

INSPECTION REPORT

CHELFHAM MILL SCHOOL

Barnstaple, Devon

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113591

Headteacher: Mrs Katy Roberts

Reporting inspector: Janet Bond
2642

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 September 2001

Inspection number:230115

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Residential special school for emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties

School category: Independent

Age range of pupils: 7 – 13 years

Gender of pupils: Boys

School address: Barnstaple
North Devon

Postcode: EX32 7LA

Telephone number: 01271 850448

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Appropriate authority: The Directorate

Names of Directors
Dr J R Burland
Mr B Doyle
Mrs K Roberts

Date of previous inspection: April 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

2642	Janet Bond	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and Design Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught
19727	Eric Langford	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
1358	Glyn Essex	Team inspector	English Design and Technology	How well is the school led and managed
22058	Christine Richardson	Team inspector	Science Religious Education Modern Foreign Language Equal Opportunities	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils
1987	George Davies	Team Inspector	Information and Communication Technology Geography History Physical Education	Pupils attitudes, values and personal development Residential provision

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chelfham Mill is an independent residential special school for boys aged between 7 and 13 years who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Many boys also have other specified behavioural disorders and all have attended other schools. Most pupils' attainments on entry are well below national expectations and averages mainly due to poor attitudes to learning, limited concentration or long periods of absence from school. All pupils have statements of Special Educational Need. Twenty seven Local Education Authorities place boys at the school and of the 52 pupils on roll 42 are residential with half having a 52 week placement and half being termly boarders. Each year the school reintegrates a small number of pupils into their local mainstream school. Few pupils are from ethnic backgrounds and there are no pupils with English as a second language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good and improving school that is highly effective in meeting the emotional and behavioural needs of the pupils. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning because teaching is good. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, directorate and senior staff who have significantly improved the provision, efficiently and effectively, since the previous inspections. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good leadership and management has enabled the school to significantly improve the quality of provision for the pupils.
- Pupils behave well because they understand and respect the consistently applied approaches to behaviour management.
- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to work and play because relationships are excellent and because they make very good progress in their personal development.
- Pupils learn well because the 24 hour curriculum is highly relevant to their needs.
- Staff know pupils very well. Excellent care procedures and good teaching are supported by effective assessment and monitoring systems that inform planning for individual needs, both in the school and house.
- Pupils make rapid progress in literacy and numeracy in their first year in school.

What could be improved

- School development planning by extending the time scale to three years and by linking development priorities and budget planning.
- Whole school target setting focused on the raising of academic standards, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Schemes of work to be completed for information and communication technology, art and design, music and geography.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made significant progress since it was last inspected in December 1999. Improvements to curriculum planning, lesson planning and target setting have had a significant impact on teaching and raising expectations. These three factors have had a major impact on the learning and achievement of pupils. At the last inspection pupils made good progress in over one third of lessons. At the time of this inspection pupils made good progress in three-quarters of lessons. All of the key issues except one identified in the last report have been well addressed. More opportunities are still required for design and technology.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 6	by Year 8	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IETPs	A	A		

**IETPs are individual education and therapeutic plans for pupils with special educational needs*

At all ages pupils make good progress and achieve well because teaching is good and the curriculum is relevant to their needs. Pupils make very good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Education and Therapeutic Plans (IETPs), which reflect their needs identified in their statements of Special Educational Need. Good assessment procedures, particularly in English, mathematics and science, ensure teachers plan effectively for individual needs in lessons. The highly structured approach to English and mathematics, coupled with skilful teaching, enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring basic skills. Pupils make good progress in science, physical education, religious education, history and information and communication technology. Pupils also make satisfactory progress in all other subjects. Pupils' progress in personal development and in managing their own behaviour is very good because they understand and enjoy the reward systems that are consistently and fairly applied.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn because lessons are interesting and relevant to their needs.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils value and understand the procedures used for helping them to change their behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond well to the high level of care and opportunities for personal development because relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Excellent. Pupils want to be in school and are well supported by all staff.

Pupils respond very well to the wide range of opportunities and support provided across the twenty four-hour curriculum. Because pupils try very hard to behave well and because the support structures are well-established and effective, lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 3 – 6	Years 7 – 8
Quality of teaching	Very good	good

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

Teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well. Teaching for the younger pupils, particularly in literacy and numeracy, is very good and because of this pupils make rapid progress in their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers know the pupils very well because of good assessments and plan their lessons effectively to meet individual needs. Teachers have a very good understanding of the behavioural and emotional needs of the pupils and because of the consistent approach to behaviour management pupils give good attention in lessons and know what is expected of them. Excellent relationships support pupils wanting to please. Good and effective teamwork between all staff contributes significantly to supporting all pupils' access to learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The twenty four-hour curriculum is very relevant to pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent overall and very good for social and moral development. This provision is skilfully included in all aspects of school life. Pupils know what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and respond well to the many opportunities provided for them to use their personal and social skills.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. Staff know the pupils very well because of good systems for monitoring and promoting progress and development. The school provides a safe, secure and caring environment where all are valued.

The school actively promotes and encourages parents and carers to be involved in pupils' learning and provides very good quality information. The school works very well with parents and carers to support pupils' learning both at school and at home. All boys have the opportunity to telephone home twice a week. The twenty-four hour curriculum provides a rich and varied range of appropriate experiences. Good and effective links with other schools and very good links with the wider community enrich the opportunities made available to pupils. Effective systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are in place and pupils' achievements are valued and celebrated.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership and management provide a very clear educational direction and effective systems for raising standards and expectations. School aims and values are excellently reflected in all that has been achieved. The development of a very positive team spirit has led to a common desire for continued improvement.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. The directorate has developed and promoted the underlying philosophy that creates the ethos of the school. They are actively and fully involved in all developments and decision making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Useful information from the effective monitoring systems is now available. The school has made a good start to using this information to set appropriate whole school targets.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Funding is managed well and staff and resources are well used to promote pupils' learning. However, school priorities are not yet fully linked to budget planning.

The generous number of staff in the school are well experienced and qualified to meet the needs of pupils. Accommodation for physical education and design and technology needs improving. The adequate range of resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress • Teaching is good and children work hard • The school helps children become mature and responsible • They are comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information more regularly about what and how their child is doing, with more involvement in target setting • More communication and easier access to talk to care staff • For parents of residential pupils more opportunities to talk to their child and visit

The inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. Inspectors found very good and regular information is supplied to parents, who are involved in target setting. However, inspectors do agree that there can be problems with telephoning

residential staff or pupils because of the limited number of telephone lines that are constantly in use.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils enter school with very low levels of achievement, particularly in the key subjects of English and mathematics. They have poor personal and social skills and poor attitudes to school and learning. As a result of a very effective management and reward system, good quality teaching and a well-planned and relevant curriculum, there has been an improvement in pupils' achievements since the last inspection. At all ages pupils make good progress and achieve well in their behaviour, in their personal and social skills and in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is improving and is good because teaching and learning are effectively focused to ensure pupils build steadily upon their achievements. Pupils who participated in statutory assessment tests last year achieved well, with a small number of higher attaining pupils achieving at a level appropriate to their age. Progress against targets in pupils' Individual Education and Therapeutic Plans (IETPs) is good. Lesson planning effectively focuses on individual targets in all lessons. Pupils are tested termly in English and mathematics and the data is used to inform subject and whole school planning. Appropriately, the school is now setting targets for whole school improvement which are providing a more directed focus on raising pupils' standards in subjects.
2. There have been significant changes in the achievements of pupils in most subjects since the last inspection. At all ages and in most subjects, pupils' achievements are improving. Progress and achievements overall have improved because in teachers' lesson plans there is a very good focus on what pupils will learn during lessons to enable their skills, knowledge and understanding to be built on and developed systematically. Pupils make good progress in English, particularly in reading and spelling. This is because teachers know their pupils very well and are skilful in delivering the highly structured scheme used. Progress and achievement at all ages in writing is good. In English, pupils' performance in statutory assessment tests are above average for similar schools. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics, particularly in number and in applying mathematics. This is because of the positive impact of effective teaching of the structured scheme used, which is carefully linked to the National Curriculum. In statutory assessment tests pupils achieve well in comparison to similar schools and higher attaining pupils achieve at a level in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress in science because it is made relevant and interesting to them and higher attaining pupils achieve at an appropriate level for their age in statutory assessment tests. Pupils make good progress in physical education where teachers' planning is good and good support from classroom assistants enables all to participate. In religious education, history and information and communication technology (ICT) pupils' achievements are good. Religious education lessons effectively allow all pupils to participate and contribute at an appropriate level. In ICT pupils learn to access the computer

and to apply their skills to using technology effectively in other subjects. In history pupils effectively learn about the past and relate their learning to present times. In art, design and technology, geography, French and music pupils of all ages make satisfactory achievement and in some lessons progress is good.

