

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **VICTORIA EDUCATION CENTRE**

Poole, Dorset

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113954

Principal: Mrs Chris Davies

Lead inspector: Mike Kell

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 268664

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  
Age range of pupils: 3 – 19  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 91

School address: 12 Lindsay Road  
Branksome Park  
Poole  
Postcode: BH13 6AS

Telephone number: 01202 763697  
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Alan Wilson

Date of previous inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Victoria Education Centre is a day and residential school for pupils with physical disability. It is part of the Shaftesbury Society and, as such, is a non-maintained school. It admits pupils from a number of local education authorities (LEAs). Most live in neighbouring LEAs, such as Poole, Bournemouth, Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire although a few boarders travel from much further afield, such as London. Therefore, the school has a wide socio-economic mix of pupils. The designated roll is 120 pupils, although there are currently only 91 on roll. This figure represents a fall in numbers, of approximately 17 per cent, compared with the recent past. There are approximately equal numbers of boys and girls placed in 12 classes. Seven children are of nursery age and there are 17 in the post-16 department. Fifteen pupils are residential.

All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which, in almost all cases, is for physical disability. As a result, pupils' levels of attainment on entry to the school are below national expectations. The major physical condition is cerebral palsy, followed by epilepsy, although there are also pupils with spina bifida, muscular dystrophy and other medical syndromes and associated learning difficulties. The overwhelming majority of pupils have a White British background. No pupils have English as an additional language. Few pupils attend classes at mainstream schools and colleges in order to extend their learning opportunities and to encourage their personal development.

The school received a Healthy Schools award in 1999, and in 2003 it was recognised as an Investor in People.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
13101	Mike Kell	Lead inspector	Art and design French Music
8941	John Fletcher	Lay inspector	
32055	Glan Davies	Team inspector	Geography History Physical education
11239	Sue Flockton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs
10678	Margaret Paull	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education
27429	Margaret Smith	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE AND</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 – 4 AND POST-16</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>33</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Victoria is an effective school with some very good features. It is well led and managed.** Good teaching promotes pupils' learning well, and they make good progress. The very good school ethos is supported by its links with parents and the community and so pupils make very good gains in their personal development. Residential provision is very good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Relationships between pupils and with staff are an outstanding feature of the school.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management.
- Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good and they are provided with good support and guidance.
- Aspects of provision have not yet been fully adapted to meet the needs of the increasing number of pupils with additional and more complex learning difficulties.
- The curriculum is enriched very well through a range of educational visits and visiting specialists.
- Pupils' learning and development are supported by very good links with parents and good links with the community.
- There is ineffective leadership and management by some senior staff.
- Residential provision supports boarding pupils' learning and personal development very well.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship and work-related learning (WRL) programmes are underdeveloped, as are links with colleges.

Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection. In terms of the key issues identified then, assessment and recording systems have been improved. This improvement has been helped by subject leaders' development of long-term plans for all subjects and the setting of short-term targets for pupils in all subjects. A forum for post-16 pupils' views to become better known has been established and this age group also has much improved access to the community. In addition, parents now receive very detailed information on their children's progress. In terms of other weaknesses identified at that time, performance management is in place for all staff and lesson planning is of good quality.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	In relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 2	Good	Very good
Year 6	Good	Very good
Year 9	Good	Very good
Year 11	Good	Very good
Year 13	Good	Very good

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

Overall, in relation to their prior levels of attainment and capability, most **pupils of all ages achieve equally well.** However, the school is aware that it needs to further

develop provision if increasing numbers of pupils with more severe needs are to continue to achieve as well as their peers.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress towards the early learning goals, except in personal and social development where progress is very good. In Years 1 to 11, and in post-16 where appropriate, pupils' achievements are very good in science, information and communication technology (ICT), geography and physical education. They achieve well in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, French, history and PSHE and citizenship. They make satisfactory achievement in religious education and WRE. A number of pupils' good use of high technology communication aids across the curriculum effectively supports achievement as these devices enable them to express choice and make decisions.

Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. **Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality education** for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good with some very good features**. Excellent relationships and the use of praise and encouragement underpin the very high level of expectation that teachers have of their pupils. Strong teamwork means that a range of adults makes a very significant contribution to pupils' learning, and staff work very hard to include all pupils in all activities. Lessons are planned effectively, based on detailed knowledge of pupils' prior achievements and targets. The degree to which alternative communication systems are currently used is appropriate for most pupils who require them, but a few pupils with the most complex needs do not currently have routine opportunities for doing so. Pupils' application to work is very good and they are provided with many opportunities to work independently and collaboratively.

The curriculum is good. There are very good opportunities for enrichment activities. Accommodation is very good and there are good learning resources. The highly effective communication systems between school and residential staff result in very good curriculum enrichment opportunities being provided for residential pupils.

Provision for pupil's care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The support and guidance given to them is good. Pupils are highly responsive to very good opportunities to have their say in the life of the school. Residential pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported.

The school enjoys very good links with parents and carers. There are good links with the community, but underdeveloped links with other schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good. The leadership provided by other key staff is satisfactory overall. Good management systems are in place. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The governance of the school is good and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very satisfied with, and very positive about, the education and care provided for their children, including residential provision. Pupils are very happy and enjoy everything the school offers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Develop curriculum planning, staff training and the use of additional communication systems to better meet the needs of pupils with additional and more severe needs.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of senior staff and provide the opportunities for them to develop the skills to contribute more effectively to school development.
- Ensure an appropriate coverage of PSHE and citizenship and improve the curriculum for 14 to 19 year olds by developing WRL and links with colleges.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Overall, pupils of all ages achieve well. Boys and girls make similar progress and those with additional special educational needs generally learn equally well, although on a few occasions the increasing number of pupils with more complex needs do not.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 to 11 and in the post-16 department achieve well.
- Pupils in all years achieve very well in their personal development.
- The implementation of national strategies has contributed well to pupils' achievements.
- Teachers are adept at promoting the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) through different subjects of the curriculum.
- Boarding pupils' achievements are supported very well by the residential facility.

#### **Commentary**

1. Although children in the Foundation Stage achieve well across the different areas of learning; they make very good progress in their personal and social development. This is because children are given many opportunities to meet different people and to interact with their peers during play and other activities. For all other school age pupils and those in the post-16 department, their achievements are very good in science, information and communication technology (ICT), geography and physical education. They achieve well in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, French, history and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. They achieve satisfactorily in religious education and in work-related learning (WRL). This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Very good specialist and general accommodation and good learning resources enhance pupils' learning and achievements. Most of the time, all pupils achieve

equally well. This is because teachers include all pupils in all activities and give them activities that are realistically challenging. These activities are also appropriate to pupils' ages so that, for example, many activities in the post-16 department prepare pupils for leaving school and are related to real life activities like buying a newspaper or travelling on a bus. Teachers are able to do this because they know their pupils very well. However, the school is becoming aware that it needs to amend some aspects of its provision, such as the more consistent use of a variety of communication systems, if increasing numbers of pupils with more severe needs are to continue to make the same good progress as their peers.

2. Consistently good achievement during their time at school means that pupils in Years 10 and 11 and those at post-16 gain a good level in a range of awards and certificates matched to their needs. Their achievements are evident in the success they achieve in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and Certificate of Educational Achievement (Entry Level) examinations and the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Youth Award Scheme.

3. The school has made good progress in adapting the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the Key Stage 3 strategy for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Generally, long-term planning is based on the strategies and lessons are structured in a three-part format. This enables pupils to practise skills in the introductory sessions and develop new knowledge and understanding in the main part of the lesson. Teachers usually use the final plenary sessions well to reinforce what has been learnt and to assess pupils' progress. The school's success in implementing these strategies is making a significant contribution to pupils' achievements.

4. Pupils achieve well in English because the school has good strategies for developing pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. As a result, pupils are encouraged to listen and are given time to respond, their reading competence develops well over time and they make good progress with their writing skills, with the most capable being able to write for a variety of different audiences. In many lessons, the use of alternative and additional communication systems such as Makaton signing, symbols and objects of reference contribute to pupils' good achievements. However, some pupils who would benefit from signing and symbol use do not currently have routine opportunities for doing so. Technological aids are also used very effectively to promote pupils' achievements. Because of good mathematics teaching, pupils in all year groups make good progress in all the different strands of the subject curriculum. In particular, they develop very good acquisition of mathematical language, which is reinforced consistently in lessons. However, teachers have not yet fully developed their planning in ways that consistently meet the needs of the increasing number of pupils with more complex needs that the school is admitting. Pupils are achieving so well in science because teachers promote interest and enthusiasm in the subject from an early age, and they harness and build on this enthusiasm as pupils get older. They approach their work seriously but regard the subject with a sense of fun, never having lost that early enthusiasm. Pupils achieve very well in ICT in developing the necessary skills to use a range of software packages. In part, this is because all pupils are included through the school's provision of a wide range of devices and adaptations that ensures all pupils can access all activities. As a result, primary age pupils know how to collect data and present it as pictograms, and older ones use programs for word processing, desktop publishing, presentation software, spreadsheets and databases.

