

INSPECTION REPORT

BARLEY LANE SCHOOL

St Thomas, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113636

Headteacher: Mr M S Davis

Reporting inspector: Mr T Richardson
16500

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 230116

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special, emotional and behavioural difficulties

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 10 to 16

Gender of pupils: Boys

School address: Barley Lane
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Exeter
Devon

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Telephone number: 01392 430774

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr W S C Newing

Date of previous inspection: July 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1650 0	Mr Richardson T	Registered inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; art and design; music; equality of opportunity; special educational needs.	How high are standards; how well are pupils taught; how well is the school led and managed; and what should the school do to improve further?
1963 9	Ms Anderson G	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; how well does the school care for its pupils; how well does the school work in partnership with parents; and residential provision.
1726 0	Ms J Taylor	Team inspector	English; design and technology; geography; history; modern languages; physical education; and religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Barley Lane is a community day and residential special school for boys aged 10 to 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). Pupils are resident within Devon and some travel considerable distances to attend the school daily. The school is undergoing considerable change. From September 2001, it will admit pupils between the ages of 7 to 14 and will no longer provide residential accommodation. At the time of the inspection the school was not at full capacity with fewer pupils than usual. The Year 11 pupils were on work experience; Year 9 pupils were being re-integrated into mainstream and other special schools; and no pupils were resident in the hostel. There are 31 pupils on roll, all of white European origin and none with English as an additional language. Ten pupils are eligible for free school meals and all pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils enter the school with levels of attainment below the average expected for their age. This is largely as a result of the considerable disruption many pupils have experienced in their learning prior to their admission to the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Barley Lane is a good school that is very successful in addressing behavioural and emotional needs. Pupils do well in their personal and physical development and leave school with qualifications in The General Certificate of Education (GCSE). Standards are rising in English and mathematics with the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Good leadership is continuing to improve the quality of education and is very successful in promoting effective behaviour management. Teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school, the governing body is very effective and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership for improving behaviour and ensuring the consistent application of the behaviour policy throughout the school. This leads to pupils doing well in their social and personal development and sets a culture of good behaviour that pupils new to the school gradually adopt and learn from their older peers.
- Good leadership is continuing to move the school forward, preparing it effectively to meet current developments and has established an atmosphere where people are positive about change and further improvement.
- Pupils are enabled to attain GCSE results, and other recognised qualifications. Standards are rising and this is most evident in English and mathematics with the introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Pupils do particularly well in art, physical education and French.
- The curriculum contains a rich variety of additional experiences for pupils that makes it more relevant to their needs and motivates them to work harder at their behaviour and studies.
- The school does its best to work in true partnership with parents and values the difference this makes to the pupils, particularly in improving their attendance and behaviour.
- The governing body provides very effective support for the work and development of the school.

What could be improved

- Some lessons are not as interesting as others to the pupils. The wide variety of teaching and learning methods used in the best lessons could be extended throughout the school so that work is more closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
- In some subjects, pupils' work is not recorded in their books and folders with sufficient care and pride so that they can refer back to it and see the progress they have made.
- School improvement needs to be more focused so that the school community shares a vision for success to the same high standard as that already evident for improving behaviour. This also includes making sure that teachers are equally as consistent in applying school procedures for curriculum planning and assessment as they are in applying the behaviour policy.

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 1999. Since then, good improvement has been made. However, this was an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors and did not report on all the subjects and aspects of the school. As a result, judgements on improvement can only be made where previous reference exists. There has been very good progress in improving the standard of pupils' behaviour and the quality of the governing body has vastly improved. GCSE results have risen and standards in English and mathematics are now improving, particularly in Years 7 and 8. The quality of leadership is now good and the curriculum has been made more relevant with a very good range of additional activities and a well planned course in personal, social and health education. Some inconsistencies remain in teachers' systems for planning the curriculum and assessing pupils' progress.

