

INSPECTION REPORT

KEYHAM LODGE SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 131187

Headteacher: Denise Fox

Reporting inspector: Charles Hackett
21081

Dates of inspection: February 17th-19th 2003

Inspection number: 249427

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Boys
School address:	Keyham Lane Leicester
Postcode:	LE5 1FG
Telephone number:	0116 241 6852
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. A. Norman
Date of previous inspection:	16 th February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21081	Charles Hackett	Registered inspector	Physical education Modern foreign language	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
19552	Pat Butson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	Leadership and management
18461	Vanessa Wilkinson	Team inspector	Art Music Personal, social and health education Citizenship	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? Equal opportunities
14563	Graham Pirt	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	Special Educational Needs
20024	Paul Wright	Team inspector	English History Geography	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Keyham Lodge is an inner-city day school for boys aged from 11 to 16 years who have statements of special educational need because they have emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average and many, also, have learning difficulties. There are currently 40 pupils on roll; one class for each year group from Year 7 to Year 11. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language, although there is a minority of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well above the national average. The majority of the pupils live within the city of Leicester and the rest in the surrounding county.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Keyham Lodge is a very effective school. Pupils make very good progress academically, personally and in improving their behaviour. This is as a result of very good teaching and support from staff. The head teacher provides outstanding leadership and together with her senior team, manages the school very well. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides pupils with a safe and secure environment where they, often for the first time in their lives, successfully develop academically and personally.
- Offers high quality care and concern for all pupils.
- Develops pupils' self esteem and confidence and supports them to make considerable improvements in their social skills.
- All staff work very well together as a team.
- Offers excellent opportunities for pupils to experience lessons in mainstream schools and pass examinations at the end of their school career.

What could be improved

There are no significant aspects of the work of the school that require attention or that the school is not already taking appropriate action to improve.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in February 1998, less than a year after it had opened. Since then the school has developed and improved considerably. The action plan to tackle the issues raised previously has been very effective and many aspects deemed to be unsatisfactory or even satisfactory are now good or very good. For example, the monitoring of pupils' progress and personal development, which was judged to be unsatisfactory is now very good. Similarly links with parents, which were classed as unsatisfactory, are now very good. Teaching and the progress pupils make have both improved, as has the leadership and management of the headteacher who at the time of the previous inspection had only been in post (her first headship) for the short period of time the school had been open. The only area where no progress has been made is the unsatisfactory indoor facility for physical education; the hall has still to double as a dining room and gym.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	A	A	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A		

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

Pupils of all abilities make very good progress during their time at the school. Prior to arriving at Keyham Lodge all pupils were making poor progress in their personal and academic development. The extent of their progress is now so good that many are able to return to mainstream education, either part-time or full-time. Last year 36% of pupils had the opportunity to spend time in mainstream schools studying a variety of subjects. Inevitably as a result of this success a significant percentage of the higher achievers leave the school prior to taking examinations. Those that do remain, though, have passed GCSE and entry level examinations. Last year there were nine pupils in year 11 and all of these gained at least one GCSE. In total they gained 35 passes between them and these results represent an above average success rate when compared with similar schools across the country.

Pupils' progress in physical education is excellent. It is very good in mathematics, science, design and technology and in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils make good progress in their reading and writing, art, music, history and geography. Progress is satisfactory in information and communication technology (using computers and other forms of technology) and in studying a modern foreign language (French). Although progress in lessons for personal, social and health education is on occasions only satisfactory, pupils' overall progress in these areas is very good because of the work the school does outside of lessons. The only area where pupils' progress is unsatisfactory is in religious education for those in years 10 and 11; it is satisfactory for pupils in years 7, 8 and 9. Progress in literacy and numeracy is good for all pupils.

The school sets challenging targets for pupils' achievements. These were met last year in almost all subject areas. In addition, the school sets targets for reintegrating pupils to mainstream schools and these have also been successfully achieved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils show a positive response to staff and the majority respond well in lessons in all subject areas.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. When pupils are out of class they are very well behaved, showing respect towards each other and being courteous towards staff and visitors. Within the classroom pupils in Year 9 and above are almost

	always well behaved but pupils in years 7 and 8 at times disturb the learning of others within the group by frequently calling each other names.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have made significant progress in their ability to understand their own behaviour and the impact it has on others. They show considerable respect for staff and property and carry out the many responsibilities they have very well.
Attendance	Although slightly below the nationally expected rate for all schools, pupils' attendance levels are good for a school of this type. They are better than the national average for EBD schools and the highest for all types of schools in that area of the city. There has been very good improvement in recent years and this is as a result of the considerable efforts of the school to encourage pupils to attend.

Pupils' significant improvements in their attitudes, behaviour and personal developments, are a reflection of the high quality care and concern and the very appropriate strategies used by staff to support them. The improvements in these areas now enable pupils to spend the majority of their time in class and learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Very good

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

High quality teaching has ensured that pupils overall make very good progress during their time at the school. Teaching is exceptional in physical education. The teacher gives pupils very good opportunities to take responsibility for their learning as well as take part in a wide range of physical activities. Teaching is very good in mathematics, science, design and technology and good in English, art, music, history and geography. Teachers promote pupils' speaking and listening skills very well in all subjects and strategies to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are given appropriate importance in the planning of work in most subject areas. Although teaching is only satisfactory in personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons, the support the school provides out of lessons ensures pupils' progress in these areas is very good. The teaching of ICT skills is often good in individual lessons but overall is only satisfactory because all teachers don't consistently develop pupils' ICT skills whilst teaching other subjects and the room used for ICT lessons is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching a modern foreign language is satisfactory, as is the teaching of religious education for pupils in years 7, 8 and 9. However the teaching of religious education to pupils in years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.

Teaching is effective for pupils of different ability levels. Learning support assistants play a key role in this, often ensuring that pupils displaying signs of having behavioural difficulties stay on task, as well as ensuring that lower ability pupils receive good support for their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The timetable is well organised and pupils have good opportunities to study a wide range of subjects.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Currently there are no pupils for whom this applies.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school puts considerable emphasise on improving pupils' moral and social development. This is very effective and as a result, pupils make very good progress in these areas. Spiritual opportunities do exist although they would benefit from increased planning to ensure they are available to all pupils. Cultural development is good; it includes opportunities to visit the theatre as well as other experiences in subject areas such as art, music and French.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has created an environment where pupils feel safe and trusted. All the staff work effectively as a team to encourage pupils to become independent learners and take on personal responsibilities for themselves and others.

The school works very hard to encourage parents to be involved in the education of their children. They invite them in when they have concerns about their child's behaviour and report to them on their progress. The quality of information provided to parents is very good. However, the impact of parents on the work of the pupils is only satisfactory as insufficient parents become actively involved in the work of the school. The additional educational opportunities offered to pupils are very good and wide ranging. These include breakfast clubs, lunchtime activities and many events after school. The residential trips and encouragement of pupils to participate in sporting events at weekends are all very positive experiences and do much to develop a very good rapport between staff and pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Together with other senior colleagues, she manages the work of the school very well. Subject leaders co-ordinate the teaching and learning in their subjects effectively and all staff work successfully together as a team.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and have a clear understanding of what is happening in the school. They regularly review policies and monitor effectively important aspects such as health and safety and financial management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has considerable data that it collects on pupils' progress. This is used to compare performances with those of other special schools. From this information targets are set for improvements in pupils' academic and personal development, attendance and for the numbers of pupils to re-integrate back into mainstream schools.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has linked its budget well with its 'development plan' and made appropriate decisions to improve facilities. These have included re-development of the science laboratory and the purchase of additional computers. Money under-spent last year was higher than average because of an unforeseen staffing change.

