

INSPECTION REPORT

Melrose School

Mitcham

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102697

Headteacher: Mr David Eglin

Lead inspector: Charles Hackett

Dates of inspection: 18th to 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 268596

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Special |
| School category: | Community Special |
| Age range of pupils: | 11-16 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 36 |
| School address: | Church Road Mitcham Surrey |
| Postcode: | CR4 3BE |
| Telephone number: | 0208 646 2620 |
| Fax number: | 0208 646 7125 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr James Holmes |
| Date of previous inspection: | 22 February 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Melrose is a day school for boys and girls of secondary age with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). Before joining the school pupils have experienced disruptive periods of education and have often been excluded from one or more mainstream schools. A few have additional special needs such as moderate learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below that expected for their age. Many pupils come from difficult home backgrounds and a few pupils have experienced difficulties with the law. Pupils come from a diverse range of different ethnic backgrounds, although there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has had a difficult period recently awaiting decisions by the local authority about its future role. This has caused (rather than brought) considerable anxiety amongst staff and as a result a number have left and this has resulted in new staff joining the school at the start of the present academic year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 21081 | Charles Hackett | Lead inspector | Mathematics, modern foreign language, religious education and physical education |
| 9173 | Sarah McDermott | Lay inspector | |
| 14691 | Jenny Hall | Team inspector | Science, personal, social and health education and citizenship, art and design and technology |
| 23412 | Alvin Jeffs | Team inspector | English, information and communication technology, history and geography |

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Ltd
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 10 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 15 |
| WORK RELATED LEARNING | 16 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 18 |
| SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 27 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Although it has faced uncertainties with regard to its future Melrose is currently providing its pupils with a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the governance of the school is inadequate. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- Attendance rates of pupils are poor and below the national average for schools of this type.
- Pupils who attend regularly have for a number of years achieved well in art and mathematics and are now beginning to achieve well in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are improving as a result of support to help them manage their behaviour.
- The headteacher, with his senior colleagues, has ensured that the school is an orderly community and staff work well as a team.
- Senior staff and governors give insufficient attention to evaluating the performance of pupils and taking action as a result of their findings.
- Teaching time is too short and the curriculum does not include all National Curriculum subjects or religious education.
- Important care procedures, such as first aid and child protection, are not up to date and staff have not received sufficient training in these aspects.
- Links with parents and the community are good and improving.

Improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory. Progress has been made in a few areas that were identified as being weak. These include science and the setting of targets for pupils' personal development. Assessment systems have also been improved but attendance is still a major weakness as is the punctuality of pupils. Records show that other improvements had been made since the previous inspection but because of the uncertainties about the school's future and the resultant staff changes many of these have not been sustained. Currently policies and procedures for child protection and health and safety are unsatisfactory and pupils' spiritual and cultural development has not been maintained at its previous satisfactory level. Governors are not as effective as previously reported and aspects of the curriculum, for example, design and technology and music are no longer offered to pupils. The teaching of personal, social and health education has also become less effective.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Pupils' achievement at the end of: | in relation to individual targets in: | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Subjects of the curriculum | personal and social education |
| Year 9 | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Year 11 | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Pupils' overall achievements are **satisfactory**. They make good progress over time in mathematics and art and now pupils are making good progress in English, science and ICT. Progress is also good in work related learning. However, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in personal, social and health education and because religious education is not offered their achievements in this subject are very poor. Pupils' personal development is **satisfactory** overall. The best aspect of this is moral development, which is good. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop social skills. However, both spiritual and cultural development are unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good and their behaviour overall is satisfactory, often being better in class than during the unstructured times of the day. Attendance and punctuality are both poor. Many pupils fail to arrive in school in time for the morning assemblies and tutorials.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Staff are committed to supporting pupils and all have a real passion and commitment to the school. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall and evidence suggests they are improving. Mathematics and art have been taught well for sometime and recent teaching appointments have improved the quality of teaching in English, science and ICT. The very good relationships that staff have with pupils help to encourage them to take an interest in learning, which for many is the first time in their lives they have done so. Specialist support assistants work very effectively alongside teachers in supporting individual pupils in lessons. The quality of lesson planning is not as effective in all subject areas and the monitoring of pupils' progress in each subject is inconsistent. The curriculum is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements. The curriculum, though, for work related learning has been developed well and helps pupils be well prepared for employment after leaving school. Although pupils have good pastoral support from staff the care of pupils is unsatisfactory because important statutory elements are missing. Links with the Connexions and the local Youth Awareness team support the work of the school well. Resources are satisfactory overall, but the accommodation is unsatisfactory. For example, the entrance to the school is dangerous, the gym is inadequate and there is no library facility. Links with parents and the community are good and there are satisfactory links with schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is good and this has helped develop a staff team committed to supporting each individual pupil. However, the effectiveness of management has been reduced because there is an imbalance in the allocation of tasks to the deputies with the result that insufficient attention is given to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, teaching and pupils' achievements. Overall because there are statutory responsibilities that are not being fulfilled, governance of the school is unsatisfactory. In recent years there has only been a small number of active governors and this has affected the contribution they can make to the school. However, following recent new appointments plans are in hand to improve the present situation.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are positive about the work of the school. Many comment on the progress their children make and the improvements in their personal development. Pupils themselves enjoy the company of staff and many state that the school has a positive impact on their lives.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to improve further the school should:

- Take action to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- Improve the way senior staff monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and take action to bring about improvements.
- Give more attention to supporting pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Increase the involvement of governors to enable them to play a more effective role because they have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

and to ensure that all statutory requirements are met:

- Provide pupils with full access to all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
- Ensure that all care procedures and policies are up to date and staff have received appropriate training in the implementation of them.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement of pupils is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The progress of many pupils is adversely affected by poor attendance.
- Pupils over time make their best progress and achieve well in art and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT) is improving and is now good.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) and pupils have restricted opportunities to achieve in other subjects.
- The few girls in the school achieve as well as boys and those pupils with additional special needs make similar progress to other pupils.