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 age 16	Key
speaking and listening	C	very good A
reading	B	good B
writing	D	satisfactory C
mathematics	C	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	B	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	

Most pupils achieve very well in learning to control their behaviour. This is in response to the school's behaviour management policy that is implemented consistently and fairly at all times. The school is also successful in improving the rate of attendance and this is enabling pupils to learn and achieve more. The school has set itself appropriately challenging targets to raise standards and is meeting these successfully. The results of National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for 2000 show that most fourteen year olds attain standards in English, mathematics and science that match the average to be found in most EBD schools. GCSE results for the year 2000 show that 100 per cent of pupils attained at least one GCSE grade A* - G. This is double the average for other EBD schools and is a good achievement for the pupils in Key Stage 4. In English, pupils in Key Stage 3 have good achievement, and are doing better due to the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils in Key Stage 4 achieve satisfactorily in English. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory achievement over their time in school. However, the achievement of younger pupils is rising. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy is being systematically introduced and the pupils in Years 7 and 8 are now taught better, are learning more, and are making good progress. Pupils show good achievement in science due to the consistent nature of the teaching that leads pupils, over time, to have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils make good achievement in art, French, information and communication technology and physical education. Pupils' achievements in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are satisfactory.

GCSE results (2000)		Grade G	Grade F	Grade E	Grade D	Grade C
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	English	1	3			
	Mathematics			1		
	Science (Double)	2	2	1		
	Art				1	4

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have a good interest in their activities and generally want to be involved. Even if there is an incident in class others want to see their task through to completion.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well and learn to handle their behaviour better as they go through the school. The points system is respected by all pupils. It is fair and applied consistently.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils demonstrate good personal responsibility in looking after their school and helping others. Relationships are good throughout the school, and stay secure even if the teacher is dealing with poor behaviour.
Attendance	Good. Better than the average for similar schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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.

In all the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory. Good teaching was observed in 30 per cent of lessons, with a further 16 per cent of lessons having very good teaching. There is good teaching of English and mathematics in Key Stage 3 as the result of the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. These subjects are taught satisfactorily in Key Stage 4. Science is taught satisfactorily and with a consistent approach that helps pupils to steadily build on their knowledge and show good achievement over time.

All teachers promote personal, social and health education well in their lessons. Teachers are becoming more effective in teaching literacy, but this is not yet approached consistently in every subject. Appropriate opportunities are taken in other subjects for pupils to develop their numeracy skills.

Some common features were observed in lessons:

- Teachers have good skills in behaviour management and apply the school's policy consistently, and with fairness, at all times. This leads to most pupils being present in lessons for most of the time and significantly increases their learning opportunities.
- Where teachers plan interesting activities and present their lessons with a variety of methods, addressing a wide range of learning styles – pupils do well, are motivated to work hard and achieve more.
- Where teaching is uninspiring and there is too much reliance on completing worksheets and textbooks, pupils are less motivated and do less well.
- Where pupils record work methodically in their books, with effective presentation, they are able to see more clearly how well they are doing and revise. For example in science, where this helps them to attain GCSE success.

Discussions with pupils show that they would like all their lessons to be equally as interesting and would like less emphasis on just filling in worksheets. Inspectors agree with their views. Support staff are of good quality and work effectively with teachers as part of a team. They are as consistent in their behaviour management as teachers and appropriate use is made of their specialist subject knowledge.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Relevant to the pupils' needs with clear links to moral and social issues. There is a good, planned programme of personal, social and health education through which pupils are encouraged to think about bullying, peer pressure and assertiveness. Very good additional activities are provided that motivate pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Good provision is made for spiritual development. Very good provision is made for moral and social development. Arrangements for cultural development are satisfactory. Adults provide good role models and pupils learn to respect others, school rules and property. More can be done to prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know pupils well and monitor their behaviour closely. There are good procedures in place for child protection and health and safety.

The school works hard to ensure that links with parents are very effective and based on mutual respect. These links benefit the pupils and the relationship is very productive, especially in addressing and improving attendance and behaviour.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is very good in raising the skill of staff in managing pupils' behaviour. He sets a very good role model for other staff in being consistent and fair. The leadership team is good and is effectively managing the current changes in the school.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is appropriately constituted and carries out all its work effectively and efficiently. Governors provide challenge where needed, and have professional skills that are relevant and helpful to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Governors and senior managers know what the school does well and what needs to be improved. The governing body is working very effectively to support the school through considerable change whilst keeping a determination that all pupils will receive a good quality of education.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning and control are good, public money is spent wisely and governors and school leaders strive for best value at all times.