Given that this is a small school, the match of staff to the subjects being offered is very good. There are specialists in a number of subjects and appropriate training is being provided for those who are non-specialists. There are sufficient classroom assistants and administration staff and resources are at least satisfactory in all subject areas. The accommodation is satisfactory in most areas but the

computer and art rooms are unsuitable for class size groups and the hall is used as a dining room and gym. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value very well. The success of the work of the school compares very favourably with similar types of inner-city EBD schools.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectations the school has for their children to work in class • Improvements in children's achievements, such as reading • Improvement in their child's behaviour • The very supportive way the school liaises with them • The extra activities the school organises 	<p>A few parents expressed concerns about behaviour in the school and the use of homework</p>

The inspection team agree with the many positive comments made by parents. They feel behaviour in the school, given pupils' special educational needs, is good. They also consider homework is provided appropriately and that a few individual pupils fail to inform their parents that they have been given homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Progress made by pupils during their time at Keyham Lodge is very good. Many arrive with very low attainment levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The level of progress is such that many pupils, 36% last year, are able to return for at least part of their education to mainstream schools. In addition, every school leaver last year left with at least one GCSE. These are very significant achievements given the difficulties and the disadvantaged backgrounds of many of the pupils. All pupils make similar progress, which includes those from different ethnic backgrounds. These results are an improvement on the previous inspection.
2. Despite the most successful pupils returning to mainstream schools, last year's GCSE results were above the national average for EBD schools. Pupils passed GCSEs in English, mathematics, ICT, art, science and physical education. In looking at the records of individual pupils, there are many who arrive at the school having been assessed at Level 1 or 2 at the end of Year 6 in their primary school (*this is well below the expected national average of level 4 for pupils of this age*). The progress they make during their time at Keyham Lodge indicates that most reach Level 3 and 4 by the end of Year 9 and then successfully pass GCSE and Entry Level Certificates at the end of their time at school. Last year, pupils achieving Level 3 at the end of Year 9 were able to pass GCSEs; for example a pupil, who was assessed at level 3 at the end of Year 9, was able to pass GCSEs in mathematics, science, ICT and physical education. Another pupil who scored level 4 in both mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 was able to pass his GCSEs at grade E in both of these subjects. All of these achievements show the impact of the teaching and quality of care in the school that enables pupils to feel safe and secure and to be able to work within the classroom.
3. The school sets challenging targets for pupils' achievements and in the main, these have been met. It is difficult for the school to set targets that will always improve on the achievements of each previous year because the numbers of pupils in each year group are quite low and there can be significant differences in the ability levels of each group. For example, last year seven pupils were successful in passing English GCSE. This year, there is only one pupil of that ability level, although all pupils will be entered for the Entry level Certificate in English. However, despite the lower ability level of the current Year 11 group, the school has set a target for all pupils to gain at least one GCSE. This is very appropriate and challenging.
4. In English pupils' progress is very good in speaking and listening and good in writing and reading. Progress in developing their literacy skills in other subjects is also good. Progress is very good in mathematics, science and design and technology and good in art, music, history and geography, with examples of individual pupils having made very good progress to achieve examination success in these subjects. Numeracy skills are well developed in other subjects. Progress in ICT is restricted by the unsatisfactory specialist ICT room and because teachers do not always give pupils sufficient opportunity to use computers and other technical aids whilst studying other subjects. Pupils' achievements in physical education are excellent. This is despite the inconvenience of having a hall that is used for dining as well as physical education lessons. Progress is satisfactory in personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons, although work outside of lessons in these areas ensures that

pupils make very good progress. Achievements in religious education have started to improve recently. The school is working hard to improve standards, although they are still unsatisfactory for pupils in years 10 and 11. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in learning a modern foreign language (French) with a few individuals in Year 9 making good progress.

5. Pupils make very good progress in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans. These targets have improved considerably in the last year and are now more precise and build on pupils' previous achievements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils have good attitudes to the school and their work. Very good relationships between all members of the school's community reflect the caring ethos of the school. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and very good around the school. Pupils' personal development is supported by the climate of mutual respect and the very good procedures in place to promote personal skills and develop independence. Attendance is good, and is above the national average for similar schools. These findings represent a very good improvement since the previous inspection.
7. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and this is a view shared by their parents. In the majority of lessons they are interested in their work and respond positively. Pupils are proud of awards they gain for their efforts and pleased to show their certificates, discussing why they have received them. Pupils concentrate well when they are actively involved in their learning; for example, when using an on-line simulation package in ICT, competing in team games in PE and completing assignments in English. Where, very rarely, pupils' attitudes to work are less enthusiastic, this is often associated with lessons that proceed at a slow pace. Pupils are pleased to celebrate each other's achievements as is demonstrated by their spontaneous applause when certificates are awarded in assemblies.
8. Out of class all pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour, such as in the way they accept school rules and expectations. Discussion with pupils indicates that they do have very good awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. For example, pupils' own accounts of the reasons why they feel they have been sent to the 'Behaviour Support' room show that many accept responsibility for their actions and are keen to improve and manage their behaviour better in future. They feel that staff deal with them very fairly. There have been no recent exclusions and no evidence that bullying is a problem. The behaviour of pupils in years 9, 10 and 11 in lessons is very good. That of pupils in years 7 and 8 varies from being very good to being unsatisfactory. The times when it is unsatisfactory often revolve around pupils calling each other names and this having a negative effect on their learning. Mealtimes are friendly, social occasions; pupils' table manners are very good and even where there is no adult supervision, pupils chat pleasantly and wait patiently to go up to the kitchen staff to be served. After lunch pupils show that they can play sensibly on their own, in pairs or as members of larger team games.
9. Pupils are developing an understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, and appreciate the progress they are making. They think about the impact of their actions on others and in discussions are realistic about reaching their own behaviour targets. For example, at the end of the day in short PSHE lessons pupils discuss why they have lost 'merit' points and consider how they might improve their performance. Pupils are able to take on responsibilities well. Older pupils act as prefects and a few

are able to take responsibility for others and report back fairly to staff on their behaviour. Pupils are very willing to support others less fortunate than themselves, for example, by contributing to charities. Older pupils can be trusted to visit the local shop unsupervised, respecting the clear expectations as to when they should return to school. Relationships among pupils are good and very good between pupils and staff. Pupils know that staff value them and, in turn, despite occasional incidents of inappropriate behaviour, pupils likewise value and respect staff.

10. Overall, pupils' attendance has improved significantly each year since the last inspection. There has been a very good reduction in the level of unauthorised absence. Although the current attendance rate of 87 per cent is just below the nationally expected level, it is well above the average for similar schools and the best attendance rate for schools in the locality. Two thirds of the pupils have attendance rates over 90 per cent so far this year. However, there are still several pupils who are persistent poor attenders, despite the best efforts of the school and the Education Welfare Service. Most pupils, including those who make their own way to school, arrive on time, allowing a prompt start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The overall quality of teaching is very good. These findings represent a significant improvement in the quality of teaching reported in the previous inspection.
12. The quality of teaching for all the classes in the school is of a high standard, although there are a few differences in the quality of teaching of different subjects. The teaching of physical education is quite exceptional and is highly effective in giving pupils responsibility for their own learning. This was the case in a Year 10 gymnastics lesson when pupils not only took responsibility for preparing the hall by clearing away tables and putting out mats, but they also decided how they were going to do this and in what order. Throughout the lesson the teacher was constantly challenging pupils to think through what they were going to do next and to evaluate and compare their performance. The teaching has a very significant impact on developing pupils' enthusiasm for learning and building up their self-esteem. It was the same in a science lesson for Year 10 pupils where the teacher provided very good guidance for what was required in conducting an experiment, but allowed very good opportunities for independent learning such as pupils taking responsibility for setting out equipment and conducting the experiment.
13. Teaching is also very good in mathematics, science and design and technology. Teachers' own individual skills in their subjects often contribute to this. For example, in a Year 10 design and technology lesson the teacher provided a very good demonstration of the processes involved in making a metal key pendant; he used highly appropriate vocabulary, which the pupils were able to follow and fully understand. Teaching is also good in English, art, music, history and geography and, for the majority of groups, in specific ICT lessons.
14. Teachers plan their lessons well. For example, in a Year 11 mathematics lesson the planning showed clearly how the teacher was going to help the pupils find fractions of whole numbers when using a calculator. Good questioning from the teacher ensured that pupils had a good understanding of the process. Similarly in a science lesson for Year 9 pupils, the very good planning, including clear learning objectives, ensured that pupils of differing ability could all make progress within the lesson.

15. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is often reflected in the level of support they are able to offer pupils. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson the level of knowledge of the teacher enabled him to make very clear explanations about algebra expression and scales. In an art lesson for Year 11 pupils, the teacher's subject knowledge is such that she can provide very effective support for pupils as they plan to design and make their own projects based upon a variety of inspirations of their own choice. In this lesson and in the majority of lessons seen, teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. A key factor in this is the very good relationships that staff have with pupils. There is good use of humour and a very positive rapport has been established. This was a significant feature of a personal, social and health education lesson for a Year 10 group. The teacher was able to use the very good relationship she has with pupils to talk about sensitive issues connected with health and sexual difficulties and pupils were able to accept the information being given in a mature and responsive manner.
16. Teachers have clear expectations that they want pupils to be in class, working and learning. This is a positive feature and is one of the most significant factors in why the school has become so effective. A key element in establishing these expectations is the time that staff give at the end of a lesson to encourage pupils to evaluate their own performance. Pupils are asked to comment on how well they think they have done during the lesson. In an English lesson for Year 8 pupils, when all the activities had been completed, the teacher asked each pupil in turn to say how well they had done and then talked about what they could do to improve their performance next time. This was very appropriate and effective and a feature of many other lessons observed during the inspection.
17. The learning support assistants work very effectively with teachers. They, like teachers, know pupils well and are quick to spot the potential for pupils to disturb each other. In a Year 7 art lesson observed pupils were unsettled but the learning support assistant was very effective in keeping pupils on task and helping them to cut out from a template. Her demonstration of the technique involved was of clear assistance to pupils. Similarly in a mathematics lesson for Year 9, the learning support assistant worked very well alongside the teacher in interpreting questions for pupils who were taking an end of unit test.
18. Lessons are often very busy with teachers keeping up a good pace in their expectations for pupils to work throughout. An example of this was seen in the work undertaken by Year 9 pupils in an English lesson where they were studying 'Macbeth'. Pupils were involved initially in a spelling test and invited to read sections of the story and then asked to complete a written exercise; everything was being presented at a pace that kept them busy and learning throughout the lesson.
19. The most significant area of development required in teaching is the need to make greater use of computers in teaching other subject areas. The school is aware of this and plans are in place to develop this further. Additionally, the teaching of ICT is made very difficult because of the unsatisfactory quality of the ICT room. It is difficult to teach and supervise pupils in this. Nevertheless the teaching of ICT has ensured that pupils have gained GCSE short course success and there are plans for the full course GCSE examination to be taken this year.
20. The other aspect that has a negative impact on teaching is the many interruptions that occur in lessons. Lessons are disturbed when pupils return from individual literacy sessions, telephone calls and by staff delivering messages or checking if behaviour

support is required. Teaching would benefit from an agreed policy on when lessons can be interrupted.