Commentary

1. The poor attendance of a significant minority of pupils is obviously having an impact on their progress. This is reflected in the reduced number of pupils who are able to remain in school to the end of Year 11 to take examinations. Additionally poor punctuality reduces pupils' learning opportunities and hence the progress they can make.
2. Last year all pupils who attended regularly achieved at least one GCSE pass. In the last three years the best results have been in mathematics and art and this reflects the consistently good quality of teaching there is in these subjects. A few pupils have also passed examinations in English and science, although the grades have not been generally as high as in mathematics and art. Recent teaching appointments have, though, seen improvements in the provision for English and science. As a result pupils are now currently achieving well in these subjects. Pupils' progress is also improving in ICT and there are now plans for pupils to be entered for GCSE. A new teacher and improved resources have contributed to these improvements.
3. Appropriately pupils achieve successes in Entry Level examinations and a few pass a variety of certificates at college during their college links. A few pupils have also started the ASDAN course and this will further increase their opportunities to achieve accreditation. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to pass examinations in other subjects and because there is no data to show the rate of pupils' progress (value added) the school has no way of knowing if pupils are achieving to their maximum potential. Given the very small numbers of pupils involved, whole school performance targets give an unreliable indication of pupils' progress.
4. Staffing changes and the lack of a sufficiently detailed teaching programme have resulted in pupils' progress in PSHCE currently being unsatisfactory. It is also unsatisfactory that pupils have no opportunities to achieve in religious education, music and, apart from cookery, design and technology because these subjects are not offered on the timetable.
5. As is the case in many similar schools, the number of girls on roll is small; however, because of the individual support given to them by all staff, the girls achieve the same standards as the boys. Overall the very few pupils who have other special needs also achieve at a similar rate to other pupils, although those with specific literacy difficulties do not make the same progress in developing their English skills as other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attendance and the punctuality of pupils are **poor**. Pupils who attend regularly have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is **satisfactory**. The moral development of pupils is **good** and social development is **satisfactory** but both spiritual and cultural development are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although, attendance is starting to improve this year it is still well below the average for similar schools.
- Clear expectations of acceptable behaviour result in pupils usually working hard in lessons.
- Pupils are very positive about the range of activities on offer in the afternoon.
- There are not enough chances for pupils to think more deeply and develop their spiritual awareness.
- The school is not giving pupils sufficient exposure to the wealth of cultures and faiths in the United Kingdom.

Commentary

6. Attendance was a problem at the time of the last inspection and it remains so. However, a change in the timetable to introduce a popular range of activities in the afternoon is having a positive effect on improving attendance. It is, also, unsatisfactory that Year 11 pupils, who should still be in full time education, are allowed home when they are not involved in specific lessons. In addition lax punctuality in the morning means that many pupils do not start the day in the right frame of mind. For example, on the Monday morning of inspection only nine pupils of the 36 on roll arrived in time for morning assembly. Form tutors are inconsistent in marking lateness and the school does not have a sufficiently accurate system to log those pupils who arrive after registration. Consequently it is difficult for the school to monitor lateness and work effectively on improvement.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| School data | 14.3 | School data | 16.4 |
| National data | 11.5 | National data | 7.3 |

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

7. Most pupils behave well in lessons because teachers engage them effectively and make the work meaningful. Teachers build up supportive relationships and most pupils respond well by meeting their expectations of good behaviour. The school promotes the idea of right and wrong well. Staff are good at encouraging pupils to think through the outcomes of inappropriate behaviour and make amends. Pupils are learning to manage their particular behavioural problems, particularly when the teaching is good and they trust the adults in class. However, there are still too many occasions, often when teaching is less effective, when pupils flare up and burst out of class. There are also incidents of inappropriate behaviour at change over times between lessons or during other unstructured times of the day.

Exclusions

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 | 22 | 13 | 0 |
| White – Irish | 1 | | |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 3 | | |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 3 | | |
| Black or Black British – African | 2 | | |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 3 | | |
| Information not obtained | 2 | | |

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

8. The pupils who regularly attend school enjoy their learning. They especially like the afternoons when they can participate in a range of interesting activities. Most pupils get on well with each other, although there are a few pupils who go out of their way to taunt or needle their fellows. Pupils do not see bullying or racial harassment as a problem in the school and know that it will be dealt with should it occur. Tutor times are useful in encouraging pupils to develop relationships with each other. However, pupils are not confident in taking the initiative in their learning and too readily expect adults to help them. Most staff are quick to pick up on verbal abuse, but many pupils are not sufficiently aware that swearing is socially unacceptable. Overall the attitudes of the regularly attending pupils have improved since the last inspection.
9. The school is not promoting the spiritual development of the pupils effectively enough. Pupils' self esteem is boosted when pupils do well in their learning or improve their behaviour. But there are not enough opportunities for pupils to reflect on the needs of others and develop their own set of values, principles and beliefs. Opportunities are missed in assembly and across the curriculum for pupils to think more deeply and develop their spiritual awareness. Assemblies do not meet the requirements for special schools to seek to offer opportunities for acts of collective worship.
10. The usual introduction to other faiths is absent because religious education is not being taught and there is insufficient celebration of the backgrounds and cultures of the pupils in the school. Art introduces pupils well to the different painting styles around the world, but the lack of music and the tipping of the curriculum towards physical activities lessen the chance for pupils to gain a greater aesthetic appreciation.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching is satisfactory as is the assessment of pupils' achievements and the support and guidance given to them. However, care

arrangements are unsatisfactory and pupils are offered an unsatisfactory curriculum. There are good links with parents and the community and links with other school and colleges are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Insufficient evidence was gathered to judge the quality of teaching and learning in physical education, history, geography, modern foreign language and food technology.