3. Pupils with additional special educational needs make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Grouping by ability in English and mathematics and individual and small group tuition ensures pupils receive the level of support they need. Learning support assistants play a valuable role in providing effective individual support. Pupils make very good progress in their personal and social development and in managing their behaviour because they understand and enjoy the reward systems that are consistently and fairly applied. The role of therapies, including anger management, play and creative therapy, psychotherapy and counselling significantly contribute to the improvements in the boys' behaviour management and attitudes to learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

4. Pupils' attitudes to school and residential provision are consistently very good across all age groups. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents confirm that their children like school and that the school expects them to work hard. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in the cheerful way they line up outside their classes at the start of the day and the positive way they approach their work. Pupils attend very well and listen carefully to instructions, as was shown in a physical education lesson when they listened carefully to their teacher, and in a problem-solving lesson as the teacher explained the techniques involved. Pupils' ability to concentrate for long periods of time and work independently were seen, for example, in an art lesson on portraits and an information and communication technology lesson on practising their skills application. Because of consistently good teaching pupils show interest and curiosity in much of what they do. In a history lesson, looking at old papers, bills and wills elicited a justified "wow" and the bombarding of the teacher and support staff with questions and explanations. The pupils' positive attitude and the effort shown by pupils was well demonstrated by the pupil who excitedly recalled that there was a rhyme that identified what had happened to Henry V111's wives. In failing to remember it, despite genuine and enthusiastic help from his peers, he promised the visitor to the class to find it out before the end of the day, which he did.
5. Pupils' behaviour is very good when in class, at play times, during meals and when taking part in evening activities. No bullying was observed during the week of the inspection. Pupils are very aware of the standard of behaviour that is expected of them and they know the difference between what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. A consistent feature of the pupils' behaviour is the way that they do not allow rare incidents of poor behaviour by others to influence their own or lead them off task. Pupils respond well because

teachers, support assistants and care staff constantly praise good work, effort and behaviour with “positivity” being at the heart of the policy for unlearning inappropriate behaviour and fostering good behaviour. The school reward system, the “Great Behaviour Race” is respected by all pupils and they show keenness at all times, particularly at the end of lessons, when discussing how many “C.C.s” or “REVS” (points) they have earned for behaviour and effort. Additionally, courtesy and politeness are strong features of their behaviour. Pupils say please and thank you in an unforced manner, will help their friends and often demonstrate real maturity as was seen when one pupil “apologised on his behalf “ for the inappropriate behaviour of his class mate. Pupils continue to behave in a sensible manner when not in class such as during play times, which are pleasantly lively and free from oppressive behaviour, and during meal times, which are civilised opportunities to socialise and eat. The strong sense of community in the school means that each pupil feels valued and, in turn, values others. Morning assemblies and the end of day changeover session strongly reflect the spirit of mutual regard that is present in the school.

6. Relationships are excellent throughout the school; a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In lessons pupils work well together and show they can discuss issues in a thoughtful manner while having due regard to the views and values of others. An older pupil showed particular sensitivity when discussing feelings as he realised that someone might not be able to dance, while younger pupils equally displayed sensitivity when a class mate, a new pupil, needed to work on his own while improving his early reading skills. The same excellent quality of relationships is present when pupils eat together: They pass food to each other without bidding and will ask for “seconds” for a friend. Because such courtesies take place in an environment of humorous exchanges between pupils and between pupils and staff the scene is set for a very good start to the school day.
7. The development of appropriate attitudes, behaviour and personal development runs through every facet of school and residential life. The significant success achieved and overall improvement in this area is the direct product of very carefully developed approaches and programmes that are consistently applied; and whose outcomes are regularly and carefully recorded and used to plan further interventions. Pupils with additional special behavioural needs respond well to the very good individual support provided by effective therapists and show the same very positive attitude to school and work.
8. The level of pupil attendance at school is excellent and well above that expected of similar schools. Pupils enjoy being in school and this is well demonstrated by the highly commendable low level of unauthorised absence achieved during the last academic year. Exclusions are very low for this type of school. Punctuality within the school is very good and lessons were seen to start on time during the inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

9. Teaching is good overall and enables pupils to learn well. During the inspection teaching was very good or better in 32 per cent of lessons observed, and was good in 42 per cent of lessons. It was satisfactory in 25 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 1 lesson. Teaching of the younger pupils was consistently at least good and was very good or better in 51 per cent of lessons. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection in all classes, but particularly for younger pupils.
10. Several factors have contributed to the significant improvement in all subjects in teaching and learning. In English, mathematics and science the curriculum has been re-written with appropriate work planned for each year group. These changes have resulted in teachers being more knowledgeable about what pupils need to learn. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well at all ages and teachers of younger pupils are particularly skilful in enabling pupils to make rapid progress. Improvements in the assessment strategies used mean that teachers can more accurately plan work for individual pupils. Monitoring of teaching by an external consultant, the headteacher and some subject co-ordinators has enabled support to be appropriately given to teachers where needed. Particular strengths of the teaching are the teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants, the good knowledge and understanding of the emotional and behavioural difficulties of the pupils, the consistent application of the school reward system and the very effective whole school system of lesson planning. Because teachers know the pupils very well, appropriate work is planned for individual pupils. As a result, pupils are interested and eager to do their work, try very hard and make good progress.
11. The effective partnership between teachers and learning support assistants contributes significantly to pupils' good progress. In nearly all lessons learning support assistants are fully aware of the role they are to play, which pupils they will be working with and what the pupils are to learn. In numeracy lessons, for example, pupils make good progress in their learning because they are divided into ability groups. Some small groups of one or two pupils are supervised by the teacher and led by the assistants, which enables individuals to be on work appropriate to their needs and to be given good individual support which helps them to concentrate and learn. Classroom assistants contribute well to the on-going monitoring of pupils' achievements and needs, which enables lesson planning to be effectively informed. At the end of most lessons time is given for pupils to explain to the whole class what they have been doing, enabling all to celebrate individual achievements and enabling the teacher to check on what pupils have understood and remembered.
12. Overall teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, particularly English, mathematics and science, and a good knowledge of the wide range of learning needs of the pupils. This results in teachers being confident in planning activities that allow all of the class to actively take part in each lesson. Teachers use information from assessments to plan work which is closely matched to pupils' needs and which provides the right amount of

challenge to help them move forwards. For example, in a very good science lesson pupils were encouraged and supported in predicting what would happen as their understanding increased. The pupils really enjoyed the experiments, gained confidence in their own understanding and were excited when the test tubes turned yellow proving that sugar was present.

13. Pupils behave well in lessons because they find the work interesting, because they have excellent relationships with staff, because teachers manage pupils' behaviour skilfully and because the school reward systems are consistently applied and fully understood and valued by the pupils. If any pupil does react inappropriately, teachers manage unobtrusively and make sure the learning of others is not interfered with. Both learning support assistants and care staff are available if any pupil requires some time out of lessons and skilfully manage and diffuse inappropriate behaviour. Pupils with additional special behavioural needs benefit from this approach and are fully included in all lessons and activities. Because appropriate activities are planned for and changed frequently, and because pupils are actively involved, they are keen to participate and confident to try new challenges. In a well-paced physical education lesson pupils responded to the high expectations of the teacher by performing as well as possible and were confident to volunteer to show their ways of balancing in front of others. In most lessons teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to make choices and decisions and pupils are treated with respect and consideration. In a very small number of lessons pupils were not always managed as well as possible or were able to divert the teacher from the intended task by engaging them in conversations about other things. Teachers are developing their skills and confidence in using information and communication technology effectively across subjects and further developments are planned for within many subject development plans.

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

14. The school's curriculum is very good overall. The whole curriculum reflects the school's aims in an exemplary manner and makes a very significant contribution to the learning of its pupils. The very good balance between the academic elements, the planned activities that comprise the 24-hour curriculum, the access to skilled therapists and the personal and social skills programme, provides a particularly broad range of highly relevant and interesting opportunities for learning. The curriculum is taught in a way that is clearly relevant to individual pupils needs. The emphasis on consistent behaviour management strategies makes a significant contribution to the curriculum because of the excellent relationships that provide a strong basis for the very effective support and guidance provided by all staff.
15. Statutory requirements, including the provision of religious education, are met and the timetable is balanced, in that all subjects of the National Curriculum are included on a regular basis. The numeracy strategy has been implemented very well and the literacy strategy has been introduced

effectively in that there is planned use of literacy across the curriculum, for example in science and religious education. The effect of the very good management and staff's hard work is evident in the upward trend in achievement in literacy and numeracy.

