

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL**

Ventnor

LEA area: Isle of Wight

Unique reference number: 118226

Principal: Grenville Shipley

Reporting inspector: Hilary Gannaway  
21527

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2003

Inspection number: 253996

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: Non-maintained special  
Age range of pupils: 7 - 19  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Grove Road  
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Isle of Wight  
Postcode: PO38 1TT  
Telephone number: 01983 852722  
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: John Hilsum

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Catherine's is a non-maintained residential special school primarily for pupils and students aged from 7 to 19 with speech and language disorders. There are presently 72 pupils and students on roll of whom 62 are boys and 10 girls. There are only three pupils in Year 6 with the rest being in Year 7 and above. Although Grove Hill Further Education Centre is part of the school, the 23 students in Year 12 and 13 have separate teaching and residential provision. Most pupils and students are of white heritage background and the school has no refugees or pupils with English as an additional language. Sixty four pupils and students are residential with 55 of these being boys and nine girls. There are eight day pupils resident on the Isle of Wight. Most other pupils and students come from the south of England although two come from Europe, one from the Middle East and two from the Channel Isles. All pupils and students who live in England have a Statement of Special Educational Need for speech and language and communication difficulties, with the pupils from the Channel Isles having an equivalent document. Some pupils have associated difficulties such as autism and there is a broad range of ability within the school. All pupils enter the school with attainment below the norm expected for their age.

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

This is a very effective school. Pupils and students make very good progress, achieve very well and gain in independence. This is due to very effective teaching and the invaluable commitment and support from residential care staff and speech and language therapists. Together, all staff make sure that pupils and students have access to high quality learning opportunities relevant to their needs and successfully gain a wide range of accreditation. The leadership and management of the principal and senior management team are excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Leadership and management is excellent; there is a highly effective and knowledgeable senior management team and a committed staff who are continually developing ways to improve learning opportunities.
- The quality of teaching is very good; it is supported by high quality teamwork and both have a significant effect on pupils' achievement and attitudes to work.
- Learning opportunities for pupils and students are very good, appropriate for their ages, and equip them very well for life after school.
- The very good relationships that staff have with pupils and students throughout the day and in the residential provision very effectively support their personal development and independence.

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

- Access to the school for pupils and students with physical disabilities.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Improvement since the school was last inspected in June 1998 is very good. Key issues have been thoroughly addressed. For example, the improvement plan now contains suitable priorities and is costed. Improvement in all aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) is very good and assessment, including individual targets, is detailed and specific to pupils and students. There have also been significant improvements in other areas such as design and technology, where there were some unsatisfactory aspects at the last inspection. The percentage of good and very good teaching is higher and, as a result, the achievement of pupils and students is now very good.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by Year 9	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	A	very good	A
reading	A	A	A	good	B
writing	A	A	A	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	A	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A	A		