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

21. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory and is now good. Improvements have been made to the way teachers plan pupils' learning and the range of extra activities provided for pupils outside lessons. Teaching time has been increased although it is still slightly below that nationally recommended. Lunchtimes are used very effectively to provide a wide range of activities such as football, art and a homework club. These activities promote pupils' achievement and progress well.
22. Pupils study a wide range of subjects and they are well prepared for the next stage of education or their life after school. For older secondary age pupils there are good opportunities for their learning to be recognised through GCSE, entry level awards and the recently introduced ASDAN* award scheme (*an external award scheme that recognizes achievement in both academic and social skills*). The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and all pupils have equal opportunities to access the curriculum.
23. For younger pupils learning opportunities are well prepared. Curriculum plans, which were identified as needing further development at the time of the last inspection, are now good in most subjects because the school uses the guidance provided by QCA (the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) to support teachers when they plan work, for example, in art, music and design and technology. Teachers are effectively adapting these materials to reflect the needs of pupils. In most subjects the curriculum for older pupils is based on modules of work that enable their learning to be accredited either through GCSE, entry level awards or ASDAN.
24. The school has already identified and has good plans to improve learning opportunities and accreditation in subjects such as personal, social and health education, information and communication technology, citizenship and, for older secondary age pupils, religious education. Curriculum plans for these subjects are satisfactory and will improve as the recently implemented developments such as entry level accreditation in personal, social and health education and improved planning for information and communication technology become established.
25. Links with other schools are very good and represent a significant strength in the work of the school. Opportunities to give pupils the chance to spend time either full or part time in mainstream schools are actively sought. Being able to return to mainstream is seen as a key aim of the school and pupils respond well when given the chance to be in a mainstream school. For example, pupils in Year 7 enthusiastically join the Year 7 pupils of a local secondary school in games lessons. The whole process is managed well by senior staff, who in return for these opportunities, offer support to mainstream staff on managing the behaviour of their pupils.
26. The literacy strategy for younger secondary age pupils has been implemented well and the strategy for numeracy very well. Teachers are using the guidance effectively to help them plan learning and this is supporting pupils to make good progress in both areas. Effective assessment enables the school to identify pupils who need additional support for reading and other basic literacy skills such as spelling. Good opportunities

are provided for these pupils to achieve and make progress because the school uses specialised programmes of work and gives them high levels of support in lessons.

27. The school extends the learning opportunities it provides for pupils very well through a very wide range of visits, workshops, residential opportunities and a very good range of activities outside lessons. Pupils have been on trips to places such as Warwick Castle and The National Art Gallery, music and English workshops and last year pupils had the opportunities to go on residential trips to Italy and Wales. Activities outside lessons include a cookery club and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. These experiences make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement and progress and to their personal development.
28. Careers education and guidance is satisfactory overall and the opportunities provided for work experience are good. The recent re-organisation of careers education is beginning to have a good impact on pupils' personal development because they are expected to take full responsibility, with guidance, for organising their own work experience placements. The school provides good support for pupils and work placements have been a successful experience for those pupils who participate. However, during the experience pupils do not produce any work that can be used to support their learning when the placement has ended. The school is addressing this weakness. The school only uses the careers service to vet work experience placements because it has found that it can match learning to pupils' needs more effectively than the service. However, this does limit the opportunities pupils have to work with people from outside the school, particularly in situations such as mock interviews.
29. The school uses the community very effectively to support pupils' learning. Pupils have very good opportunities to use the local area to enhance their studies when they visit places of interest, such as The National Space Centre for science. There is also an interesting and informative range of visitors to the school, who share their knowledge with pupils and contribute effectively to their learning. For example, drugs advisors from the police force and local education authority and coaching sessions run by Leicester Tigers rugby club.
30. College links are satisfactory. The recent reorganisation of college opportunities is having a good impact on pupils' personal development because it expects a high level of commitment from them. Attendance on college courses has not been good in the past and the school is now targeting opportunities to those pupils who choose college to further their career prospects and those who are prepared to attend regularly. This is a new approach and has been appropriately identified by the school as an area for further development. The co-ordinator is beginning to make successful links with a wider range of further education providers and this, when developed further, will improve the college opportunities provided for pupils.
31. Overall, the school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. It is a very high priority for the school and is reflected in its aims and mission statement. Staff work very hard to provide a safe, friendly but challenging environment in which pupils can thrive and succeed, both in their work and as members of the community. The school has appropriately started to consider how it can better plan the opportunities it provides to match more closely the pupils' needs, and how it can monitor the impact that taking part in activities has on each pupil's progress.

32. Support for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The stories and prayers in the daily assemblies give pupils appropriate opportunities to reflect on themes such as 'standing up for what you believe in', illustrated effectively by references to the recent Peace March in London and Nelson Mandela's long imprisonment in South Africa. Opportunities are provided for Muslim pupils to pray. Discussions in assemblies and religious education lessons about the main world religions help pupils explore other people's beliefs. Opportunities are taken in lessons to promote spiritual development, such as in a Year 11 science lesson when talking about the growth of a chicken from an egg, however, such opportunities are not routinely planned for in all classes and subjects.
33. Very good opportunities are provided to support the moral development of pupils. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. All adults in the school are very good role models and there is a clear moral code evident in the daily life of the school. The golden rule is 'treat others as you want to be treated yourself'. Staff take every opportunity to encourage pupils to think about what is right and wrong, consider the effect their behaviour has on others and take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils are encouraged to help others by taking part in fund raising for charities such as 'Children in Need' and 'Comic Relief'. Equality is promoted well, with racist or other discriminatory behaviour or attitudes always being challenged; displays in the school such as 'Show racism the red card' demonstrate that racism has been an appropriate focus in personal and social education lessons. Other lessons are also used well to explore wider moral issues, for example, in a discussion about rainforests in a Year 9 geography lesson, pupils considered how 'greed' has an impact on the environment. Moral questions are also posed in some of the displays around the school, such as, 'Is it OK to eat animals?' or 'Can terrorism ever be justified?'
34. A significant strength of the school is the way in which it promotes pupils' social development. This has improved very well since the last inspection, and parents are very happy with the opportunities the school provides. Pupils are provided with a wealth of experiences and life skills to help them develop. Key factors in the school's success are the well-established systems for managing behaviour and recognising achievement, the emphasis on returning pupils to mainstream schools and, particularly, the very good range of activities outside lessons, including residential visits in this country and abroad. Staff give very freely of their time. Pupils' very good relationships with staff mean that they become more confident and understand that their ideas are valued. They are constantly prompted to take an active part in their learning and school life generally, and to take responsibility. For example, during the inspection there were very good opportunities provided for pupils to work together in physical education and design and technology lessons, and to attend mainstream schools and work experience placements. The elected Student Council encourages pupils to think about how the school works as a community and how pupils and staff can work together to make it a better place. The school also seeks pupils' views through questionnaire surveys, taking their suggestions seriously. Staff work very hard to make sure that break and lunch times are successful social occasions. All pupils attend clubs at lunchtimes, including football run by the Year 11 pupils, computers and games. At the whole school meetings after lunch, one pupil chairs a discussion, calling for reports from other pupils and staff about behaviour at the clubs.
35. The school continues to provide good support for pupils' cultural development. Opportunities are provided in many lessons to promote understanding of different cultures, for example, by studying world religions, French culture, African music and stories and foods from around the world. Visitors into school are chosen to provide a