16. Equality of access to, and opportunity within the curriculum, has a high profile in the school. The school ensures the needs of all pupils are met and that they have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and opportunities to succeed in them. They have a high expectation that the curriculum will meet the special educational needs of all pupils. Arrangements and activities that are woven into the basic curriculum, such as school visits, integration and therapy programmes, are carefully planned, monitored and adjusted so that an appropriate balance is maintained between addressing the individual needs of pupils and their right to a broad and balanced curriculum. In these ways, the school reinforces the relevance of its provision to individual pupils very effectively.
17. A very strong emphasis is placed on pupils' personal, social and health education through the daily life of the school and in subject lessons. It is firmly embedded within the whole school curriculum. This is entirely appropriate. It has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve and endorses the aims of the school very well. There are good guidelines for work on sex, drugs awareness, health education, and citizenship, as well as valuing self and others, safety and the physical and emotional changes during adolescence. The curriculum is sufficiently flexible to enable issues raised by the pupils to be included and the positive effect of the provision for personal and social development is apparent throughout the school. Pupils are courteous to visitors and engage in polite conversation at meal times and in lessons. The positive relationships with the house staff and the variety of extra-curricular activities, along with the personal, social and health education programme, make a valuable contribution to helping pupils become mature and sociable members of the community.
18. Provision for extra-curricular activities, ranging from beach-cleaning, fishing, swimming and a range of sports at the local leisure centre, to artistic activities and computer games, is very good. A selection of activities is available on a regular basis and the skills of staff are used very well to ensure that activities can be pursued to a high level and there are opportunities for team building. Links and communication with local schools are good and there are strong links to prepare pupils for reintegration at both primary and secondary level, as well as for staff training and development. The school is developing its own website and links with schools and the community through information and communication technology very effectively.
19. The school's curriculum is greatly enhanced by the school's extensive and very good links with the community. Some pupils work on community projects to keep the beaches clean and develop good links with many local youth organisations, such as the Sea Cadets. Pupils make visits to extend their knowledge of the local area and their cultural education is enhanced by visits

to productions and by groups who come to the school to provide workshops on, for example, African Dance.

20. Overall, the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and it contributes significantly to the school's ethos as a caring and very well ordered community. There has been marked improvement in this area of the curriculum since the previous inspection.
21. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The very well planned assemblies consistently provide pupils with opportunities for reflection and to pray for others, as was very poignantly demonstrated during the assembly that reflected upon the disaster in America. The staff's direct contribution and the behavioural models that they provided during this assembly contributed significantly to what was a very moving experience for all.
22. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour. Pupils understand the school's clear rules and conventions for learning and living together very well and they respect the consistency and fairness with which the staff apply them. Many examples of spontaneous "sorry" to staff and other pupils were heard during the week of the inspection, as were examples of appropriate courteous and respectful behaviour. Additionally, personal and social education lessons and evening social skills training provide very well structured opportunities for discussions about right and wrong and pupils of all ages demonstrate that they are confident speakers during such discussions. The many fund raising events undertaken by the school such as for Children in Need and the UNICEF appeal for the Children' Fund provide pupils with opportunities to explore wider moral issues.
23. Provision for pupils' social and personal development is excellent. There is a very well organised curriculum for personal and social education as well as a very good residential Social skills training and Leisure skills training programme. These provide a solid foundation for social development which complement and supplement the school's rules and conventions for appropriate social living and learning. The very well established routines are promoted in a consistent manner by all staff. Play times are enjoyable experiences as pupils show respect for others and lessons are rarely disturbed by inappropriate behaviour as pupils respond to lessons that are interesting and try hard to gain points for good social behaviour. Evening activities demonstrate a very good balance between formal opportunities to acquire social and leisure skills and informal opportunities to put them into practice. Social skills development is a strength of the school and is as much the product of the excellent role models provided by the staff, as it is the product of good programmes and routines.
24. The school's provision for the pupils' cultural development is excellent. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Carefully planned assemblies regularly contain opportunities for extending the pupils'

understanding of their own religious culture and the culture of others. Christian religious festivals as well as the religious festivals of other faiths are recognised, such the Chinese New Year, while religious education lessons extend this knowledge more formally as Hindu worship and the lives of saints in other cultures are studied. The English curriculum provides opportunities to visit the theatre while a visit by one class to hear and see an African Dance group resulted in the group being invited to perform before the whole school. French lessons provide insights into the culture of France while a visitor who had grown up in South Africa provided valuable information about that country's past and present culture and another visitor talked about life in Asian countries. The school's commitment to fostering the pupils' cultural development is amply demonstrated by the practice of teachers keeping a weekly record of how different subjects have contributed to this area of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The provision for the care and welfare of the pupils is excellent and is a strength of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Excellent child protection procedures are in place, which are well understood and acted upon by staff in the best interests of the pupils. The Head of Care is named officer and fully trained in the area of child protection. The school procedures are very effective in ensuring that ongoing refresher training and updates are provided for all staff. All staff are aware of, and alert to, the need for the continuous monitoring of the well being and personal development of the pupils in their care. Staff respond in a discreet and sensitive manner to any personal queries raised with them. Pupils trust adults and there is a settled ethos for learning across the school that has a positive impact on the raising of standards.
26. Very good systems are in place to manage and report all incidents involving the physical restraint of pupils by adults. Staff are well trained in the application of physical restraint techniques and all reported incidents are reviewed by the senior management team to identify any trends and ensure staff action taken was consistent with school policy.
27. Teachers, residential staff and support staff know their pupils well and make the best possible provision to support them in their learning and personal development. All staff display a high level of care and concern for the pupils and there is much evidence of the excellent rapport and respect that exists between pupils and staff. The school's pastoral support programme has proved successful in raising the level of pupil attendance and improving pupil attitudes and behaviour over recent years. The close and positive relationships that exist between pupils and between pupils and adults have helped to promote a more positive attitude to the school and to inter-pupil relationships.
28. Very good procedures are in place to review and support the specific needs of "looked after children" as they pass through the school. The close liaison

maintained with social workers in monitoring the pupils welfare has a positive and beneficial impact on the pupils time in school. All pupils feel safe and content in school and many have developed the confidence and independence to raise with staff any queries and concerns they may have.

29. Very good health and safety procedures ensure a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff. Very good arrangements are in place for the correct storage, recording and administration of medicines and for the effective management and reporting of pupil injuries. Examples were seen during the inspection week of the quality of care and attention shown by staff in treating injured pupils and of the trust and reliance in them shown by the pupils.
30. Pupils and adults in school are aware of the need to work safely and all demonstrated good health and safety practice during the period of the inspection. Fire evacuation drills are undertaken at least half-termly and post evacuation reviews held to identify areas for improvement. Risk assessment is a well-established procedure in the school. Nominated staff have specific responsibilities for health and safety and for fire safety and all formal staff meetings have health and safety as a standing agenda item. An annual health and safety audit of the whole school is undertaken with audit outcomes and recommendations presented to the school directorate for action.
31. Very good recording and absence management procedures help to promote the excellent attendance being achieved by the pupils. Attendance and absence figures are monitored daily by senior management with regular reports made to the school directorate. The practice for daily registration of pupils fully complies with statutory requirements.
32. Excellent and well-established behaviour management procedures are well embedded into the routines of the school and have a positive impact on the very good attitudes to learning displayed by the pupils. Great emphasis is placed on promoting good behaviour and a number of incentives are in place to encourage and reward pupils' good work and behaviour. The clear, simple and well-documented systems of behaviour rewards and sanctions are fully understood and accepted by pupils and used well by staff to promote the overall very good behaviour to be seen in and around the school. Pupils respond well to the behaviour policy and those spoken with consider that all staff apply the rewards and sanctions in a fair and consistent manner.
33. The school has zero tolerance to bullying and racism and staff work hard to ensure an anti-bullying culture is maintained within the school. There was no evidence of any oppressive bullying or harassment of pupils recorded during the inspection. Past incidents of unacceptable behaviour are considered by pupils to have been swiftly and effectively dealt with by staff to the benefit of all involved.
34. Teachers and support staff know pupils very well. Pupils' individual needs are very carefully identified and assessed when they enter the school and staff are

aware of pupils' targets and programmes. The individual education and therapeutic plans are of high quality because teachers have been given extensive training and support to ensure that the plans are well written and prepared with clear reference to the pupil's original statement. Clear targets are set for each individual and these are reviewed regularly, altered as and when conditions change or pupils make progress. Annual reviews are carried out on time and targets are shared with parents, carers and pupils. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent so that learning takes place in a purposeful and inclusive atmosphere. Staff work well together to ensure that any information about pupils' work and progress is shared effectively. Teaching, care and other staff ensure a common, coherent approach to the management of behaviour is maintained. In the classroom context support staff work quietly and effectively with individuals to ensure that the teacher is able to teach with a minimum of disruption and pupils are able to make progress towards their targets.

35. Assessment procedures to track pupils' progress and attainment, and to adjust teaching programmes to meet pupils' needs, are now very good in English, mathematics and science. However, they are not used as consistently in several other subjects, for example design technology and music. The school is extending the use of formal assessments into Year 7 and 8 to build on the progress made by the end of Year 6. Some pupils in Year 6 undertake the national statutory tests each year and a few obtain Level 4, which is the national average. Appropriately, the school has set targets to increase the numbers taking the tests and to have more pupils achieving at a higher level.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Most parents/carers are supportive of the school, have a good regard for the work of the staff and believe their children receive a very good quality of care and education. However there are a significant minority of disaffected parents who, regardless of the efforts made by the school to encourage their involvement, continue to display no interest in the school or desire to be involved in their child's education and personal development.
37. Parents are welcomed into school and actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. In recognising the very wide geographical spread of parents, from as far away as London and Oxford, the school has set in place a number of initiatives to ensure good and effective links can be maintained with parents. These include providing free transport from rail stations and ease of access to discounted local overnight accommodation for parents/carers wishing to visit school and spend time with their children. Special events are organised, for example a summer sports day, Christmas show and a spring fayre, all of which provide valuable opportunities for quality time and informal exchange between staff and parent/carers.
38. Overall the impact of parent/carers involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. Teachers and residential staff display a positive attitude towards communicating with parents/carers and to seeking their support as partners in

the education and development of their children. The majority of parent/carers acknowledge the willingness with which staff respond to their queries and concerns and many are keen to be involved in supporting their child's personal development.