The achievement of pupils and students is very good and they leave with a highly relevant range of appropriate external awards. All pupils and students, including the few girls and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make very good progress towards their individual targets. This is due to the excellent teamwork between teachers, teaching assistants and speech and language therapists who know the pupils and students very well. The school rightly puts a high emphasis on pupils' language skills. Consequently, pupils and students achieve very well in English. The strong joint working between teachers and speech and language therapists supports progress in speaking and listening and literacy skills across the curriculum. As a result, pupils and students often show remarkable speaking and comprehension skills given their special educational needs. They use these language skills to successfully support work in a range of subjects. This helps to ensure they know what is expected and to consistently make very good gains. Achievement is good in mathematics and basic numeracy work for school age pupils. It is very good for students in the further education centre where mathematics is practical and relevant to their needs as young adults. Achievement is also very good in science and in personal, social and health education (PSHE). In PSHE, pupils and students have many varied opportunities during the day and in the residential setting to practice skills learnt and gain in independence and self-esteem. Pupils and students are increasingly confident in their use of ICT and this also aids their learning across a wide range of subjects. The school sets whole school targets and tracks pupil and student progress. It is using this information to evaluate and raise standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils and students are very enthusiastic and highly motivated to work hard. They enjoy coming to school and co-operate very well with adults.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils and students are polite and move purposefully round school. They react positively to the consistent approach of staff in lessons, at break and lunch time and in the residential setting.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships with staff are very good. As a result, pupils and students increasingly develop the confidence to become more independent as they get older.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above that for similar schools and there are no unauthorised absences.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 6 - 9	Years 10 - 11	Years 12 - 13
Lessons seen overall	Very Good	Very Good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good overall. It meets the needs of all pupils and students very well and has an extremely positive effect on learning and self-esteem. Teaching is very good for school age pupils because there is a very relevant curriculum. Teachers know pupils individual needs and have detailed subject knowledge. This results in work being set that challenges them as individuals. For students in the further education centre, teaching is very effective as it is directly related to their need to become independent learners. Teaching is very good in English, science and PSHE. It is very good in mathematics for students in the further education centre and good for school age pupils. The teaching of ICT across the curriculum is now good and improving due to better resources and training. This represents very good progress in this subject since the last inspection. Literacy is taught very well and is a feature of all subjects. The prominent use of subject key words, discussions on relevant themes and specific questioning makes a significant contribution to meeting pupils' language and communication needs across the curriculum. Numeracy is taught well and a good emphasis is put on this in lessons such as science and design and technology. A significant characteristic of teaching is the teamwork and joint planning provided by teachers and speech and language therapists, both within lessons and group work. It boosts language skills of pupils and students and ensures that they acquire relevant skills which they use confidently in school, the further education centre, residential provision and off site.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Programmes are very carefully planned to make sure pupils and students are taught a very broad range of skills so they are equipped for adult life. There is a strong focus on English and a range of appropriate, often vocational, courses that lead to accreditation. Very constructive links with the community make sure there is a wide range of high quality activities available both on and off site.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Opportunities for promoting social development are excellent, while those for moral and spiritual development are very good. Very effective PSHE and citizenship programmes, along with very good links with residential provision, support this very well. All staff act as excellent role models.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Detailed procedures include the keeping of comprehensive information showing pupils' and students' needs and how they are progressing. This ensures high levels of care and well-being are maintained.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The principal has very clear ideas about the way forward. There is a particularly strong senior management team who represent all aspects of the school and are highly effective. All staff are enthusiastic and fully committed to do their best for pupils and students.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. The governing body have a very good understanding of the school and its' needs through monitoring and detailed work in committees.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school evaluates how well it is doing through detailed monitoring. From this, priorities for improving the quality of education are set out in the comprehensive school improvement plan which in turn is frequently reviewed to ensure progress.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school carefully and thoughtfully uses its resources very well to support achievement. The school obtains resources at a competitive price. It consults when appropriate, including mainstream schools for whom it provides outreach services.

Although the main school has a good level of accommodation that effectively meets the needs of pupils and students presently at the school, it is sited on many levels. Any pupils with physical or certain sensory difficulties would have problems accessing all activities.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• Parents feel the school works closely with them and are comfortable talking through problems.</li><li>• Staff have high expectations of their children.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is not always clear what homework is set.</li><li>• Some parents consider the information that they receive on work and progress is not enough.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with the very positive views expressed by most parents. During the inspection there was plenty of evidence that homework is set and completed by residential pupils and students. There is also a facility for day pupils to do homework before they go home. However, the school recognises that it needs to clarify homework expectations, particularly for day pupils and students. It also needs to provide more evidence of completed homework for parents of residential pupils and students. The school has already reviewed information for parents and is beginning to hold meetings for parents both on and off the Isle of Wight.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Leadership and management is excellent; there is a highly effective and knowledgeable senior management team and a committed staff who are continually developing ways to improve learning opportunities.**

1. At the last inspection it was considered that the leadership provided by the principal was very effective. Since then further action has been taken to ensure the school continues to be pro-active and implement relevant developments to benefit pupils and students. As a result, the leadership of the principal and senior management team is now excellent.

2. A particular strength is that the senior management team is drawn from all aspects of the school, the further education centre and residential provision. The team meets regularly. This helps to maintain extremely effective links between all areas of the school. Consequently, staff acquire the most up to date information, particularly about pupils and students. This helps staff provide seamless collaborative teamwork to support them. The complementary skills of the senior management team mean that they have an exceptionally good understanding of the needs of the school and measures to be taken to meet them. Clear delegation of responsibilities to senior staff and subject co-ordinators ensure they feel confident to carry out their tasks and move their areas forward. This has meant that from a very good base there has been a continuous improvement in all aspects of the school. This has not just involved those areas identified as key issues. It has also included, for example, improvement in the quality of teaching and the strengthening of the curriculum, particularly for students in the further education centre. Enhanced achievement of pupils in design and technology and ICT has also taken place, along with the provision of a very good range of accreditation. All of this has been aimed at ensuring pupils and students have every opportunity to succeed and become independent.