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment procedures are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In many subjects teachers use their subject knowledge well to engage pupils in learning.
- Overall staffing changes have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching.
- The very positive relationships that staff have with pupils are used well to help focus pupils on their learning.
- Teachers and support staff work well together to offer individual pupils good support.
- The quality of teachers' planning is inconsistent and often lacks an evaluation of pupils' achievements.
- Assessment arrangements are improving but are not used effectively by all the teachers.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. There is a clear link between subject specialists and consistently good standards of teaching. Art, science, maths, ICT, English, French and physical education are subjects that benefit from teachers having good subject knowledge and using this well. For example in French, the teacher, a fluent French speaker, uses his skills in the subject well to give pupils valuable experiences of regularly hearing the correct pronunciation of the language. Similarly in art the teacher's own high quality skills effectively demonstrate a variety of artistic techniques to pupils.
12. The teaching of art and mathematics has been effective over time and resulted in pupils achieving well, particularly in examinations. Recent appointments have, also, had a positive impact on the quality of teaching of English, science and ICT. However, the quality of the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship has been adversely affected and is now unsatisfactory and not up to the standard reported in the previous inspection.
13. Teachers and specialist support staff know pupils well and have developed good relationships with them. They use these positive relationships well to encourage pupils to remain in class, behave appropriately and complete the tasks set. Humour is used effectively and most lessons have a calm and relaxed atmosphere that does not put pupils under pressure and enables them to be more responsive learners than they have shown themselves to be in their previous schools. The exceptions to this are when teaching is less effective and a pupil or pupils react badly and leave the room.

14. The quality of teachers' planning for lessons varies, partly, because there is no agreed school format for this and the deputy head responsible for monitoring lesson planning has insufficient time to do so. Overall there are insufficient systems in place to monitor the consistency of the quality of teaching throughout the school and senior staff have little evidence to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' achievements in the different subjects.
15. Marking of pupils' work is variable. In English and mathematics, there is good practice, with useful comments that assist pupils in understanding what has been successful and what has not. In many other subjects, ticks and comments, although regular, are not as helpful as they might be. A few subjects, such as ICT, use assessment well within lessons, with teachers taking notes that assist in the development of new targets and tasks for the next lesson. However, in other lessons not enough detail is recorded and this means that individual targets are not as precise as they might be.
16. Assessing and recording the National Curriculum levels achieved by individual pupils has improved considerably and there is now a consistent framework in use throughout the school. This is largely as the result of the good work undertaken by the deputy head that has responsibility for assessment. Thus, every subject can now identify the National Curriculum levels gained by each pupil and there has been good training undertaken to assist staff in the assessment of these levels. However, this process is still at an early stage of development and requires external moderation. This collection of data has not been in operation long enough for a clear view of the progress, or lack of it, being made by individual pupils to be gained.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **unsatisfactory** and there are **unsatisfactory** opportunities to extend and enrich it. The accommodation is **unsatisfactory**. Resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The statutory requirement to teach pupils all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education is not being met.
- There are good learning opportunities in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The amount of formally planned teaching time is well below national guidelines.
- The subject plan for personal, social and health education programme is inadequate and does not ensure that pupils will have suitable learning opportunities.
- Enrichment opportunities, extra-curricular activities and clubs are not well developed except in sport where a good range of activities is provided.

Commentary

17. Uncertainty about the future of the school and the consequent difficulty in recruiting specialist staff, together with delays to proposed building work, have all contributed to the school not being able to provide a curriculum that meets the statutory requirements. There is no religious education or music offered to pupils and design and technology is confined to cooking lessons.
18. The afternoon timetable makes up 35 per cent of the teaching week and is described by the school as an enrichment programme. It is enjoyed by pupils because of its relaxed and flexible nature, and because it's main focus is on recreational and leisure activities. However, as a result of these arrangements the amount of formally planned teaching time is well below the national guidelines. This is unsatisfactory and has a negative impact on pupils' academic progress, for example, the time available to support pupils with literacy difficulties.
19. The unsatisfactory accommodation has a negative impact on many areas of the curriculum. The lack of a science laboratory limits the opportunities for experiments and the hall and outside areas place severe constraints on physical education, although the co-ordinator has made good use of local centres to compensate. In addition, the lack of showers and changing

rooms mean that pupils usually undertake physical education in everyday clothes, which is not appropriate. For design and technology there is no special accommodation and the development of independent research and reading skills is severely limited by the lack of a library. In addition the school entrance is unsafe because it is narrow and there is no pavement. Resources are satisfactory, although music, science and design technology are not adequately resourced.

20. All pupils have personal, social and health education lessons, the content of which is relevant. However, the subject is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils can make progress from lesson to lesson, and year to year, and have work that is increasingly challenging. Other subjects, and the afternoon enrichment programme, also have the capacity to promote pupils' personal and social development, but these opportunities are not sufficiently developed.
21. Not enough use is made of visits into the community, visitors into school, or clubs at lunchtime and after school, to support learning in National Curriculum subjects and religious education. There are strengths, however, in the enrichment programme. Partnerships with the local police, the Connexions service and the Youth Awareness partners provide good support for pupils' personal and social development, and help prepare them for leaving school. A good range of sporting activities is provided in the afternoon enrichment programme. Many pupils opt to play football, but golf, squash, multi-gym, table tennis, orienteering, canoeing, fishing and snooker are also options. None of these activities, however, lead to externally accredited certificates.

Care, guidance and support

Although individual pastoral support for pupils is good, care arrangements are **unsatisfactory**. Support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are **satisfactory** and the involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff seek to offer effective positive pastoral support to each pupil.
- The tracking of each pupil's academic progress and personal development is unsatisfactory.
- The school is not sufficiently up to date with recommended procedures to ensure that the care of pupils in their charge is adequate.
- The behaviour management system works well in improving pupils' behaviour but staff rely too much on the headteacher and deputy headteacher to deal with serious behaviour incidents.