good range of experiences – ‘Bob Marley Life and Legend’, ‘Beats Working’ and a circus skills group, for example. Pupils also take part in a range of visits that promote their wider cultural development, including to art galleries in London and Birmingham, to drama and musical performances such as ‘Romeo and Juliet’, ‘Godspell’, the ‘Lion King’, the ‘Black Voice Choir’ and ‘Blood Brothers’, and the residential trip to Italy. There are appropriate displays around the school promoting positive black role models, and the updated book stock now reflects better the different cultures evident in modern British society. Year 7 pupils’ inclusion in physical education lessons extends their multi-cultural experiences because of the multi-cultural population at the mainstream school. Pupils’ cultural development could be further extended by more direct experiences, for instance by visiting different faiths’ places of worship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school provides pupils with very good educational and pastoral support and guidance. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. A particular strength is the way all adults - including the office staff, taxi drivers, escorts and the premises officer, as well as the teachers and teaching assistants – know the pupils very well and work closely together to monitor and support them. There is a common goal of supporting every pupil to succeed whether it is to achieve reintegration to mainstream schools or progress successfully to college or employment. Pupils and parents value the support they receive, and former pupils come back to visit to share their successes. A very good example of this shared sense of community was seen in an assembly during the inspection when the headteacher read an e-mail to the pupils from one of the taxi drivers who was on holiday in the Maldives.
37. The school has very good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils both in school and when out on visits. Child protection procedures are very good and are used in the best interests of pupils. They are understood by all staff, who are aware of the need for constant vigilance. Effective procedures are in place to support children ‘looked after’ by the local authority. Health and safety arrangements are very good. Risk assessments, health and safety audits, fire drills and routine testing of fire alarms, extinguishers and portable electrical appliances are all carried out, effectively co-ordinated and recorded by the premises officer. The arrangements for first aid and medical care are also very good; five staff are trained in first aid and there is an appropriate medical room. Very good records of medication, accidents and illnesses are kept, and parents are informed about any incidents. The school has appropriate policies and procedures for physically restraining (‘holding’) pupils when required and for monitoring any pupil who absconds, and for recording any such incidents.
38. Procedures for monitoring and improving pupils’ attendance are very good; the school makes effective use of a computerised system to record and analyse attendance data. This is much better than at the time of the last inspection when procedures were satisfactory. Registers are marked at the whole school assemblies and meetings at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. The school tries to contact the parents or carers of any pupils who are absent on the first day of absence and makes every effort, working closely with the Education Welfare Service, to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Challenging attendance targets, which are monitored regularly, are set for individual pupils, each class and the whole school. A particular strength is the way that the attendance data are effectively analysed and presented in the form of charts. These are displayed in each class base so that pupils can easily see their levels of attendance and the targets they are aiming for, both individually and as a class. Full and improved attendance is appropriately rewarded with special trips out, certificates and vouchers. Parents are reminded through the newsletters about

the importance of regular attendance and the procedures for requesting holidays in term-time.

39. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and provide an effective framework, which supports pupils' learning. Again, this is significantly better than at the last inspection when this was a key issue for improvement. The parents and carers who attended the pre-inspection meeting were very positive about the school's behaviour management procedures, especially the emphasis placed on rewarding good behaviour. There is a comprehensive behaviour policy. Staff and pupils are all aware of the school's expectations of behaviour and are clear about the systems for monitoring pupils' work and behaviour during the day, and the rewards and sanctions available. On most occasions, these are used consistently by staff and promote good behaviour very effectively. Pupils are proud to receive merits, enter their names in the 'good work' book, be elected as 'Student of the Week' and have their achievements celebrated in the regular 'Achievement Assembly'. Pupils are 'Gold', 'Silver' or 'Bronze' status, depending on their behaviour records, with 'Gold' pupils receiving additional privileges such as going on a special trip at the end of each term. Staff are always on duty in the 'behaviour support' room where pupils who have left, or been asked to leave, lessons can go to calm down or work on their own. They also complete their 'time', the main sanction imposed for unacceptable behaviour and work, here. Comprehensive records are kept of pupils who use the behaviour support room, including why they are there, how long for and who sent them; this supports the whole school behaviour management system well. Information collected on each pupil's behaviour is systematically recorded and analysed, using ICT, to provide a comprehensive picture, which is used as the basis for individual pupils' behaviour targets in their IEPs.
40. The school has very good policies and procedures for making sure that any bullying or racist incidents and other discriminatory behaviour are dealt with promptly and effectively. All incidents are recorded and reported as required by law.
41. Assessment procedures meet the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and the school has a comprehensive special educational needs policy. The individual education plans are very detailed and have improved recently with the use of more precise targets for what pupils should learn. The content is monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, the fact that they are based on the initial assessment means that, in a very small number of cases, useful information from the pupils' original statement is not carried forward into the plan.
42. Procedures for assessing the academic achievement and progress of pupils are good and continue to improve. This shows very good improvement since the previous inspection where assessment was judged to be unsatisfactory. All new pupils now undergo a range of initial assessment, including checking on their ability to read, spell and understand what they have read. This assessment forms the basis of the targets set for each pupil as part of their individual education plan. Most teachers use the outcomes of these assessments effectively when planning further work. Teachers use different methods of assessing and recording pupils' achievements. However, they are all regularly maintained and easily understood.
43. Pupils' personal development is monitored and supported very well and is clearly a high priority for the school. Procedures support pupils to improve their self-confidence, self-discipline and self-esteem, as well to take more responsibility for improving their own behaviour. The newly introduced system of personal tutorials, the recent improvements in the quality of targets set for each pupil and the close involvement of pupils in reviewing their own progress all contribute very well. The

school's very effective use of a computerised system ('Eclipse') to record and analyse pupils' behaviour records over time ensures that staff are kept well informed and have good evidence from which to plan pupils' next targets. Staff take time to ensure that pupils know and understand what they have to do to improve, and constantly challenge them to think about their behaviour and its consequences. The personal, social and health education programme, including citizenship, supports pupils' personal development satisfactorily. The possibility of providing a 'learning mentor' for pupils is another initiative being considered which would further enhance the monitoring and support of pupils' personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents and carers think very highly of the school and consider that the school works closely with them for the benefit of their children. All those who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned the questionnaires felt that the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his best. For example, one parent commented that, "The school is really good at helping pupils develop their self-confidence. My son now reads out loud and loves coming to school". Parents and carers are especially positive about the school's behaviour management procedures and the wide range of activities available outside lessons. They consider that their children make good progress, the school is well led and managed, and that teaching is good. Most are happy to approach the school with questions or problems. The inspection team shares these very positive views. A few parents and carers reported that their sons do not like school and that behaviour in the school is not good; given the nature of the pupils' special educational needs, the inspection team considers that pupils mostly behave well. A few concerns were also expressed about the amount of homework given. The inspection team judges that homework, which pupils often complete at school, makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.
45. The school does all it can to establish effective links with parents and carers and with many families links are very good, despite the wide area from which the pupils come. This is an improvement since the last inspection when links were judged to be unsatisfactory. The Family Liaison Officer (a teaching assistant) makes home visits before boys are admitted to explain about the school's expectations, the behaviour policy, the 'holding until calm' procedures and the home-school agreement. These visits are valued by parents and carers and establish a very good basis for further co-operation. Staff also contact parents and carers frequently by telephone to discuss attendance and other concerns, as well as successes such as good work, visits out of school and integration to mainstream schools. All pupils have homework diaries, but not all parents see these.
46. Because of the difficulties in establishing effective co-operation with many families, the overall impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and parents' contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is only satisfactory. However, the school is constantly seeking new ways to involve families further in school-life and their children's learning. For example, a questionnaire survey of parents has been carried out, a parents' room created at the school, a few parents act as support to others regarding the 'holding' procedures, and a 'focus group' has been established. However, as yet, attendance at planned events has been poor, even when transport has been provided, except for at the annual sports day, governors' meeting and prize giving, which is always very well attended. One of the parent governor positions has been vacant since 2001.

