

INSPECTION REPORT

ASH VILLA SCHOOL

Sleaford, Lincolnshire

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120747

Headteacher: Dale Robinson

Reporting inspector: Alastair Younger
23587

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 2 May 2001

Inspection number: 196460

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Maintained special

School category: Hospital

Age range of pupils: 8-16 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Willoughby Road
South Rauceby
Sleaford
Lincolnshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr John Lawler

Date of previous inspection: 28 July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23587	Alastair Younger	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science History Geography Music French Religious education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
9169	June Keyworth	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
21822	Helen Maskew	Team inspector	English Art Physical education Information and communications technology Personal, social and health education Design and technology	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ash Villa is a very small special school attached to a psychiatric hospital unit. It serves pupils from the whole of Lincolnshire. There are places for up to 18 boys and girls. There are presently ten pupils on roll; aged 8-16. Attainment on entry is very varied, several pupils have special educational needs whilst a few are performing at, or above, expected levels for their age. Referrals are made purely on health grounds and at any time of the school year. Most pupils are residential but the residential side is funded, managed and staffed by the health service and is not a part of the inspection. Placements are usually of three to six months duration. All current pupils are white and English speaking. The school has undergone considerable change since the previous inspection. There is a new headteacher and staff and the type of pupil now admitted is likely to have significantly greater mental health problems.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school giving good value for money. It is well led and managed. Pupils are happy to attend and are well looked after. A good curriculum is well taught and pupils achieve well. Pupils' attitudes are very good, and their behaviour and personal development good.

What the school does well

- A high standard of teaching leads to pupils making good progress.
- Pupils show an enthusiasm to learn, usually behave well in lessons and form excellent relationships with staff.
- A good range of subjects is taught. This facilitates a successful return to mainstream school.
- There is a high standard of care.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school well, he is well supported by his staff.

What could be improved

- Achievement in science is unsatisfactory. It has not developed at the same pace as other subjects.
- There is not enough contact with the local community.
- Assessment results are not being sufficiently used to improve curriculum planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1997 when it was considered to be performing to a satisfactory standard. It is now judged to be a good school. When taking into account the increasing severity of pupils' mental health problems on admission, this represents very good improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by the time pupils leave	Key	
speaking and listening	B	very good	A
reading	B	good	B
writing	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education (PSHE)	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B		

All pupils are set individual targets for numeracy, literacy and personal development. These targets are reviewed each week and records show that pupils make good progress towards meeting them. In addition to good achievement in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, pupils achieve well in history, physical education, information and communication technology and art and design. Achievement is satisfactory in religious education, design and technology and geography. Science is an area of weakness and pupils are not making sufficient progress. Music and French have very recently been added to the curriculum but there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on achievement in either subject.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils demonstrate their interest by contributing well to discussion and working hard. They enjoy coming to school and show a desire to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils cope very well with their problems. This means that bad behaviour rarely interrupts learning. No bullying or sexism was observed and records show that incidents are very rare. This helps pupils to relax and concentrate on learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show an increasing awareness of their own and others' problems. They support one another in a sensitive manner. Higher attaining pupils often work diligently and make few demands on teachers' time, thus demonstrating increasing initiative and personal responsibility. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils contribute significantly to pupils' desire to learn.
Attendance	Overall attendance is not judged in most hospital schools as most pupils have no chance to absent themselves. Pupils rarely waste time moving between lessons and return to class promptly after breaks and lunchtimes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

Of the teaching observed, 14 per cent was very good, 50 per cent good and 32 per cent satisfactory. Teaching in English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy) and personal, social and health education is good overall. It is unsatisfactory in science, where pupils are not learning enough. There are particular strengths in lesson planning. This usually helps teachers to make good, productive use of time and helps to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in learning. In a few lessons teachers expect too much of lower attaining pupils and have difficulty in adapting to their limitations. The sensitive management of pupils' conduct results in lessons where pupils can concentrate on learning with few disruptions. The high quality of teaching keeps pupils interested and working hard and is largely responsible for the good progress that they make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. With the recent addition of music and French to the curriculum the school now teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum plus religious education. This means that pupils are not missing out on any of the learning experiences they would encounter in mainstream school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Within lessons time is allowed for reflection and quiet discussion. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce moral and social values and are very good role models. Moral and social concepts are also strongly represented in many lessons. There are opportunities for artistic and musical appreciation but the range of multi-cultural themes is limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are safe, happy and well looked after. There is good recording and monitoring of their personal and academic development. Procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is well led and managed. Clearly stated educational aims are being very well met. In the past term management responsibilities have been shared more fully with staff and after initial resistance teachers are now taking much more responsibility for the development of the curriculum.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is growing in strength and involvement. Governors are actively involved in the drafting and monitoring of many school policies. A very good chairman is devoting time and energy to ensure that the headteacher is properly supported. Where the governing body could be strengthened is in its involvement in the monitoring of standards in different areas through more regular visiting.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There is very good monitoring of teaching and the curriculum. Teachers are regularly observed in the classroom by the headteacher. Observations, such as range and frequency of pupil-teacher interactions, are helping to improve teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Budgetary management is good. The school's financial planning effectively supports educational priorities and is backed by a good development plan. Very good use is made of specific grants. The headteacher has provided very good forward planning for the provision of extra staff when required. Appropriate tendering according to principles of best value is observed.