Commentary

22. The provision of pastoral support for pupils is good. Staff know those pupils who attend regularly well and discuss their needs thoroughly at the daily debriefing session. Pupils are clear that there is always someone to turn to should they have worries or concerns. In addition the school works well with parents to ensure that difficult home circumstances do not disrupt pupils' education. Regular multi agency meetings are well organised and have proved to be successful in bringing together outside support organisations to ensure that all professionals are working to the same end in supporting individual pupils. By the time they leave school most pupils have been given positive help in finding a college or work placement. This good personal support puts the pupils at ease and is a major contributor to their positive attitudes to school.
23. The monitoring of pupils' progress in both academic achievement and behaviour improvement is not sufficiently accurate. Individual education plans do not link objectives from term to term and often conflict with the targets set by teachers for achievement. Much time is spent updating the pupils' credits for behaviour at the expense of ensuring that all staff are consistent in applying the fundamental behaviour improvement targets for each pupil.
24. The innovative behaviour management system is appreciated by pupils and is having a positive impact on discipline. The practice of awarding financial credits for good work and behaviour

gives the pupils a sense of responsibility for their actions. Pupils are proud when they accumulate enough credits to pay for their place on popular outings. Most staff manage to defuse potential pupil arguments and avoid escalation into more serious misbehaviour. However, when difficulties arise they tend to over rely on the intervention of the deputy headteacher and headteacher, rather than deal with the situation themselves. The lack of recent training in restraint techniques means that the safest current course of action is to refer dangerous incidents directly to the head and deputy headteachers.

25. The school is aware of its duty to ensure the pupils are safe and sound. However, many practices are not sufficiently rigorous and need reviewing and updating to ensure that they meet expected requirements. Major concerns include:
- Child protection training for the headteacher and staff is out of date and does not meet recent recommended guidance.
 - There are no staff trained in first aid.
 - There is no governor with a responsibility for health and safety.
 - Records for the administration of medicines are spread across three different log books.
 - There is no bound log book in which to record every day accidents.
26. In addition the school is not sufficiently clear of the whereabouts of pupils during the school day should there be need for an emergency evacuation. The lax monitoring of lateness and the fact that senior pupils can go off site at lunchtime without signing out means the safety of pupils is potentially endangered. Office staff are conscientious in effectively checking the whereabouts of regular Melrose attendees if they are absent. However, the school is not rigorous enough in having a clear view of the status of many pupils who are on roll but hardly ever turn up or who are being educated at other schools or institutions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are positive about the school and appreciate the close communication that exists between school and home about their children's behaviour and attitudes.
- The quality of the information provided for parents on the progress their children make is inconsistent.
- The good contact with a range of agencies and employers ensures that there is a smooth transition for pupils to the next stage of their education or work.

Commentary

27. The headteacher and his staff place great importance on maintaining good lines of communication between school and home. Many parents agree that they are well informed about their child's personal development and can work with the school effectively to help their children go forward. They appreciate receiving the weekly pink slips charting their child's behaviour and value the chance to share in the setting of behaviour targets each term. Although there is no formal systems for consultation, parents feel comfortable in approaching the school and believe they are well involved in major decisions. Parental concerns and queries are dealt with swiftly and for the good of the pupils. Most parents support the school by regularly attending their child's annual review and termly meetings with the teacher. However, a significant number of families are not giving enough support to ensure that their child attends regularly and too easily condone their child's absence.
28. The school is attempting to provide parents with enough detail about the subjects of the curriculum and how their children are progressing academically but the quality of these reports

vary and are not being monitored sufficiently. Parents do not receive an over view of the curriculum and there have been no meetings or workshops to explain how subjects are taught and how parents can help from home. The annual reports are not giving parents a sufficiently clear message on how their children have progressed over the year in each subject of the curriculum and in many cases the targets reviewed at the end of each term are not those that were set at the start of the term.

29. Links with a wide range of outside agencies underpin the good pastoral support pupils receive. Of particular note is the productive liaison with the Connexions service, which effectively smoothes the transition from school to work and college. The deputy headteacher in charge of the curriculum has also built up a very useful bank of potential employers for work experience opportunities. There are limited links with the town of Mitcham, but the pupils are often out in the wider community making use of local facilities such as the leisure centre and fishing lakes.
30. Currently because Melrose is in a state of flux as it awaits the decision of the local education authority on its future it is difficult to consolidate its links with other schools. Links though are improving with further education colleges and allow pupils to experience a range of vocational courses. Pupils compete enthusiastically against other special schools in football competitions. A few parents, justifiably, would like to see further opportunities for their children to integrate back into mainstream education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **good** and that of other senior staff **satisfactory**. Governance, however, is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has established a united staff team who all show a real desire to support pupils in difficult circumstances.
- Senior staff have ensured there are systems in place that improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour and increase their opportunities to access learning.
- Management responsibilities have been allocated unevenly to senior staff and this has reduced their ability to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work.
- Senior staff give insufficient attention to reviewing pupils' achievements and taking action as a result of their findings.
- The quality of the leadership and management of subjects is inconsistent but is being improved by recent teaching appointments.
- The few members on the governing body are supportive of the school but have not been able to ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties.

Commentary

31. Given the potentially volatile pupil population, the headteacher has ensured that a high priority is being given to encouraging pupils to be in class and behaving appropriately. He plays a prominent part in the support available for pupils during the teaching day. Together with his deputies he has ensured that the quality of education is satisfactory, despite a number of significant barriers to the work of the school. These include the unsatisfactory accommodation, uncertainties caused by delays in decisions being made with regard to the school's future development and staffing recruitment difficulties. The headteacher's leadership skills have contributed to all staff having a shared passion to give pupils a real chance to access learning and improve their whole quality of life. This is demonstrated well by the very high level of positive encouragement offered by the specialist support assistants.
32. Recently the anxieties over future plans for the school have led to teachers leaving and new teachers joining the school. Much of this has had a significant impact on how the school has been able to develop its provision and partly explains why overall the school has made

unsatisfactory improvement since its previous inspection. However, because of good support and induction systems new staff have quickly settled and are becoming effective in improving the quality of education. For example, the new subject leaders of English, science and ICT are all having a positive impact on improving the quality of provision in these subjects. However, not all subjects are as effectively led, for example, the leadership and management of personal, social and health education and citizenship are currently unsatisfactory.