47. The quality of information provided to parents and carers is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is now a very good prospectus and a guide for pupils, as well as regular newsletters and other letters home to keep families informed about school life, including the subjects being taught, and, for example, giving advice about how to help with homework. The school is now considering alternative ways of presenting information about the school, for example on tape or video. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that they feel well informed about their children's progress. Annual reports are improving in quality, with more detail included on what pupils know and can do in each subject. Reports are accompanied by an 'Emotional and Behavioural Development Record Sheet' and, for older pupils, the pupil's own assessment of their future plans. The reports, however, could be improved further by using more visual means to present information. Pupils' IEPs and targets are shared with parents each term and occasional consultation evenings are held, although attendance at these has not been good. Attendance at pupils' annual reviews is, however, steadily increasing because the school negotiates convenient times with parents and carers; since the last inspection attendance has increased from one third to two thirds.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has built a very effective senior management team comprising a deputy and two assistant headteachers. Each member of the team has clearly defined responsibilities that are central to the effectiveness and smooth running of the school.
49. The school is meeting its aims very well; they are 'to provide a safe caring, educationally challenging environment where each pupil is valued and encouraged to reach their full potential'. To do this the school has worked exceptionally hard to develop high standards of teamwork amongst all staff. Many examples were observed during the inspection of the ways in which teachers and learning support staff work very closely and plan together. The staff all feel valued and they are well supported; a judgment supported by the recent report received when the school was awarded 'Investor in People' status.
50. The school is committed to continued professional development and ensures that all staff are well trained. All staff are very well deployed and have the opportunity to contribute ideas to the overall running of the school. For example, a learning support assistant came up with the idea adopted by the school of 'Talk time'; an informal yet structured opportunity for pupils to develop their language skills. The induction and mentoring policy is very good and relates directly to the professional development and performance management policies. Newly appointed staff are given a senior teacher as a mentor and have a planned schedule for induction to the school.
51. There has been a significant improvement in the leadership of subjects and the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Now almost all subjects are managed effectively and clear action plans show how they will be developed further over the next year. The school's procedures for performance management are excellent and are largely responsible for raising the quality of teaching throughout the school. There is a clear cycle of monitoring and evaluating teaching. All senior staff are involved and have received appropriate training. Although the monitoring of teaching is of a high quality there could still though be improvements in the feedback given to teachers on how they could improve their teaching even further.

52. The governors discharge their responsibilities well and all statutory requirements are met. Whole-school targets are set and governors look at, and approve, the various school policies, two of the most recent being those for the marking of pupils' work and health and safety in the school. There is a planned programme of visits for governors, where they have a clear agenda and report back in writing about their findings. Governors are also actively supportive of initiatives taken up by the school. For example, a governor attended whole school training in positive handling of pupils (Team Teach) and all governors are involved with staff in discussing the school improvement plan.
53. The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher and are, therefore, in a good position to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and to contribute effectively when discussing issues relating to staffing and finance. Governors' minutes comment favourably upon various aspects of school life. For example, a governor had mentioned the calm and purposeful atmosphere in an assembly she had joined.
54. There has been very good progress in planning for school improvement since the last inspection. Previously the school improvement plan was not costed and not linked to the budget. By contrast there is now a very careful evaluation of the previous year's plan and any issues remaining are fed into the planning for the next year. The 2002-2003 plan is very appropriate; it combines new nationally agreed areas all schools have to address as well as aspects of its work the school would like to improve.
55. The school finances are carefully managed. The school currently has an under-spend of around seven and a half per cent due to a teacher leaving and not being replaced for one term. However, there are plans to use about a half of this money by appointing additional staffing. The recent auditor's report has helped to improve financial security further and increased the number of hours for the bursar. Minor issues raised by the report, such as access rights, more frequent changing of passwords and back-ups, have now been implemented. The administration team offers very effective support; the school secretary plays a key role in the whole staff team approach so evident in the school. The use of the new technology by administrative staff and by teachers for planning and preparation is good.
56. The school considers best value very carefully in terms of comparing standards with similar schools as evidenced in a DfES report on 'Value added', and sets targets for improvement. In terms of purchasing goods the school seeks competitive tenders. A very good example of this was the development of the new science room and the landscaping of the grounds. The day-to-day management of the school's finances is good. There are secure systems in place for ordering, receiving goods and paying invoices.
57. Specialist accommodation is unsatisfactory for ICT and art and design and this has a negative impact on the work in these subjects. The gymnasium is too small and doubles as a dining hall. By way of a contrast the new accommodation for science is very good. Resources for science and design and technology are very good and they are satisfactory in all other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. Whilst there are no key issues for the school to address there are aspects in need of improvement that senior staff and governors should consider including in their school development plan.

- In liaison with the local education authority they should seek to improve the accommodation. In particular they need to improve the rooms used for ICT and art, and look to ways of improving the indoor facilities for physical education.
- Senior staff should review with staff the reasons why lessons are interrupted and seek to develop a policy that limits the need for lessons to be disturbed by someone coming into the classroom or the telephone being used.
- Governors and senior staff should also continue with the current development work they are doing to improve the teaching of religious education and the use of ICT in the teaching of other subjects.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	15	12			
Percentage	3	28	38	31			

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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	40
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	0	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	1	1	2
	Girls			
	Total	1	1	2
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	11 (0)	33 (0)	22 (14)
	National	58 (57)	65 (64)	66 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	11 (0)	11 (0)	0 (14)
	National	25 (26)	45 (41)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	2	2	5
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	2	2	5
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	22 (0)	22 (0)	55 (0)
	National	59 (65)	69 (68)	66 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)
	National	25 (24)	42 (40)	34 (32)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	-	9

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	0	0	8
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	0	0	8

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	7.2 (3)
	National	32.5 (32.2)

Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	36	9	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	1	
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2		
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5
Average class size	8

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	528681
Total expenditure	522985
Expenditure per pupil	11886
Balance brought forward from previous year	33737

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Balance carried forward to next year	39433
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Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2

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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	40
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	38	17		4
My child is making good progress in school.	50	42	8		
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	43	22		8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	33	17	4	8
The teaching is good.	71	17	8		4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	38	8		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	17	4		4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25			
The school works closely with parents.	63	25	8		4
The school is well led and managed.	63	33			4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	38	4	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	54			

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

ENGLISH

59. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. The quality of teaching is good and pupils work hard to make good progress. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening and good progress in reading and writing. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

Key strengths

- The encouragement all staff give to pupils to improve their skills in speaking and listening.
- Teachers have high expectations for pupils to achieve and plan their individual targets for this well.
- The planning of lessons is based on the National Literacy Strategy planning.
- The high quality of relationships in lessons is a very important factor in the progress made by pupils.
- The subject leader organizes teaching and resources well.

Areas for improvement

- Computers are not used sufficiently during English lessons to enhance pupils' learning.
 - Assessment of pupils' work is not consistent in all classes.
60. Throughout the school, standards of speaking and listening are very good. Teachers and learning support staff provide very good role models for pupils. Pupils are confident to ask questions and contribute to discussions. This is because teachers and support staff encourage them to join in and genuinely value what they have to say. Opportunities for speaking and listening, both within lessons and around the school, make a strong contribution to developing pupils' personal development in areas such as increased confidence, awareness of the needs of others, and a more positive self-image. Consequently, many pupils become enthusiastic communicators and readily volunteer to speak in whole school assemblies and class discussions. Pupils recount stories they have been reading, such as "Our Day Out" by Willy Russell, and extend their understanding of the story through role-play. As pupils move through the school they become more confident communicators, answering questions confidently and expressing opinions more clearly.
61. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' understanding of text, including specific lessons for literacy that effectively use elements of the National Literacy Strategy. In all lessons observed, pupils were either able to cope with the reading of the texts used or showed a willingness to receive adult assistance. There is an emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of what they read. All pupils are able to select their own choice of books and higher attaining pupils read with understanding and comprehension. Pupils all wish to succeed and improve their reading skills as best they can. They are proud of their achievements and they understand why they are asked to undertake reading tasks. Pupils are eager to read aloud in class. For example, pupils in a Year 9 lesson willingly read aloud lines from 'Macbeth', showing great patience when others stumbled and required help. They were very interested and showed a very good knowledge of the background to the play. Careful records of progress of reading levels are kept and pupils are tested regularly to check how well they are doing. The high quality of relationships in lessons is a very important factor in the progress that

pupils make. The school's provision for withdrawing pupils for individual additional reading support is effective in helping to raise standards in reading.

62. Teachers and learning support assistants know their pupils well and effectively use this knowledge in lesson planning and assessing and recording the progress pupils make. Individual targets are in place for each pupil and this ensures that pupils build on what they already know. Relationships in lessons are very good and pupils are able to learn in a very happy atmosphere. All staff help each other in creating a positive learning atmosphere by setting and expecting high standards of behaviour from pupils.
63. In the previous report, progress in writing was assessed as satisfactory. It is now good for the vast majority of pupils. They are able to write tidily, more accurately and, where appropriately, with the assistance of a computer. For example, Year 8 pupils studying 'Romeo and Juliet' were able, with encouragement, to write down the names of the characters and their matching descriptions. Higher attaining pupils' writing is often organised, imaginative and clear. For example, pupils in year 11 write with clarity and accuracy and redraft pieces of writing to produce work of a good standard. They write book reviews, letters and accounts of visits. Displays on classroom walls and along corridors provide good examples of writing and promote pupils' pride in their work.
64. The emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills in other subjects is good. Teachers use a range of resources and pupils are encouraged to find information from different sources. For example, in a very good Year 8 humanities lesson pupils were required to read and sequence assorted weather facts.
65. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear view of what needs to be done next to improve further. There are examples where pupils use computers to produce a finished example of their work, such as when older pupils re-draft their written assignments for external accreditation. However, there is scope for pupils to use computers more regularly to help them with their work. The department has a wide range of resources and the library facilities are satisfactory and are used regularly by pupils. There is good recording of the work that has been done; however, there is a need to ensure assessment is consistent throughout the school. The subject development plan appropriately recognises where there can be improvements in this area.