3. A feature of the excellent leadership is that the principal and senior staff having a very clear understanding of the future educational direction this non-maintained school needs to take. In order to ensure quality provision, the school is developing an outward looking inclusive approach where expertise is shared with other schools. The aim is to ensure a wide range of pupils with speech and language difficulties receive the best possible education. The school is already successfully supporting, and benefiting, mainstream pupils with speech and language difficulties, and their teachers, in partnership with local schools and the local education authority (LEA). It is doing this by providing outreach in the form of speech and language therapy for several LEA schools, both primary and secondary. The school also provides a seconded teacher for a middle school. Speech and language therapists at this school are very enthusiastic and committed to this innovation and local schools are very appreciative of the link. St Catherine's English teacher and a speech and language therapist are trained to provide an accredited course in speech and language difficulties to teaching assistants and teachers in mainstream schools. This is already having a significant effect on the confidence of these staff to meet the needs of pupils with speech and language difficulties in mainstream schools.

4. Developments are supported by excellent management procedures that include clear policies and structures to support the work of the school. As a result, the school runs smoothly, pupils and students are very well behaved and arrive at lessons ready to learn. These have been further improved by the implementation of an action plan following a European Foundation for Quality Management evaluation. This identified monitoring everyday processes as an area needing to be more consistent. There are a range of relevant resources, including those for ICT, which very effectively support work in the classroom.

Teaching, the curriculum and pupil progress are very well monitored and evaluated, both formally and informally, so that there is a thorough overview of the strengths and weaknesses and what needs to happen next. This in turn informs the very detailed and relevant school improvement plan. This plan strongly reflects school priorities by focusing on developing better provision. Recent improvements have included making sure criteria include more about what pupils can achieve.

5. There is a strong ethos of collaboration and teamwork evident throughout the school. It is centred on high expectations and the professional way staff work together. This involves residential care staff, teachers, teaching assistants and therapists all working together to ensure pupils and students make progress and succeed. Staff are involved in as much discussion as possible, particularly about the needs of pupils and students. The detailed schedule of meetings ensures all staff have a very good understanding of the aims and priorities and how they are implemented. All staff are highly committed and enthusiastic because the systems in place encourage staff to be proactive in pursuit of the best possible education for all.

6. The staff are very well supported by governors. The governing body has a very good overview of the school, understands the priorities and the way it needs to develop, given that it is a non-maintained school. They monitor the progress of the school through regular meetings, high quality reports from the principal, observing teaching and frequent visits. A strength of the governing body is that most of their work is completed through appropriate committees. These committees have strong delegated powers allowing members to take rapid decisions if necessary, but with comprehensive liaison so that all governors know what is happening. Governors are fully involved in development planning and costing, always acting to support improvement. For example, the school needs to expand further education provision and governors have been quick to respond to this. Finances are very well planned to support education, whilst maintaining a realistic reserve in keeping with their non-maintained status. Led by the bursar, who is a member of the senior management team, they do similar school comparisons and consult staff over, for example, subject budgets and refurbishment.

7. There is a well-developed performance management programme that takes into account the professional and personal development of all staff. Residential care staff have very appropriate training for which they receive national accreditation. This ensures they understand the special educational needs of these pupils and students. It helps to reinforce the very high quality support residential provision makes to education. All staff have access to high quality induction training, and training such as that for literacy, so they quickly become confident in their work. They are given the chance to lead training, particularly when they have taken part in a relevant course. There is regular training with speech and language therapists so teachers understand the very special needs of individual pupils and students. Professional development very effectively enhances staff knowledge and their ability to get the best out of pupils and students. Consequently all staff, including teaching assistants are effectively deployed in their roles. As a result, pupils and students develop a variety of relevant skills.

**The quality of teaching is very good; it is supported by high quality teamwork and both have a significant effect on pupils' achievement and attitudes to work.**

8. Teaching is very good with the teaching in all lessons being at least good and over five out of every ten very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when there was a percentage of unsatisfactory teaching and high attaining pupils and students were not always challenged. Teachers are very careful to ensure the few girls have an equal access to learning. Teaching is equally effective for pupils of school age and students in the further education centre. This is because there is a very suitable age appropriate curriculum and

teachers have very good subject knowledge that ensures consistent high quality learning opportunities for all. Teachers take every chance to reinforce learning and this has considerably aided the very good progress of pupils and students towards their individual targets.