The levels of staffing and financial resources are not typical and are being held at current levels to help the school prepare more effectively for re-designation. The accommodation is good and pupils welcome the attractive display and the way cleaning staff care for their school. There is an adequate supply of learning resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are small class sizes, children like school and are making good progress; • behaviour management is consistent, teaching is good, and parents are kept well informed of how their child is getting on; • the school is approachable, well led and managed, and works closely with parents; and • children are expected to work hard, achieve their best and are treated as adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are uncertain about the amount of work that children should be expected to do at home. • Uncertainty about the future is unsettling some pupils.

Inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by parents. The school could be clearer in the information it gives parents about homework and inspectors judge that the school's current policy is appropriate for the needs of the pupils. Changes in the nature of the school are unsettling the pupils, but they are responding well to the school's sensitive and careful management of this change.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are below the national expectation for their age. This is largely due to pupils having missed significant parts of their earlier education. Some pupils have also had difficulty with their literacy skills and this slows down their learning in other subjects.
2. Most pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in learning to control their behaviour. This is in response to the school's behaviour management policy that is implemented consistently and fairly at all times. The improvement made is clearly seen as pupils get older and, during the inspection, the lessons where most behavioural difficulties occurred were for pupils in Year 7. Incidents of poor behaviour among the older pupils are rare and when the age groups are mixed together, for example during lunch, the older pupils have a calming influence over the younger ones as they provide a model for them on how to behave. Pupils have clear targets set for improving their behaviour and meet these routinely as they move through the school. This very good achievement is also aided by staff taking every opportunity to reinforce and remind pupils of what they are doing well, rather than focusing on what they could do better. Also, parents are informed every week of the points their son has been awarded and are able to continue the work of the school at home. It is to the pupils' credit that, during a period of uncertainty while the school is being reorganised, they are continuing to behave well, even through an inspection! The school is also successful in improving the rate of attendance and this, along with improved behaviour, is enabling pupils to learn and achieve more.
3. The school has set itself appropriately challenging targets to raise standards and is meeting these successfully. These are:
 - To keep the number of classroom interventions for behaviour support below 950 in a full year. This is likely to be achieved.
 - For all Year 11 pupils to obtain qualifications in two subjects. This was achieved in 2000 and current pupils have the potential to do as well as in previous years.
 - To raise the reading age of lower attaining pupils by at least six months. The school has emphasised improving reading and inspection shows that this target is already being achieved.
 - For most pupils in Years 7 and 8 to achieve two key objectives from the National Numeracy Strategy. Inspection shows that the school is also likely to achieve this aim.
4. Since the last inspection, there has been a steady improvement in National Curriculum test results in mathematics and science for pupils aged fourteen. In English, sufficient numbers of pupils now reach the required standard to be

entered in the tests for 2001 for the first time. The results for 2000 show that most pupils attain Level 4 in mathematics and science by the age of fourteen. This is below the national average for their age but in line with the attainment in similar schools. Teacher assessments in English show that, in 2000, most pupils attained Level 3 and match the average to be found in most EBD schools. By the age of sixteen, pupils do well in their GCSE examinations. Results for the year 2000 show that 100 per cent of pupils attained at least one GCSE grade A* - G. This is double the average for other EBD schools. Pupils are most successful in art where four out five pupils gained GCSE grade C in 2000. In addition, all the Year 11 pupils gained a grade in the double science award GCSE and four out of five pupils were also graded in English. Results in mathematics were disappointing in 2000 as only one pupil achieved GCSE success. The success of Year 11 pupils in gaining GCSE awards, as well as making significant improvements in their behaviour, represents good achievement for all pupils over their time in the school.

5. Inspection shows that, in English, pupils in Key Stage 3 have good achievement, and are doing better than before. This is due to the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils in Key Stage 4 achieve satisfactorily in English, but their lessons are sometimes uninspiring and this affects their rate of progress. Pupils attain good standards in reading, satisfactory standards in speaking and listening and unsatisfactory standards in spelling and handwriting. The majority of pupils learn to read at an adult level and use these skills effectively in other subjects. In writing and spelling, teachers have previously encouraged written work without giving too much criticism. However, younger pupils are already showing that they respond well to regular spelling activities and focused feedback on the quality of their written work. Pupils make appropriate progress in speaking and listening. They talk with confidence, listen carefully to each other and to the teacher, make appropriate contributions to lessons and ask relevant questions. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their literacy skills in some lessons. For example, pupils in science regularly practise their reading skills and use sentence banks to help them write about their experiments. In art, the teacher and assistant help pupils to develop their conversation skills and pupils focus on how words in design and technology are spelt. However, such opportunities are not yet provided routinely in all subjects.
6. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory achievement over their time in school. However, the achievement of younger pupils is rising and the school is now likely to show that pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 are catching up with their peers in mainstream schools. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy is being systematically introduced and the pupils in Years 7 and 8 are now taught better, are learning more, and are making good progress. In lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 7 were able to use their knowledge of the four times table to quickly answer questions such as, "What is a quarter of 36?" Year 9 pupils calculated the total amount payable on a hire purchase agreement by reading correctly from a table the amount of interest that would be paid. The Year 10 pupils work individually