5. Pupils are very effectively encouraged to develop their communication skills in all lessons. The planned introduction of subject-specific vocabulary is a consistent feature. Consequently, pupils learn to use language well and to expand their vocabulary because of the excellent examples presented by staff. Teachers also develop pupils' mathematical skills well across the curriculum. They take many opportunities to reinforce pupils' understanding of mathematics and their knowledge of mathematical language, particularly in subjects like history, science and design and technology. Information and communication technology is used well in subjects such as mathematics, where well-chosen programs are used to enable pupils to reinforce their understanding of a range of important skills. A particular feature of ICT is its use to assist pupils to communicate, as a variety of technical devices are used by a number of pupils in order to communicate with others and take part effectively in lessons.

6. The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development, and this is evident in all the work that it does. At the time of the last inspection, pupils achieved very well in their personal development and this standard has been maintained. Pupils make very good progress towards the personal and social targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) because teachers provide many opportunities for them to develop these skills during lessons. Lesson planning identifies activities that require pupils to work independently at times, while in other tasks they have to work in pairs or small groups.

7. The residential facility makes a significant contribution to raising standards of achievement. Facilities are made available for pupils to work on their homework tasks and residential care workers provide well-judged support. Residential staff support pupils' achievements in other ways too. They have knowledge of their targets in IEPs and have a good understanding of the progress pupils make towards these targets during the school day. This is because of the very good communications between school and residential staff. Residential care workers and teachers maintain close contact on a daily basis through a home/school book and to consolidate this link, formal meetings take place between class and subject teachers and key workers. These are residential care workers with a specific responsibility for particular pupils and, therefore, they get to know them and their families especially well. Key workers also regularly observe pupils in their classrooms to obtain a more 'rounded' picture of their pupils. All information is carefully recorded in a pupil's individual development plan so that their progress towards individual targets can be tracked effectively.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Their attitudes to work and learning and their behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development, through the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Excellent relationships with staff help pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning and make a significant contribution to their achievement and development.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good and a major factor in ensuring that the school is an orderly, learning environment.
- The school's ethos of care and support helps pupils to develop their confidence, their social skills, their awareness of others and understanding of the wider world.

- The residential provision contributes significantly to pupils' personal development.
- The school systems for monitoring attendance, and the initiatives to discourage absence, are underdeveloped.

## Commentary

8. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with that for similar schools. The school follows up any unexplained absence on an individual basis, but is not yet developing clear initiatives to promote and encourage higher attendance. In addition, the school is not monitoring and comparing the attendance rates of different groups of pupils. New procedures and systems for a new registration system are currently being explored, and these will make the monitoring and analysis of attendance and punctuality data much simpler.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	9.8%	School data	0.2%
National data	10.5%	National data	0.4%

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

9. Relationships are a strength of the school. As a result, pupils are happy and enjoy attending the school. One parent revealed that after spending one night in the residential unit, her son declared that he had enjoyed himself so much that he wouldn't mind spending more nights there. Interactions with adults are often characterised by the positive use of humour by staff and the vast majority of pupils are uninhibited in their questioning and discussion. The consistently open and genuinely caring approach of adults at the school contributes significantly to the relationships. This, in turn, successfully encourages pupils to develop interest in their work and increases their desire to learn. The trusting relationships mean that pupils have no hesitation in seeking help and advice with any concerns or worries that develop.

10. The very good attitudes and behaviour shown by pupils during the previous inspection have been maintained. Very good behaviour ensures pupils concentrate effectively in lessons and this has a positive influence on the progress they make. This is evident in the fact that there have not been any exclusions in the past year. The school is a safe environment in which pupils respect the behaviour code and respond enthusiastically to praise and reward schemes. In lessons, pupils often become engrossed in their work and show real determination to succeed. Throughout the school, there are examples of pupils sharing resources without dispute, taking turns and being considerate towards each other. They are very aware of their own and others' physical difficulties and they show increasing levels of tolerant and supportive behaviour. No examples of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection and records show that rare incidents of oppressive behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively.

11. The very effective, and consistent, care and support provided by education, care and therapy staff helps pupils deal with their difficulties. As a result, they become interested in their work, more aware of themselves and others in the community and develop a range of personal skills. Pupils feel secure and show increasing levels of self-esteem. Every opportunity is taken to encourage pupils' social development and to prepare them for later life. It was a privilege to be present at an

independence day event where six Victoria pupils competently led pupils from a number of other schools in developing and making a presentation to local councillors about the problems people in wheelchairs have accessing some shops in the town centre. Pupils show a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and growing awareness of values such as trust, respect and friendship. They are taught to celebrate differences, to respect one-another and are helped to think through the consequences of their actions. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted very well through acts of collective worship, and enhanced through activities like short prayers during snack time. Their understanding of their own and others' culture is good. Subjects such as English and art make significant contributions to their appreciation of literature and paintings, and activities like French Day in school, trips to France and visits to buildings such as different places of worship give pupils understanding of how other people live.

12. The recent National Care Standards inspection report noted the respectful, positive relationships between staff and pupils in the residential provision. There is a homely atmosphere, with opportunities for peer groups to mix in their houses. This makes a significant contribution to their personal, social and health development. An emphasis on choice also makes a strong contribution to personal development, and pupils and staff hold weekly planning meetings to choose activities for evenings and weekends. Pupils also have their own individual development plans in which they can record their personal views and aims, which help to build confidence in their ability to express choices and make judgements.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education. Pupils benefit from effective teaching and very good care, supported by very good links with parents, good links with the community and satisfactory links with other schools and colleges. The provision for residential pupils is very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good overall with some very good features. Therefore, pupils learn well and make good progress in developing new skills, knowledge and understanding. Lessons also make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Assessment procedures are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very high quality interactions between staff and pupils and the appropriate use of praise and encouragement underpin the very high level of expectation and challenge that teachers have of their pupils.
- Strong teamwork means that a range of adults makes a very significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Lessons are planned effectively, based on detailed knowledge of pupils' prior achievements and targets because staff use effective assessment procedures.
- Alternative communication systems and their use are appropriate for most pupils who require them, but a few pupils with the most complex needs do not currently have routine opportunities for doing so.
- Pupils' application to work is very good and they are provided with many opportunities to work independently and collaboratively.

## Commentary

13. The school has done well to maintain the overall good teaching and learning identified during the last inspection, and there has been a significant improvement in some aspects. A much higher proportion of teaching is now very good and most lessons have very good features. Teachers are very well prepared; lessons are well planned and classrooms are well organised and structured. Lessons are rewarding experiences. The input of specialist subject teachers, particularly in Years 7 to 11, is a significant influence on the quality of learning.

14. Lessons have many common features of very effective practice. Particularly noticeable characteristics are the excellent quality of relationships and adults' knowledge of their pupils' needs. These features provide the basis of much of the work that takes place. Detailed knowledge of the degree of individual pupils' capabilities and difficulties enable teachers to provide activities and tasks in which pupils can achieve success, but at a level that is realistically challenging. Consequently, pupils rise to these challenges as they try very hard and always approach their work with interest and enthusiasm. The quality of the relationships permits adults to persevere with high expectations and to extend pupils' learning; praise, encouragement, rapport and humour all combine to produce a very positive learning atmosphere. For instance, a class of post-16 pupils were learning about recognising different coins and estimating values that were less than one pound in simulated real life situations. The teacher developed scenarios that pupils might experience when they leave school, like wishing to buy a newspaper when they were unsure if they had enough money while others in the queue behind them were rushing to catch a train. There was a great deal of laughter as the teacher pretended to be in the queue and made comments like "Come on. Get the right change sorted out."