Three staff share the teaching of two classes. This allows a sufficient amount of non-contact time for planning and liaison with other schools. There are no support staff employed by the school but nurses and care assistants are always on call at the adjoining hospital unit. The accommodation is satisfactory. It belongs to the hospital, which is responsible for its servicing and maintenance. Large classrooms provide a good, stimulating environment for learning. Weaknesses relate to the lack of a science area, a workshop area and a suitable gymnasium. There is a good range of high-quality textbooks

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are mainly supportive of the school and express gratitude for the help it is giving their children. Two parents of previous pupils have recently joined the governing body because they want to keep their involvement with the school. Several parents voiced criticism of the slight amount of information they receive about their children's progress and what the school has to offer. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and also feels that end of placement reports could be improved by the inclusion of more information on progress. It is good that the school is reviewing its reporting systems to parents and is producing a school brochure for future admissions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

The timing of the inspection coincided with a period where new patients were not being admitted to the hospital because of health staff shortages. This meant that there were fewer pupils than normal on roll and many were nearing the end of their placements and treatment. This clearly has an effect on several judgements, especially those relating to teaching and pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Comparisons with the previous inspection findings are difficult because the nature of pupils being admitted now is more variable and extreme. Using an internationally recognised scale, all children are assessed by the consultant on admission to the hospital unit. The results of this assessment show a significant increase in problems facing the pupils.

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' achievement and individual progress is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. It is inappropriate to refer to differences in progress between pupils of different age or ability because numbers are small and it is the impact of pupils' illnesses that affects progress more than the provision. Differences in the attainment of girls and boys also reflect different reasons for referral. For instance, there is a small group of higher attaining, older girls, several of whom have eating disorders and there is a smaller group of boys with more severe conduct disorders. Both groups are achieving well and meeting individual targets but girls are performing at a higher academic level. Wherever possible a range of examples of what pupils of different ages are achieving is given.
2. Pupils make good progress because they are usually well taught and, with the exception of science, are following carefully planned programmes with good reference to the National Curriculum. Pupils work hard in lessons; all are set individual targets for numeracy, literacy and personal development. These targets are reviewed each week and records show that pupils make good progress towards meeting them. The progress that older pupils are making is often leading to the successful completion of examinations at the end of Year 11 and helping them to go on to further education. That of the younger pupils is usually enabling them to return to mainstream schools with as little disruption to their education as possible.
3. Achievements in English are good and have been sustained since the previous inspection. Many pupils have very good speaking and listening skills. Nearly all can read well, some with excellent inflection and understanding. Those who experience difficulty in reading are given good support to help them, an improvement since the last inspection. The majority of older pupils have high levels of comprehension and use a good range of vocabulary. Some of the poetry written by older pupils is outstanding.
4. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in mathematics. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The regular practising of mental arithmetic skills is leading to particularly good progress in this area. Older pupils are making good progress in learning how to process data and present it in easily accessible form such as in tables and graphs. Many also show a good understanding of shape and angles and a good ability to solve problems. Pupils make good progress in developing basic number skills because teachers are including opportunities to improve these skills in many lessons other than mathematics.
5. Achievement is unsatisfactory in science. There is insufficient planning and commitment to raising standards in the subject, teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge and there are inadequate facilities. This is a weakness that has not been

sufficiently addressed since the previous inspection. The problem is most acute for pupils of secondary school age.

6. Pupils achieve well in history, physical education, information and communication technology, art and design and technology. There is satisfactory achievement in geography and religious education. Music and French have very recently been added to the curriculum but there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on achievement in either subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The good attitudes, values and personal development observed by the previous inspection have been maintained. This represents an improvement when considering the increasing severity of problems being faced by pupils.
8. Pupils' attitudes are positive. They enjoy attending and appreciate the opportunities to learn and make progress. Despite the large age range in classes, the majority of pupils react well with each other and their teachers. The more mature girls are extremely co-operative and conscientious. Younger and less mature boys pose problems in a few lessons when they distract others and are constantly demanding the attention of the teacher. In all lessons seen pupils clearly enjoyed their success and took the self-evaluation of their work and behaviour seriously. Over time this improves their motivation and confidence to attempt more challenging work.
9. Behaviour in lessons is usually good. Small groups enable good, focused interaction between teacher and pupils. Older pupils listen to the teacher and each other well. Younger pupils are more easily distracted and, while they are always very keen to respond to questions, often interrupt to share a burning issue. In a very small minority of lessons, younger pupils behaved inappropriately, ignoring staff and avoiding work and thus learning very little.
10. Relationships are good. Pupils make many friends and are supportive of each other. They all relate very well to staff, are courteous and understand what is expected of them. During the inspection there was a complete absence of any bullying, sexism or racist comment and records show this to be the usual case.
11. In a particularly good initiative, older pupils are successfully mentoring younger ones. Organisational issues governing the school day prevent the pupils from taking many specific responsibilities within the school but two Year 11 pupils are managing their GCSE revision independently and well. At the end of each lesson pupils honestly and sensibly assess how well they have met their targets for achievement.
12. It is inappropriate to make an overall judgement on attendance in a hospital school. Pupils in the care of hospital staff have little opportunity to absent themselves from lessons. Day pupils often have a previous history of spasmodic attendance related to their psychiatric condition. Whilst on the roll of the hospital school, however, nearly all make good progress in improving their attendance and maintain this when they return to mainstream schools. Lessons start on time and pupils receiving support in the hospital are quickly involved in activities on their return to the classroom.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The previous inspection found a good standard of teaching and this has been maintained. Of the teaching observed, 14 per cent was very good, 50 per cent good and 32 per cent satisfactory. Only a small sample of teaching could be observed but analysis of pupils' work and teachers records supports the judgement. Teaching is

