatisfactory overall. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection but is largely the result of the long-term absence of senior staff. The school development plan identifies appropriate targets but the costs of improvements are not identified and the senior management team and governing body have not established clear procedures to monitor the cost effectiveness of their decisions. In the last four years the school has accrued a considerable surplus. This is being used appropriately to develop the school accommodation and improve standards in subjects such as physical education and science. However, the surplus was not specifically planned for, and the level of the current contingency fund at nearly £70,000 is higher than recommended levels.
62. Teaching and other staff are well deployed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured through effective timetabling that despite staff absence standards have been maintained in almost all classes. Special support assistants are used very effectively to provide support for particular individuals or groups of pupils. This has enabled staff who are very new to the school to work effectively.
63. The school uses its accommodation and resources well. The governing body has ensured that many of the improvements to the accommodation required in the previous report have been completed and these improvements are leading to increasing standards. For example, a new computer suite offers all pupils the opportunity to work independently and the new all weather surface has increased the opportunities for physical education. Standards in this subject benefit from good use of the swimming pool at the neighbouring secondary school. Teachers use a range of resources well to support the pupils' learning, for example a wide range of materials are used in the Learning Support Department to overcome pupils' specific learning difficulties.
64. Financial control is satisfactory. A recent audit by the local education authority identified a number of areas for improvement including the management of the School Fund. This had grown to a considerable sum prior to the recent improvements to the accommodation. Other improvements required changes to the school's general operating procedures. The new school administrator has begun to take appropriate action to ensure that financial procedures meet the standard identified in the audit and the governing body has introduced appropriate new procedures. School administration is effective and ensures that senior staff are able to focus on the educational development of the school.
65. Although three of the areas identified in the previous inspection report have not been fully addressed this is largely as a result of the long term absence of several senior members of staff. Changes to the senior management team mean that monitoring and evaluation have yet to be fully developed. However, the governing body and senior management team have ensured that standards within the classroom and residential provision have not fallen and in many subjects have risen. This is largely as a result of the high quality of teaching and the pupils attitudes and behaviour. The school provides good value for money.

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

80. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

80. **English**

66. Despite their specific learning difficulties pupils make very good progress in English. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Their attainment in national tests results at the end of Key Stage 3 do not fairly indicate this progress as pupils enter the school with a very low level of attainment. By the end of year 11, with very good teaching, especially from the Learning Support Team, they reach levels close to national norms. This is demonstrated by good examination results at GCSE in the range A – G. All pupils make very good progress against their individual education plan targets in all aspects of English. The setting of homework tasks matched to the pupils' abilities plays an important part in their progress.
67. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening at both key stages which is a great advance since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils confidently give their opinions during discussions, in all lessons, and listen well to each other. They understand words such as 'defence', 'embarrassing' and explain the meaning of 'delusion'. Pupils recount previous chapters of Dickens' Oliver Twist and predict what will happen in the future. Higher attaining pupils accurately recall vital elements of various characters. Lower attaining pupils need considerable support but make great gains in their extended use of vocabulary in discussions. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils discuss the characteristics of Lady Macbeth and describe in some depth vital aspects of her character. Higher attaining pupils describe with fluency the build-up of tension within a particular scene whilst lower attaining pupils, with support, distinguish between the spoken word and descriptive prose in the same scene.
68. The pupil's progress in reading is very good across the key stages. This is a great improvement since the previous inspection. Year 7 pupils describe how their confidence has grown. All pupils begin to understand and absorb the strategies they are taught to help them read more fluently. They read a variety of texts, plays by Shakespeare, novels by Dickens as well as using related television programmes and activities from the Internet. All pupils have appropriate reading targets; these are checked on a daily basis as well as during specific reading time within English lessons. All pupils benefit from individual sessions when they are withdrawn from lessons for intense help by the Learning Support Team. As pupils become more confident they are able to manage without this level of support. These sessions play a highly significant part in pupils' progress, not only in their reading and writing but also in the building of pupils' self confidence. Pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to read aloud is an impressive feature of all lessons, whatever the subject. This is a sign of very good progress as is the accuracy with which they read.
69. Progress in writing is also very good at both key stages, representing an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are given many very effective strategies to help them organise themselves and their work. These are used and given great importance in all lessons, not just in English and Learning Support time. All rooms have lists of relevant words on display and many have the 'Sunnydown 100 Words' displayed. Pupils progress in minute steps to ensure they understand and can use all that they have learnt and can build upon their success. All pupils write with enthusiasm for a variety of audiences and understand the need for drafting and redrafting their work. Younger pupils at Key Stage 3 write newspaper articles and diaries while older pupils extract information from text and use it to write their answers to given questions. Pupils at Key Stage 4 improve their punctuation with the correct use of inverted commas. The oldest pupils understand how stage directions can influence performances, they write their own to improve the dramatic effect of a scene from Macbeth. They all fully understand and can illustrate the use of body language within the play and in their own lives. All pupils are beginning to use information and communications technology to help them draft and/or redraft their work and to consolidate their spelling skills. The teachers have produced excellent spelling and writing aids that are in everyday use throughout the school.
70. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good. Within weeks of arrival pupils are relaxed especially in their