39. The quality and regularity of information provided to parents is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. This includes the use of a wide range of mediums including informal telephone conversations between staff and parents, regular "dear parent" correspondence and more formal written communications on pupils progress and achievements. The school brochure is a comprehensive and informative publication which, with the "reader friendly" parent fact pack, serve as valuable reference source on all aspects of the pupils' time in school. The development of the school internet web site shows promise of providing parent/carers and the wider community with a wide range of good quality information about the school and the work and achievements of the pupils. The school has good and effective links with parents and carers.
40. Very good individual education and therapeutic programmes (IETP's) are prepared for each pupil and shared with parent/carers at the beginning of each term. These include well detailed feedback reports on each child's progress against their previous IETP's and allows parent/carers to be kept fully informed and up to date on how their child is progressing and developing at the school. Well-established procedures provide for the full involvement and contribution of parent/carers in the annual review process. However the school is disappointed to report that on average just over half of the parent/carers invited actually attend the organised annual review meeting for their child.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management provided by the Headteacher and her senior staff are very good. There is a very clear sense of direction in all that the school does. This has been a key factor in the significant improvements achieved by the school since the inspections carried out in 1998 and 1999, particularly in its very successful drive to raise the standards of teaching and learning and in meeting the individual needs of all pupils. These developments have been underpinned by the very strong and supportive educational philosophy, based on the work of the Director over a period of many years. This informs the work of all staff, both in the school and in its residential units, in working very consistently and effectively to help pupils to change their behaviour. The very good leadership and management has guided and supported the staff to form a very effective and cohesive team. Through improved training and delegation of responsibilities, particularly to subject co-ordinators in planning and monitoring the curriculum, and by actively involving staff in the many developments which have been undertaken, management has helped to create an admirable team spirit and a shared commitment to move the school forward.

42. The School Development Plans of current and recent years provide ample evidence of the comprehensive nature of this commitment. Targets cover the areas of curriculum, premises, staffing and finance. Planning is of good quality and includes the timescale involved, staff responsibilities, financial implications, arrangements for monitoring progress towards the targets and brief success criteria. The latter does not contain sufficient detail, however, and, given the large number of targets pursued each year there is no prioritisation. It is clear, however, that the majority of targets are achieved from year to year as a result of effective planning and implementation. Examples include the completion of most subject schemes of work and the ongoing development of an increasingly effective system of monitoring the curriculum, together with important improvements to learning resources and accommodation, such as the purchase of new computers and the laying of new tarmac around the school. In the key subjects of English, mathematics and science the subject co-ordinators provide useful and effective subject development plans that inform the school development plan.
43. There are insufficient structured links between the school development plan and financial planning. The current system allows developments to be funded as and when possible during the course of the financial year. The school has not yet introduced a clear system of prioritising to assist the planning process, together with an extension of the planning period from one to two or three years. The Directorate, however, has good systems for the monitoring and reporting of the school's financial situation. Prudent management ensures adequate budget surpluses and, as the examples quoted above illustrate, it has been able to fund the many priorities achieved since the inspection of 1998. It has been well supported in this by efficient financial control and administration under the direction of a member of the Directorate. The school has no formal systems to test the extent to which it applies the principles of best value. However, it works continuously and successfully to ensure that value for money is achieved in the use of the fees negotiated with local authorities to recognise the many and varied needs of its pupils.
44. Management has introduced very effective systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and of teaching and learning. The quality of teachers' planning and record-keeping, of pupils' work and of several other areas such as marking, resources and the display of pupils' work, are reviewed on a regular basis and clear points for action are noted from this process and followed up to good effect. Management information systems are well used to support monitoring and evaluation. A thorough scheme of performance management is about to be issued. This is a school that has developed a clear awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and is determined to continue to improve. As a crucial part of this process, however, the setting of whole-school targets is still at an early stage of development, particularly as they relate to academic attainment.
45. There are an appropriate number of teachers for the number of pupils in the school and the requirements of the curriculum. The ratio of learning support staff to pupils and the ratio of residential care staff to pupils is very good and a

significant amount of thought has gone into their deployment. A comprehensive staff development programme provides a pattern of training that clearly reflects the academic, care and special educational needs of the pupils. All staff have job descriptions and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The turn over of both teaching and care staff is reasonable and the school continues to have no problems with recruitment.

46. Overall, the accommodation is good and shows clear evidence of care by both pupils and staff. However, the lack of space in the design and technology room limits the range of activities that can be undertaken and there is no specialist area for work with clay as part of the art and design curriculum. The sports barn requires updating. The school has included the need to address these issues in its development plan. Very effective use has been made of all buildings and spaces on site, including the use of “home” based dining rooms, and the school has succeeded in creating an environment that directly supports its mission statement. The good practice suggestions concerning accommodation identified in the Devon County Council’s inspection report for Schools with Boarding have been responded to.
47. The level of resources for learning is satisfactory overall. Mathematics, science, history and personal and social education are well resourced and resources for information and communication technology are very good. Although they do not impact on achievement, apparatus for physical education requires improvement as does the range of books in the school library.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to further improve pupils’ progress and achievements, the headteacher and directorate should:
 - (1) Develop a three year planning period with closer links between school development priorities and budget planning, (42, 43)
 - (2) Set whole school targets that focus more specifically on the raising of academic standards, particularly for higher attaining pupils, (44, 63)
 - (3) Complete the schemes of work for information and communication technology, art and design, music and geography (67, 76, 85, 92)

The following should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Continue to develop information and communication technology across the curriculum (52, 58, 71, 76)
- Improve the range of fiction and non fiction books in the library (47, 52)
- Improve resources for physical education (46,47, 97)*
- Improve accommodation for design and technology (46, 70)*

* included in the school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	20	27	16	1	0	0
Percentage	1	31	42	25	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	52
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	45
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y9**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.2
Average class size	6

Education support staff: Y3 – Y9

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	640

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	3
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	2265805
Total expenditure	2143923
Expenditure per pupil	45,000
Balance brought forward from previous year	285080
Balance carried forward to next year	406962

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	11

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	36	55	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	36	0	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	46	0	0	18
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	10	10	0	18	62
The teaching is good.	55	36	0	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	46	0	9	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	36	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	18	0	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	46	9	18	9	18
The school is well led and managed.	46	36	0	0	18
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	27	0	9	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	36	0	0	18

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Comments by parents are positive, particularly regarding the improvements in pupil behaviour. However, a number of parents are concerned about difficulties with communication, both with the educational and residential provision.

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

ENGLISH

49. Pupils' achievements in English are good at all ages. They make particularly good progress in their reading and in aspects of their writing skills such as spelling because of skilful teaching. Most pupils have very low levels of basic literacy when they arrive at the school and the rapid progress which they make over their first year or eighteen months is clearly shown in the significant gains which appear in their reading ages and in the quality of their written work. They are very proud of this. They are keen to read to visitors and to show their written work and several pupils talked at some length about how much their reading in particular had improved since they had come to the school. This success clearly does much for pupils' self-esteem and the very positive attitude they display towards their work in English is a major factor in the progress they make. Their behaviour in the English lessons seen during the inspection week was often notable for the high levels of effort and concentration that they sustained. There were a few occasions on which the interest of some pupils strayed, at the beginning or towards the end of the lesson, but, in general, the pace of working at all ages in the English groups was remarkably consistent.
50. The English course that the school uses provides a very consistent structure for pupils and staff to follow and, despite the often repetitive and mechanical nature of the tasks that it sets, the pupils find it very motivating. They are well aware, through its graded exercises, of the progress that they are making and the course also has the advantage of promoting consistency in the teaching of English by teachers and learning support staff. There is some very good teaching of the subject when the basic "script" of the coursebooks is used as a springboard for further discussion or exploration of the topics studied. Teachers encourage pupils to think about spelling rules, for example, and to discuss less predictable combinations of letters. One group of mainly Year 6 pupils responded enthusiastically in a session in which words containing "ow" and "ou" were compared and a group of Year 8 boys, after a slow start to the lesson, became very interested in building more complex words of several elements. In their spelling of these words this group achieved high levels of accuracy and have clearly progressed to a level at about the average for their age. The ability to make this sort of basic skills work interesting to pupils was a feature of the good and very good teaching seen during the inspection week, as was the ability to motivate those pupils who were discouraged by failure. No unsatisfactory teaching of English was seen but in some lessons staff were reluctant to depart from the "script" and as a result progress by pupils, though never less than satisfactory, was slower and the pace of the lesson more pedestrian.
51. The benefits of such a highly structured course, which formed the basis of all but one of the English lessons seen, and of the organisation of the pupils in small groups in order to deliver it, are evident in the progress made by pupils.