33. Both the head and the pastoral deputy maintain a close supervision of the school during the day and this ensures that the school is safe and pupils' behaviour is monitored well. However, statutory care procedures have been not addressed recently and because of this are unsatisfactory. Insufficient attention has been given to recording and monitoring pupils' achievements and as a result the headteacher does not have sufficient information to evaluate pupils' progress and take appropriate action for improvements. Documentation prepared for the inspection shows that the school does have the ability to evaluate its effectiveness but there are no established procedures embedded in its work to undertake this task routinely.
34. Both deputies offer committed and loyal support to the headteacher. However, there is an imbalance in the responsibilities that have been allocated to them. The deputy responsible for monitoring the curriculum and assessment has too many areas of responsibility as well as an almost full teaching commitment. The effect of this imbalance is that despite her best efforts, there is insufficient time for senior staff to monitor the curriculum as a whole and ensure that assessment procedures are used well by all staff. Two senior teachers have also been appointed but as yet have been allocated insufficient whole school areas of responsibility.
35. The chair and vice chair of governors are very enthusiastic and together with both staff governors have offered very positive support, particularly in connection with the proposals to change the role of the school. However, the governing body has been small and has not ensured that it has systems in place to give it an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has contributed to the governors not fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. Recently the membership of the governing body has been increased. Plans have been made for committees, more frequent governor visits and governors taking on specific responsibilities. When implemented these new arrangements will undoubtedly improve the quality of the governance of the school.
36. The uncertainties with regards to the school's future have understandably led to difficulties in managing expenditure and this has meant that the unspent money in the last two years has been slightly over the recommended five per cent. However, irrespective of these uncertainties there is an insufficient link between planned expenditure and the development of the school's provision. For example, most aspects in the school improvement plan have not been costed and linked to the budget available. The school's administration team offer very strong support to all staff. This is particularly the case in the upkeep of the school's financial records which are very clear and well maintained.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 747351 |
| Total expenditure | 669165 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 13595 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Balance from previous year | 63011 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 78186 |

WORK RELATED LEARNING

Pupils' written work was analysed. There were discussions with pupils and staff. Planning documents were analysed. Part of a careers education lesson and a Youth Award Scheme (ASDAN) lesson were observed.

Work related learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 10 and 11 pupils achieve very well on their work experience placements.
- The subject leader provides very good support and guidance to prepare each pupil for leaving school.
- Good links with college enable pupils to study accredited vocational courses.
- Careers education and guidance is well organised in Years 9 to 11, but in Years 7 and 8 it requires further development.

Commentary

37. The school enjoys good, supportive links with local employers and this has helped provide good work experience opportunities for pupils. Pupils talk about their experiences with great enthusiasm and confidence and together with pupils from mainstream secondary schools, have contributed to a DVD about these. Pupils have achieved success in placements that include caring for animals, painting and decorating, retail, nursery placements, and beauty therapy.
38. Work related learning is very well led and managed by a deputy headteacher. She ensures, for example, that work experience is well matched to pupils' individual learning needs. Her support for leavers, particularly the most vulnerable pupils, is very thoughtful, thorough and caring. The school does not currently provide any mini enterprise projects but has plans to do so once the future of the school is decided. A Youth Award Scheme (ASDAN bronze level) has recently been successfully re-introduced for Year 10 pupils and provides an opportunity to study vocational modules.
39. All pupils are given the opportunity to study vocational courses at college, although not all pupils have the confidence to take up places. A few pupils study to NVQ level 1, in carpentry, and business administration and in the past have continued on these courses to higher levels on leaving school.
40. Year 11 pupils talk positively about the support and guidance they receive from the co-ordinator for work related learning, and from their Connexions personal adviser. The new statutory requirement for careers education in Years 7 and 8 is in place as part of the personal, social and health education programme. However, the planning of this programme is at an early stage because overall planning for personal, social and health education is not complete.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Four lessons in English were observed. Pupils' written work was analysed. There was discussion with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of subject plans, assessment records and other documents. One lesson of French was observed but there was not the opportunity to gather sufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision in the subject.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FRENCH)

All pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 have the opportunity to study French. Planning shows that pupils learn a good range of vocabulary for many different aspects of every day life. For example, Year 7 pupils learn the basic vocabulary for the days of the week and numbers and by Year 9 pupils know some vocabulary to assist them in shopping or when writing simple letters. In the Year 9 lesson seen, the two pupils present in the class made very good progress. The teacher speaks the language fluently and enthusiastically encouraged pupils to try to pronounce and write the new words they were learning. The lesson was based on pupils being able to give directions and by the end of the lesson both pupils were able to give directions for turning left, right and straight on.

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvement in the quality of teaching is resulting in pupils now making good progress.
- Support assistants make a very strong contribution to the positive atmosphere that exists in lessons.
- Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well and can join in with and contribute to discussions.
- The new subject leader has had a very positive impact on pupils' achievements.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils with literacy difficulties to improve their reading and writing skills.
- The absence of a library means that pupils do not have a relaxed environment to use for reading and research.

Commentary

41. Discussion with pupils indicates that they enjoy this subject and feel they make significant progress at Melrose compared with previous schools. This is borne out by a scrutiny of their workbooks and records, particularly in the work covered in the last year. Accredited courses have developed well since the last inspection; in 1999 three pupils gained G grades at GCSE and this year the six pupils are predicted to achieve grades between G and D.
42. The good achievement arises largely from good quality teaching. It is well planned and provides a wide range of texts and discussion opportunities. For example, in a very good lesson on personification the emphasis on extending pupils' ability to join discussions encouraged each pupil to provide good examples of personification, such as "My nan says if you wear that jumper much longer it will walk to the washing machine". Throughout the lesson the teacher used the topic to develop the theme, "What do you think your chair would say about you?" and to keep pupils on task, "Focus, focus!"
43. The specialist teacher uses humour and great ingenuity to interest and focus pupils' attention. There is also a strong commitment to the development of each individual pupil and the acquisition of good working habits. Her planning demonstrates detailed and appropriate individual targets for pupils, which informs what will be covered in lessons and how much

support individual pupils require. Very good relationships and the use of positive feedback to individual pupils ensure that they remain on task, while the good use of the interactive whiteboard as a means of highlighting text motivates pupils well.