Learning Support sessions. They talk about their problems and are very eager to succeed. Within lessons they are increasingly willing to take risks such as reading in front of their peers. They respond positively to the enthusiasm and encouragement of adults. Their behaviour is invariably good and pupils really enjoy their lessons. They work hard independently, in small groups and as whole classes.

71. The quality of teaching is very good overall. During the inspection it was invariably good or very good, sometimes excellent and very rarely only satisfactory. English lessons are very well planned by teachers in both the English and the Learning Support Departments. Although separate departments they liaise very closely and provide very consistent support for the pupils. The work of classroom assistants during English lessons is of the highest quality and contributes strongly to pupils' successful learning. Teaching is of a particularly high standard where pupils are enthused to such an extent that they gain confidence and they can identify their progress within the lesson. This occurs when lesson targets are exactly matched to the needs of the pupils and their learning occurs in minute steps.
72. The quality of teaching by the Learning Support Team is excellent. The success of their work fully justifies the withdrawal of pupils from other lessons. Without exception it is very well planned, the pace and timing of skills teaching is matched to the individual needs of pupils at all times. Pupils enjoy their sessions and make very good progress. Timetables for withdrawal are reviewed termly to ensure pupils do not always miss the same lessons. Assessment within the department is very accurate and used very well to ensure progression at the correct pace. The Learning Support co-ordinator leads a very dedicated and skilled team, their work effectively underpins the curriculum throughout the rest of the school.
73. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It is highly structured and fully meets the needs of the pupils. Long, medium and short term planning are all very good. Every pupil has relevant targets set and these are monitored well. Teachers' records contain much very good information but they do not follow a consistent pattern. The school recognises that a more structured assessment scheme would ensure that progression is even more rigorously monitored.
74. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is hard working and has a clear understanding of how the subject is best developed to meet the particular needs of the pupils. Resources are of very high quality and are used well. Pupils are confident to use information and communications technology and more use is being made of the computer suite for English lessons. The quantity and high quality of books in the school is good. The library has a wide range of age and ability appropriate materials.

89. **Mathematics**

75. In the three years before the inspection, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 have been slightly below national averages for all secondary schools. Any variations between the years is the result of differences in the ability of the small number of pupils on roll. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 are attaining below national averages as a result of their literacy and other specific learning difficulties. For example, as a result of sequencing difficulties pupils require additional time to set out calculations involving several operators. At the end of Key Stage 3 most pupils understand and use the four rules of number, including using negative numbers and decimals. Pupils identify the numerator and denominator in a fraction and can cancel down to the smallest fraction. Pupils enter data into a spreadsheet to produce graphs and can draw a pie-chart accurately.
76. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are making satisfactory progress. During the inspection, some year 7 pupils made very good progress in lessons. This progress resulted from work that involved and interested the pupils and that allowed all pupils, regardless of their prior attainment to make progress. For example, higher attaining pupils began to see patterns in number bonds during an investigation and make predictions. Lower attaining pupils were able to construct number bonds and reinforced their understanding. A strength of the lesson was the ongoing recording of pupils' understanding that formed the basis for the next lesson. It is the lack of this recording of pupil's past attainment that hindered progress for other pupils in their lessons. Therefore, although pupils make gains in knowledge and understanding work is not

consistently based on their attainment in previous years and the pace of progress is slower.

77. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is much closer to national averages for all secondary schools. In 1998 pupils attainment at GCSE in the range of A-G was in line with national averages. The number of pupils attaining A-C was below national averages, as a result of most pupils appropriately taking the foundation examination which limits the range of possible grades. There is a slight decline in the results for 1999 which is not matched by the performance of the same pupils in other subjects. Inspection evidence shows that this fall in standards results from the long-term absence of the mathematics co-ordinator and the lack of a clear profile of pupils' past attainment. Together with unsatisfactory teaching this means that the current year 11 pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. As a result of more organised teaching, pupils in year 10 are making satisfactory progress.
78. At the end of Key Stage 4 the highest attaining pupils understand how the formulae to calculate the volume of a truncated cone is derived and use the formula to calculate volume. Other pupils use formulae to calculate the areas and perimeters of regular shapes such as a triangle or circle. Higher attaining pupils calculate answers using their knowledge of multiplication tables while lower attaining pupils use calculators. Pupils are aware of standard units of length, volume and area and use them appropriately.
79. Pupils develop their numeracy skills in other subjects, particularly in science where they are required to calculate features such as terminal velocity using formulae. Pupils are able to plot graphs to demonstrate physical processes such as acceleration. Pupils enhance their skills in other subjects such as geography when they use questionnaires to gather data about tourism to Lulworth Cove.
80. The pupils generally respond well in lessons particularly when they are able to identify their own progress. Pupils in year 7 became quite enthusiastic when they began to see a pattern in the number bonds investigation. Pupils settle quickly to work and are pleased with their success in the multiplication tasks that are set at the beginning of many lessons. They generally work well when completing individual work often showing considerable application and determination. Behaviour is generally good, although higher attaining pupils can become restless and bored when not challenged by the work. Such behaviour is never disruptive to the rest of the class.
81. Teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection it ranged in quality from very good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching is very good, the lesson targets are very clear and the lesson includes a range of activities. All staff provide individual support through the use of good questions ensuring that the pupils are able to think about their answers. All staff record the progress and attainment of the individual pupils to form the basis for the next lesson. A range of resources are provided and pupils are actively involved throughout. All these features were present in a year 7 lesson investigating number bonds and the pupils became increasingly involved and enthusiastic as they recognised their own progress. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, in year 11, the work presented did not take account of the full range of attainment in the group or the pupils' past learning. Explanations were confused and the range of resources was inappropriate for the pupils' specific learning difficulties. Although the pupils completed the work that was set they were not involved or challenged and failed to make progress.
82. The subject co-ordinator has retired following long-term absence and the subject is currently taught by a number of part-time teachers. As the co-ordinator had been responsible for most of the teaching, records of pupils' past attainment are limited and therefore a number of lessons include activities that are too easy for higher attaining pupils. This limits their progress. Teachers have concentrated on ensuring that the schemes of work taught include all areas of the National Curriculum programmes of study. They are only beginning to develop pupils' profiles of attainment in year 7. Resources are satisfactory and teachers are beginning to use information and communications technology to support pupils' learning.
83. Standards in the subject have fallen since the last inspection and teaching is less successful. However, it is a credit to the teaching of the majority of staff that the pupils are still able to make satisfactory progress.

98. **Science**

84. By the end of Key Stage 3 the pupils attainment is below national averages for pupils in all secondary schools. At Key Stage 4 the GCSE results for 1998 and 1999 are above those found nationally for boys doing the combined sciences single award. There has been an upward trend in attainment over the last few years. Examinations of pupils' work and lesson observations suggest that attainment is even over all strands of the subject.
85. Progress through Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. As they progress through the key stage pupils develop both knowledge and skills, often from low levels on admission. Pupils gain increased insight and understanding of the nature of the subject and its basis in evidence. Year 7 pupils can read a thermometer accurately and use this skill to plot the cooling of water over time as a bar graph, they understand how far it will cool and, with help, why it cools quickest to start with. By Year 9, pupils tackle more complex work exemplified by considering how to calculate the energy needed by an individual pupil to ascend the main school stairs. They carry out the experiment taking all the necessary measurements and then applying the correct formula.
86. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 4. Pupils tackle a greater volume of work and show a greater depth and breadth of coverage and appreciation together with an increased range of skills and knowledge. Pupils tackle ideas such as reactivity of metals. They are able, by experimenting with metals and acids, to produce ideas for a reactivity series whilst at the same time taking into account fair tests and factors that will affect rates of reaction. Most pupils make good progress towards the targets set on their individual education plans in science lessons where literacy support is built into the teaching methods. When pupils receive additional support from learning support assistants, their progress is often rapid.
87. Most pupils clearly enjoy their science, especially the practical work. They concentrate well and work hard when there is plenty for them to do and the approach is varied. Apparatus is handled with increasing care and precision. They are confident, suggest answers when asked and pose quite a few questions of their own.
88. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection the teaching observed was never less than satisfactory, with the majority of lessons being good or very good. Lessons are well planned; points from previous lessons are revisited and reinforced. Lesson targets are clearly identified and communicated to the pupils. Their views are actively sought through skilful questioning. The pupils' answers are developed and used to extend their knowledge and skills. Much is done to boost their self-confidence and to improve their reading and writing skills. Science lessons are well disciplined with a great emphasis on safety. The technique of pasting printed homework into the homework diary does much to ensure that it is remembered. This, together with the practice of going over what is expected from the pupils while in class, ensures that the best possible use is made of homework. Most work is well marked with useful suggestions for future improvement.
89. There is an enthusiastic and effective co-ordinator, who has developed good schemes of work covering all the National Curriculum programmes of study and the requirements for single award science. There are suitable systems for assessing theory and practical work. Appropriate use is made of the local environment for such activities as pond dipping and measuring the acidity of rain. The curriculum is further enhanced by the ecological aspects of the activities week in Dorset and the environmental components of the geography trip. The pupils' interest and attainment are raised still further by visiting field centres. Visits such as that to the Royal Institution Special Schools day serve to further raise understanding and deepen perspectives. The problem of the small size of the science room, mentioned in the last report has now been overcome and the new accommodation has the potential to be very good although it is not fully complete. The subject is well equipped. The use of computers for data logging is developing well and there are good plans to make more use is made of the new computer suite and network. The school has gained success in the Pupil Researcher Initiative, a national award. The provision for science and standards have risen since the previous inspection and are likely to rise further when the new accommodation can be fully used.

104. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

104. **Information technology**

90. Attainment is in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 3, with half of the pupils assessed to be working at the expected level: this is the highest subject result in the school. At the end of Key Stage 4 the GCSE results for 1998 were that a tenth of the pupils obtained grades A* to C whereas by 1999 they had risen to nearly half of pupils attaining in this range. In the range A* to G results are in line with the national averages for boys in all maintained secondary schools. The course is well planned and taught resulting in little difference in attainment across all strands of the subject. There has been a sharp upwards trend in attainment over the last three years.

91. Good progress is made throughout Key Stage 3 with the development of knowledge and understanding of computer skills. Year 7 pupils demonstrate that they have already assimilated a wide range of basic computer skills in their production of individual business cards. These include personal logos and a wide variety of text forms and patterns. By year 9 pupils can make effective use of spreadsheets, for example the use of formulae and modelling techniques. Higher attaining pupils are supported through individual work to fulfil their potential. Lower attaining pupils also make good progress, helped by learning support assistants and the well-structured approach. Similarly good progress is made through Key Stage 4 with some ideas revisited at a higher level. Pupils make particularly rapid progress in understanding control systems and modelling. Year 11 pupils show an impressive knowledge of the electronic systems used by supermarkets ranging from bar codes and EFT to stock control and pricing. Pupils are able to relate their classroom work to the real world on a visit to a supermarket.

92. Most pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, especially now that each can use their own computer. They are keen to learn and to put their newly acquired skills into practice. When there are difficulties most will first employ on screen help, but they are also confident to ask for advice. Almost all pupils feel that computer skills are both interesting and well worth acquiring.

93. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the lessons observed teaching was never less than satisfactory; most lessons were very good and some excellent. Lessons are very well planned and contain a wide variety of approaches. Teaching techniques stimulate pupils to discover for themselves what is possible and how it might be achieved. Teaching is designed to build on what the pupils already know well, so as to increase their self-confidence. Cross-curricular links and possible uses for their new-found skills are emphasised. Teaching is clear and calm with good behaviour management although on the single occasion of a lesson being less successful the individual behaviour difficulties of a small number of pupils distracted the others in the class.

94. The co-ordinator is well-organised, enthusiastic and has developed schemes of work to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and provide well for the pupils' progress and useful assessment. Since the last inspection the new computer suite has been completed and its use by all departments is now actively encouraged. It is an excellent asset and there are good plans for developing access to the Internet and E-mail. The good quality of the computer provision and the high quality of teaching make information and communication technology a definite strength of the school.

109. **Religious education**

95. The pupils make good progress towards the targets identified in the local agreed syllabus. At the lower end of Key Stage 3 progress is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Religious education is now taught as a discrete subject across the whole school.

96. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils understand the concept and relevance of the Christian family and know

that it can include friends and people of similar beliefs who are not necessarily related. They know the story of the Creation as told in the Christian religion, that Jesus acts as a role model for helping others and they understand the need to look after the environment. Key Stage 4 pupils know and understand that all religions have their own beliefs and practices. Using knowledge gained in previous years they discuss such topics as the Tawhid, and debate with real insight whether one should be expected to follow practices of a religion other than your own if living in a different country or with a family whose faith is different to yours.

97. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have a very good attitude to their work. They join in discussions well, often showing good background knowledge based on previous work. They are confident to express their views and listen to each other with interest and respect.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall and there were some very good features in all the lessons observed. Lessons are very well organised with very good introductions which engage pupils interest and lead them into the main theme of the lesson. The pace and timing of activities throughout lessons is good and holds pupils' interest throughout. The calm, unthreatening approach enables all pupils to become involved in discussions. Cross-curricular work is of a good standard with very good links with art. Assessment is on-going and provides a clear indication of what has been taught and what pupils have learnt. The subject is very well co-ordinated and the scheme of work followed ensures that pupils build on their skills, knowledge and understanding across the school. Resources, though limited, are satisfactory but visits to local places of worship are underused.

113. **Art**

99. The pupils make good progress overall and frequently very good progress in lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is slightly below national expectations for all pupils. GCSE results show attainment at Key Stage 4 in line with national averages in the range A-G.
100. At the end of Key Stage 3 pupils extend their observational skills by mixing paint to match objects collected in the school grounds and by still life drawing. They are beginning to understand the elements of abstract art from their work using Hundertwasser's painting. Having made pots from clay they colour and glaze them understanding the differing ways of doing this. Higher attaining pupils pick out detail using several colours on their pottery and mix paints to obtain an exact colour match for their natural and man-made objects found in the school grounds. Lower attaining pupils use fewer colours achieving less detail on their pots and take longer to match exact shades of paint to their collected objects.
101. At the end of Key Stage 4 older pupils organise their work very well and work independently on their own projects. They make clay portraits and understand the principles of colouring and glazing. When lino printing they use a scanner and computer to assist them in their work and understand masking techniques to produce prints of several colours. Higher attaining pupils create delicate fine-wire sculptures and very clear colourful lino prints. Lower attaining pupils initially find difficulty using lino printing tools with accuracy but gradually discover the correct technique and produce good results.
102. The pupils' response in lessons is good. It is especially good at Key Stage 4 and in the youngest classes of Key Stage 3. Pupils are keen to get on with their work and concentrate very well. For example, one of the youngest classes worked absolutely silently for twenty minutes so great was their concentration on their observational drawings. The oldest pupils are totally engrossed in their own projects but happily discuss each others' work and are willing to offer and accept advice from their peers as well as the teacher.
103. The quality of teaching is good overall although several examples of very good teaching were observed during the inspection. Where it is very good pupils are challenged to deepen their knowledge in an

unthreatening way, with very good skills teaching throughout, advice and help is given at just the right time. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and results in a good range of activities. Where teaching is less successful, work is not always planned in as much detail for when pupils complete the main work for the lesson and the pace is slower.

104. Co-ordination of art is good and the co-operation between the teachers is very good. The co-ordinator is new to the school and is beginning to make a positive innovative impact in the subject. The scheme of work is broad and balanced and includes the full range of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is evidence of good cross-curricular links both in the past and in the present, especially in religious education and history. Assessment is on-going and is of a high level across the department. Resources are used well. The absence of a kiln and photocopier within the department hinders progress. The lack of draining boards in the newly furnished art room creates difficulties when clearing up after lessons.

119. **Design technology**

105. There is little evidence to enable a judgement to be made on standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 due to the lack of written evidence and artefacts. This has been caused by numerous recent changes and reorganisation. However, scrutiny of the written work and wooden artefacts from this academic year suggests that the majority of pupils are working below national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 4 the GCSE results for 1998 and 1999 are lower for A* to C than those found for boys nationally, but higher than national averages for the range for A* to G.

106. Lesson observations and scrutiny of the pupils' work in Key Stage 3 suggests that they are making satisfactory progress this current academic year. The quality of their work improves and shows an increase in the precision of their marking out, cutting and joining skills. There is a development of the ideas concerned with drawing plans and appreciating the tools and quantities of materials needed. Pupils show an increasing ability to list and to explain the sequence of events involved in the production of an artefact. Year 7 pupils showed, in the construction of their key rack that they could use a template for marking out. They were able to countersink screws and use a brace and bit to make large clean holes. Year 8 pupils clearly understand lamination and know that strength can be improved by alternating grain direction. They measure, mark using a square and cut wood accurately. Most can produce a good finish by sealing with varnish, sanding and concluding with button polish.