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 69 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	33 (48%)	29 (42%)	7 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

15. Teachers are committed to enhancing pupils' personal development too. In part, this occurs routinely as teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this engenders a work ethic within classrooms. At other times, opportunities to develop their personal qualities are planned. Teachers engineer many opportunities for pupils to work independently, such as operating computer programs in lessons like English and mathematics. Co-operative work is also encouraged, like the Year 9 pupils who worked in pairs examining the features of their partner from digital photographs. Pupils are also given opportunities to participate in large group activities, such as the mixed age class that were involved in acting out the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* to very simple musical accompaniment, and activities like this help pupils to listen and to develop an understanding of working with others

16. The good achievements that pupils show owe much to the quality, range and expertise of the many adults who work very well together as teams. There is very high quality liaison between teachers, a range of therapists, day care staff, learning support assistants and, in the case of boarding pupils, residential care workers. The input of

therapists and day care staff ensures that pupils are as physically comfortable as possible and that communication strategies are in place. This means that pupils are able to focus on their learning. Their learning in lessons is enhanced by a strong team of learning support assistants who contribute greatly in ensuring that all pupils participate fully in lessons and are included in all activities.

17. Increasingly, the school is now admitting pupils with more severe and complex learning needs, a number of whom are non-speaking. While some additional communication aids, such as Makaton signing, symbols, objects of reference and visual timetables, are used to include pupils and to promote their learning, they are not yet used consistently throughout the school. This means that on a few occasions pupils are not in a position to communicate effectively with adults or their classmates. Senior staff recognise the need to consider adopting communication systems that are additional to speaking and listening more routinely, and are beginning to implement such change. High technology aids have been provided to several pupils in the school and this has improved their learning by giving them opportunities to express choice and make decisions.

18. Generally, teachers monitor pupils' achievements well during lessons and make very good use of well-chosen questions to evaluate pupils' learning. They feed back information to pupils effectively so that they have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. Effective assessment systems also mean that teachers have good information to plan future activities that reflect individual needs. A good start in developing assessment procedures has been made by the introduction of 'p' levels, for those pupils working at below Level 1 of the National Curriculum, but these need to be broken down still further to assess the very small gains that pupils make and to plan the next step to be taught. Other aspects of assessment are equally good; teachers' accurate assessments of pupils' achievements contribute to events such as IEP reviews, Annual Reviews of Statements of Special Educational Need and detailed annual reports to parents.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. There are very good opportunities for enrichment activities. Accommodation is very good and there are good learning resources.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The broad, balanced and relevant curriculum prepares most pupils very well for the next stage of their education.
- A very good range of educational visits and visiting specialists support pupils' learning very effectively.
- The curriculum has not yet been sufficiently well adapted to meet all the needs of the increasing number of pupils with complex learning difficulties.
- Some contents of the PSHE, citizenship and WRL curricula are not yet being implemented fully.
- The very good range, experience and quality of staff meet the needs of the curriculum very well.
- The curriculum enrichment opportunities for residential pupils are very good.

## **Commentary**

19. The school ensures a balanced approach to the variety of needs presented by the pupils. The curriculum has improved steadily since the last inspection. The disruption created by the need for frequent individual therapy sessions is very carefully monitored to make sure that pupils' learning is not adversely affected. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and at post-16, work towards the most appropriate accreditation for their capability. As a result, all pupils leave the school with accreditation through GCSE full or short courses, Entry Level, or ASDAN which gives them the confidence to transfer to college and the ability to follow more advanced courses. In 2004, six Year 11 pupils left school and five of these went on to another school or college. The figures for post-16 pupils are equally impressive; 12 pupils left, of whom 11 continued in education.

20. Pupils in Years 1 to 9 are prepared very well for the next stage of their education. Effective long-term subject planning and a broad and balanced curriculum mean that pupils follow a curriculum in each stage of their education that enables them to build on their prior learning. Pupils' transfer from one stage to the next is further enhanced by effective communications between teachers. The school's commitment to providing its pupils with a full National Curriculum also enables pupils to benefit from some inclusion opportunities in mainstream schools and, if appropriate, full-time transfer into a mainstream school. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and those in the post-16 department, are well prepared for leaving school. Aspects of the curriculum that support this particularly well include the accreditations that pupils can achieve and, for many who enter the post-16 department, there is an emphasis on independence training and the development of life skills. However, the curriculum programme for pupils aged fourteen to nineteen years has some limitations. There are few links with local colleges to enable pupils to follow different 'taster' courses and to experience a very different environment, and the WRL curriculum is underdeveloped. For instance, there are no young business enterprise schemes.

21. The range of educational visits, visiting specialists and opportunities for extra-curricular activities is very impressive and significantly enhances pupils' learning. Personal development, independence skills and communication skills benefit enormously from residential experiences, starting in the primary classes with a visit to Green Island. Other residential trips include outdoor adventure activities in Cornwall and a five-day visit to compete in sports events at Stoke Mandeville. Lunch time clubs include gardening, a miniature tramway, dancing, discussion group, computers, and many more. There are also after school clubs open to both boarding and day pupils.

22. Some aspects of the curriculum require further development. In particular, the curriculum has not yet been fully adapted or modified to meet the needs of the changing profile of pupils now entering the school. The school is aware that it needs to improve staff training and expertise in the planning for, and teaching of, pupils with complex learning difficulties. In addition, the PSHE and citizenship curriculum needs developing further. Some subject leaders have carried out audits to ascertain how their long-term plans can contribute to these two aspects of the curriculum, but this is incomplete. As a result, there is insufficient and inconsistent coverage and further monitoring is required if PSHE and citizenship is to be fully integrated into the whole school curriculum.

23. All staff are committed and enthusiastic and there is a good number of teaching and learning support assistants to meet the needs of the curriculum. The input of specialist subject teachers, particularly in Years 7 to 11, is a significant influence on the quality of curriculum planning. Staff have very good knowledge of children with special needs and

are experienced in working with them. Very good induction and continuing professional programmes maintain their skills very well. The very good accommodation is enhanced by bright informative displays, and is very well used. Resources used in lessons are usually good, but there is a lack of outdoor play equipment, especially for the younger pupils and for wheelchair users.

24. The highly effective communication systems between school and residential staff result in very good curriculum enrichment opportunities being provided for residential pupils. This provides valuable support not only for their personal development but also their academic curriculum. For example, some of the sports and drama activities are truly inspirational in the less formalised atmosphere after school. On one such occasion, a giant human jigsaw was built up amid shrieks of laughter and enthusiasm, with very good learning about self-image, turn taking, and making choices. These are valuable ideas that pupils can then apply to other learning in school. Resident pupils' learning is also developed through their access to computers, including Internet availability, both in their residences and the school computer suite.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Good quality support and guidance is made available to secure pupils' ongoing achievement and development. Very good procedures ensure that pupils' views are routinely sought and valued.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is vigilant in ensuring pupils' well being and safety.
- Careful monitoring of pupils' achievements, and close communication between staff, ensure a consistent and effective approach to their further development.
- Very good and improved opportunities are made available to ensure pupils' involvement in school development.
- Residential pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported.

## Commentary

25. Good arrangements for child protection are in place and the school is both vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. All staff show very high levels of care and concern and ensure that day-to-day activities are carried out safely. The procedures for getting pupils to and from their transport at the start and end of the day are complex, but procedures are closely followed with every care being given to ensuring that children are safe. In lessons and at break times, appropriate supervision is always provided so pupils can play safely. Good systems ensure that identified hazards are quickly reported to the appropriate authority with the result that concerns are dealt with rapidly. The few minor procedural issues in the residential areas raised in a recent National Care Standards inspection have been attended to effectively.

26. The good support and guidance provided by staff enhances pupils' academic, personal and physical development. There is variability between subjects in the systems used to record, monitor and use data on individual pupils' levels of academic understanding, but across the school good quality advice and guidance does help secure pupils' ongoing achievement. Individual education plans have been further developed since the last inspection and follow a standardised format throughout the school. Many targets are now specific so that progress can be judged, but more work needs to be done to ensure that all are equally precise. In addition pupils have targets for each subject or area of learning. All targets are shared with parents/carers, so that the latter are aware of what their children are aiming for at school.

27. The very close liaison between education, therapy, day care, learning support assistants and residential care workers ensures that pupils' personal and physical development are under constant observation. In addition support is available from the local education authority sensory support service, with a teacher for hearing-impaired pupils visiting the school each week to help pupils with significant levels of hearing impairment to develop language. Teachers from this service also provide training for staff when this is needed. Formal reviews are used effectively to identify development targets and to tailor support programmes. Staff from all disciplines show consistently high levels of concern for pupils and are conscientious in reporting successes or concerns as they occur. The school is flexible and responds effectively to all concerns by arranging informal reviews at which revised targets are agreed to maintain and extend development. The very good and open communication between specialist staff is the key to the effective and consistent support offered to all pupils. In addition, the school benefits from having a trained counsellor who works with pupils who can be referred by staff or parents, or who can refer themselves. There is also a rehabilitation engineer who is able to adapt equipment to meet individual requirements.