MATHEMATICS

66. The achievement of pupils throughout the school is very good. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that in all year groups they are making very good progress with their learning. This is as a result of consistently very good teaching. This situation is an improvement on the previous report.

Key strengths

- The strong impact made by specialist staff in raising standards
- Very effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in Years 7 to 9
- The development of opportunities for pupils to take examinations.
- The very good planning and support offered by the subject leader ensures that pupils of different ability are set appropriate work.

Areas for improvement

- The use of computers to support learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving exercises.

67. The school has two specialist teachers for mathematics. Their very good subject knowledge enables them to spot potential learning problems early and give very effective help to pupils. Important features of their teaching are the probing questioning that ensures pupils understand new concepts and the effective use of plenary sessions for the reinforcement of learning. For example, in a very good algebra lesson for Year 9 pupils, the teacher reinforced the work they had been doing earlier in the term before giving the pupils an end-of-unit test. Clear questioning helped the lower attainers to have a much better understanding of the work, express simple functions in symbols and find the values of 'x' or 'y'. Higher attainers showed that they had remembered the previous work well, such as the generating and plotting of points.
68. In Year 11, the mental arithmetic session opened with very good quick-fire questions to test pupils' understanding of their tables. The main part of the lesson was concerned with GCSE work about fractions; for example, finding four-fifths of thirty. Very good teaching helped the higher attaining pupil to progress well and he soon learned to convert fractions to decimals. The lower attaining pupil in the group had been given work at a different level and received very effective help from the learning support assistant.
69. The management of mathematics is very good and this has been a key factor in developing pupils' achievement and raising standards since the last inspection. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in Years 7 to 9 and accreditation in Years 10 and 11 leading to GCSE has given an added impetus to the work. Last year's GCSE results were very creditable. The curriculum has been very carefully thought out and planned. Teachers are now much clearer about what they are going to teach and how they are going to adapt the work for the wide range of pupils within each class. However, there are still occasions when the work for the higher attaining pupils could offer more challenge. Assessment procedures, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, are now good. The school is using data effectively from baseline assessment, end-of-unit tests, optional and national tests to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Annual targets are being set and there are good targets in pupils' individual education plans. The new marking system is being used well and gives pupils a good assessment of their day-to-day progress and highlights areas where they can improve their work.
70. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows the main areas for improvement to be the use of ICT to support pupils' learning and the need to increase the opportunities pupils have to undertake problem-solving exercises. Computers could be used for exercises such as collating and organizing data.

SCIENCE

71. Pupils achieve well and make very good progress in science. These achievements are reflected in recent accredited examination results, where most pupils are attaining entry level certificates and many achieving full GCSEs. The teaching of science is very good. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection.

Key strengths:

- The curriculum and teaching are planned very well.
- The science facilities and resources for undertaking practical work are very good.
- Good leadership of the subject

- Very good relationships in lessons between the teacher and pupils lead to a purposeful working atmosphere.
- The safety arrangements for pupils working in the laboratory are very good.

Areas for improvement:

- Improved facilities for the use of ICT in lessons.
72. Pupils in Year 7 know how to test for acids and alkalis, making hypotheses about the likely reading on the pH scale. Most are able to identify why cells divide when looking at life and living processes. In Year 8 pupils can identify that new materials are made during a simple chemical reaction. Their learning in science is applied to real life when studying digestion and food and they understand the need for a balanced diet as they test foods for their constituent parts. More able pupils know that oxygen is necessary for aerobic respiration and that oxygen and glucose are transported in the blood. By the time they reach the end of Year 9, pupils recognise that weight on earth is due to gravitational forces, predicting the behaviour of magnets as well as the shape and direction of magnetic fields. In the last national Standard Assessment Tests, of the nine pupils participating, 5 pupils achieved level 4 and 2 pupils achieved level 5, which although is within expected levels for pupils of this age shows the considerable progress they have made.
 73. During Years 10 and 11 pupils continue to make very good progress and they work with effort and concentration. They show an increasing ability to work independently. This is a strong feature of science lessons and contributes to pupils' learning. This was demonstrated in a very good Year 11 lesson where pupils worked independently or in small groups as they undertook a test to investigate the presence of protein in foods. The teacher's very good planning for and organisation of the work for individuals or groups ensured that all pupils made a great deal of progress.
 74. Teaching in the subject is very good. Lessons are well planned and assessment of pupils' progress is good and used well to plan future work. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and uses this to provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils. There are very good relationships between pupils and the teacher and learning takes place in a happy and purposeful atmosphere.
 75. Science is well led. The subject leader has made sure that planning reflects National Curriculum requirements as well as courses that pupils are pursuing through to nationally accredited courses. The work planned is interesting and there is a good range of topics covered. The teacher ensures that work is relevant to pupils' needs and this helps to keep pupils interested in the subject. Subject action planning identifies appropriate developments and contributes to the school improvement plan.
 76. Computers are used wherever possible and work was seen where pupils had used computers for data logging to record data from an experiment. Further work is limited due to the lack of modern equipment and no Internet connection being available in the science laboratory. This new science facility represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. It is well resourced with most of the items needed for the courses. Risk assessments have been undertaken and pupils use the laboratory with due regard to the clear safety rules that have been established by the teacher.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Pupils' progress in art is good. Teaching is also good and this represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

Key strengths:

- High expectations for pupils to achieve.
- The teacher's subject knowledge is good.
- The range of learning opportunities and activities, including visits, are good.
- There are effective assessment and recording procedures.
- Good opportunities to take examinations in the subject.
- Pupils have good opportunities to evaluate their own learning.

Areas for improvement:

- Opportunities to study the work of famous artists.
- Increased use of computers.

78. The subject is well led and managed. Effective assessment and recording procedures enable the teacher to plan work for the different abilities in the group and have high expectations for pupils' achievement. This has a positive effect on their progress overtime. The curriculum is enhanced by visits such as trips to the National and the Birmingham Art Galleries. These opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' achievement and progress. Pupils' achievements are given recognition by the chance to take GCSE or entry level awards in Years 10 and 11.
79. Teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to develop understanding and skills. In Year 7 pupils are undertaking work with clay and show their knowledge by answering quick fire questions about working with clay as an introduction to practical work. They use correct vocabulary such as 'slip' and 'firing' and accurately describe what they mean. Pupils in Year 9 design items such as gloves, masks and shields for the topic body adornment. The teacher encourages them to use two and three dimensional techniques and to consider the suitability of the materials they have chosen. There are good opportunities for discussion that allow pupils to share ideas and offer suggestions to help overcome problems. For example, a pupil found sewing leather, to make a pair of gloves, difficult and suggested using glue.
80. Pupils work effectively together in art lessons and are able to accept each other's comments without getting upset. They have mature attitudes because the teacher has high expectations of them, which they understand and respond to well. In Year 11 pupils plan their own projects based on the requirements of the syllabus and their interests. The teacher provides very good support for pupils, offering suggestions that help them to improve their work and encourages them to explore new techniques, for example, the wide range of different tools that can be used to apply paint to paper. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own learning because the teacher marks pupils' work consistently and provides opportunities for discussion about what has been learned at the end of the lesson and at the end of each unit of work.
81. There are limited opportunities for pupils to study the work of famous artists or to use computers to undertake research or as an art media. The school does not have enough book or poster resources and there is no access to the Internet in the art room. Art software is also limited. Both these areas have already been identified for development.

CITIZENSHIP

82. As the subject is new to the school it is too early to make judgements on pupils' achievements and progress. The subject was not taught at the time of the previous inspection.

Key strength:

- Identification of the subject as a whole school priority for development.
83. The approach the school has adopted ensures that the subject is starting to make a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the topics studied and the experiences pupils have. Pupils have a wide range of suitable opportunities to improve their understanding of the world. For example, pupils in Year 7 are learning about the environment. Through good use of questions and appropriate discussion the teacher is able to check how much they have learned during the unit of work. Pupils are able to name the features of a community and recognise that the areas they live in have different facilities. Older pupils are learning about different charities and taking part in whole school projects. The teacher provides, through the marking of work, discussion at the end of the lesson and at the end of each unit of work, good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own learning.
84. The subject leader has only been responsible for managing and teaching the subject since the beginning of term but appropriate priorities for improvement have already been identified. The subject development plan is of good quality and is already leading to improvements. For example, the planned introduction of accreditation for older pupils, through taking part in the ASDAN scheme.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in design and technology. Teaching is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

Key strengths:

- Very good planning and assessment arrangements, including very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work.
- Very good resources for pupils to undertake a range of activities.
- The subject leader has very good knowledge and manages the subject very well.
- Computers are used effectively for helping pupils with their design work.