107. Pupils in Key Stage 4 make good progress in designing skills from rather imprecise planning in year 10 to work of a much higher standard for GCSE. Plans are developed and modified as a result of research and trials, leading to some useful detailed working drawings and artefacts, which demonstrate skills of shaping, joining and finishing of high quality. No evidence of progress with systems and control was available.

108. Pupils show enthusiasm for design technology. They obviously enjoy making things and learning the skills needed to operate tools with precision. Most concentrate well, take a pride in what they are doing and work hard. They are aware of the need for safe working practices and are aware of the regulations for the use of tools and machinery.

109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there were some good lessons. Lessons are well thought out, the resources needed are carefully prepared and well matched to the pupils' abilities. Great care is taken to ensure that all safety precautions are taken. The teachers are expert woodworkers; their lessons are punctuated by clear explanations of what is wanted and how it might be achieved. There are informative demonstrations on the safe and effective use of tools.

110. The subject is being reviewed and developed. There has been a complete change of staff for this year and much hard work is being done to produce new schemes of work, assessment methods and a reorganised workshop. It is very early days yet to make any judgement on how effectively these challenges have been met. However, much positive progress has already been made. Areas using media other than wood are under-developed as are the National Curriculum requirements for systems and control. As the last report stated making skills are particularly good and there is accurate measurement. There is good

attention to health and safety. Food technology has not been formally introduced due to the changes in staffing.

125. **History**

111. Standards of attainment and teaching have improved since the last inspection. At the end of Key Stage 3 the pupils' attainment is slightly below national expectations for pupils in all schools. Pupils can identify key figures in history and the social and economic consequences of events such as the development of machines in the early period of the Industrial Revolution. They use their knowledge of chronology to order events and can see the roots of current techniques, such as marketing, in the past. History is not taught in Key Stage 4.
112. The pupils make good progress in developing their historical understanding, knowledge and skills throughout Key Stage 3. Pupils in Year 7 are able to use a range of sources to gain information. In Year 8 they begin to be critical of sources and are aware of features such as bias. By the end of the key stage in Year 9 they can take the information from a range of sources to produce a balanced view. They recall increasingly complex factual information. Their progress enhances their progress in literacy and helps them to develop strategies to overcome their specific learning difficulties. Pupils develop enquiry, sequencing and organisational skills by working with "real-life" information.
113. The pupils respond well in lessons, with a key feature being that they work for the whole lesson, often so involved up in their work that they do not notice the end of the lesson. They co-operate well for example sharing reference books in year 7. Year 9 pupils were able to role-play a hypothetical interview between a reporter and a mill owner. Behaviour is consistently good with pupils with additional behavioural needs often well supported by special support assistants.
114. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher has good subject knowledge, which coupled with high expectations ensures that the quantity and quality of the work presented challenges the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 7 were expected to find information on the Roman army from a range of sources. They were then required to apply this knowledge to their previous work on the make-up of Roman society. The teacher and special support assistants know the individual pupils very well and individual targets are now set for each term. Within the lesson, specific pupils are required to read aloud or make contributions according to their targets. The teacher manages the pupils behaviour ensuring that they work throughout the lesson. The pupils' knowledge and understanding are tested regularly with questions and their levels of attainment are recorded. Homework is used well to consolidate the learning in the classroom, for example the pupils investigate further examples of change in the Industrial Revolution.
115. The subject is taught and co-ordinated by one teacher. The scheme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and there are appropriate plans to develop the use of information and communications technology in the subject. Assessment, through the individual targets, is good. There is a good range of resources and pupils are involved in visits to sites of historical interest such as a Roman settlement. The subject supports pupils' cultural development well.

Geography

116. Standards of attainment and teaching have improved since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils' attainment is below the national expectation for pupils in all schools. Pupils are able to recall how specific physical processes are responsible for different features of the landscape, for example how the different strengths of rocks in the course of a river leads to features such as waterfalls. They recognise, understand and use specific language such as 'corrasion', 'attrition' and 'hydraulic action' when applied to erosion by water. They identify similar processes in operation with erosion by wind and ice.
117. By the end of Key Stage 4 the pupils attain examination passes in GCSE in the range A* to G in line

with national averages. The number of A* to C grades is lower than national averages as the pupils' specific learning difficulties mean that they do not undertake the higher level paper. So the range of grades is restricted. Pupils understand the interaction between human and physical features of a landscape.

When completing their fieldwork studies on their visit to Dorset, Year 11 pupils were able to identify why the features of a coastal landscape such as Lulworth Cove would be attractive to visitors and the consequences these visitors have on the landscape. They develop their numeracy skills using a range of data collection techniques such as questionnaires. They develop their information and communications technology skills in preparing and presenting their final project reports.