28. There are very good opportunities for pupils to express their views and to become involved in day-to-day school development. Pupils are asked consistently to express opinions on their work and performance. Their views are always sought at formal reviews and older pupils play a responsible part in agreeing their development programmes and targets. Through the school council, and school forum for post-16 pupils, pupils make positive suggestions on how to improve school routines and facilities. Recent improvements to the playground and the major alterations to the entrance area were strongly influenced by them.

29. The residential staff teams are very committed to valuing and seeking the views of each pupil in their care. They listen well, and act on those views, building up trust and confidence between staff and pupils. Induction arrangements for pupils are very good, and pupils make a personal CD as part of the induction process. The National Care Standards report commented that residential pupils' care, welfare and safety are good, with many strong aspects in the approach to pupils' personal needs. There is an impressive consistency of approach to residential pupils' personal needs.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school enjoys a very good and improved partnership with parents and carers that contribute positively to pupils' learning and development. There are good, productive links with the community and satisfactory links with other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents and carers appreciate all the school does; their partnership with staff is enhanced by frequent communication.
- A very good range of initiatives involves parents in school life and in the education and development of their children.
- The school draws effectively from the local community to broaden and enhance the development of day and residential pupils.
- The school's improvement plan acknowledges that much more work is needed to develop the links with other schools and colleges.
- Very good links are maintained with the parents of residential pupils.

### **Commentary**

30. The very strong partnership between the school and parents has improved since the last inspection. Views expressed by parents and carers, in the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, indicate high levels of satisfaction with the school and widespread pleasure at the improvements they see their children making. An overwhelming majority say their children like school and feel better for the support they receive. There is widespread agreement that teachers and therapy staff quickly determine their children's needs and that they are kept well informed of progress and development. All parents comment favourably on the consistently high level of care that is shown towards pupils and there is broad agreement that the school is effective in encouraging maturity, mobility and self-confidence.

31. When pupils enter the school, parents and carers are fully involved in initial assessments and in agreeing education and therapy programmes. Very effective communication is maintained through the home/school book, telephone calls, parents' evenings, social events and the formal Annual Reviews of Statements of Special Educational Needs. All statutory requirements are met in relation to transition planning and Annual Reviews. Parents and carers are very well involved, with opportunities to submit written reports, and to attend the meetings. This ensures that parents/carers are clear about the progress the children are making, and of their targets, and keeps them involved in their children's education. Pupils are also involved in reviews, either by attending meetings or by discussion beforehand with a member of staff.

32. Reviews and evenings are generally well attended and the school makes alternative arrangements for any parents unable to attend. Parents are alerted quickly if problems occur and the school is always available if parents have any concerns. The school regularly consults parents, values their views and opinions and always takes note of suggestions for improvement. Various initiatives are helping to build the partnership with parents and to involve them in their children's development. For example, the "Gossip Group" (giving shared support and information to parents) meets monthly in school and is valued by an increasing number of parents. The number of special evenings is increasingly being arranged to help parents understand and support programmes at home. Recent sessions have covered mathematics teaching, transition arrangements and various specialist therapy evenings. The school provides a much appreciated therapy service during school holidays.

33. The school is increasingly outward looking in its links with the wider community. Various community groups use the school on a regular basis and the resources and skills in

the local community are used well to enhance pupils' learning and understanding of the wider world. Pupils visit local shops, museums, theatres, libraries and experience journeys on local transport. There are regular opportunities for them to go on residential visits and frequent visitors into the school include the police, fire services, theatre groups and artists. The independence programmes for older pupils are particularly effective and are heavily linked to community facilities and organisations. The school also provides a facility for the local community. The swimming pool is used regularly and a number of local colleges place their students in the school for work experience. As a result, many of their students have subsequently become volunteers in the school.

34. Although some good links have been developed with other educational establishments, such as groups of pupils from a local special school joining Victoria pupils for some swimming lessons and a very good link with a local secondary school which has enabled pupils to be extremely successful in the national Keilder Challenge, links with local colleges are underdeveloped. This prevents older pupils from experiencing taster courses in vocational subjects as well having the opportunities to mix with other students.

35. Links with the parents of boarding pupils are developed well through the pupils' individual development plans, in which they have a home contact page. Pupils can telephone home or write letters at any time, and most make weekly contact, supported by staff. This also provides an opportunity for communication between key workers and parents about aspects of care and welfare. Weekly boarders have a home-school book also. Any problems that arise are immediately reported to the pupils' home, and all telephone calls, correspondence, or problems are documented. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to use facilities in the local community, and many do so after school in order to shop, play skittles, or go to the cinema or a club. These activities are all chosen by pupils in advance, at their weekly planning meetings, and so transport requirements, groupings, and other arrangements are made well in advance.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good. The leadership provided by other key staff is satisfactory overall. Good management systems are in place. The governance of the school is good and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's development, which is enthusiastically endorsed by all staff and governors.
- Some senior staff provide very good leadership and management, but others do not take a sufficiently active role in shaping the direction of the school and managing aspects of its provision.
- Procedures to track pupils' progress are at the early stage of development, so that the data obtained is not yet used routinely to ensure that all pupils, and different groups of pupils, achieve as well as they can.
- Current financial systems and arrangements with the Shaftesbury Society do not allow the school to plan strategically.
- Very good performance management systems are linked to very good opportunities for all staff to undertake ongoing professional training and development.

- The governing body is developing well its role as a 'critical friend' of the school as governors' roles and responsibilities, compared with those of the charity's trustees, becomes further clarified.

## Commentary

36. Governors are very enthusiastic and they work hard, and successfully, to support and develop the school. The strengthening partnership between senior staff and governors ensures that there is a shared vision for the school's key priorities and development. Collectively, governors possess a very good range of professional skills and the school is, increasingly, using this expertise to promote and encourage its aspirations. Consequently, governors are able to provide insight and challenge to ensure that priorities are identified correctly and day-to-day matters are addressed effectively. However, there has been a great deal of discussion recently with representatives of the Shaftesbury Society to clarify precisely governors' terms of responsibility and what they are required, and empowered, to do with respect to the role of the charity's trustees. This has still not been fully resolved and this has an impact on governors' ability to move the school forward, with a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, as effectively as they wish to do.

37. Very good day-to-day financial management enables governors to monitor budgeting and spending through very well produced financial reports. By monitoring these reports, they are able to challenge senior staff to explain, and justify, recommendations in the light of a changing school population. However, the Shaftesbury Society's financial arrangements are having a detrimental effect on the school's ability to plan strategically. Currently, governors and senior staff are not allowed to carry forward financial surpluses from one year to the next. Therefore, the school is prevented from identifying long-term priorities, developing budgets that produce planned surpluses and then using this money to bring about change. For instance, the surplus of £78040 shown below will be passed on to the Shaftesbury Society rather than being available to the school to fund further development.

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	3160608
Total expenditure	3082568
Expenditure per pupil	28023

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to the next year	78040

38. The school provides good value for money. It operates a seven-band system to determine fees, based on individual pupils' needs. The bands take account of the three dimensions of education, therapy and care / support and are linked each pupil's placement in terms of whether it is day or residential. Both income and expenditure are judged as reasonable; value for money is built into all spending decisions and income is used efficiently to maintain the accommodation, improve the quality of resources and to employ and deploy staff.

39. High levels of leadership and management have been maintained during the period since the last inspection, and in some aspects they have improved. The headteacher has developed a very good understanding of the school's status during the short time in which

she has been in post. She sets high standards in all areas of the school's work and has the perception to recognise how the school needs to develop in the future. Some other senior staff support her very well in this respect. They, too, are able to see areas for the development within their own areas of responsibility and can, therefore make significant contributions to school improvement planning. As a result, aspects of provision such as residential care, therapies and innovation within the primary department are all contributing to school development. However, there is significantly less perceptive insight in the leadership of the senior school and post-16. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, other features of leadership are evident throughout the school and are subscribed to by all senior staff. The very strong commitment to inclusion provides equality of opportunity for all pupils within the school, irrespective of their special educational need. This commitment to inclusion shown by the leadership team and governors has a direct impact on the quality of education for pupils; priority is given to removing as many of their barriers to learning as possible.