Areas for improvement:

- Ensure that computers linked to the school network and with Internet access are available.
86. Pupils make very good progress between Years 7 and 9. Pupils in Year 7 know how to produce a design to a specification, for instance when they have to produce a novelty for a garden centre. They explore the design process and manufacture a range of novelties in their own packaging. In Year 8 pupils design and produce a layered pudding. They are able to investigate materials when they have to produce safety clothing and use computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) when producing stencils for younger children to use. By the end of Year 9 they have produced box kites as they explore materials, and investigated manufacturing and using pre-made pieces as they design and produce clocks.

87. During Years 10 and 11 pupils continue to make very good progress as they start to use resin moulds and low heat alloys to produce artefacts. By Year 11 they are producing coursework assignments using sophisticated vacuum forming techniques and producing wooden items with cut joints.
88. Lessons are very well planned and very good use is made of individual education plan targets. Assessment of pupils' progress is very good and is used to plan future work. One of the strengths of this is the way pupils themselves evaluate their performance. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and uses this to provide interesting and relevant learning opportunities for pupils. The action planning for the subject identifies appropriate developments and contributes to the school improvement plan. Relationships between the teacher and the pupils help to ensure that learning takes place in a purposeful atmosphere. This contributes to a working atmosphere between pupils where they respect the health and safety implications of a workshop environment.
89. Computers are used wherever possible and work was seen using computer aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM). Extended work is limited because the workshop is not on the school computer network and has no Internet connection. The design technology workshop is small and, although well used, presents difficulties when full groups are present. The subject is very well resourced for the courses. Risk assessments have been undertaken, are emphasised by the teacher, and pupils use the room with due regard to safety.

HUMANITIES (history and geography)

90. Over time, pupils' achievement and progress are good in both subjects. The good progress identified in the previous report has been maintained by the new co-ordinator. Teaching is consistently good.

Key strengths:

- The management of the subject is very good. Pupils benefit from the subject leader's knowledge and enthusiasm.
- Pupils have good attitudes to history and geography.
- Good support is provided to help pupils present their work neatly.
- Work in class is well supported by a good range of visits out of school.

Areas for improvement:

- Extend the range of external accreditation for higher attaining pupils.
- Greater use could be made of computers to aid pupils' learning and progress.
- Increase the range of historical artefacts.

91. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress. In geography they are able to identify how river floods help to create meanders. They understand how the rate of flow of a river dictates where the main areas of river erosion will occur. Pupils in Year 8 use the Internet to study weather patterns over Europe. They show a good understanding of how weather fronts develop and are able to relate this to their own environment. By Year 9, pupils know about the water cycle, river erosion, earthquakes, volcanoes and the structure of the earth. They have studied the changing economy of France, the physical geography of India and key cities of Japan. Pupils describe aspects of their studies, and know the meaning of useful terms such as 'population density' and 'distribution'. They enjoy the study of geography and find the topics very relevant and interesting. By the end of Year 11 pupils' knowledge of geographical concepts has increased. For example, they have a better understanding of environmental issues

such as conservation, recycling and the use of natural resources. As part of their entry level certificate examination coursework, pupils have compared the climate and vegetation at the equator with other parts of the world and how the “greenhouse effect” affects the world’s climate. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use geographical terms correctly in written work and can offer reasoned judgements about places and environments. Pupils’ presentation of their work is good.

92. During Years 7 to 9, pupils find out about people and events from a suitable range of periods of history. They are able to appreciate how living conditions have changed over the years. Pupils show an understanding of chronology and know that the past can be divided into different periods of time. In their study on medieval realms, pupils have looked at the way law and order was maintained in medieval times and the way in which people were punished for disobeying the law. Pupils study life in Elizabethan England and the gunpowder plot. They recognise the historical figures and the importance of a king, queen or head of the church in relation to the life of ordinary people.
93. Both subjects are well managed by a very enthusiastic co-ordinator. Pupils build upon their learning throughout the school. However, as the subject manager teaches humanities throughout the school, there are no opportunities to moderate the accuracy of pupils’ levels of achievement with colleagues. Lessons and projects are planned carefully, but without specific reference to the use of computers. Although the range of textbooks is good, the subject manager recognises the need to extend the range of historical artefacts. Opportunities for learning in humanities are regularly enhanced by a good variety of out-of-school trips in the local area. Humanities make a good contribution to the development of pupils’ speaking and listening skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

94. Pupils’ achievements in ICT are satisfactory. Teaching in individual lessons is good despite the limitations of the computer suite, but in the majority of other subjects ICT is not used as effectively as it could be. This is a similar picture to that recorded at the previous inspection.

Key strengths:

- There is good planning of what will be covered in ICT lesson.
- Good subject leadership in identifying how the subject can be developed.
- A good course is offered to older pupils that allows them to pass examinations.

Areas for improvement:

- An overall plan for what will be taught in each year in ICT.
 - The ICT suite is an unsuitable room for teaching whole class groups.
 - The use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum.
95. The planning for ICT is not fully in place. Although lesson planning is good and clearly sets out the expectations within the lesson or sequence of lessons, there is no overall plan for the subject, how it will be taught and how aspects will be covered for pupils between Years 7 and 9. This is being addressed at present and features in the subject action plan. As part of this the subject leader is appropriately introducing work from the national guidance issued by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority and addressing all the issues raised during the inspection.
96. By the time pupils are in Year 9 they are familiar with word processing, databases and spreadsheets. They construct questionnaires based on a database and determine

formulae to enter into the cells of a spreadsheet. For instance a Year 9 group were constructing a spreadsheet to determine cost, selling price and profit for a tuck shop. An appropriate course is now being offered for pupils in Years 10 and 11, which leads to an examination. The syllabus for the course is challenging and builds upon the skills that pupils have gained in previous years. This is an improvement on the curriculum at the last inspection.

97. ICT is not used sufficiently in other subjects, although there are examples of digital and video cameras being used, for instance in physical education, computer aided design and manufacturing in design and technology, data-logging in science and use of video in geography.
98. The room used for the computer suite is unsatisfactory. The room is cramped and split into two sections by an intruding support wall, which makes teaching difficult. Pupils have difficulty in maintaining good behaviour because the room is overcrowded.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

(French)

99. French is only taught to pupils up to the end of Year 9. Overall they make satisfactory progress although there are a few individual pupils who make good progress. Teaching is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to that reported in the previous inspection.

Key Strengths:

- The teacher speaks in French for as much as possible during lessons.
- Tests are undertaken at the end of units of work, which the teacher uses well to plan future work.
- Teaching encourages pupils to develop their language skills and improve the presentation of their work.
- Work in the subject supports pupils' cultural development well.

Areas for improvement:

- The teacher's subject knowledge is limited, particularly for higher ability pupils in Year 9.
 - There is a need to increase the resources available to make lessons more interesting and challenging.
 - Opportunities for pupils, who have made good progress by Year 9, to study French further and take an examination.
 - Opportunities for pupils to visit France to experience the language and culture first hand.
100. Although it was not possible during the inspection to observe any French lessons, a scrutiny of their work shows they make satisfactory progress and cover a good range of basic skills. Pupils in Year 7 have learnt about the vocabulary for days and months of the year. Many write short sentence describing themselves. In Year 8 pupils have used a commercial scheme. From the results of the end of unit tests, they have acquired good basic knowledge of terms such as 'Bonjour', 's'il vous plait' and numbers up to 20. This is further extended in Year 9 where pupils are able to write brief paragraphs on various cultural aspects of France. Clearly though, much of the more complicated sentences have been completed with teacher assistance.

101. Pupils present their work well, linking their work well to developing their writing skills. There is a very good emphasis on this from the teacher in his marking. The work that pupils have covered matches that which is expected nationally to be included within the French curriculum, although the teacher has made adaptations to ensure that the work set is appropriate for the pupils. The work in Year 9 links well with pupils' understanding of cultural differences in France and there have been positive links with work undertaken in geography. The teacher has undertaken in-service training and this has encouraged him to use French in lessons as much as possible. However, the teacher is not a specialist and does not have the subject knowledge to develop the skills of higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 9. He would not be able to undertake exam work should the school offer this to older pupils.
102. There are resources available but they are relatively limited. The school has recognised this by recently acquiring CD ROMs, but as yet these are not used in lessons. There is a need for resources that will stimulate an interest in the subject amongst the pupils. Similarly the school needs to consider what opportunities it can provide for pupils to experience the language first hand by having the opportunity to visit France. There were plans made for this in the previous year but the visit did not take place.

MUSIC

103. Pupils' achievement and progress are good, as is teaching. This is a similar judgement to that made at the previous inspection.

Key strengths:

- Enthusiastic teaching helps generate pupils' interest in the subject.
- Interesting activities are offered in lessons.
- Good opportunities to play different instruments.
- The emphasis put on encouraging pupils to understand what they have learned.
- Opportunities to go to live performances such as musicals.