118. The pupils' progress is good in both key stages although their progress in developing independent fieldwork skills is less well developed than their knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 7 develop a sense of place and are able to use maps of different scales. Year 8 pupils identify specific physical features such as volcanoes on a map and can distinguish between the different types of lava flow. Pupils' work in the subject supports their literacy development through the range of techniques used to reinforce their learning of geographical concepts such as crosswords or word-searches.
119. The pupils generally respond well in lessons. Pupils develop their interest and are often enthusiastic. Behaviour is good and pupils are keen to answer questions and demonstrate their learning. Year 11 pupils are able to work independently and although younger pupils complete specific tasks well, they are less familiar with working independently on investigative tasks.
120. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and this results in a good emphasis on geographical terminology. Lessons are well structured and include a good range of activities such as the use of video. The main resource of the course is the range of worksheets prepared by the teacher where the pupils record their answers and complete other activities. These include a good range of techniques such as revision quizzes, word-searches and exercises where pupils have to fill in missing words. These reinforce concepts from earlier lessons. The pace of lessons is good and the teacher manages the pupils' behaviour well.
121. The subject is taught and co-ordinated by one teacher. The schemes of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study although there is less emphasis on the development of investigative skills. Although the pupils' specific learning difficulties mean that they find difficulty in tackling open-ended tasks, Year 11 pupils found their first real investigation a great challenge having not undertaken much similar work in the past. There is appropriate regular and accurate assessment of the pupils' progress. Resources are good and there are appropriate plans to develop the use of information and communications technology. The use of a single room for geography ensures that displays are used to celebrate and reinforce pupils' learning.

Physical education

122. Standards in the subject remain high as in the previous inspection and there have been considerable improvements to the facilities including a new all-weather surface that has the potential to help raise standards further. The quality of the school's work has been recognised by the award of a 'Sportsmark Award'.
123. The pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations for all pupils. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate range of skills in specific sports such as football, basketball, athletics and swimming. They understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and take part in appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities with other pupils sometimes taking the lead. They develop their understanding of teamwork and working together through skill based exercises in small groups.
124. By the end of Key Stage 4 the pupils' skills are in line with national expectations. Their sense of fair play and teamwork are very good. These were demonstrated in a football match with another school. The pupils were able to co-operate well, passing the ball and providing encouragement for each other, even when shots went astray. Many pupils demonstrated a very mature approach tolerating foul play by the opposing team and ignoring remarks made by less mature players on the other side. Most boys worked very hard to support each other and the result was a well deserved victory. In a class hockey lesson the same pupils were able to develop their skills in an unfamiliar sport and worked well together, despite the poor weather conditions.
125. Pupils in both key stages make good progress. New Year 7 pupils, although clearly not used to whole class lessons in physical education listen well in swimming and try hard to complete the tasks set for them. They develop their organisation skills well through the school's insistence on them bringing the correct kit to each lesson. The same pupils begin to develop their sense of teamwork in games lesson where they have to learn to pass the ball to be successful. The pupils' progress in outdoor and adventurous activities is good as they undertake regular visits to off-site facilities such as a climbing wall and residential centres.
126. The pupils enjoy physical education lessons. They work hard, for example, pupils in year 10 worked very hard in a football skills lesson and identified good features in each other's play. In all year groups, pupils work well in mixed-ability groups with higher attaining pupils often encouraging others whose skills are less well developed. The pupils' behaviour is very good in all lessons; they listen to instructions and pay good attention to health and safety issues.
127. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and special support assistants have good subject knowledge and this allows them to provide good demonstrations and coach specific techniques to individual pupils. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' preparation for the lesson, the amount of work required and the level of behaviour and teamwork expected. Relationships are very good with a good rapport between the pupils and their teachers. Teachers use a good mix of encouragement and constructive criticism to motivate the pupils. Some lesson plans are detailed and identify individual targets; others do not identify clear learning targets for the lesson but include the range of activities to be provided. Often, lessons include the co-ordinator and non-specialist teachers. In these lessons, the co-ordinators expertise is used well to support the full range of attainment.
128. The schemes of work meet the requirements of most of the National Curriculum programmes of study although there is little evidence of dance. The timetable includes opportunities for the pupils to develop skills in specific sports and also for team games. There is a good range of competitive matches with other schools. There are appropriate plans in the subject development plan to introduce an accredited course in Key Stage 4. Assessment is satisfactory although it is based on the teachers' good knowledge of the individual pupils rather than a systematic approach. The facilities have improved and there are good links with neighbouring schools and sports centres, both locally and in other parts of the county. The subject greatly supports the pupils' social and personal development.