40. The good level of management in the school is evident in many aspects of its work. Very good induction procedures and performance management arrangements, and a very focused programme of staff development have all combined to bring about change since the last inspection. As a result, overall standards of achievement have risen because the quality of teaching and learning has improved. A particularly impressive feature of management is the way staff are recruited, deployed and developed. This is rooted in the school's commitment to the continuing professional development of its entire staff. However, the school now needs to accelerate this programme if staff are to have all the skills necessary to meet the needs of an increasingly complex school population.

41. Efficient and routine systems to track pupils' progress and to carry out whole school analyses of pupil performance are an underdeveloped feature of management. There are very well-established systems for the regular monitoring of individual targets in all subjects through IEPs, but the school is only now beginning to collect whole-school data in a systematic way in order to raise standards of achievement. The performance of different groups of pupils and their achievements in different subjects are not compared sufficiently well, and the whole school is not using the data routinely to help with moderating teachers' assessments of the 'p' levels and National Curriculum levels that pupils achieve.

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **WORK-RELATED LEARNING**

Provision in work-related learning is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good opportunities to undertake work experience, which helps to raise their awareness of opportunities or when the leave school.
- Although information about WRL is provided within personal, social and health education programme, it is generally underdeveloped.
- There are very few opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to follow link courses at local colleges or be involved in business enterprise schemes.

### **Commentary**

42. Pupils' are given good experience of the world of work, through work experience. At present this is offered in Year 11, but this is being changed to Year 10 so that there will be more time to follow up the experience. Pupils undertake their work experience in situations that are appropriate for them, given their level of maturity and level of personal development. Some go out to local businesses, while others stay on the school premises, either helping in school situations such as with younger children, or working in the adjacent adult education provision for horticulture, which is also owned by the school. Pupils are well prepared for their work experience, and they maintain a daily record that can be used for further discussions.

43. Pupils are helped to consider issues in relation to WRL in the context of the PSHE programme. For example, they discuss preparing for work experience, and address issues in relation to themselves, such as their strengths and personal targets. However, an introduction to these issues at an earlier age would be beneficial.

44. Pupils' awareness of the world of work and post-16 opportunities is limited by the fact that there are currently very few openings for them to attend local colleges for taster or link courses. In addition, there is no business enterprise scheme in the school, so that pupils do not have the opportunity of first-hand experience of running a business, which again limits their understanding and, therefore, their choices when they leave school.

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, as a result of which children make good progress in lessons and towards their individual targets.
- Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- The curriculum is well planned to provide children with a broad range of opportunities, but needs to be further developed to take account of the more complex needs of children now entering the school.
- Assessment procedures are very good.

#### Commentary

45. At the time of the inspection, there was only a small number of children in this age group. They are taught in a class of both nursery and reception age children, together with pupils in Year 1. Because of the small number of children, and the fact that some are part-time, it is not appropriate to make a judgement about overall achievement. However, children make good progress in lessons and those who have been in school for longer make good progress towards their individual targets. This is a similar picture to that at that time of the last inspection.

46. Children's **personal and social and emotional development** is very good. Adults help children to settle into the class and to gain confidence in meeting different people. Children begin to be aware of their peers, and often show care for them, trying to involve one another in different activities. They learn to take turns and to make choices of activity. They are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Provision for developing **communication, language and literacy** is good, with opportunities to develop children's communication skills and language being provided throughout the day. There is much emphasis on the understanding of language, and Makaton signing. Some symbols are used to help children's understanding, but the further use of such additional communication systems for those with more complex needs would give additional support to their development of communication. **Mathematical development** is good. More capable children are learning to count and to recognise numbers; they match and name shapes and make patterns of different shapes. Many activities enable children to make good progress in developing their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They show a growing awareness of their environment, both around the school and by taking part in visits to places such as a farm. In **creative development**, music is used throughout the day to enhance understanding of different areas of the curriculum. Children enjoy these opportunities and try hard to join in with words, and actions where appropriate and achieve well. They have many opportunities for art activities such as painting and making collages, and they participate in these enthusiastically and with good success. **Physical development** is assisted through play activities and through more formal lessons. Children are well supported in these and are enabled to move around as much as possible, using different movements and parts of the body.

47. Two experienced nursery nurses share teaching and management of the Foundation Stage. They lead and manage it well. They have a good understanding of children's needs and plan well to meet these. A variety of activities is used well to engage children's interest in developing understanding and knowledge in different areas of the curriculum and to assist their development of communication skills. Good use is made of a variety of resources, although more equipment in the outdoor play area would further assist children's development, particularly the acquisition of equipment for pupils in wheelchairs. Children are well supported by other adults such as learning support assistants and speech and language therapy assistants who enable them to participate fully in lessons. A range of therapists employed by the school, and advisory teachers such as those for hearing-impairment who visit, help with the development of children's communication skills and address their physical needs.

48. The curriculum is based on the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage and, as such, it is broad and balanced and provides children with good opportunities to work towards the early learning goals. However, some additional approaches and strategies, such as a more sensory-based curriculum for children with more complex needs, would further enhance opportunities for these children. Children are assessed when they enter the school and these assessments form baseline judgements against which children's progress can be measured. Achievements are recorded routinely on a daily basis, and then weekly record sheets are completed for each area of learning. As a result, staff are able to set realistic termly targets based on detailed knowledge of children's achievements and they can complete the Foundation Profile in the reception year. This gives staff a clear picture of pupils' needs and forms the basis for setting targets.

## **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 – 4 AND POST-16**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-organised and skilled teachers provide challenging lessons that ensure pupils achieve well in all aspects of English.
- The use of ICT has raised significantly the achievements of many pupils, especially in writing.
- Curriculum planning is very good for the majority of pupils, but further development is needed to meet the needs of the increasing number of pupils with complex learning difficulties that is now being admitted.
- The use of alternative and additional means of communication is inconsistent.

#### **Commentary**

49. Teaching is consistently good, and frequently very good. In the best lessons, planning is detailed and identifies work that is matched to the needs of individual pupils and groups of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour and

pupils respond to these challenges very well. They are encouraged to listen and are given time to communicate and respond, including those who use electronic communication aids.

50. Pupils listen carefully, and their confidence in speaking increases as they mature. As a result, they contribute willingly in lessons and in other activities like school assemblies. Older, and more competent communicators, also have the confidence to speak to large groups, including people they do not know. For instance, some presented their research findings about local disability access to shops to representatives from the local council and business community.

51. Reading ability, in all age groups, ranges from very fluent and expressive reading to pupils who are at the early stage of developing reading skills, using a variety of strategies. However, most pupils' reading competence develops well over time because difficulties with the mechanics of reading are not allowed to inhibit their appreciation of literature and appropriate support is provided when needed. Older pupils are challenged to think, read critically and express opinions on the structure, style and content of many and varied books and plays, such as J.B. Priestley's *'An Inspector Calls'*. Most show very good understanding of the texts they read.

52. Generally, pupils make good progress with their writing skills. The most capable write for a variety of different audiences, from informal letters to critical accounts of books they have read. They frequently use word processing for extended exercises or to improve the presentation of their work. A significant improvement since the last inspection has been the introduction of on-screen writing grids for pupils who have difficulty in manipulating pens or pencils; this has enhanced these pupils' confidence and competence significantly.

53. The subject is led and managed well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection as the subject curriculum is now well planned and structured and monitored effectively. It meets the needs of the majority very well, and culminates in good accreditation at the end of Year 11. However, further development and refinement is needed, such as further development of the sensory curriculum, if the school is to meet the needs of its changing population, as increasing numbers of less capable pupils and those with complex learning difficulties are enrolled.

54. Alternative and additional communication systems are not yet used consistently throughout the school. In many lessons, teachers use such systems very well; adults were seen using Makaton signing, symbols, objects of reference and visual timetables to promote pupils' learning. However, some pupils who would benefit from signing and symbol use do not currently have routine opportunities for doing so. In particular, younger pupils with complex needs, or those who are non-speaking, are not exposed to a total communication environment that would support the development of speech and language. Teachers of the more capable non-speaking pupils are very skilled at presenting two or three options, so enabling pupils to participate. However, some of these very capable pupils may well want to express an opinion different from any of those offered, but the lack of routine signing or the use of symbols means they sometimes do not have the opportunity to do so. Technology has provided several pupils in the school with a 'voice' and these aids are used very effectively. They ensure that all pupils are fully included in activities and all are given opportunities to express choice and make decisions.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils are encouraged very well to develop their communication skills in lessons. The planned introduction of vocabulary, specific to the subject being taught, is a consistent feature of lessons, and the language development observed during a session in the sensory room was especially good. Pupils learn to use language well and to expand their vocabulary because of the excellent examples presented by staff. In the post-16 department, English is integral to the Life Skills programme and this is particularly relevant as pupils are provided with many opportunities to rehearse their communication skills in 'real life' situations. This is very good preparation for when they leave school.