44. The successful teaching is characterised by the role played by support assistants. They have very good relationships with pupils and have a clear understanding of the skills being developed within the English curriculum. Much of pupils' attention to detail is as the result of the consistent and supportive role they play. A very good example was seen during a Year 9 lesson on persuasive text. The class contained two pupils who found maintaining attention and working within a group difficult. Throughout the 30 minute session the support assistant moved between them, encouraging, focusing and calming. As a result of this sensitivity both pupils completed the worksheet and finished by making sensible contributions to a whole-class discussion.
45. Improvements in the provision for English are attributable to the good leadership of the English co-ordinator. Her input has meant that the overall quality of English is now back to the level reported in the previous inspection. She has developed an appropriate and very motivational programme of work, improved use of assessment, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, and developed a strong partnership with the local education authority advisers and a few local schools. Daily assessment and the identification of clear individual learning objectives have been established within all lessons. The co-ordinator has also been instrumental in developing the use of computer software and the use of this is a regular feature of most lessons.
46. A little work with pupils who have the most serious degree of learning difficulties in reading and writing has been undertaken. This has been effective, but has decreased as the result of timetable constraints, which have made it difficult for the co-ordinator to find the time for intensive work on these aspects. At present a quarter of pupils have reading levels that make reading day-to-day materials difficult. This also has the knock-on effect of preventing them from putting pen to paper with any degree of confidence. There has been good training for support assistants to help rectify this and materials, including computer software, have been purchased.
47. At the time of the last inspection it was reported that there was no library. This is still the case. The subject co-ordinator has built up the stock of books and they are accessible within her classroom but this is not providing pupils with access to a discrete area where they read and develop independent reading and research skills.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Although, there is no whole-school planned programme for these aspects staff provide good role models for pupils in demonstrating how to speak and listen to each other. There are, also, subjects that place a good emphasis placed on subject vocabulary, such as shapes and numbers within mathematics and technical vocabulary in science and ICT. However, not enough emphasis is placed on developing pupils' writing skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Three lessons in mathematics were observed. Pupils' written work was analysed. There was discussion with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of subject plans, assessment records and other documents.

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to pass examinations in mathematics.
- Good assessment arrangements enable teachers to plan work that matches pupils' ability levels.
- Teachers and support staff give pupils very good individual support.
- The curriculum ensures that older pupils have good opportunities to undertake tasks based on using and applying mathematical skills.
- Resources for mathematics are limited and ICT is not used effectively to support learning.

Commentary

49. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and consistently achieve well in examinations. The majority pass GCSEs and the few who find this level too difficult are able to pass Entry Level examinations. Grades achieved are improving as a result of the teacher's determination to challenge pupils to achieve as well as possible. Pupils' progress is well recorded and a scrutiny of their work shows progress is equally good in all aspects of mathematics.
50. The quality of teaching is good overall. The usual teaching approach adopted by both mathematics teachers is effective for EBD pupils and based on supporting individual pupils to work independently on tasks from a textbook. Pupils are assessed when they join the school and the results of these are used well to identify areas where pupils are weak and unsure of the concepts involved. Work is then set designed to remedy the weaknesses and further develop pupils' achievements. This proves very effective. For example, a pupil admitted recently showed in her assessment that she had a clear weakness in understanding and using time. As a result tasks and a support programme have been designed to support and develop her skills in this area.
51. Support assistants are well briefed with regard to the mathematical work that individual pupils are undertaking. They are skilled at offering an appropriate level of support for each pupil. Together with teachers, support staff are very aware that many pupils are very 'fragile' learners and, therefore, often reluctant to take on the challenge of learning new mathematical concepts. They recognise differences in pupils' responses to tasks and offer effective support, without being tempted to do too much for pupils.
52. The curriculum is good. Of particular note is the very good opportunities Year 10 and 11 pupils have to undertake tasks based on using and applying mathematical concepts. Much of the curriculum for other pupils is based around following a set textbook. For older pupils the syllabus for the examinations forms the basis of the work pupils undertake. Although these programmes are effective in enabling pupils to cover a wide range of mathematical aspects, they do mean that teaching strategies being used to meet pupils' different learning styles are restricted. For example, there are few opportunities for them to work together or use a wider range of materials.
53. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good. The subject leader makes use of national initiatives and offers good advice to the other teacher who teaches the subject. She has made sure that the subject policy and assessment documentation are up to date. However, teaching resources are limited and there are restricted opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning. Provision in the subject has improved since the time of the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. There is no planned approach to the practising of pupils' mathematical skills in the teaching of other subjects. However, teachers do refer to mathematical aspects as they occur in their lessons. For example, in a physical education lesson where pupils were learning the techniques of throwing a javelin the teacher challenged pupils well to consider the degrees of

the different angles they could hold the javelin and how this could affect the distance they achieve.

SCIENCE

Three lessons in science were observed. Pupils' written work was analysed. There was discussion with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of subject plans, assessment records and other documents.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have developed a good understanding of how to carry out fair tests in their investigations.
- The laboratory accommodation, and the range of resources, are unsatisfactory and restrict the range of investigations that pupils can do.
- The very good subject knowledge of the teacher is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching.
- The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has made a very good start in leading this subject and improving the provision for science.

Commentary

55. Achievement in science is good across the school. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils' progress has been enhanced over the past year. Examples of achievements include Year 9 pupils gaining a good understanding of levers and how they work and Year 10 pupils using a computer programme well to simulate chemical reactions with metals. By Year 11 pupils can carry out GCSE investigations using more than one variable, and write extended prose to explain their results. Pupils can also explain their results orally, including explaining the principle of fair testing.
56. The inadequate condition of the laboratory prevents pupils from doing experiments for themselves. The supply of electricity, gas and water to the laboratory, the fume cupboard, and storage facilities are all unsatisfactory. This seriously restricts the range of contexts in which pupils can develop their practical skills.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is now good and has many very good features. The new science teacher is knowledgeable, with the skill to explain difficult ideas at an appropriate level. Teaching is refreshingly enthusiastic which pupils find motivating and the management of pupils, and relationships in the classroom, are excellent. There are very high expectations of pupils and they respond well to the challenges set for them and enjoy their lessons. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when attitudes were unsatisfactory.
58. Science is now being very well led and managed by the recently appointed subject co-ordinator who is very enthusiastic. Pupils' performance data is being compiled and monitored, but there are not yet sufficient records to monitor pupils' progress over time. The curriculum, despite the restriction of the accommodation, is well planned. Assessment procedures are mainly good and help pupils to understand how they can improve. The assessment of GCSE course work, however, does not include enough explanation of the marks awarded for each of the investigation skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Three lessons in science were observed. Pupils' written work was analysed. There was discussion with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of subject plans, assessment records and other documents.