9. Teaching is very good overall in English, PSHE and science. It is very good in mathematics for students in the further education centre and good for school age pupils. Teaching in design technology, where there were unsatisfactory elements at the last inspection, has particularly improved and is now very good. In ICT teaching is good, and improving, because staff are now confident in their use of relevant aspects of ICT. They use it well to support learning in subjects such as science, English, mathematics and design technology and throughout further education where it is often used effectively to help students present their work for external awards.

10. A significant characteristic of the very effective teaching is the teamwork between teachers and speech and language therapists. The planning of lessons between teachers and speech and language therapists and their subsequent close, often integrated, working in lessons is particularly effective in meeting pupils and students individual speech and language development needs. Much of this work stems from the very good teaching and collaboration with speech and language therapists in English, where staff know the pupils and students very well. As a result, pupils and students feel valued and work hard. All staff reinforce language and literacy work exceptionally well, with a particular emphasis on speaking and listening skills. Speech and language therapists complement this successfully during specific group work where pupils and students discuss, take turns, give their views or act out an issue such as repairing friendships. The outcome of this is that literacy and language skills are reinforced and extended into other subjects, along with the use of key words and aides such as writing frames to give less confident writers help to start their work. For example, work on planets in science for Year 9 was supported by a list of key words about the planets so that pupils felt more positive and confident when completing the written work. In a Year 8 science lesson and a Year 9 history lesson, the speech and language therapist reinforced literacy skills and subject vocabulary throughout. This reinforcement has a positive effect on learning in all subjects as pupils and students become more confident and are keen to progress and develop independent working.

11. Apart from therapists focusing on language needs, teaching assistants also play a very valuable role in the classroom. They are knowledgeable and highly involved in lessons. They often support those pupils who are less confident to be involved in practical work, as in a Year 8 art lesson where one reluctant pupil was successfully encouraged to participate in clay work. Teamwork also extends to residential care staff who support work in lessons by supervising homework and providing a range of activities and life skills which complement and reinforce work completed in school.

12. Teachers are very good at organising lessons to make sure pupils' and students' individual needs are met. For example, in a citizenship lesson for Year 11, all pupils had individual tasks with, for example, some answering questions while others were writing at length. Because the tasks were appropriate, all were focused and working intensely. Within the further education centre, individual targets are discussed with pupils during the lesson. In a Year 13 design and technology and a Year 12 Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Course lesson this meant students knew exactly what they had to do by the end of the lesson and became absorbed in their work. Strategies such as this give students a very good understanding of their own learning. They confidently report back at the end of the lesson on how far they have met the target, listening carefully to each others' explanations.

13. Teachers are careful to see pupils and students are challenged. A variety of teaching strategies are used and activities changed so that pupils and students do not lose interest and remain enthusiastic throughout the lesson. Resources are used very well to motivate pupils. For example, in science in Year 8 and 9 photographs of pupils completing the previous practical work were used on their individual worksheets. This helped remind them of what they had done so they could write up the task as well as being a record of work completed. Pupils enjoyed this and were keen to talk and write about what they were doing in the picture.

14. Planning, which emphasises the lesson as part of a series of lessons, means that the aims of the module of work are clear to pupils and students. Consequently, they listen well and have a good idea of what is expected of them over a period of time. This is supported by introductions that often include skilful questioning of pupils and students to see what they remember of previous work. Staff use this to gain a good idea of pupil or student progress and what they need to do next. Skilful integration of work from the last lesson also helps pupils and students to systematically build on what has gone before so no time is wasted.

15. Relationships are very good because lessons are effectively managed to make sure pupils and students are challenged to do their best and behave well. They are encouraged wherever possible. This helps pupils and students self esteem and as a result they take a pride in their work, often supporting each other and are happy to tell others what they have done. Teachers have very high expectations that pupils and students will do well. In return they are fully engaged in the lesson, often asking sensible questions and producing large quantities of very good quality work.

16. The end result of the very effective teaching and teamwork is that pupils and students have very good attitudes to work. They build up a range of highly relevant national awards and certificates before they leave and this very effectively supports their transfer to college or work.