## French

Provision in French is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from being taught by a fluent French speaker.
- Regular assessment in lessons is used very well to evaluate pupils' understanding.
- A good variety of teaching methods ensure pupils are motivated to work hard.
- All aspects of literacy are promoted well.

## Commentary

56. The single French teacher leads and manages the subject well, and so there has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection. French is now being offered to more pupils in Years 3 to 6; more pupils obtain external accreditation at the end of Year 11; biennial trips to France and regular 'French Days' in school enable pupils to meet and communicate with native French speakers.

57. As a subject specialist teaches all lessons, pupils are exposed to very good spoken language. As a result, lessons are very rich language experiences within which pupils are immersed in spoken language, supported well by texts. Consequently, their speaking and listening skills, reading and writing are all encouraged through the activities they undertake. In addition, computer programs are used appropriately to reinforce pupils' learning.

58. Teaching is good and so pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well. They acquire new vocabulary and develop increasing understanding of sentence construction, reinforced well in written exercises. Lessons are very well planned, prepared and organised. Very good planning identifies what it is anticipated pupils will learn, and additional activities for higher attaining pupils are provided. Therefore, time is used well and lessons are productive sessions. Skilled learning support assistants work very well with individuals and small groups of pupils. They provide appropriate levels of support but do not intervene too quickly and so pupils are encouraged to solve problems for themselves.

59. Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. They listen carefully to questions and instructions and participate enthusiastically. Personal development is promoted well as pupils are required to work independently but, at other times, they work in pairs or small groups. For instance, a class of Year 5 pupils worked in pairs on a computer program

aimed at reinforcing their recognition of colours in written form, and they had to agree on the answer before pressing the button. A small group played a card game, matching the colour with the word, and although this was to some extent competitive pupils behaved very well towards each other. The teacher is particularly skilled at checking in lessons, regularly and routinely, that pupils are learning. Carefully worded questions, supported by simple but effective resources, are used to assess individual pupils' progress. Final plenary sessions are used effectively as an additional assessment opportunity as well as consolidating pupils' learning through different activities, such as bingo-type games.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good with some very good features as a result of which pupils achieve well.
- Good progress is being made with the introduction of the national strategies for mathematics, but planning needs to be further developed to ensure that the needs of pupils with more complex needs are met consistently.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and at post-16, have a good variety of opportunities for achieving nationally recognised qualifications. This is not expanded on.
- Assessment and recording procedures are not as consistent as they could be.
- Monitoring by subject leaders is still not sufficiently developed.

### **Commentary**

60. The quality of teaching and learning represents good improvement since the last inspection. The best lessons are well planned, with a clear indication of what it is anticipated pupils will learn. and these expected outcomes are shared with pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, and pupils feel confident to ask for help and to attempt tasks which they find difficult. Well-targeted questions ensure that all take part and a variety of resources is used well to give pupils a practical understanding of topics. There is very good development of mathematical language, which is reinforced consistently in lessons.

61. Because of the good teaching, pupils in all year groups make good progress overall with a few secondary-age pupils attaining in line with national expectations. For example, in the summer two pupils gained GCSE passes and two gained the expected level in the national tests taken at the end of Year 9. Most pupils make good progress in all the different strands of the curriculum compared with their prior achievement.

62. Since the last inspection, the national strategies for mathematics have been introduced as the basis of the subject curriculum. This represents a good development as many teachers have introduced the three-part lesson suggested in the strategies. Pupils particularly enjoy the mental start-up activities. Teachers are successfully using the strategies as the basis for their planning for pupils in Years 1 to 9. Planning for pupils in Years 10 and 11 follows the requirements of the national examinations, such as GCSE, Entry Level and ASDAN. However, teachers have not yet fully developed their planning in ways that consistently meet the needs of the increasing number of pupils with more complex needs that the school is admitting. This is sometimes evident in the lack of worksheets or other activities that have been sufficiently well adapted in ways that enable these pupils to attempt independent work or, at least, to require less assistance.

63. Teachers regularly complete accurate records of pupils' progress in terms of the levels they have achieved, either using National Curriculum levels, or 'p' levels for those pupils working below

Level 1 of the National Curriculum. In addition, consideration is appropriately being given to the introduction of an assessment scheme which gives more detail for pupils with more complex needs. However, there is still some inconsistency in the ways in which teachers record ongoing progress during, and at the end of, lessons. Many staff use the final session in lessons well to assess what pupils have learnt, but this is not done systematically and, therefore, when this does not happen subsequent activities that closely match pupils' needs are more difficult to plan.

64. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, with separate subject leaders for primary and secondary year groups. There has been some improvement in this respect since the last inspection but, overall, there is still insufficient monitoring of the subject. For example, the primary subject leader does not yet have the opportunity to observe lessons in order to advise colleagues on improvements. However, generally the primary subject leader is effective, with a clear vision for the development of the subject. She is carrying out effective monitoring of the mathematics curriculum, to ensure that it is broad and balanced, as well as checking that mathematical skills are being developed across the curriculum. Leadership and management is much less effective in the secondary department as monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum is not sufficiently thorough and robust.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Teachers develop these skills well and maximise opportunities that present themselves in different subjects to reinforce pupils' understanding of mathematics and their knowledge of mathematical language. For example, when they discuss timetables they begin to develop a sense of time, which is further developed in history; in science and design and technology they use weights and measures and through art they develop understanding of pattern and shapes.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school and all pupils successfully participate in well-planned practical work.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Assessment systems are good.
- Information and communication technology is used well.

#### **Commentary**

66. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards of achievement at that time were good, and these achievements have been surpassed during the intervening time. This is in spite of an increased complexity of disability or communication problems faced by some pupils now being admitted to the school. Teaching and learning are now very good and pupils achieve very well so that, overall, more pupils are successful in GCSE examinations in science than in English and mathematics.

67. Pupils are achieving so well in science because teachers promote interest and enthusiasm in the subject from an early age, and they harness and build on this enthusiasm as pupils get older. The comment of a Year 1 pupil was quite telling in this

respect; he entered the room saying "Is it science now? Science is something I **like!**" Throughout the school, pupils have extremely good attitudes in lessons and they behave very well.

68. Pupils' early curiosity and interest in science is nurtured carefully so that by the time they are following their GCSE course, they are confident and inquisitive young scientists. They approach their work seriously but regard the subject with a sense of fun, never having lost that early enthusiasm. This is in large part due to their teachers, whose own enthusiasm for the subject is obvious, but who also have the skill to plan investigative science in ways that are interesting, innovative, and appropriate for individual learning needs. Pupils take pride in their work and the quality of their presentation is enhanced significantly by their use of ICT. They show good mastery of word processing and other ICT skills as they incorporate graphs and tables.

69. Time passes very quickly in science lessons, some of which may be double lessons, because of teachers' careful attention to individual pupils' capabilities and inclinations. Learning support assistants have an important role in this respect, encouraging and supporting as required. As a result, all pupils are included in all activities, including those pupils with communication difficulties who are given time to make their contribution in lessons, thus developing their skills and understanding. Learning is supported well by homework, which is set appropriately and has a clear purpose. Pupils do this work carefully and teachers mark it well.

70. The two subject leaders have shown very good leadership and management in the ways in which they have gone about improving provision. As such, they are developing a strong understanding of its current status and areas for development. The subject leader for the lower age range is relatively new in post, and has made a good start, working closely with the local authority science adviser to ensure full coverage of the science curriculum when the subject is taught by class teachers. The subject leaders are also planning further development of the science curriculum for lower-attaining older pupils in Years 7 to 11. This will enable teaching and learning to become even better matched to these pupils' particular needs. Assessment in the subject is regarded as very important and is carried out well. In addition, the subject leaders have identified the need to better meet the requirements of lower attaining pupils and those with more complex needs by further refinement and adaptation of assessment procedures. Similarly, they are aware of the lack of adapted equipment available for enabling greater access to practical work by pupils with severe dexterity or motor problems. They are addressing this shortcoming in order to remove any barriers to learning that might limit these pupils' opportunities.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good and results in pupils' very good development of basic computer skills, leading to appropriate accreditation
- Provision of a wide range of devices and adaptations ensures all pupils, including those with more complex needs, can access all activities.
- The curriculum is good overall, but it lacks innovation and imagination



## Commentary

71. Very good subject knowledge, excellent relationships, and high expectations contribute to the very good quality of teaching and learning in ICT. Precise instructions, combined with careful explanations and well-targeted questions, ensure success in the practical applications of technology. Pupils are confident and acquire, in a progressive and structured way, the necessary skills to use a range of programs. Primary age pupils learn how to collect data and present it in pictograms or graphs, while older pupils use programs for word processing, desktop publishing, presentation software, spreadsheets and databases. They also learn how, when and why to use particular packages in order to achieve the best results and they know how to use search engines to explore the Internet for information.