good in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, but not good enough in science. Literacy and numeracy are well taught and this especially helps to ensure that lower attaining pupils are able to make progress. The high quality of teaching is the major factor in ensuring that pupils are learning to the best of their ability and making good progress.

14. One of the keys to good teaching is the very good management of pupils' conduct. Teachers are firm but understanding and show exceptional patience. Teachers' voices are seldom raised and the calm manner in which problems are faced has a very good effect on pupils, several of whom have a previous record of challenging behaviour. This results in classrooms that pupils enjoy being in and where they are able to work and concentrate without undue distraction. When extreme behaviour does occur this is dealt with swiftly and fairly so that little time is lost and pupils can quickly resume their learning. A weakness is that teachers occasionally allow a single pupil to dominate discussion when others want to contribute.
15. Lesson planning is also very good. This compensates for weaknesses in longer term planning. Detailed lesson plans ensure that lessons can run smoothly and make the best use of time whilst ensuring that individual needs are being met. What stops this planning from being even better is that it does not always state individual learning objectives with sufficient clarity to give teachers an absolute indication of whether a pupil has made sufficient progress in a lesson. It also results, occasionally, in expectations being too high for lower attaining pupils. This is an exception to the norm, where expectations are suitably high.
16. Teachers show a very good understanding of the main subjects of English, especially for higher attaining secondary aged pupils, and mathematics. They also teach PSHE well. However, there is insufficient subject knowledge to teach science in a systematic, varied and exciting manner and this is contributing significantly to unsatisfactory learning and progress in the subject. Teachers question pupils well and this helps them to gauge whether pupils are understanding what is being taught. At the end of each lesson pupils are told how well they have achieved and how they have behaved. This helps them to understand what they are doing right and where more effort is needed.
17. A good range of methods is used to make lessons interesting. Good quality photographs and artefacts, for instance, enlivened a history lesson. They provided a good source for discussion and stimulated pupils to work hard. When worksheets are used they are to support teaching rather than replace it. They are often used to help pupils to record work systematically. Good support is given to pupils who are studying independently. They are allowed to do as much work as they can without help but are given well-informed and timely advice when they encounter difficulty.

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

18. The academic curriculum is good overall. It closely resembles that of mainstream schools. This greatly helps pupils to return successfully to those schools. Since the last inspection the school has successfully increased the time taught for most subjects. Pupils are offered a wide range of subjects, with music and French recently added to the curriculum. Information and communication technology is well used in many subjects.
19. Curricular planning is satisfactory but does not sufficiently show variation for high, middle and low ability groups. This imposes a burden on teachers in respect of their lesson planning. English and mathematics planning sets a good standard but science and design and technology are areas of weakness
20. Medical needs of pupils nearly always have to override curriculum needs, as this is the reason for referral, but all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Care is taken to ensure that regular withdrawal for therapy does not significantly reduce pupils' access to the whole curriculum.
21. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. There are effective links with a broad variety of child and family support agencies. Statutory reviews are carried out appropriately. Statements are reviewed automatically when pupils are due to return to their mainstream schools. Pupils with weaknesses in basic skills are well supported by the strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Targets are set on the basis of academic achievement and behaviour.
22. Provision for extra-curricular activity is satisfactory. The school organises a range of visits to reflect aspects of the curriculum, for example visits to Lincoln Cathedral, a Sikh temple in Leicester and the Rural Life Museum and Gallery. However, the nature of the school day means there is little flexibility for pupils to access a wider range of extra-curricular experiences, particularly those associated with sport and physical activity. Pupils return to the hospital unit whenever they are not in class, so there are no opportunities for the school to arrange recreational activities during the school day.
23. The quality of provision for personal, social and health education is good. The curriculum covers all aspects of personal development including sex and health education and drug and alcohol abuse. Good emphasis is placed on discussion in very small groups which allows pupils to be reflective and share thoughts on issues which are very relevant to them.
24. Work related education is satisfactory but restricted by the nature of the school. Older pupils are generally in the school for too short a time to take part in work experience or college placements. Careers' education is included as part of the personal, social and health education syllabus but there is no guarantee that all pupils receive it, especially short stay pupils. No checks are made with mainstream schools to ensure that pupils' statutory rights have been met.
25. The school's relationship with the wider community is satisfactory. Within the immediate hospital community the therapeutic links are good. Weaknesses relate to links with the broader local community, in which the school is somewhat physically and socially isolated. No evidence was found that visitors are encouraged, either to enhance the curriculum or to provide social contact for pupils. For example, no use is made of visiting artists, musicians or drama groups.