This is particularly so in their increasing accuracy and confidence which they bring to their reading and writing. By the time they are eleven, the low-attaining pupils have developed the ability to listen carefully to instructions, are reading unfamiliar words with increasing success and are putting together longer pieces of writing with more independence. The higher-attaining pupils at this stage are reading aloud with confidence and fluency, varying the expression of their voice with due regard for meaning and punctuation. They are also producing writing that shows good organisation of their ideas and a clear joined style of handwriting. In the year 2000, pupils' performance in the statutory teacher assessments and tests at this stage was above the average for schools of this type. By the time they are thirteen, the continued development of these skills by pupils at all levels of attainment is also noticeable in other subjects of the curriculum, in which they are making notes, recording information and reading worksheets and text books with improved fluency and accuracy.

52. There are some drawbacks, however, in the school's heavy reliance on the published course used. There are very few opportunities for the study of poetry and a richer variety of literature and the range of writing attempted is also limited, especially for the higher-attaining pupils in the secondary classes. Because of the predominant organisation of pupils in small groups to work through the coursebooks, opportunities for the development of more formal speaking and listening skills and for drama in a whole-class setting are also much reduced. The subject's contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils is less than it should be as a result. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology, in particular of word-processing, to develop the pupils' ability to plan, draft and edit longer pieces of work. Higher-attaining older pupils do move on from the coursebooks to a more varied diet of reading, but reading for information or independent research by these pupils is not extended as much as it could be. The position of the school library and its inadequate stock of general interest and reference books do not help this situation.
53. The school's main priority in English, however, is to improve pupils' basic skills in English. This is an entirely appropriate aim, given the very depressed levels of these skills which most pupils bring to the school on admission. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. The subject's co-ordinator has provided very effective leadership in the drive to raise the standards of teaching, planning and monitoring in the subject. Whole-school targets for attainment at eleven and thirteen, particularly for an increase in the number of higher National Curriculum levels, are lacking in the subject development plan, which otherwise provides a sound basis for continuing improvement in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

54. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are improving and are now good and sometimes very good at all ages. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enter school with very low levels of attainment in

mathematics. Termly test results clearly show the good and often very good progress pupils make in their first two years in school. The school has successfully incorporated aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy into the highly structured scheme of work that is used and this has had a significant impact on improving teaching and progress in the subject. Teaching is good and frequently very good and lessons are well planned to ensure that all pupils have work that is appropriate to them. Because of this pupils are confident and enthusiastic in lessons and try very hard to succeed because they are building on their earlier learning. Pupils make good progress towards the very appropriate targets set for them in their Individual Education and Therapeutic Plans (IETPs). Pupils with additional special needs are well supported and make good progress.

55. Younger pupils make very good progress in their basic number work, learning strategies to work more quickly such as using a number line. By Year 6 most count reliably in two's and higher attaining pupils count in fours and complete mental calculations, both addition and subtraction, quickly. They enjoy their work on time, capacity and weight and use a range of graphs and pictograms to record their findings. Pupils recorded their findings carefully after using non standard measures, such as hand-spans, to measure the furniture in the classroom. Higher attaining pupils begin work on area and perimeters. Pupils enjoy the security of the consistent format of the lessons and marking their own work. Because of the very good relationships, where pupils have incorrect answers they are keen to find out why their answer is different and to discuss what they have done and explain their reasoning. The good pace of the lessons helps pupils maintain their concentration and they are keen to complete their work and move on. Pupils present their written work well, understand the marking system used and are delighted with their own and others achievements. One Year 8 pupil was so engrossed in his work when he suddenly said "Damn, I've done that wrong" and then caught the eye of the teacher and apologised. Year 8 pupils show good progress in reading 4 and 5 digit numbers and in written calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They work hard at exploring 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and in calculating problems involving distance and time. Pupils produced well presented written work when displaying their findings using bar graphs and line graphs and enjoyed using a pie chart to colour code how they spent their day. At all ages pupils apply their number skills to problem solving and show a good understanding of which type of calculation would be best to use. For example, when preparing for a trip to a local castle, pupils worked out timetables for the necessary arrangements to run smoothly.
56. In mathematics teaching and learning throughout the school are good and frequently very good. All classes have mathematics lessons where they are grouped, within their year group, by ability. Each class also has whole class topic lessons in mathematics. This combination ensures all aspects of National Curriculum mathematics are covered. At all ages, because lessons are well planned with appropriate activities for individuals, pupils behave well, are engrossed in their work and enjoy what they are doing. Lessons go at a brisk pace and pupils try their best because they receive regular praise,

encouragement and feedback on their progress. Teachers are familiar and secure with the highly structured commercial scheme, which they apply effectively. Pupils are confident and comfortable within the three-part lesson structure, which is firmly established and is reflected in the good lesson planning. Across all classes, teachers use the plenary sessions well. Pupils are confident to talk about their achievements and teachers use questioning very effectively to check pupils' gains in mathematical knowledge and understanding. Assessment is used effectively to set sufficiently challenging targets for individual pupils. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to use mathematics throughout the curriculum; for example, a variety of forms of data collection and display are well used in science, history and geography.

57. Teaching and learning for pupils with additional special needs is good. Individual targets are in place and all lessons are planned to reflect them, which ensures that all pupils have full access to mathematics. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed to provide individual support and contribute significantly to the good progress pupils make. Because staff know the pupils very well, all available opportunities are taken to extend pupils' learning. Good use is made of questioning and prompts at an appropriate level with sufficient challenge for each individual. The effective and consistent use of the school reward system also keeps pupils actively involved and helps them sustain their concentration.
58. There has been continued improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. Pupils who undertake the statutory assessment tests achieve well in comparison to similar schools. Mathematics is very well led and the mathematics co-ordinator has effectively linked the commercial scheme used to the National Curriculum, very clear and appropriate targets for individual pupils are in place and there is a greater emphasis on oral and mental work. All pupils are appropriately challenged within the work set for them. The co-ordinator carefully monitors lesson planning, teaching and pupils' progress and this informs the very effective subject development plan. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to support mathematics and developments are planned for in the subject development plan.

SCIENCE

59. Pupils at all ages achieve well in science. Their good progress ensures that they increase their knowledge, understanding and investigative skills significantly from a low level of attainment on entry to the school. The positive attitude pupils have to learning in science makes a significant contribution to the efforts they put into their studies and the pace at which they learn.
60. Because of the high quality of teaching pupils up to the age of 13 make very good progress in increasing their knowledge of facts and in developing an appropriate and detailed vocabulary. In an imaginative lesson where the teacher used interesting approaches that captured the pupils' attention, Year 4 pupils learned that they have incisors, molars and canine teeth and

recognised that each type of tooth has a different job to do when eating. The teacher kept them actively involved by getting them to look at their teeth in a mirror, count them and calculate how many teeth they have altogether. Good teaching ensures pupils have the opportunities to observe carefully and to predict outcomes. For example, in one lesson Year 5 and 6 pupils considered whether the oldest person in the group was likely to be the tallest. They checked their predictions through measurement and realised that it cannot be a fair test if someone stands on tiptoe. Another group of Year 6 pupils devised a fair test using an eye patch to extend their knowledge of the importance of having the use of two eyes to judge distances accurately.

61. Teaching and learning in science is very good overall because teachers plan work that it is matched well to the range of abilities within the groups. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and pupils who have difficulty in joining in or controlling their own behaviour are included well in lessons, often diverted by interesting activities. Warm humour often helps to diffuse potentially difficult situations. Year 7 pupils know how to group and classify creatures and plants found in a woodland area. They gained a sound understanding of their habits and characteristics because, as lessons progressed, teachers assessed the pupils' understanding of the work through good questioning techniques. They intervene at appropriate times to give specific teaching points in order to increase pupils' skills and understanding. The teachers' careful attention to health and safety within the science room is very good so pupils understand the importance of careful movement. Pupils with no previous experience of working safely with Bunsen burners and boiling water are given the opportunity to learn how to conduct themselves properly in the science room. They learn that they are being trusted to handle expensive and delicate equipment and develop self-control and awareness of others over time. This increases pupils' interest and excitement in science. Year 8 pupils learn important aspects of health and safety and put on their goggles to carry out experiments such as finding if certain foods contain starch or sugar. Pupils concentrated well as they added droplets of iodine to small quantities of egg, rice, potato, biscuit and powdered milk. They ensured that they were carrying out a fair test and followed similar careful procedures when testing for sugar. Pupils show a good understanding of what they have done when they complete tables to record their experiments. Their written work shows they use the correct vocabulary, draw clear, well-labelled diagrams and record experiments in an ordered way. There are many examples of good observational drawings of for example, plants and flowers, in pupils' books. Some useful data-handling work is completed in the information and communication technology suite in specific lessons. Higher attaining pupils evaluate their work and predictions and they present coherent accounts of experiments.
62. Teachers share the purpose of the lessons with pupils and check what they have learned during or at the end of the lessons. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils generate an enthusiasm for learning. Staff show excitement at pupils' discoveries and value and consider their suggestions as when a pupil reasoned that the oldest person in the room is not necessarily

the tallest, or someone suggested keeping the water hot to give the contents in the test tube time to turn yellow.

63. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop guidelines for teaching and the resources for science. The science room is used when appropriate and the resources and quality of teaching and support have a significant impact on the progress made and the enjoyment of science. The school has at least maintained the good level of progress since the last report. Some pupils now undertake the statutory assessment tests at the end of Year 6 and a few pupils achieve Level 4, the national average. Annual testing shows that the majority of pupils make very good progress up to the age of 11 and the school is rightly setting targets to increase the number of pupils achieving Level 3 and 4 each year. Careful analysis of the results of previous tests to provide useful information about the areas pupils find most difficult in the tests is not yet in place. Annual tests for pupils in Year 7 and 8 are to be introduced and a similar analysis of the results would enable the school to follow the progress of pupils up to the age of 13 more accurately and raise targets for this group to a higher level.

ART AND DESIGN

64. Only three art and design lessons were seen during the inspection and in these pupils made good progress because teaching was good. It was clear from looking at displays of pupils' work around the school and from looking at photographs of pupils' previous work that, overall, pupils at all ages achieve at a satisfactory and appropriate level. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
65. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in lessons because teachers are skilled at providing stimulating experiences, which encourage pupils to participate. Portrait paintings, inspired by the work of Cézanne and completed by pupils from the previous year, were used very well to focus the attention of Year 4 pupils on what emotions they thought the pictures portrayed. Demonstrations and clear instructions by the teacher supported the pupils in acquiring new techniques and in being confident to participate. Because of the very good relationships pupils were confident and sensible in expressing opinions of others portraits. Year 8 pupils enjoyed feeling and describing objects and looking at them from different perspectives before attempting their observational drawing. Pupils carefully observed and concentrated well to achieve good levels of accuracy and listened and responded to the teacher who drew their attention to details to be included. The opportunities provided by the teacher were well planned and ensured that pupils built on past experiences. Teachers deploy learning support assistants well and they make a significant contribution to pupils' full participation in the activities. Teachers make sure they reinforce pupils' literacy and numeracy skills where possible, particularly in the development of their vocabulary. In a Year 7 lesson the teacher used questioning well to support pupils giving very good attention to a range of pictures. They used a wide vocabulary to describe what they saw, for example " its not a friendly picture, its quite scary with no-one to welcome you" and on a self portrait of an aged Rembrandt reading a book one pupil made the observation " he's reading the last page of his life".
66. Art and design is used effectively by teachers to develop pupils' cultural awareness and pupils have good opportunities to look at the art of different countries, for example when celebrating the Chinese New Year. Art and design is used well to reinforce learning in other subjects. During a project on the Ancient Greeks Year 4 pupils made life sized shields and swords and a large collective collage of the wooden horse of Troy. Year 6 pupils produced very careful and detailed observational drawings of mini beasts to support their work in science, and then had

fun creating drawings of imaginative mini beast. Information and communication technology was used well by Year 8 pupils in their work on producing cartoons.

67. Currently there is no art and design co-ordinator. Although the planning of work for each year group has improved since the last inspection, the completed programme of work is not yet in place as the school is waiting for the newly appointed art specialist to begin. Although the lack of a specialist art and design room could limit the range of work undertaken, photographs were seen of pottery and three-dimensional large models made by the pupils. Throughout the school there are good displays of pupils' work, which help create a stimulating visual environment. Information and communication technology is being more widely and effectively used to support teaching and pupils' achievements in art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

68. Very little completed work by pupils in design and technology, either written as part of the design process or products which they have made, was seen during the inspection week. It was explained that pupils had taken most of their work in the subject home with them at the end of the previous academic year. There is insufficient effort made to record and celebrate pupils' work in this area of the curriculum, for example, by the use of photographs or display. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory, with good progress in some lessons.
69. Examples of good work, which reflected good progress, were observed. The Year 4 classroom displayed some interesting work done with textiles and photographs of key rings made by Year 7 pupils showed that they are capable of completing a project with good levels of accuracy and attention to the quality of finish. The written work of higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 includes well-presented work on structures, including evidence of good observation and evaluation by pupils and the use of tests to assess the comparative merits of different types of structures that they assembled. Their folders also suggested satisfactory progress in their understanding of other topics such as energy and electronics, mechanisms and food technology.
70. This work and the lessons observed during the inspection week indicated that achievement overall in the subject is satisfactory and that in the primary classes it is good in some areas of the curriculum. Because of good teaching Year 6 pupils, for example, were producing some very good ideas in a lesson on the use of commercial logos. They looked at examples of the use of graphics for commercial purposes and in the well led discussion that followed they were able to link the aesthetic qualities of a design with the nature of the product and the "message" it was designed to carry. A good response was also seen from Year 7 pupils at the start of a project to make metal key rings. The teacher used photographs and questions very effectively to stimulate discussion. Teaching is less effective when the teacher talking takes up too much time. Older pupils began to lose concentration in one lesson when this was the case and the lack of visual materials added to this problem. The practical skills and knowledge of common tools and equipment of the older pupils are still at a level well below the average for their age. The unsatisfactory nature of the specialist design and technology room is a contributory factor in this. It is too small for a class to work in safety and

comfort at anything more than simple tasks. The lack of an extractor fan in the room means that equipment for higher-level work, for example, with resistant materials, cannot be considered. The school is aware of the impact of this on pupils' achievements and have planned for improvements in the school development plan.

71. Good work has been done on completing a sound scheme of work for the subject and there has clearly been an improvement in the planning and delivery of the curriculum since the two previous inspections. This has enabled pupils to build upon their skills, knowledge and understanding in a more structured way. No use of computers in the subject was observed during the inspection week and there was no evidence of their use in the limited amount of pupils' work seen.

GEOGRAPHY

72. Overall teaching and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Due to time tabling constraints only a limited number of lessons were observed and judgements have therefore been supplemented by a detailed scrutiny of work, classroom displays and lesson plans.
73. Younger pupils begin to have an awareness of the shape of the British Isles and identify major cities and rivers. They study the reasons for the location of towns through their work on settlements and understand the need for different types of buildings such as houses and factories. Teachers effectively use the study of the location of the school to support pupils learning in this area of the curriculum. Because of good teaching younger pupils improving skills at reading maps, including a detailed town map of Barnstaple, effectively supports much of what they do. The very detailed map of the whole school site was successfully used to teach map and orienteering skills. Year 4 pupils responded very positively to this activity and used their maps with pride and confidence. Year 6 pupils consolidate their ability to recognise Ordnance Survey Map symbols and are able to describe a route through making reference to what was "seen", such as a church, river and car park. The teacher successfully linked work on ratios in mathematics to map scales as well as simple grid work to four figure grid references. The use of column graphs to compare populations and standard symbols to explain weather prepare pupils for an increasing use of symbols in geography as they move through the school. By the end of their time in Year 6 pupils' work on land use makes them aware of the positive and negative changes that are taking place in the environment.
74. Pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 build on their previous learning about environmental changes through developing an understanding of the re-cycling cycle, with teachers successfully linking this work to the role of reservoirs and the need for sewage systems. A visit to a sewage works provided an interesting underpinning to this work. Carefully structured work on contours extends their skills in map reading and the addition of major mountain and highland ranges to their map of the British Isles increases their knowledge of

the geography of their own country. The use of globes and world maps enabled them to locate the Sahara desert, the tundra and India as they progressed from early work on weather to the study of different world climates. They continue to use mathematical skills when they study summer and winter rainfall and temperature graphs for different countries such as Egypt. Previous work on rivers is carefully developed as they study river profiles and a well-planned lesson on different types of weathering had pupils working collaboratively and with effort as they identified the effects of the sun, water and frost on land and rocks.

75. Teachers consistently ensure that the work is well matched to pupils' abilities; they challenge them well in most lessons and through good questioning and prompting provide opportunities for all to achieve success. The enthusiasm and confidence with which pupils take part in discussions is a very positive feature of lessons observed, as is their concentration and application when working independently or collaboratively. The consistently good behaviour of pupils is because teachers provide interesting, well-structured activities and apply the school's behaviour management routines in a consistent and fair manner. The pupils' good response to the subject that was identified during the last inspection has been sustained.
76. The school is in the process of appointing a new co-ordinator who will be responsible for ensuring that the satisfactory scheme of work currently in place is further developed to ensure pupils build upon their earlier learning. The school has already begun to improve the resourcing for this subject but as yet has not formally included reference in the policy to the use of information and communication technology within lessons or during topic sessions in the computer suite.