**Learning opportunities for pupils and students are very good, appropriate for their ages and equip them very well for life after school.**

17. Overall all pupils and students have access to a very good range of learning opportunities that are very well chosen to meet their individual special educational needs. Programmes are very carefully planned to make sure pupils and students are taught a very broad range of skills through a range of relevant activities. By doing this, it also helps to ensure that the few girls receive an equal chance of high quality learning. Access to these activities is consistently supported by the strong emphasis on language through English teaching, the reinforcement of literacy skills across the curriculum and work undertaken with speech and language therapists. This ensures that when they leave, pupils and students have gained a wide variety of skills and are very well equipped for life after school.

18. There is a very clear rationale for what is taught with activities that are well co-ordinated to meet pupils' and students' changing needs as they move through the school. There is a very thoughtfully designed curriculum for pupils of school age that takes into account their age, level of maturity and abilities. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum. It is broad and balanced. It is very clearly planned so activities build very well upon each other which ensures that pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school. For example, the few primary age pupils have most of their lessons with one teacher. This helps them to develop consistent work routines and gain confidence before moving on to more subject based work. Pupils between Years 7 and 9 have specialist subject teaching with an emphasis on developing independence skills. This helps to support access to the more individual curriculum for pupils when they reach Years 10 and 11. Work

at this stage is aimed at further developing their skills as young adults. This is done very well through more vocational learning with an emphasis on key skills and subjects such as careers and work experience. There is a wide range of accreditation including the ASDAN award scheme, Certificate of Educational Achievement and GCSE, which pupils value highly.

19. Pupils benefit very well from the activities that have been developed for those in Years 10 and 11. Along with good links across both sites, this ensures students get off to a good start once they move on to the further education centre. Here the curriculum is very well planned with a relevant core of subjects which includes work to boost basic skills. A wide and very relevant extended range of further activities has been developed. These are based on vocational courses, independent living skills and speech and language therapy. However, the curriculum is also flexible enough to meet students' individual needs through the use of a range of nationally accredited courses. These courses carefully build on the ones taken in Year 11 so students have the best possible chances of continuing success. Careers development for students is very good. It builds on work started with pupils in Year 9 and continued in Years 10 and 11 and is well supported by the careers service and resources in school. Work experience is very well organised and there are very good links with the local college. Access to college courses is progressive as pupils and students move through the school and further education centre. For example, in Year 10 pupils become familiar with the college on visits. In Year 11 they have access to courses and in Year 12 they choose more focused activities such as office skills, catering and horticulture.

20. Overall residential provision plays a very important part in providing extra learning opportunities which support the curriculum. There is a wide range of evening activities and residential visits for pupils and students and staff work to support day pupils for extra social activities where possible.

21. Life skills work in school, the further education centre, and through the residential care staff is very carefully thought out to help students integrate into local communities. Links with the local community are a significant strength. However, the school is also very well aware that students need to build up significant links with their own home communities before they leave. Transition arrangements when students leave the further education centre are exceptionally effective. The school supports students to access and experience colleges and work placements near to their home so that they become familiar with whatever placement they are moving on to. This may take the form of one day a week or a block placement. Students and parents appreciate this and it goes a long way to ensuring students have the best possible chance to succeed once they leave.

22. The school has worked exceptionally well to improve areas of the curriculum that were issues at the last inspection. For example, there have been good developments in planning that all aspects of ICT are regularly taught, within the subject itself and that ICT is used to support learning in other subjects. In design and technology improvement is very good with all aspects of the subject now being covered.

23. Provision for PSHE is exceptionally good. It is comprehensive in nature and relevant to the circumstances of pupils and students and is the collective responsibility of all staff. It is planned and taught not just in PSHE lessons but also in subjects such as science, where sex education and the environment are part of the subject and food technology where personal hygiene and collaboration are important. Citizenship makes a large contribution to PSHE through themes such as rights and responsibilities, valuing difference and global communities.

**The very good relationships that staff have with pupils and students throughout the day and in the residential provision very effectively their support personal development and independence.**

24. There is a very firm emphasis on personal development throughout all activities so that pupils and students can gain the skills they need to support their integration into college or work when they leave. This provision underpins most of what goes on in school and successfully enhances learning. It is supported by consistent routines. These ensure that pupils and students feel secure and know what is expected when moving between school and the residential setting. Pupils and students are aware of the very good liaison between residential care and school staff and know that they will be well looked after.

25. Pupils and students see staff working extremely well together and these role models help them in turn have very good relationships with staff. In lessons teachers use humour appropriately to help pupils and students feel relaxed when working. They praise pupils and students when they try hard and this makes them feel valued and aids their confidence.