Areas for improvement:

- Access to and the use of computers to support pupils' learning is limited.
- The range of music available on compact discs reduces pupils' opportunities of listening to the work of famous musicians.

104. Appropriate assessment and recording procedures ensures that the teacher has realistic expectations of pupils' achievement and this helps her to plan work so that they achieve well and make good progress. The curriculum is enhanced by trips to the theatre to see productions such as 'Blood Brothers' and 'Godspell' as well as visitors to the school to run workshops. These opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' achievement and progress. At the moment there are no opportunities for pupils' work to be accredited.
105. The teacher provides good opportunities for pupils to develop understanding and skills across all areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 7 pupils are currently learning about and performing traditional African songs. Pupils work well together and are proud of their efforts. The very good relationship they have with the teacher is reflected in their positive behaviour and enthusiastic participation. Pupils in Year 9 treat resources with respect and use keyboards confidently to choose and alter a pre-recorded rhythm. They create 'rap' phrases, which they sing or speak over the background to create an advertising jingle. In lessons pupils are quick to consider the

work of others and show interest offering appropriate suggestions, politely, to help them improve. There are good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their skills through performances. For example, pupils played African drums at the school sports day and at other special schools events. There are good opportunities for pupils who are interested to learn a musical instrument. A small number are currently learning keyboard skills and demonstrate that they can play simple tunes accurately. The teacher provides, through discussion at the end of the lesson and at the end of each unit of work, good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own learning.

106. There are limited opportunities for pupils to listen to the work of famous musicians or listen to a range of world music and pupils do not use computers to undertake research or as a vehicle to make music. The school does not have enough recorded music resources and there is no suitable music computer software available to support learning. However, both these areas have already been identified for development by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. There has been considerable improvement in the teaching and progress of pupils in physical education since the previous inspection. Teaching is now excellent and, as a result, the progress of pupils is excellent.

Key strengths:

- The very effective approach of the teacher responsible for the subject inspires pupils to give their best in lessons.
- In lessons pupils have significant responsibility for their learning.
- The excellent relationships the teacher has with pupils encourages them to listen to instructions.
- The encouragement given to pupils to take part or watch physical activities in their time outside of the school.
- Opportunities for pupils to gain external examination success in GCSE.
- The very appropriate opportunities for pupils in Year 7 to integrate with mainstream pupils for physical education lessons.

Areas for improvement:

- Although it does not detract from the excellent work in the subject, the system used by the teacher to plan, record and evaluate work in physical education would benefit from adopting a clearer format.
108. The teaching of physical education is outstanding and as a consequence pupils make excellent progress in a wide range of areas, as well as developing their own confidence, and self-esteem. The teacher has very high expectations of pupils. These include:
- All pupils have to change for physical education lessons.
 - Pupils are required to listen and follow instructions throughout lessons.
 - All physical education lessons engage pupils well in activities that boost their fitness levels.
 - The teacher and support assistants offer very good coaching skills in a range of activities.
109. The quality of the relationship between the teacher and pupils is very positive. Pupils know what is required of them when they attend lessons and they respond to these

expectations in a very positive manner. This was seen in a Year 10 lesson. Pupils were familiar with the routine of having to clear the hall of tables and then get out the equipment. The teacher, though, gave them the opportunity to decide if they got changed first before they put the equipment out, so they took on the responsibility for making decisions from the outset of the lesson. This continued throughout the lesson when pupils had to decide on the ways they were going to move over equipment and how they could improve their performance. Pupils had to manoeuvre themselves around various apparatus, as well as vaulting over a box. The teacher then skilfully supported each individual pupil with advice and guidance. This ensured the whole lesson was a very positive experience for all pupils. The teacher successfully ensures that pupils of different abilities are able to participate and develop their skills. In the gymnastics lesson a Year 10 pupil found it difficult to jump from a trampette over a small box onto a mat but by the end of the lesson, because of the high level of coaching and support he received, he was not only able to do this but did so displaying a range of shapes and stretching movements in the air.

110. Pupils out of school take part in a wide range of activities. The teacher goes to great lengths to ensure that pupils with interests in physical activities or sports clubs have the opportunity to take part or to watch events. These include links with the Leicester Tigers Rugby Club, Leicester Riders Basketball Club, sports centres and football clubs.
111. The work in physical education in years 10 and 11 is extended by the opportunity for pupils to take GCSE examinations. Last year, 5 students passed the short course and this year all pupils are studying the full course GCSE.
112. In addition to the work within the lessons, the teacher also runs a range of clubs. These include Duke of Edinburgh club where pupils have been developing their skills in outdoor education. Last year these were developed further on a residential trip to Wales and there are plans for other residential experiences in the future.
113. Pupils have considerable respect for the teacher and this has a significant impact on their behaviour. This is the case with the Year 8 group who during the week of inspection were seen to have a considerable number of difficulties behaving appropriately in lessons. This was not the case, though, during a physical education lesson when all pupils in this group co-operated well with each other and pupils from Year 9 to take part in a joint games lesson. Their behaviour throughout the lesson was good and their response to the activities was very positive.
114. In covering such a wide range of activities, the teacher does have a recording system for the work he will undertake, how the lessons have gone and how individuals have progressed. However, this is rather complicated and would benefit from a more simplified system, which in turn would reduce the level of paperwork currently being produced.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. Pupils' achievement and teaching in Years 7 to 9 are satisfactory but achievement and teaching are unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. There has been insufficient progress since the last inspection.

Key strengths:

- The school has recognised that standards were unsatisfactory and has already taken action to improve teaching.

- The willingness of class teachers to teach religious education.
- A course leading to pupils being able to take an examination has been started for year 10 and 11 pupils.

Areas for improvement

- The curriculum and assessment arrangements.
- The range of resources and text books available.

116. A scrutiny of pupils' work, particularly that completed recently, shows that the work in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory, whilst that done by the older pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very limited.
117. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. In this lesson sound teaching was helping the pupils to develop their understanding of Buddhism. A higher attaining pupil was able to talk about why Buddha was dissatisfied with his life, and why he wanted to leave the trappings of the palace after seeing how ordinary people lived. The teacher used this information well to reinforce prior learning and it led into a much better understanding of 'enlightenment' - the key learning objective of the lesson.
118. Since the last inspection, there have been difficulties over the teaching of religious education. The appointment of a part-time specialist teacher was unsuccessful and did not bring about the anticipated improvement in teaching and learning. Recently the headteacher has taken over the responsibility for developing the subject and is already effecting change. Class teachers are now responsible for teaching their own classes, and there is a clear action plan of how the subject is to be developed in the future. This includes how the school intends to raise standards and ensure that there is better curriculum coverage. The school has already started work on this; for example, national guidelines are being used for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and a programme leading to accreditation has been introduced for the older pupils. The monitoring of teaching, the use of assessment and ICT are all areas that the school has identified for improvement and the headteacher intends to address these with some urgency.

Personal, social and health education

119. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in lessons but, because of the high quality support provided for pupils their overall progress in these areas is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory.

Key strengths:

- The very good support the school provides pupils for their personal and social development.
- The recent re-organisation of the way the subject is taught.
- The introduction of accreditation for older pupils.

Areas for improvement:

- The procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievement and progress.

120. Learning opportunities in personal, social and health education lessons, including drugs and sex education are satisfactory overall. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the topics studied and the

experiences pupils have. However, it is the overall work of the school that has the greatest impact on their personal and social development.

121. In lessons pupils have a wide range of suitable opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in years 10 and 11 use computers to research organisations that provide information about health issues. A good explanation of the research task and opportunities, through discussion, to explore pupils' understanding of the topic enables the teacher to ensure that pupils are successful. The teacher provides pupils with a good list of web sites to help them get started and there are constant opportunities for them to talk about the information they find. Pupils in Year 8 are effectively supported to develop their personal skills through activities such as circle time (opportunities for pupils to share information in a formally organized manner). Visitors to the school make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and particularly to their personal development, for example, members of the local basketball team have visited to talk about the dangers of smoking.
122. At the moment the subject is satisfactory overall because teachers are developing their subject knowledge and the school is improving procedures for assessing and monitoring younger pupils' learning. Pupils' work indicates that there are times when learning is not as well matched to their abilities as it could be. For example, there are a significant number of worksheets not completed in lower attaining pupils' files. However, teachers provide through the marking of work, discussion at the end of the lesson and at the end of each unit of work, good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own learning.
123. The way the subject is taught has recently been improved. There are now five teachers each responsible for developing and teaching one element of the curriculum across the school, for example, emotional health or social relationships. The school has also introduced an entry level award syllabus for older pupils. These developments are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning because they are supporting teachers to develop expertise in their area of the curriculum and are providing opportunities for the assessment and the recognition of achievement for older pupils.