Modern foreign language

129. The school does not teach a modern foreign language. As the pupils have not been disapplied from this part of the National Curriculum this is in breach of statutory requirements. Since the previous inspection the governing body has consulted with the parents and found that they approve of its position in not offering a modern foreign language. Where individuals have a specific talent they are supported, for example, a pupil from a bilingual family was supported to gain success in the GCSE examination.

144. Music

130. Music is not taught currently as a National Curriculum subject although it has been taught for some terms since the last inspection. The school does not meet its statutory requirements. Some pupils receive individual drumming lessons. Unfortunately the school cancelled these lessons for the week of the inspection and so no judgements could be made.

145. Personal, social and health education

131. Standards in personal, social and health education are good overall. They are better in Key Stage 4, than Key Stage 3 because pupils' confidence and personal and social skills are very fragile on arrival in year 7. Where applicable, as in elements of health and careers education, standards reached by pupils meet course expectations. Pupils make very good progress in personal, social and health education and the taught programme is very well supported through extra-curricular activities and school routines. Work in other parts of the curriculum such as supported studies and thinking skills reinforce learning well. Progress in personal and social skills from year 7 to year 11 is very good, as seen in the self-discipline, independence and co-operative behaviour of pupils. Progress through the careers education programme is very good, supported well by a strong relationship with the careers officer. Year 11 pupils make very good progress with the Youth Awards Scheme and Royal Society of Arts (RSA) awards in personal achievement.

132. Teaching in personal, social and health education is good. Lessons meet the needs of pupils well and are successful in matching materials to their age and capabilities. For example, worksheets on the effects of alcohol are written in language pupils can read and understand. As a result, pupils take these lessons seriously and enjoy the work they are given to do. Their responses show impressive maturity in dealing with sensitive subjects, including adolescence and sex education. Planning is sometimes too general, partly because staff know pupils so well. Teachers recognise the need to clarify the aims of lessons and to share these with pupils. Assessment is good. It includes some pupil self-assessment and evaluation of units.

133. The curriculum and resulting programme of work in personal, social and health education is carefully thought out and implemented effectively in all year groups. It results in pupils making rapid progress in personal development and being very well prepared for their lives beyond school. This provision enhances the school's work.

148. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

148. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

134. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector. A total of 19.5 inspection days was spent in the school. During this time 85 lessons or parts of lessons were observed for a total of 57 hours. Thirty-one hours were spent on other inspection activities including a scrutiny of pupils' work and their records, and observation in the residential provision. Inspectors observed lunch, break times, assemblies and the arrival and departure of pupils' transport. Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of senior management team, governors, teaching, residential and support staff, and professionals working in and visiting the school, parents and pupils. Documentation was analysed prior to and during the inspection including schemes of work, programmes of study and policies. A selection of work, pupils' statements of special educational needs, annual reviews and individual objectives were examined to evaluate pupils' progress. Inspectors heard pupils read in Learning Support sessions and meetings were held with groups of pupils. Inspectors examined teachers' plans and records and other school documents and policies. Pupils were accompanied to a swimming lesson in the adjacent school. A meeting for parents was attended by ten parents. Forty responses to a parents' questionnaire were considered together with letters from other parents.

150. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

150. **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 7 to 11	68	68	68	Not applicable due to residential provision

150. **Teachers and classes**

150. **Qualified teachers (Y7 – Y11)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	5.4

150. **Education support staff (Y7 – Y11)**

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	110

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	Not assessed due to high proportion of temporary part-time staff.
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Average teaching group size:	Key Stage 3	9
	Key Stage 4	10

150. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	918,713
Total Expenditure	783,316
Expenditure per pupil	11,352
Balance brought forward from previous year	68,387
Balance carried forward to next year	203,784*

* Approximately £135,000 of this has been used to fund specific improvements to the accommodation in the current financial year.

150. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 68

Number of questionnaires returned: 40

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	58	38	0	3	3
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	60	30	0	8	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	33	45	12	6	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	42	42	11	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	51	35	11	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	51	32	11	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	65	30	3	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	55	34	3	5	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	65	30	0	3	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	54	38	5	0	3
My child(ren) like(s) school	64	15	10	8	3

150. **Other issues raised by parents**

A small number of parents raised concerns over the way in which the school deals with complaints.