26. Good liaison between the school and the hospital unit has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Weekly reports from the school to the unit contain an education summary which informs the unit of pupils' academic achievement. Communication with local mainstream schools is good and is helping staff development through the sharing of good practice. The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 and those on reintegration programmes are provided with work from their own schools.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and, for cultural development, satisfactory. The atmosphere of the school is generally calm and within lessons time is allowed for reflection and quiet discussion. Pupils study a range of faiths including Buddhism and Sikhism. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce moral and social values and are very good role models. Pupils' behavioural targets reflect these values. Moral and social concepts are also strongly represented in the PHSE lessons. There is good representation on display of a variety of European artists, and opportunities for artistic and musical appreciation. However, the range of multi-cultural themes is limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Teachers have a clear understanding of each pupil's emotional, intellectual and educational needs. Staff offer good pastoral care, support and guidance to pupils. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the level of care their children receive. There is a good, detailed child protection policy. It is in line with local procedures. The designated teacher has the relevant training, and the school's social worker is contacted in his absence. The teachers are aware of the need for vigilance. The policy is clear but lacks detail, such as a body-map, which would strengthen it. The pupil restraint policy is also good.
29. The health and safety policy, monitored by the headteacher, ensures pupils and staff work in a safe environment. Condensation in the gym has been identified as a potential hazard because it makes the floor slippery. The hospital trust or the local authority is responsible for checks on all equipment.
30. In response to criticism by the last inspection the school has produced a good school trips' policy to promote safety on educational visits. The school's door security system, and more formal handover of pupils from the hospital to the school, have also been significantly improved.
31. The school is a calm oasis where procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good and used to very good effect. Pupils were involved in developing a behaviour policy that positively discourages bullying and oppressive behaviour. The school code promotes tolerance of others and pupils value the sticker reward system. Pupils are happy with the behaviour policy and think it is fair, this is one of the main factors in its success.
32. Recording and monitoring of attendance meets statutory requirements. Regular attendance is positively encouraged and the headteacher works closely in partnership with the hospital manager and mainstream schools to ensure pupils attendance. Pupils with attendance problems are set appropriate targets for improvement. The hospital manager values the education the school provides and works closely with the school to determine when children are withdrawn for therapy, and when it is not in the best interest of a child to attend due to their being too poorly. The headteacher takes every opportunity to include all pupils even when they can only manage short periods of time in school.

33. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good and have improved since the last inspection. Appropriate targets are set for literacy and numeracy and assessed daily both by teachers and pupils. The self-evaluation by pupils is generally thorough and perceptive. Information requested from pupils' mainstream schools is not always available or, in some cases, inadequate. The school takes good steps to remedy this by testing each pupil for literacy and numeracy skills when they are admitted.
34. There is a relative weakness in the use of the results of assessment. Although assessment is informing statements of what pupils know, understand and can do, this is not being sufficiently referenced to national standards. This means that achievement is being recorded but not necessarily how well they are attaining in comparison with national expectations. As a result, longer term planning is not sufficiently focusing on provision for different ability groups. It also means that information relating to pupils' levels of attainment cannot be reported when pupils return to school.
35. The marking policy is satisfactory and reflects the schools' emphasis on raising the self-esteem of pupils. However, this does not always inform pupils of their academic progress in terms of their own attainment and against those of their peer group. No reference is made to specific progress over time. Consequently, pupils have no yardstick by which they can measure their progress. Marking of older, high attaining, pupils' work is especially good, particularly in English. Thorough scrutiny and very good annotation by the teacher informs those pupils both of their progress and how they can improve the quality of the work even more.
36. The school encourages pupils to evaluate their own work and behaviour. This has a positive affect on their personal development and is an effective way to build their self-esteem and self-confidence. All pupils receive high levels of individual attention, particularly in terms of their behaviour. Thus ensures that they understand how they have improved and what they must do to improve still further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The majority of parents and carers are very pleased with what the school provides. They find it easy to approach the school with concerns. They feel encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school and are satisfied with the work their child is expected to do at home. The inspection team supports the parents and carers' positive comments but feels that parents do not receive sufficient information for them to make a clear judgement of their child's achievement and progress because of lack of detail in end of placement reports.
38. Communication between parents, carers and the school has improved since the last inspection. There has been an open day, held in conjunction with the hospital unit, and a Christmas play that parents, carers, staff and children have enjoyed. In a very good initiative, two parents of former pupils have been paired with new parents to give them support. A few parents act as couriers to bring work from mainstream schools. Most communication with parents is by telephone as the school often needs a quick response. Parents and carers of new pupils are invited to tour the school, are given general information about how the school functions and are invited to share the school's home-school agreement. The school operates an open door approach to parents and welcomes them to arrange a meeting if they have any concerns.
39. The governing body has recently received a grant to improve communication between the school and parents and carers. It has plans to provide opportunities for parents to

meet with teachers on a regular basis to share strategies for providing support for pupils re-entering mainstream schools.