72. All pupils achieve equally very well because those with the most severe motor difficulties can access the computers and are, therefore, included in all lessons. There is a very good range of access devices provided, and as pupils usually carry their own switch, joystick or roller ball with them they are able to use computers in the classroom or the computer suite with equal confidence.

73. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has ensured that pupils follow a well-structured curriculum that gives them good skills and understanding so that many are able to follow a GCSE course in Years 10 and 11. However the curriculum is not as innovative or imaginative as it could be. For example, insufficient use is made of some of the more exciting software now available, especially for the more able older pupils. Additionally, there is a lack of more specialised software for the pupils with more complex learning difficulties.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Technology is used well in a range of subjects. In subjects like mathematics, well chosen programs are used to enable pupils to reinforce their understanding of different shapes while in science and geography, for example, pupils input data and produce graphs. A particular feature is the use of ICT to assist pupils' communication. It is well used in English and other subjects to produce very well presented word-processed work, but a variety of high technology aids are also used by a number of pupils to communicate with others.

## HUMANITIES

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in lessons because they are taught well.
- Very effective subject leaders have developed a very good subject curriculum.
- Assessment information is used well to determine the planning of future lessons.
- Pupils develop skills to seek historical information from a variety of sources.

## Commentary

75. History is only taught to pupils up to the end of Year 9. During this time they achieve well in developing and reinforcing the skills of historical research as they seek information, for example about North American slavery, from a variety of sources including reference books and computer programs. They also develop good knowledge of historical facts and understanding of chronology and events and people from the past. This is because pupils are taught well, and follow a very well considered and constructed subject curriculum that enables them to build up, systematically, their historical insight and understanding of ideas.

76. Very good displays around the school effectively demonstrate pupils' achievements as they include good quality pieces of written work. Teaching is imaginative and supported by an effective use of good resources. Lessons are clearly planned and organised, with interesting activities that are well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities, with tasks provided to extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils. Lessons are relaxed yet purposeful, with very good relationships between teachers and pupils. In all lessons, literacy is reinforced through the introduction of key words and historical vocabulary. Learning is further reinforced through teachers' skill in relating what they wish to teach to pupils' experiences, particularly in the case of the youngest pupils. They learn about their own life as well that of their parents and grand parents and use images such as changes in peoples' clothes to develop understanding of the passage of time. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in terms of assessing and recording pupils' achievements, which are now carried out routinely and consistently.

77. Although class teachers teach the subject, the subject leader monitors lesson plans and the quality of teaching and learning. This ensures that pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum that becomes increasingly challenging as they move through the school.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and pupils achieve very well.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of wider environmental and social issues.
- Literacy skills are promoted very well.
- Assessment of pupils' achievements and progress is very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

## Commentary

78. Pupils' very good achievements are a result of stimulating teaching and a very well planned subject curriculum. Planning places an emphasis on extending pupils' awareness of their immediate surroundings, the local environment and the wider world. Consequently, they develop many skills, such as drawing and interpreting maps and using symbols to find places, as well as knowledge of their own and other countries. Therefore,

by the time they leave school many have been successful in the Entry Level or GCSE courses that they follow.

79. Lessons are characterised by very good opportunities for speaking and listening and the promotion of pupils' language. Many discussions take place, such as the debate in the lesson on sustainable energy that considered our dependence on electricity and the number of machines we use that are driven by electricity. In particular, there is a strong focus on the introduction of specialist vocabulary and most pupils understand and use this terminology accurately. The promotion of such technical language is typical of the level of challenge that pupils are given in lessons. Very high expectations of behaviour and work, and the interesting activities that are provided, result in pupils having very impressive attitudes. They are interested in what they are doing and enjoy the tasks they are set. Many work independently, or as small groups, but, for those pupils who require more support, help provided by teachers and effective learning support assistants is readily at hand

80. The comprehensive curriculum is also very effective in developing pupils' understanding of wider and more complex geographical issues; moral and social education is embraced and ethical issues are discussed. As a result, they have a developing awareness of the influence of economic activities on natural resources; they show an understanding of the relationship between different areas of a town and the facilities required by the community; they appreciate the idea of sustainable energy and the effects of pollution on the environment.

81. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection given the changing nature of the school's population. The subject leader provides very strong leadership and has a clear vision for developing the subject. Management is equally very good, with careful monitoring of teaching, learning, progress and planning. The assessment and recording of individuals' progress is now very good and this information is used well to plan future lessons. Very good resources are well documented for easy accessibility, and pupils' ICT skills are consolidated well through activities such as collecting data and displaying the results graphically.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning.
- The subject is well co-ordinated for secondary age pupils, but there is currently no co-ordinator for Years 1 to 6.
- There are some good assessment procedures being developed, but they are not yet fully in place for all pupils.

## **Commentary**

82. The quality of provision is similar to that at the last inspection, although there have been a number of recent changes. For example, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education is being revised and is now nearing completion, and co-ordination of the subject

is in a state of transition. The subject leader for years 7-11 and post-16 is involved in local meetings and demonstrates a good and enthusiastic awareness in developing the teaching and learning of the subject. Newly written medium and short-term planning schemes are in place and are being evaluated and developed further. However, the lack of a permanent subject leader for the primary school has an adverse impact on the monitoring and evaluation of planning and teaching. As a result, leadership and management are currently satisfactory.

83. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and teachers throughout the school are doing their best to teach in an interesting way so pupils are motivated to learn. They manage pupils efficiently, use praise and encouragement well and communicate successfully with pupils through the use of a range of additional strategies. For instance, the good use of signing and visual cues in a lesson with Year 7- 9 pupils extended their understanding of the story of Joseph and the family's feelings such as love, anger and jealousy that surfaced, in the same way as they can today. In classes involving pupils in Years 1 – 6, teachers' use innovative and interesting ideas that result in pupils enjoying their learning. However, lessons sometimes lack sparkle and there is a lack of continuity from one lesson to another. In part, this reflects the lack of subject co-ordination in terms of checking consistency in planning lessons and developing the curriculum.

84. Pupils' progress in the subject is monitored in a variety of ways throughout the school. For younger pupils, there is good photographic evidence such as the puppet theatre that pupils had made and performed in themselves as a means of telling parables. Teachers record their observations of each pupil's work, identifying whether it was done independently or with assistance, and progress sheets for Year 10 and 11 pupils show coverage of a wide range of topics. These include not only the features of the major world religions, but also consideration of topics such as emotions, bullying and crime. The co-ordinator for Years 7 to 11 has recognised the need to further develop assessment systems to assess more accurately the achievements of non-writing pupils. This co-ordinator's effective leadership is also evident in the subject action plan, which accurately identifies other development areas like improving the monitoring of teaching and improving the range and organisation of resources.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- The specialist accommodation and resources are good, although space for food technology is rather limiting for some older pupils.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

85. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in pupils' achievements and the progress they make. The facilities are generally good, and generous, with separate facilities for food technology, and for design and technology involving textiles and resistant materials, but the kitchen facilities for older pupils are only large enough for two or three pupils to cook at any one time. This has an adverse effect on the overall curriculum through its impact on pupil and staff timetables as pupils have to be taught as very small groups.

86. Pupils achieve well in all elements of design and technology throughout the school. They work hard at the subject, with clear enjoyment and concentration. They make good progress within lessons, which are generally successfully taught by the subject leader. Lessons are well planned by a teacher with strong subject knowledge. Pupils gain valuable experiences and increasing skills in handling equipment, and they take great care in their work. For example, a group of pupils in Years 7 - 9 in a textiles lesson were designing and making their own cases / containers for objects of their choice, like mobile phones and spectacles. Each pupil was working at a different stage of the design process. They were all able to describe their plans and demonstrate skill in implementing them, together with explaining their ideas and the practical considerations for decorating them.