HISTORY

77. Pupils' achievements in history are good and sometimes very good. Such achievements are the result of good teaching, with well-planned lessons offering pupils a good range of interesting activities that generate pace and excitement.
78. Younger pupils begin to acquire a knowledge and understanding of history as they work on stories from very long ago, such as the story of the Trojan Horse and the greed of King Midas. They develop an early awareness of the history of the British Isles through learning about the Roman occupation. They study their towns in detail, including looking at different types of buildings and occupations and they use computers to produce a colourful menu for a typical Roman meal. The past is effectively related to the present when they link the routes of Roman roads to current main arterial roads and motorways. The study and production of a Roman type of mosaic contributes to their cultural development and uses skills learnt in their art work. Teachers effectively use resources that capture pupils' attention and interest. The story of Romulus and Remus, supported by a well-selected video, generated significant interest and enthusiasm in one group of pupils. Time lines, as they help to give pupils an early understanding of chronology, are effectively used to help them

understand the Tudor period, while work on famous people such as Francis Drake and Shakespeare add colour to and confirm that history is about real people and events. Year 6 pupils have a much better understanding of the passage of time and are more able to abstract information from a range of different sources. A well planned lesson on the Lynton and Lynmouth flood disaster created a great deal of interest, including awe and wonder, as pupils looked at old photographs, newspaper headlines and listened to a paragraph out of a book written at the time. As a result of the teachers' good questioning and prompting, pupils deduced that the event took place fifty years ago. From looking at photographs of the time they observed the type of car, no Sky dishes and people in "old fashioned" clothes. They also were confident when offering their views about the feelings of the people involved in the disaster. The teacher's use of her and the support assistant's personal family knowledge about this event added significantly to the quality of this lesson and the learning that took place.

79. During Years 7 and 8 pupils show they have made progress in their ability to sequence historical events when they construct their own personal time line of previously learnt events in correct order. They recall previous lessons with enthusiasm and accuracy and demonstrate a very real interest in the subject. Pupils can respond to the question "What is history?" and respond well to the challenge of why they need to know about what has happened in the past. They develop an understanding of the wide range of sources that are available for learning about the past and successfully generated a long and valid list, which included the need to ask "old people". In one lesson the teacher's use of old documents including bills, wills, letters and deeds was very successful in generating interest and enthusiasm. It led to pupils asking very relevant questions about the material and making very good deductions about content. Pupils' work on Victorian Britain, including looking at early death rolls (Column Graphs) and children working in coal mines, helped them think about a period that was not all that long ago. This caused them to think about and reflect upon changes over a relatively short period of time.
80. The subject is well led. Teaching is driven by a good policy that guides a scheme of work that provides pupils with opportunities to build on previous work and make progress in a systematic manner. Displays of pupils' work confirm that the "topic" sessions in the computer suite are periodically used to support learning in history but such usage is not yet fully assimilated into the scheme of work. Resources for the subject are satisfactory in quantity and good in quality. The co-ordinator recognises the need to extend resources for local history and the need to revisit some end of topic assessments. Overall, there have been satisfactory improvements in teaching since the last inspection and good improvements in planning and co-ordination.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

81. The very recently appointed co-ordinator is already having a positive impact upon planning while teaching in the subject is showing improvement in the teachers' confidence and in their knowledge and understanding of the needs

of the subject. Teaching is good. And because of this pupils' achievements during the last term in information and communication technology are good. Very good lesson planning, very well structured instructions and guidance and having regular opportunities to apply their skills during discrete "topic" lessons all contribute to the improvements in pupils' progress.

82. The subject is timetabled for two one-hour periods a week for each class in the computer suite. One period is spent acquiring skills and knowledge in computer studies, the other in applying these across the curriculum. This is proving to be effective. The subject is very well resourced in terms of software and computers, both in the specialist suite and in classrooms. The use of computers to support other subjects in class is developing well. Displays in classrooms show ICT is used to support other learning, such as creating graphs in mathematics, printing "best copy" of text in history, downloading diagrams from the Internet in science and creating geometric and free form "pictures" in art.
83. Because of good teaching younger pupils are confident when working with computers and know that a computer has a variety of uses. They name and label the basic elements of a computer and use the mouse to match words to pictures. Effective individual help provided by the teacher and support assistant has a very positive impact upon the pupils learning. The teacher's choice and use of programmes in one Year 4 lesson had a very positive impact upon the pupils' motivation and the success that they achieved. Year 6 pupils word process with more confidence and accuracy. They understand how to use the keyboard to enter text and are becoming more skilful in using the mouse to identify and select words and icons. They use the space bar correctly, insert text between words and use the backspace to make corrections. As they make progress in skills acquisition they become better participants in discussions, skilfully led by the teacher, about applications. For example, when discussing the design elements of a birthday card one pupil realised that it might be possible to change font size while another thought that since colour could be used it might as well be pink for girls. The very good quality of discussion during this lesson was significantly enhanced by the pupils' use of correct terminology such as text, graphics, font size and font type.
84. Through good teaching pupils in Years 7 and 8 successfully build on previous learning and in particular show that they are more able when using computers and talking about what they are doing. Pupils listen to the clear and logical instructions provided by teachers and are happy to ask for help when needed. Staff are particularly sensitive to the need to allow pupils to explore and solve their own problems and they time their interventions with great care. Older pupils retrieve their own files from the hard disc, change font by type and size, underline text, spell check and save their files with varying degrees of help. Additionally, they know that a computer is a very powerful research tool and can search for information using key words and/or through systematic searches using menus. Pupils also use their search skills when importing images to enhance text and higher attaining pupils show they can use

supplementary drawing and painting program to change images. The co-ordinator made very good use of a “topic” lesson, word-processing English text, to identify the pupils’ baseline performance at the start of the term.

85. Information and communication technology is very well led by the recently appointed co-ordinator. A very well considered policy reflects National Curriculum guidelines and is translated into practice through long and medium term planning that provides the required level of detail for lesson planning. The very good medium term plan in place for the autumn term provides an excellent model for the development of the remaining plans. Assessment in the subject is directly linked to National Curriculum levels and includes Post Topic Tests, Small Steps Record and self-help checklists. This enables teachers to provide appropriate work for each pupil. Because of these developments and the recently acquired new hardware and software pupils achievements are improving and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

86. By the age of 13 pupils achievements are satisfactory overall. Achievements in oral skills are satisfactory and they achieve well in their written work because of effective teaching. Pupils in Year 7 enjoyed their first lesson in French and made a good contribution to the discussion about France. Appropriate resources were well used to encourage pupils’ participation. They thought hard about the symbols on a map of France and looked with interest at the pictures and posters provided by the teacher. Effective questioning and prompting by the teacher enabled pupils to make good links between books they had read set in Paris, “A Tale of Two Cities” and “The Hunchback of Notre Dame”. The teacher skilfully created enthusiasm and they left the lesson wanting to learn more about France and to hear more of the French tapes so that they could learn to speak the language.
87. Through systematic teaching Year 8 pupils extend their vocabulary of single words, questions and phrases. During a revision lesson most remembered the days, dates, colours, ways of greeting people and were able to ask short questions that they had learned during the previous year. Pupils know how to say ‘I like’ or ‘I do not like’ foods and drinks and the teacher effectively encouraged them to build up conversations to ask for drinks in a café. Pupils use a limited vocabulary and range of phrases for basic communication but many pupils lack confidence in speaking spontaneously from memory in front of others. Pupils’ written work, in a series of well-constructed exercises, showed that they understand how to give and receive personal information and greet different people.
88. Pupils have achieved satisfactorily because of the use of a mixture of French and English in the lessons, which improves pupils’ listening skills and gives them a good opportunity to practise their own speaking and writing of the

language. However, pupils lack confidence in their oral French work. Good use is made of the resources, such as tapes and posters, to stimulate discussion in French and English but computers are insufficiently used to support learning. Because teachers organise several different activities in the lessons pupils learn effectively because they are all interested. The co-ordinator, who is the specialist teacher, provides very good guidelines and support for other teachers and the established system of assessment ensures that pupils are on appropriate work.

MUSIC

89. Pupils throughout the school achieve at a satisfactory level for their age and ability, particularly in singing, and enjoy their music making activities. Although a specialist teacher has been appointed she has not yet joined the school and currently class teachers take music lessons. Pupils sing very well in assemblies and this makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school. Progress made at the last inspection has been maintained.
90. Because teaching is good younger pupils listen well, try very hard and show good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Classroom assistants are effective in helping pupils to participate as independently as possible, for example in reading the words of the songs. Most recognise a song by listening to the introduction being played and are keen and eager to join in. All participate fully in singing and are pleased with their own achievements. They are effectively introduced to an appropriate range of instruments and watch carefully to see how they should be played before participating. Lessons are well planned to enable all to participate at an appropriate level and music plays an important part in the development of pupils' language and communication skills. For example, pupils have great fun with "conversation" songs consisting of short and long sounds.
91. The short-term series of lessons for older pupils are appropriately planned to enable all to participate and build on and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. However, achievements in composing and performing are at a level below the average for their age. Although some teachers have high expectations of pupils others prefer to have an enjoyable session without sufficient challenge to the pupils. Most pupils are confident to perform either solo or as part of a group and enjoy, for example, conducting their composed body rhythms for others to join in. Pupils sing a variety of songs showing good voice and pitch control, and respond to the beat with body movements. They learn to control sounds through playing tuned and untuned percussion instruments and enjoy building up dramatic tension. Opportunities for individual and co-operative work are well planned for and good relationships support pupils' participation and confidence.
92. Music from other cultures and ages is effectively introduced to extend pupils' experiences. For example, Year 7 pupils enjoyed singing a Victorian song to support their work in history. Information and communication technology is insufficiently planned for within music. The scheme of work for music is not yet

complete and assessment is in the early stage of development. These factors limit the opportunities for pupils to systematically build on previous learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