40. While communications with parents and carers has improved, the school misses opportunities to celebrate its success with parents and carers through highlighting its achievements in more detail in the prospectus and the governors' report to parents and carers. Communication with parents and carers, especially by telephone, is not sufficiently recorded and letters home are somewhat formal. The school does not provide an interim report to parents and carers as to how well each pupil has settled.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school is well led and managed, an improvement since the previous inspection. The new headteacher, in post since shortly after the previous inspection, has firmly established a regime with clearly stated educational aims that are being very well met. Key issues for improvement, identified by the previous inspection, have been systematically addressed with the exception of the need for improvement in science provision.
42. In the past term, management responsibilities have been shared more fully with staff. After initial resistance, teachers are now taking much more responsibility for the development of the curriculum. This is a good development, still in its early stages but already showing a greatly enhanced desire amongst all staff to provide the best possible education for all pupils.
43. The governing body is growing in strength and involvement. It is strengthened by the inclusion of hospital staff including the consultant psychiatrist and unit manager. Parents of previous pupils are also involved. They are dedicated to ensuring that the school can help other children as it did their own. Governors are actively involved in the drafting and monitoring of many school policies. A very good chairman is devoting time and energy to ensure that the headteacher is properly supported. He is kept well informed of all developments and visits regularly. There is a good working relationship between the chairman and the headteacher. The former recognises that the latter is a very able person and allows him considerable freedom to manage the school in the way he feels fit whilst still ensuring that he is held accountable to the governing body. The governing body is not fully contributing to the monitoring and questioning of standards in different subjects.
44. There is very good monitoring of teaching and the curriculum. Teachers are regularly observed in the classroom by the headteacher and each has a comprehensive personal development file, very well informed by observations such as range and frequency of pupil-teacher interactions.

45. Budgetary management is good. The school's financial planning effectively supports educational priorities and is backed led by a good development plan. Very good use is made of specific grants, for example to increase staff training for the improvement of secondary aged pupils' literacy and numeracy. The headteacher has provided very good forward planning for the provision of extra staff when required. He has effectively reduced the staff budget to allow for spending in other areas to improve pupil progress. For example, money has been well spent to provide good information and communication technology throughout the school. Appropriate tendering according to principles of best value is observed. This includes the purchase of training which is always linked to the School Improvement Plan, teachers' individual professional development and performance management.
46. The small size of the school, and wide age and ability range of pupils, poses staffing difficulties but these are well met by the three staff who share the teaching of two classes. This allows a sufficient amount of non-contact time for planning and liaison with other schools. In a very good development the governing body has ensured that funding is being very well used to maintain the services of a regular supply teacher. This allows teachers with permanent contracts to attend regular courses, such as training in information and communication technology, the results of which are being seen in the good provision for that subject. There are no support staff employed by the school but nurses and care assistants are always on call at the adjoining hospital unit.
47. The accommodation is satisfactory. It belongs to the hospital, which is responsible for its servicing and maintenance. There are three large classrooms which provide a good, stimulating environment for learning. Pupils have access to large well-maintained outdoor areas. Weaknesses relate to the lack of a dedicated science area, a workshop area and a suitable gymnasium. A good range of high-quality textbooks enhances resources and is supplemented by a suitable range of reference books which reflect the age and interests of pupils. High quality resources, such as for history, are often borrowed from a local curriculum resource centre.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to further improve the school the headteacher staff and governors should;

(a) Raise standards in science by:

- providing training to improve teaching;
- creating a small area dedicated to scientific use and display;
- expanding schemes of work to include more physical and chemical processes.

(paragraphs 60-63)

(b) Develop greater contact with the local community in order to reduce a sense of isolation by encouraging more visitors who could contribute to the enhancement of the curriculum or provide more social contact for pupils.

(paragraph 25)

(c) Improve schemes of work by using evidence gained from pupil assessment to identify clearer targets, more closely linked to the whole range of levels of attainment found in the school, and thus facilitate better curriculum planning and reporting of progress to mainstream schools and parents.

(paragraphs 19, 34, 35, 37)

In addition to the key issue identified, the school should consider the following issues for inclusion in the action plan:

- A greater focus on multicultural issues.
- Improvement to the child protection and restraint policies.
- More visits from governors.
- Clearer statement of learning objectives in lesson plans reflecting more realistic expectations for lower attaining pupils.
- Formal recording of communication with parents.
- Provision of better facilities for design and technology and physical education.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	50	32	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		10
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		3

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	N/A
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	N/A

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	N/A

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	N/A

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	10
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	Varies
Average class size	5

Education support staff: Y4– Y11

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	131830
Total expenditure	132738
Expenditure per pupil	8296*
Balance brought forward from previous year	5719
Balance carried forward to next year	4811

* numbers vary greatly, this relates to actual figures for last year

Results of the survey of parents and carers**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	12
Number of questionnaires returned	8

Most parents are supportive of the school. The majority finds it easy to approach staff with queries and feel that the school's values have a positive effect on their children. Parents of day pupils are happy with the work set to be completed at home and feel that behaviour is usually good.