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy this subject and achieve well, particularly in their confidence in using the internet.
- Teaching is now well planned, informed and motivates pupils well.
- Leadership is good and has improved the subject well in the past year.
- Assessment is not yet detailed enough to clearly identify the individual progress of pupils in all areas of ICT.
- There are no opportunities for pupils to pass examinations in ICT but these are now being planned for the future.
- Staff confidence in using ICT is still patchy and this means that the use of ICT varies very much from teacher to teacher.

Commentary

59. Pupils' achievements over time are satisfactory but because of the development of the ICT suite and the appointment of a new teacher pupils are now making good progress. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they have good opportunities to experience and develop skills in presentation, control technology, researching the net and using CD-ROMs. By Year 9 pupils use a control programme to regulate the temperature and light levels of plants. They produce professional looking presentations 'About Me'. They use desktop publishing to advertise their charity plant sale and graph individual results in the 'mini Olympics'. By Year 11, they tally and graph favourite footballers, enter formulae into spreadsheets and produce reports of a high quality arising from the plant sale. All pupils use the internet with ease, research individual projects, use the web for history and geography and send e-mails.
60. Pupils settle well in the ICT suite and work carefully at the tasks set. The high motivation they have for the subject is the product of teaching that is consistently good. ICT lessons have a clear focus, use time well and are built on tasks that are of interest for both boys and girls. These tasks include activities such as searching the web for information on individual footballers to substantiate a report for the Chelsea manager. The specialist teacher is knowledgeable about the subject and uses his good range of teaching skills to focus pupils on the task in hand. This ensures that good progress is made within each lesson. For example, one good lesson for Year 9 pupils saw the teacher demonstrating a slide presentation with video clips of individual pupils from a physical education lesson. His very good knowledge of and relationships with pupils combined to assist in involving all pupils. A strength of teaching in ICT is the manner the teachers deals with problems face to face and talks through negative attitudes with pupils. Thus, many pupils who start in an antagonistic frame of mind become part of the lesson and quickly seek to produce a professional result. A very good support assistant, who also possesses personal ICT skills of a high order, assists him.
61. The subject has been well led over the past year. As a result provision has improved overall since the previous inspection. The new co-ordinator has worked hard to develop an appropriate programme of work, buy in up-to-date technology and work with LEA and school staff to have ICT used with more confidence within the school. Despite this, staff confidence is still variable and this affects the use of ICT within different subjects. The co-ordinator has also introduced a consistent form of assessment and uses it well. It gives a good picture of where pupils are in their ICT development, but does not yet fully identify the many sub-skills that are required for individual development within the subject.
62. The good progress in the teaching of ICT means that many pupils are now skilled enough to take externally accredited course in the subject. Appropriately the school is expecting to introduce them in the coming academic year. This would provide a boost to the subject and increase the challenge to pupils who have already developed high level ICT skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. The new interactive whiteboards, computer programmes and training have combined to move this subject on well over the past year. A few staff have been enthusiastic in the use of new technology within lessons and particularly good examples of this were seen in English, history, geography and science. However, the school has not yet maximised the use of ICT in other subject areas. While good use of ICT is often made in introductions to lessons, there is further scope for the development of programmes that can challenge pupils in all subjects and build on the interest and confidence that are clearly developing.

HUMANITIES

Religious education is not taught. No teaching of history or geography was seen during the inspection and it is not possible to make judgements on the provision in these subjects.

Religious Education

64. Provision for religious education is **very poor**. Currently the subject is not taught at the school. Assemblies do not make a contribution to pupils' understanding of religion and there is an unsatisfactory emphasis throughout the school on pupils' spiritual development. This current situation means that the level of provision described at the time of the previous inspection has not been maintained.

History and geography

65. Discussions with staff and pupils, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and records, indicate that the curriculum for both history and geography is both wide and interesting. A sensible programme of work has been developed that allows pupils to concentrate on one major topic at a time. For example, within geography pupils have the opportunity to study countries such as Italy and Brazil and recent themes have included volcanoes, plate tectonics, ecosystems and environmental issues. History is providing pupils with the opportunity to study England since 1066.
66. Both of these subjects are being developed through the use of CD-ROMs. The BBC website has been used intensively recently to investigate plate tectonics and the Tsunami, while the 'History-on-the-web' has provided the core information for the study of most aspects of the history curriculum. A basic assessment system is being put in place and opportunities for fieldwork developed. There are, though, not enough visits to historical sites and museums, which would further contribute to pupils' interest in history.

TECHNOLOGY

There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in design and technology. One food technology lesson was observed.

Design and technology

67. The curriculum offered for design and technology is unsatisfactory and as a result, the subject does not meet the National Curriculum statutory requirements. There is no specialist teaching, accommodation or resources for pupils to work with resistant materials, nor to learn about electronic and electrical control systems. Pupils in years 8 to 10 do have cookery lessons. A satisfactory Year 10 lesson was observed, where pupils learned how to make meals from 'left-overs'. The four pupils present, were well motivated, shared the limited resources well, conducted themselves sensibly with the cookers and equipment, and related well to staff. The course does not, however, lead to an accredited certificate. The accommodation and resources for cookery are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Four lessons were observed in art and design. Pupils' work was analysed and discussed with the art teacher. Displays in the art room and on corridors were observed. Although parts of two physical education lessons were observed there was insufficient evidence gathered to make an overall judgement on physical education. Music is not taught.