93. Overall, pupils' achievements and progress in physical education at all ages are good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Their good progress over time is the direct result of lessons that are well planned, have pace and provide a good range of activities. In addition, teachers' high expectations, constant praise and constant feedback about their performance and effort contribute significantly to the pupils' success in and enjoyment of the subject.
94. Because of good and effective teaching younger pupils learn the basic skills of throwing and catching and use these skills well in cricket and rounders. On the field teachers provide good opportunities for them to develop simple ball control skills as they progress from straight out and back runs to dribbling around increasingly more cones. Running while carrying the ball prepares them for playing rugby while passing the football between pairs and playing a mini game in a small square adds to the development of football skills. They accept with understanding and good grace the need for warm up activities and the need to develop the skills required for full games but demonstrate significant enjoyment when the time comes for the "big" game. Pupils play with enthusiasm and effort; they listen to the constant advice about skills and tactics that the staff effectively provide and accept the normal pre game reminder about the referee always being right. The willingness of pupils to accept the referee's decision without dissent is a strong feature of games activities. Equally, a very positive feature of the teaching is the use of good "models", their constant praise for effort and the very good pace that is present in lessons. Pupils' good listening skills also help them to perform safely when in gymnastic lessons and in particular when staff remind them about health and safety factors. They enjoyed the floor work where they devised their own ways of moving and demonstrated very good imagination when performing sequences of balancing positions. The paired work on sequences of balancing position by one pair was of the highest standard and rightly admired by their peers. Relay running as part of the athletics programme is lively but it is always controlled with the non-winners accepting their status with very good grace.
95. During Years 7 and 8, because of effective and good teaching, pupils continue to make progress as they build on previously acquired skills and apply them with greater confidence as they play rugby, football and cricket. Through careful explanations and discussions, teachers ensure they understand more about game strategy; appreciate the need to pass the ball and respond more readily to the staff's advice about moving into space. Warm-up activities are seen as an inherent part of the Health Related Fitness programme and pupils can explain the need for both. Sprints, press ups, step ups, star jumps and squat thrusts are counted or measured with pupils showing keen interest in their own performance. The good quality guidance provided by staff ensures

pupils are concerned with whether they have improved on their own performance or some external standard such as the fastest time in which the school cross country run has been completed.

96. Inter house competitions, the school swimming gala and periodic fixtures with other schools provide pupils with an opportunity to display their skills in more formal settings. The photographic evidence of the on site events clearly show that staff create a colourful and purposeful sporting atmosphere. Swimming at a local leisure centre is part of the Leisure Skills training programme and the school 5 Star Award system supports achievements effectively. Throughout the school, teachers and learning support staff work very well together to support pupils' learning. Pupils are keen and eager to participate and improve because relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
97. Physical education is well led with the carefully planned scheme of work providing a range of structured activities, which reflects National Curriculum guidelines. Although resources for the subject are not satisfactory this does not impact on the good achievements of pupils. There is a need for more small equipment and large apparatus; some of the mats for gymnastic activities need to be replaced and consideration should be given to the acquisition of equipment for net games such as tennis and volleyball. An increase in the level of resources would also benefit the residentially based Leisure Skills training programme, which successfully complements the school-based programme. The school has already recognised the need to improve the heating facilities and lighting in the sports barn and has included the improvement of this valued and essential facility in the school development plan. Limited use of ICT is made to further support pupils' learning in this subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. At all ages pupils' achievement and progress in religious education are good because teaching and planning are good and teachers have a good understanding of pupils needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Effective lesson planning allows Year 5 pupils to develop their ideas well, for example as they considered why and to whom they would say 'thank-you'. They listened carefully to the teacher and thought hard about their answers. At harvest time they moved on from the idea of simple thanks for a gift to thanks to God for our food. Other subjects are used well to support work in religious education, for example pupils used the knowledge gained in science to classify fruit and vegetables before they created their own very attractive artistic 'still life' harvest display. Year 6 pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of what is special about a range of faiths and religions because their understanding is developed well through discussions and the use of appropriate resources. They watched a video about Guru Nanak with great interest and understanding. One boy was quick to explain "God did that miracle because Nanak is doing something for him!" Pupils develop a greater awareness of values and respect for themselves and others through the well - told stories.

99. By Year 7 pupils have a good awareness of other faiths and know the importance of prayer in each one of them. Through well planned and led discussions they understand what is meant by 'belief' and 'commitment' and discuss the beliefs of people from Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament, through the story of Daniel in the lion's den, to Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. Pupils sympathise with, and speak of admiration for, people who stand up for their beliefs. Led very well by the teacher, they discussed the tragic terrorist attacks in the United States sensitively and with a mature approach. In Year 8, because of sensitive teaching, pupils are aware of the need to care and help others, the founding of the Samaritans and the need to raise funds for different groups. Lessons reflect the school's open, pastoral approach and the subject contributes very significantly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
100. Teaching and learning are good across the school because teaching shows a balanced approach to learning *from* the teachings of religion as well as learning facts and information *about* religion. Pupils are encouraged to look for similarities between religions. For example, Year 6 pupils compared the disappearance of the body of Guru Nanak after his death with that of the removal of Jesus' body from the tomb. Teachers give opportunities for reflection and there is a good balance of activities within lessons, which helps maintain pupils' concentration. The overall planning and preparation for lessons is thoughtful and imaginative and teachers use questions well to help pupils extend their thinking and answers. Pupils are made aware of the expectations of the staff that they should participate in discussions and listen to other's contributions and points of view. They do not always find this easy, but some new learning takes place in every lesson. Teachers match work and the level of support well to meet pupils' needs and praise pupils for verbal and written contributions to the lessons when marking their work. However, there are occasions when the results of some lessons are lost because the pupils do not necessarily record key points of the lessons or their personal contributions.
101. Because the subject, which is based on an LEA Agreed Syllabus, is led and managed very well by the co-ordinator, pupils achieve well. Stimulating and moving assemblies make a very strong contribution to religious education. The school is improving resources systematically and visits and visiting speakers are included in the planning for several topics within the subject. The use of ICT to support the subject is limited.

RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

102. The school's residential provision is a full and very effective partner in the provision of the school's 24-Hour curriculum and is successful in its aims to foster the development of personal skills, social skills, self control and to support the pupils' social and emotional development. Residential provision continues to be a strength of the school.

103. The accommodation is provided in two separate blocks away from the school where pupils live in five small units that, by their size, create a small “home” atmosphere. The domestic nature of the units’ fixtures and furnishings further add to this atmosphere and they show clear evidence of care by pupils and staff. Behaviour management routines and very good health and safety arrangements provide a safe and secure environment for the pupils. Very careful thought has been given to making sure that sufficient staff are available to supervise and support the pupils before and after the school day, including supervision for the wide range of activities that take place during the evening, evening meals and night supervision duty.
104. Pupils go to their home base for their midday meal with school staff in support. The excellent relationships that can be seen to exist between pupils and staff are particularly obvious during all meal times where a very sensitive balance is achieved between informal social interaction and the ongoing training of social and personal skills. The very good staff development programme ensures that all staff understand and follow the rationale and approaches that underpin the core programmes and approaches used in residence.
105. The excellent changeover at the beginning and end of the school day, of pupils and of relevant information, is a strength of the school. Praise and rewards for good works and behaviour are an essential part of these sessions, with pupils and staff demonstrating real pleasure when a particularly good day or evening is recognised and shared with others. Additionally, these sessions and other formal sessions reflect the school’s stress upon the need for staff to share information which will be of value to both elements of the school team as they strive to optimise the pupils’ academic, social and emotional development.
106. Pupils’ behaviours, social skills and emotional state in all settings, formal and informal, are very well recorded with the Leisure Skills training and the Social Skill training sessions which underpin most activities playing key roles in the provision of the 24- hour curriculum. The BE SMART scheme (Behaviour Enhancement through Social Mastery and Recreational Training) with its focus upon self help, motor skills, social independence, interpersonal social skills and social emotional cognitive skills provides a very good example of how the very carefully considered residential programme complements the day school curriculum.
107. Pupils have a wide choice of on site activities, which can include art, camera club and a good variety of sporting activities. Some of the pupils also join local clubs such as the sea cadets, a rugby club and drama group and many join the Boys Brigade. Additionally, off site visits to the theatre, leisure centres, a workshop on African dance and as Eco Warriors to clean local beaches further extend their personal and academic development. Visitors to the school such as the police, the ambulance service and from the army also add to the rich range of purposeful experiences that are provided for the pupils.

108. Pupils have a right to two free telephone calls home every week and have the option to make their calls in private. They may also receive their calls in private if they wish but parents, who can telephone the pupils at any time after school, are periodically frustrated because the two outside lines are engaged.
109. As in school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They understand and can explain the need for rules and clear routines and accept the fairness of the loss of privileges when deemed necessary. The significant overlap that exists between school and residential provision's systematic approach to fostering the development of appropriate social and personal skills is a strength of the overall provision and makes a very positive contribution to the quality of the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.