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

It was not possible to observe teaching in every situation for every subject. It is not always appropriate to report on achievement, teaching and progress in relation to pupils' ages because there are so many other factors, such as the nature of a pupil's illness, that have greater influence on standards than their age. However, the school operates two classes at any one time, one for younger, or less mature, pupils and one for older pupils so reference is made wherever possible to these two groupings.

The important subjects of English, mathematics and science are reported on as fully as possible. In most other subjects there is less evidence on which to base judgements but wherever possible it is stated what pupils know understand and can do.

ENGLISH

49. Pupils' achievements English are good. Many have very good speaking and listening skills. Most pupils read well, some with excellent inflection and understanding. The majority of older pupils have high levels of comprehension and use a good range of vocabulary. Some of the poetry written by older pupils is outstanding. Younger pupils' reading skills have improved since the last inspection.
50. Lower attaining pupils make good progress in their development of speaking and listening skills. There are very many opportunities in all lessons for discussion and pupils are encouraged to relate relevant experiences and show what they have learned. Within the small groups they are confident to express themselves and ask questions. High attaining older pupils show very good skill in a lesson on emotive language and volunteer to identify nouns which describe abstract emotions. In a drama reading, pupils enter into their parts with enthusiasm, reading aloud with good understanding and dramatic force.
51. Younger pupils all read appropriate to their ages. The highest attaining read exceptionally well and demonstrate a sophisticated range of vocabulary and a very good comprehension of difficult concepts. In a lesson introducing 'Macbeth' a younger pupil remembers that the same author wrote Julius Caesar. Good progress is also made with writing skills. Scrutiny of work shows that while pupils have difficulties writing legibly on admission, over time and with practice their writing become more legible as their confidence increases. This lack of practical skill often hides a sophisticated level of vocabulary for their ages, which becomes apparent when they transfer their work using word processing.
52. Older pupils make good progress overall. The majority are very confident readers. Higher attaining pupils are revising for their GCSE examinations and work with their own school materials. Scrutiny of work shows a high standard of comprehension, use of vocabulary and very good creative writing, both prose and poetry. Lower attaining pupils make progress in their small groups which provide individual attention. Scrutiny of work shows that the standard of writing ranges from clear and legible to unsatisfactory, often reflecting their emotional mood.

53. Good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy with younger pupils. In a lesson on adjectives they recognise that adjectives are describing words and identify them in a passage of text. Higher attaining pupils identify nouns and differentiate between pronouns, proper nouns and possessive nouns. Lower attaining pupils understand what a 'blurb' is and make distinctions between three different blurbs on the backs of three versions of the same book.
54. Teaching is good overall and results in making good progress. All teachers have good knowledge of the subject and planning for each lesson is effective. High attaining girls benefit from the very high expectations of one teacher who is able to support their learning and progress with thorough analysis of their work and informative annotation. However, this is not always appropriate for lower attaining pupils, and they become lost in lessons when they cannot keep up with the more advanced levels demanded of them. Pupils usually respond well to high expectations of good behaviour and the atmosphere in the classroom is positive. Pupils are anxious to please and delighted when they produce a high standard of work and are praised accordingly. Teachers use resources well and encourage pupils to make good use of the computers.
55. The subject is well co-ordinated and planning follows the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The National Literacy Strategy is used well with younger pupils. All staff have been trained in the delivery of the strategy and will be developing it for older pupils. The range of books and resources is good.

MATHEMATICS

56. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in mathematics because the subject is well taught. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
57. Younger pupils improve their number skills through a good range of activities well matched to their very differing abilities. This is the result of very good planning by teachers and results in pupils being interested and working hard. Pupils use tally charts to record results of surveys and measure and draw lines accurately to the nearest centimetre. The range of ability is demonstrated by individual command of times tables which varies from total mastery of all tables to difficulty with any other than two, five and ten times. Weaknesses are well addressed through good adherence to the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy and there is regular and good practise of mental arithmetic. Pupils conduct simple investigations, such as the relationship between area and perimeter of rectangles, recording results in tables. Pupils show a good understanding of co-ordinates and use them to locate points on a matrix. Most demonstrate a good understanding of addition and subtraction facts.
58. Older pupils often work from published texts, related to their examination courses. Most pupils show a good understanding of fractions and calculate the areas of shapes accurately. Highest attaining pupils solve simultaneous equations and factorise large numbers. Nearly all pupils develop an extensive vocabulary relating to the subject, including words such as multiple, prime and factor. Pupils show immense pride in their work and progress is often evident in both the quality and quantity of work. Teachers succeed in making lessons interesting by using resources such as overhead projectors and videos. These help enliven lessons resulting in motivated pupils.
59. The subject is well managed. It is well guided by policy and there are extensive and detailed schemes of work, broken down for each individual pupil with regards numeracy planning. The weakness in the schemes is that although they show good coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study they do not sufficiently take into account

the wide range of ability encountered in each year group. This is remedied particularly well in shorter-term numeracy planning which is broken down for each individual pupil.