Physical Education

68. Physical education and sport play an important part of the life of the school. Subject documents show there are good opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of activities. These include badminton, basketball, football and gymnastics and are extended by activities that form part of the afternoon curriculum such as fitness sessions at a local gym, fishing and canoeing. In the two lessons sampled pupils show a keen interest to take part in physical activities. Year 10 pupils enthusiastically joined in a warm up and listened carefully to the instructions of the teacher in developing their basic skills in throwing a javelin and all three in the group were successful in being able to throw a javelin. In a less successful short tennis lesson for Year 11, pupils, although keen to play, were not willing to listen carefully to the support offered by the teacher and found it difficult to accept losing in a game or waiting for their turn to play.
69. Pupils take part in regular football matches with other schools and the school team has been successful for the second year running in reaching the final for similar schools in the area. Reports and photographs of previous matches show the enjoyment pupils gain from the games and discussion with pupils themselves show they are eagerly awaiting their participation in the final.
70. The provision for physical education, though, is restricted by the inadequate gym and outdoor facilities available at the school itself. Good use, though, is made of outside sports facilities to compensate for this. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has developed good plans for the further development of the subject and has started a very good system to record pupils' achievements.

Music

71. The school does not provide a music curriculum because there have been difficulties in recruiting a specialist. Pupils in Years 7 to 9, therefore, do not receive their statutory entitlement of National Curriculum music. School performances do provide occasional opportunities for pupils to participate in musical events, but enrichment opportunities in music are unsatisfactory overall. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory as a result.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in art, progressing to GCSE standard by the time they leave school.
- Teaching is based on specialist knowledge and skill, combined with a good understanding of pupils' learning needs.
- Assessment methods in Years 7 to 9 are not as well developed as those in Years 10 and 11.
- Planning for the afternoon art enrichment programme is not linked closely enough to pupils' personal and social development.
- The art room is stimulating, colourful, and full of interesting displays and artefacts.

Commentary

72. Pupils make good progress in art. On entry to the school, younger pupils frequently lack confidence using pencil and paint. They can respond to ideas presented by the teacher but find it difficult to explore and investigate on their own. They have difficulty communicating ideas both orally and in writing. By Year 9, pupils have progressed well and may have developed good drawing skills and a good sense of colour. They can produce mixed media collages in the style of famous artists, like Matisse, and manipulate shapes well. Pupils show the potential to achieve good GCSE grades in art. For example, a pupil in Year 11, working towards GCSE grade C, has developed good independent research skills to present GCSE projects on 'Food and Drink', and 'Adorn, Decorate and Embellish'. She communicates her findings well using mixed media, incorporating references to famous artists like Andy Warhol and Gustav Klimt. Different styles are used like 'cubism', and 'the 1960's look'. For example, there are cultural references in her work, to the Hindu practice of creating Mendhi hand patterns. Most pupils on roll are entered for GCSE art in Year 11, and in recent years all pupils entered have achieved a grade.
73. Teaching and learning are good. The teacher uses her subject expertise very well to demonstrate artistic techniques to pupils, her expectations are high and pupils' successes are reflected in their work on display throughout the school. The recent long-term absence of the teacher temporarily limited development of the art curriculum. As a result, in recent months, pupils' progress in learning key aspect of art has been restricted but their progress in researching and communicating themes and painting has continued to develop well.
74. The art teacher knows well how individual pupils are progressing. The assessment methods for pupils in Years 7 to 9 are, however, informal and not recorded. This makes it difficult to formally check the progress of individual pupils from entering school to leaving in Year 11. In contrast, the assessment methods required for the GCSE course are well established. Pupils receive clear explanations about how they can improve the standard of their GCSE coursework.
75. Textile lessons are included in the afternoon enrichment programme. These activities have more of a recreational than a teaching focus. As a result they are not planned with the same good attention to learning outcomes as the art lessons. The textile lessons have the potential to support pupils' personal and social development well, but these opportunities are not formally planned into the lesson.
76. The subject is well led. The art teacher makes the best use of what is only satisfactory accommodation and unsatisfactory storage facilities to create an art room that is highly stimulating. Displays of pupils' work there and in the corridors celebrate their good achievements. The co-ordinator is aware that areas for development are to broaden the art curriculum, develop assessment procedures, and plan the afternoon programme more rigorously. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Two part lessons from the personal, social and health education course were observed. Two lessons involving visitors from the local police and from the Youth Awareness team were also observed briefly. There were discussions with the subject co-ordinator and the deputy headteacher. Pupils' written work was analysed.

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The personal, social and health education programme does not ensure that pupils can make progress in their learning.
- There are no assessment procedures in place to check if pupils are progressing well enough.

- Good links with visitors enhance the opportunities pupils have to discuss important social aspects.

Commentary

77. Pupils do not progress well enough over time because planning for the subject is weak. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has not been in post long enough to produce a whole school plan for personal, social and health education that covers what is to be included in each year of the taught programme. There is also no plan that links all other opportunities, for example, tutorial time and the afternoon enrichment programme, to learning in PSHCE lessons. Annual reviews and annual reports of pupils' progress in PSHCE are not based on any formal procedures for assessing what individual pupils know and understand of the topics taught. The monitoring of pupils' progress over time is therefore too informal and subjective, and not based on recorded evidence. As a consequence of these deficiencies leadership and management are both unsatisfactory.
78. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons are satisfactory. Relevant topics are presented including work on emotions, healthy eating, drugs education, and the law. Pupils are keen to contribute, for example, in Years 8 and 9 during a lively discussion about the difference between fact and opinion. Pupils' exuberance, however, is not always managed well, with the result that their oral responses are not guided into more carefully considered debate.
79. Pupils respond well to visitors. Presentations by visitors observed were well matched to pupils' learning needs because they are regular visitors to school and have got to know the pupils well. As a result, pupils gained knowledge about the harmful effects of alcohol, and the work of the local police.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| Inspection judgement | Grade |
|--|-------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 4 |
| How inclusive the school is | 4 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 5 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 4 |
| Pupils' achievement | 4 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 4 |
| Attendance | 6 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 4 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 4 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs | 5 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 5 |
| Accommodation and resources | 5 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 5 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 4 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 5 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 4 |

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfac

(4);
unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).

* In a special school such as this, 'standards achieved' are judged in relation to pupils' individual targets and not in relation to national standards.