87. In food technology, pupils plan their own ingredients for a dish and justify their choices in terms of health and practicality, and identify the safety issues that have to be considered during preparation. Lessons such as this reinforce learning in other subjects very well too. Mathematical skills are encouraged in activities such as weighing and measuring, and scientific knowledge about diets is supported in food technology. In addition, the subject supports pupils' self-help and independent living skills development very well, such as the group of post-16 pupils who had shopped for the ingredients before preparing and cooking their own lunches. These pupils are not only competent at carrying out such tasks, but also appreciate the freedom of choice that is built-in to such activities.

88. The strong leadership and management of the subject have resulted in an interesting and comprehensive subject curriculum and good assessment procedures. There is good evidence of the variety and quality of pupils' work in the attractive and informative displays around the school.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well.
- The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development.
- Visitors into school, and events such as Creative Arts Weeks, support learning very well.
- Lessons contribute very well to extending pupils' language and developing their analytical skills and powers of inference.

## Commentary

89. Pupils learn well in lessons. They acquire many new skills and develop good understanding of a variety of techniques and materials. Very good displays around the school show that pupils have learnt about how artists create the idea of movement in a single picture, how colours can be mixed and then used in printing, and the technique of line drawing used in a project about the environment. Displays also show that pupils learn about the styles of other artists, such as during their study of colour and pattern when they examined the work of Rousseau, as demonstrated by *The Tropical Storm with a Tiger – Surprised*. Topics such as that of the work of Rousseau and other studies, associated with movements like the Impressionists and the Expressionists, widen pupils' cultural development.

90. Lessons are well planned, prepared and organised and time is used well. Consequently, resources are readily available and pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, pupils work quickly, applying themselves diligently and enthusiastically. They enjoy the subject and take pride in their work. In addition to providing opportunities for acquiring new artistic knowledge and understanding, such as through examining famous portraits painted by Michelangelo and Velazquez, these sessions also make a good contribution to pupils' language acquisition. For instance, when examining a portrait the teacher introduced such words as 'coronet' and 'ermine' when trying to introduce the idea of using clothes and other visible items as a way of getting a preliminary indication of the model's life. The teacher used this exercise extremely well to develop in pupils the idea of critical analysis.

91. Lessons also promote pupils' personal development well. They work well together, such as the Year 9 class who were considering the idea of self-image. Part of this exercise required them to examine a digital photograph of the classmate opposite them and attempt to draw conclusions and make deductions about the 'model' based on visible features in the portrait. This was a potentially difficult exercise as it would have been very easy for pupils to make inappropriate and hurtful comments. However, the very good relationships within the class, and pupils' respect for each other, meant that this did not occur and pupils responded maturely and sensibly.

92. Despite a number of staffing difficulties, the subject has progressed well since the last inspection. Effective leadership and management have been maintained despite the long-term absence of the subject leader. Many pupils now follow a GCSE course in Years 10 and 11; resources such as 'Amanda's Arm' have been introduced to allow pupils with more severe motor difficulties to control their pencil or paint brush; electronic communication aids enable pupils to participate fully in lessons. In addition, very good use of the community extends pupils' experiences. During the Creative Arts Week, pupils worked on the theme of '*Growth*'; and visitors such as a digital artist and contemporary and

traditional sculptors enriched pupils' learning by introducing them to new ideas and materials.

## **Music**

93. It is not possible to judge overall provision, teaching and learning or pupils' achievements as too few lessons were seen and only in Years 3 to 6. In the lessons that were seen, learning was good. Pupils were taught by a subject specialist who provided them with good opportunities to listen to music and to perform, using untuned instruments. These listening and playing opportunities were effectively linked to other events and activities with which the pupils were familiar. One group considered instruments that could make sounds like fireworks in paintings they had done, and another class used instruments to represent characters and movements in the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*, which they had read together as a 'Big Book'.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Physical education**

Provision in pupils' physical education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject leader provides a very good role model and very strong leadership.
- The physical education staff are very enthusiastic and this has a very positive effect on the pupils.
- Pupils are very keen on physical education and their attitudes are very good.
- Resources and accommodation are very good.
- Assessment and recording of pupils' progress are very good.

### **Commentary**

94. The provision in physical education is a strength of the school. Pupils' achievement in physical education is very good and the school provides an excellent range of experiences for them. Physical education enjoys a high profile in the school and provides a very good route to developing links with mainstream and other special schools. For example, some pupils from a local special school join in with Victoria pupils' swimming lesson.

95. In addition to making very good progress in developing their skills and knowledge, pupils know the value of warming up and the importance of exercise. They understand the use of space in the hall. The subject also gives pupils very good opportunities to develop their personal skills; they enjoy participating in team games and in doing so they learn about the value of working together, rules and how to accept defeat in a sportsman-like manner if they lose. The subject also makes a significant contribution to preparing pupils for leaving school, such as the post-16 pupils who become involved in sport as a leisure activity.

96. The leadership and management of physical education are very effective and this has been instrumental in producing the good improvements that have taken place since the

last inspection. Her infective enthusiasm has done much to develop the subject, as has the very good role model she portrays to both colleagues and pupils. This has helped to improve the quality of provision since the last inspection, although the excellent new sports hall and improved procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress have also made significant contributions. Staff are consistent in observing pupils' progress during lessons and they routinely record these achievements. The subject leader maintains a computerised record system and so pupils' progress can be tracked very easily in the different areas of the subject curriculum.

97. Significant characteristics of the very good teaching pupils receive are the quality of planning, which is matched to the individual pupils' needs, and the employment of instructors and assistants with specialist skills in particular sports. Class management and the relationships between pupils and staff are very good. The quality of learning is enhanced considerably by the excellent accommodation, including a swimming pool and an exceptionally well-appointed sports hall, and resources. Pupils' response to the teaching is very good. They listen very carefully to instructions and follow them to the letter. They become involved in all the very good activities that are provided, and persevere even when experiencing difficulties. All adults provide very good levels of support and their presence and encouragement boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils learn very well because of the skilled teaching they receive, their own enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject, and the very wide range of the subject curriculum. Consequently, many pupils are successful when they follow an Entry Level course in Years 10 and 11.

98. Extensive enrichment and extra-curricular activities complement the school curriculum extremely well. These include table cricket, an assault course, wheelchair football, off-site horse riding and a gymnasium club. All pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The facilities are also used very well by boarding pupils in the residents' sports club.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good range of opportunities designed to promote pupils' personal and social skills, as a result of which they make very good progress.
- The teaching in discrete PSHE and citizenship lessons is good.
- The curriculum is insufficiently developed to ensure coverage of all the necessary topics.
- Very good use is made of the community to support pupils' learning.

#### **Commentary**

99. The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development, and this is evident in all the work that it carries out. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils achieve very well, making very good progress towards the personal and social targets in their IEPs. In the primary department, PSHE is covered through the different subjects of the curriculum but, currently, there is no assurance that that the entire curriculum is being

covered. Pupils in the secondary department have weekly PSHE lessons and, because of good teaching, these sessions contribute well to pupils' overall personal development. For example, pupils have opportunities to discuss feelings and how these are shown, how to cope with anger and how to deal with bullying. In addition, many other, more informal, opportunities are provided for pupils to develop social skills such as lunch times and breaks.

100. Pupils learn well in discrete PSHE lessons because teachers are very adept at dealing with potentially difficult issues sensitively and thoughtfully. Consequently, pupils feel confident in expressing their views and listening to others. As a result, pupils explore issues such as bullying, recognising and communicating a range of emotions and dealing with anger.

101. The subject curriculum includes the required elements such as sex and relationships education, drugs awareness and some aspects of citizenship although citizenship for all pupils is addressed through the different subjects of the curriculum rather than in discrete lessons. However, as at the last inspection, more development is needed, as the programme of study and long-term planning are mainly outlines of issues to be covered rather than a detailed analysis that ensures coverage of all topics. There are plans to cover the PSHE curriculum through other subjects, and there has been a partial audit of the opportunities available to do this. However, this has not been done in all subjects and so that subject leaders cannot be sure that the entire curriculum is being covered. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

102. A number of visitors to the school, together with opportunities to go on visits, help pupils to develop their personal skills. For example, theatre groups have been in to work on issues such as bullying; Streetwise helps pupils to look at many safety issues; drama workshops, art and dance have helped pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship; pupils in Years 7 to 9 visited the Mayor's Parlour; health professionals help with the health aspects of the curriculum.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7). In a special school such as this, **standards achieved** are judged against individual targets and not national standards.*