SCIENCE

60. Progress is unsatisfactory in science because teachers do not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the full range of the subject and because resources and accommodation, particularly for the older pupils is inadequate. This represents a deterioration since the previous inspection.
61. In individual lessons, pupils make satisfactory progress but they are not stringing enough lessons together to develop systematically to build up a comprehensive understanding of the subject. This is a result of a lack of policy and inadequate schemes of work, which do not reflect the range of pupils' ability.
62. Most of the work available for analysis, and all of that seen taught, related to biology. Younger pupils have identified and named bones and organs found in the human body. Pupils show an understanding of how muscles contract to create movement and have also identified and classified a small range of mammals, reptiles amphibians and insects, producing simple keys to aid recognition. Older pupils have studied similar topics but in more detail. They have also learned about environmental issues such as pollution and conservation. Too much of the work is worksheet based and scrappy presentation reflects a lack of interest and pride when compared with work by the same pupils in other subjects.
63. The teaching observed was satisfactory but it is clear from pupils' lack of progress that this is not always the case. In one lesson pupils were examining the appearance of leaves. The teacher was offering good help to individual pupils and kept up a good pace to keep pupils involved and interested, thus reducing disruption. Weak subject knowledge was demonstrated by a heavy reliance on crib notes and the lack of opportunity for pupils to make comparisons or focus on function rather than just appearance.

ART AND DESIGN

64. Scrutiny of pupils' work and wall displays show a wide range of attainment in art but achievement overall is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils reproduce good pencil drawings of Paleolithic sculptures and cave paintings and use effective depths of shading. Lower attaining pupils attempt the same task with more simplistic results. Art work on view includes collage, portraiture, montage and silhouettes.
65. Younger pupils use a good range of materials including paint and clay. They often decorate their works with computer graphics and use a variety of colours and fonts. They create a display of masks from different ethnic groups including West African and Aboriginal totem masks. Older pupils confidently reproduce paintings in the style of European artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. One high attaining pupil has produced a well-designed piece of written work on the artist Brom.
66. Teaching is good. The teacher sets a good pace and pupils respond positively. Those with less confidence try hard to produce a good standard and are pleased when they receive positive recognition for their efforts. Planning and preparation is good and tasks are modified to suit all pupils. Pupils discuss what they have learned at the end of the lesson; some girls for instance showed interest in the fact that pre-historic women had braided hair.

67. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a good policy with clear aims to provide as wide a variety of artistic experiences as possible. The art room is well equipped and includes a slide screen. No use is made of visiting artists but pupils have visited a local gallery and the Millennium Dome.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

68. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
69. Pupils make satisfactory progress. The lack of specialist workshop facilities results in a greater focus upon design than making. Pupils use stencils to design sheets showing the six stages of the process of design and technology. Younger and lower attaining pupils have difficulty using rulers and set squares accurately and need supervision and help. Older, high attaining pupils complete tasks well. The majority of pupils understand what 'parallel' means and can try to draw lines accordingly. By the end of the lesson most low attaining pupils have drawn a border and successfully completed at least three of their sheets. One high attaining pupil produces a very sophisticated and complex design unaided.
70. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in one lesson observed it was good. The teacher skilfully adapts lessons to the ages and abilities of the pupils. On the few occasions they are disruptive interruptions are fielded with patience. Good use is made of an extra teacher in supporting those pupils who are more demanding of attention. Time is provided for speaking and listening at the end of lessons and pupils evaluate their work for the benefit of others. All listen politely without interruption.

GEOGRAPHY

71. Good teaching leads to good progress in geography; an improvement since the previous inspection. Younger pupils show a good understanding of volcanoes and have used 'clip art' from a computer programme to illustrate their topic work. They also demonstrate a good knowledge of the farming year, a particularly appropriate topic for rural Lincolnshire. In this topic they have used words such as crops, seasons and herbicides in their writing. Older pupils write good, clear answers to questions related to the same topics as younger pupils but demonstrating a more sophisticated degree of understanding and vocabulary. Their work shows a good use of computers for presenting data, for instance in drawing a table showing factors affecting farming.
72. In a well taught lesson the seating of pupils around a table encouraged good discussion and pupils were enthused, asking good questions and listening to advice as they developed the previous lesson's work on compass directions and map symbols. Good individual help was also given to a pupil working independently on work sent in by her school.
73. The subject is well managed. It is guided by a good policy and there are good schemes of work which show links to other subjects.