26. Provision for social development is excellent and for moral development very good. These consistently aid improvement in pupil and student personal skills. All staff work with them on independence skills, socially acceptable behaviour and self confidence. Very good relationships are a particular strength. Staff make clear what is, and is not, acceptable. They do it in a way that means pupils and students listen and respond in a mature way. Because staff expect pupils and students to behave appropriately they do. In the residential provision there are many examples of positive interactions during which staff listen carefully to pupils and students. This results in them co-operating and being friendly to each other and staff.

27. Confidence and personal skills are also built through daily social experiences. For example, meal times are very well managed. There is a very calm and friendly atmosphere in the dining room where school age pupils eat sitting with friends and staff. All go to collect food in an orderly fashion, chat with friends and clear away. Lunch gets off to a good start with pupils volunteering to say grace. In the further education centre, lunch is well organised with students queuing sensibly and quietly, talking to visitors and staff with ease. The expectation is that students will behave well and socialise.

28. Other meals show pupils and students exhibiting similar social skills. For supper, in the residential houses, pupils and students have a choice of food with older ones preparing their own. Students and pupils appreciate the efforts made by staff. They are very polite in the houses of an evening. Individual programmes and activities provided by residential care staff very successfully reinforce personal development and the skills needed for life. For example, all students do their own personal clothes washing and learn how to use shops and find their way around. All residential pupils and students have access to a choice of a very good range of activities after school and at weekends such as football training, horse riding, youth club, sailing and music. There are also opportunities to go out and eat. These activities take place both on and off site with those off site supporting the ability of pupils and students to learn social skills in a range of different settings and situations.

29. Personal development in school and the further education centre is exceptionally well promoted throughout the curriculum. It is particularly supported through PSHE, citizenship, life skills and independence work. The relationships staff have with pupils and students motivates them to succeed. They learn about making choices, rules and how to take responsibility and be considerate of others. They increase their communication skills and learn about moral issues during thoughtful reasoned argument in citizenship lessons.

30. Pupils play host to visitors, often showing people round the school and go on visits such as those to theatres. The school nurse plays an important part by having a 'drop in' session and working to support personal hygiene.

31. Pupils and students know that at any time they can talk to staff or people from outside the school to express concerns. They have opportunities to express their views via house meetings and through the school council and feel confident and responsible enough to do so. All of this makes pupils and students feel valued and trusted to behave in a mature manner. Pupils and students are encouraged to think of others by completing challenges during the ASDAN award scheme to raise money and thorough links with charities such as sport relief and supporting a school in Ghana.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Access to the school for pupils and students with physical disabilities.**

32. The school occupies two sites on either side of a road. Since the school was set up, school buildings have been greatly expanded and extended to meet the changing learning and living needs of pupils and students. For example, the residential and learning accommodation for the further education centre is situated in two large houses plus other buildings opposite the main school site. It is about to be extended by the purchase of a new house. This generally provides suitable accommodation for students' learning and independence needs.

33. The main school has a good level of accommodation that effectively meets the needs of pupils and students presently at the school. However, because of where it is sited, school buildings are on many levels joined by a series of often steep outside steps with uneven surfaces in between. In adverse weather pupils get wet when moving between buildings and suffer changes in temperature. Consequently, it can also take quite a while to get from one lesson to another, although pupils are very good at negotiating this and getting to lessons on time. The school is beginning to admit pupils and students with more complex needs. As yet, the school has no pupils with speech and language difficulties combined with complex physical, including sensory, disabilities. At present, the site would prove very difficult for them to negotiate. It would be difficult to meet their individual learning needs and include them for all of the time in lessons with their class. The senior management team and governors understand that they need to try to overcome this. In response they are planning to have a radical review of education accommodation and they are about to commission an architect to look at the site.

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

34. The governing body, principal and staff need to:

Consider ways in which they can reasonably plan a programme of adaptations and alterations so that any pupils or students with physical, including certain sensory, needs have access to the same learning opportunities as their able bodied peers.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	10	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	52	48	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four 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	72
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	63	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*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: Y6– Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8
Average class size	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y6 – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	15
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Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	1991117
Total expenditure	1904236
Expenditure per pupil	27598

Total aggregate hours worked per week	450
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Balance brought forward from previous year	914500
Balance carried forward to next year	914500

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	72
Number of questionnaires returned	59

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	37	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	37	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	42	14	8	7
The teaching is good.	68	29	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	25	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	14	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	27	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	68	24	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	80	17	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	81	19	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	27	3	0	3