HISTORY

74. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. They study a good range of topics, closely related to what they are missing in their mainstream schools. Teaching is good and there has been improvement in all areas of the subject since the previous inspection.
75. The enthusiastic manner of history teaching rubs off on pupils. Lessons are enlivened through the use of good quality resources such as videos and laminated pictures in a lesson which required pupils to conclude that the Edwardian period at the beginning of the last century was not necessarily a golden period for all sections of society.
76. Younger pupils have built up a good understanding of how people have lived at different periods in the past. They know, for instance, where the Vikings came from, the types of houses they lived in and how they dressed. When studying the Victorian age pupils have considered the social issues of the time, made comparisons between schools then and now and looked at the differences between town and country life. In a good link with English they have read 'The Wolves of Willoughby Chase', a classic story which highlights the differences between rich and poor in Victorian times. This is the sort of work that demonstrates imaginative teaching which motivates pupils well and encourages them to work hard (note the school address). There is a lot less work from older pupils because the majority are not studying the subject as part of their options for GCSE. Nevertheless, there is good evidence of pupils studying sources, such as contemporary newspapers and documents, to glean evidence and draw their own informed conclusions from these sources.
77. Management of the subject is good. Planning shows a broad range of teaching methods being used. There is a good policy and good schemes of work, which can be adapted for pupils studying different topics at the time of their arrival. Good use is made of a curriculum resource centre for the loan of books and artefacts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

78. Information and communication technology is taught as an individual subject and used as a learning tool across all subjects of the curriculum. There has been good progress since the last inspection in both the purchase of hardware and the increased use of ICT across the curriculum.
79. All pupils make good progress in information and communication technology. Small groups allow individual access to computers and individual attention from the teachers. Pupils say they make very good progress in their keyboard skills as a result.
80. A younger pupil works from the beginners level of 'Key-Byte Guide to Microsoft Word'. Within a few weeks he is able to manipulate the mouse and navigate around the screen. He highlights text and use bold, italics and underline facilities. Over time, with supervision, he produces a small poster advertising a summer fair with a list of activities in a variety of font sizes and styles.
81. A higher attaining pupil uses word processing to support written work which he finds physically difficult. This results in some very good poetry, the quality of which was previously masked by his poor handwriting. One high attaining pupil studying GCSE French accesses the BBC Revision web site to work on her translation and comprehension skills. The majority of pupils use graphics, tables and columns and achieve a good standard of word processing.

82. Teaching is usually good. The syllabus is well planned and assessment is good. Pupils see how they make progress through the graded scheme of work. Weaker teaching occurred in a one to one situation where a younger pupil became distracted in a lesson which was too long. Resources are very good and staff use them effectively in many subjects. This is having a significant impact on pupils' learning and progress.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FRENCH)

83. Only recently added to the curriculum, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on French. In the one lesson observed, good teaching led to pupils making good progress as they learned the names of different buildings in a French town. The teacher used the language well, with good pronunciation setting a good example for pupils to follow. The lesson was well planned with clear learning objectives for each of the two pupils of widely differing ability.

MUSIC

84. Music has only recently been added to the curriculum and there is insufficient evidence to inform safe judgements to be made for either subject. In the one lesson observed, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Younger pupils learned about the stringed instruments of the orchestra and listened to a piece of classical music composed by Vivaldi. Pupils showed interest, discussing different styles of music but, overall, the work expected of them was over ambitious.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

85. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Younger pupils use circuit training to work independently on fitness regimes. They set their own benchmarks for future progress. Pupils recognise the value of warming up before exercise. Higher attaining pupils identify their Achilles tendon and name it correctly, connecting it to Greek mythology. Pupils participate wholeheartedly in a wide variety of timed exercises, including sprinting, press-ups, squats, and skipping. Good fitness scores are achieved in the allocated time.
86. Pupils participate enthusiastically, throwing themselves into each activity with total commitment. An element of competition spurs them on. At the end of lessons they are worn out with their exertions. Pupils are very positive about their achievements and enter scores on individual cards. Older pupils are enthusiastic but less energetic than younger ones. All pupils attempt all the activities to the best of their ability. One very shy pupil, nervous of performing in front of others, excels at skipping and clearly increases her confidence when she tries this, and other, exercises. Planning shows that pupils have opportunities to play basketball and tennis and that teaching recognises the distinction between individual skill development and matchplay.
87. Teaching is good, with a strong emphasis on health and safety aspects. The teacher recognises variations in pupils' abilities and uses praise and encouragement effectively. All activities are voluntary for this vulnerable group of pupils and the teacher handles any difficulties sensitively. Planning and organisation of the lessons are good and pupils respond to the activities very positively. The subject is well managed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

88. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education, which is taught in line with the county's agreed syllabus. Pupils have studied several of the world's great religions and learned about similarities and differences in creation stories, special places, texts and traditions. There has been a good focus on Christianity, with pupils learning about several traditional Bible stories and Christian festivities. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply about the concept of a god and what he or she may represent. They also compare the scientific view of evolution with the theological one. This work is good in that it encourages older, more able, pupils to think deeply about life but it is occasionally too ambitious for younger or lower attaining able pupils, as was the case in an unsatisfactory lesson where pupils rapidly lost interest and became uncooperative.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

89. All pupils make good progress in personal, social and health education. The school provides a full range of relevant issues in the subject's schemes of work. These include dealing with stress, building relationships and understanding of self and all contribute to pupils' personal development. PSHE is taught as an individual subject, but is also part of the general ethos of the school. Weaknesses in the subject include an over heavy reliance on worksheets and lack of opportunity for relevant speakers from outside to expand and reinforce the important issues raised in the subject.