through their SMP text books and show, for example, that they can use their knowledge that 180 degrees is a straight line to find the value of other angles on the line. Appropriate opportunities are taken in other subjects for pupils to develop their numeracy skills. For example: in physical education, pupils add and subtract scores; and in science, pupils discuss their measurements and convert fractions into decimals. Throughout the school, pupils are not taught sufficiently how to present their work, their books do not show how work can be improved and cannot be used for revision.

7. Pupils show good achievement in science due to the high expectations of the teacher and the consistent nature of the teaching that leads pupils, over time, to have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils show good independent skills in setting out their apparatus and use careful measurement to ensure that their test is fair. Pupils record work consistently in their books and make steady progress year on year and lesson by lesson that builds, over time, into good achievement. These books are helpful for pupils as they show how well previous work has been carried out and can be referred to for revision for tests and examinations.
8. Pupils make good achievement in art and are taught well so that they produce work that matches national expectations. This leads them to better than average levels of success in their GCSE examinations. In French, the subject is taught enthusiastically and this leads pupils to try hard so that, in Years 7 and 8, they do as well as pupils in mainstream schools. Pupils make good achievement in developing their computer skills. This is due to the quality of teaching they receive and the teacher's high expectations that they will quickly learn to carry out operations for themselves. Good achievement also takes place in physical education, where pupils are encouraged to work hard and stay fit. Pupils' achievements in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Positive attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection by Her Majesty's Inspector. Pupils have good attitudes to school; most of them want to attend and parents at the pre-inspection meeting confirmed this. Ten of the pupils have achieved 100 per cent attendance, reflecting the high levels of enthusiasm most pupils have for school. In more than 75 per cent of lessons pupils show positive attitudes. They have a good interest in their activities and generally want to be involved – Friday afternoon activities are a highly valued motivating factor. Pupils were so interested in the visit from the Dartmoor Ranger that they chose to continue into break time. Pupils are particularly interested in extra curricular activities, information and communication technology and design technology. Even if there is an incident in class others want to see their task through to completion.

10. Behaviour is good and pupils learn to handle their behaviour better as they go through the school. The points system is respected by all pupils who see it as fair and applied consistently. All are trying to achieve level 1 so that they can have first choice of activities on Friday afternoons and they value the opportunity to redeem themselves if points are lost. Pupils are compliant over school rules, for example handing in tobacco voluntarily and strictly observing the school's no smoking rule. Older pupils recognise and value the improvement they see in themselves and others, and are pleased with its impact on their lives. Parents also report they see an improvement in behaviour since their children have been in school. There is a culture of good behaviour that pupils who are new to the school gradually adopt and learn from their peers. This is particularly evident during lunch when pupils sit together with staff in 'family' groups and engage in conversation in a polite and friendly manner. As a result, the younger pupils behave as well as everyone else and enjoy the occasion. Older pupils appreciate the satisfactory reduction that has also taken place in bullying and swearing. The head teacher is very alert to these issues, and any issues of racism or oppression, addressing them quickly and effectively. Exclusion is used as a sanction but levels are reasonable (two pupils were permanently excluded last year) and going down over time.

11. The personal development and relationships of pupils are good. Pupils' have developed a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and, for example, have made an animated computer presentation on bullying. They show respect for those with disability. There is generally a good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Pupils are happy to volunteer to say grace at lunch and others listen respectfully. They demonstrate good personal responsibility in looking after their school and helping others. Pupils appreciate the lack of graffiti and that the school is attractive and clean. Parents say that the active school council wanted more litter bins as pupils take an increasing pride in their surroundings. They also report that there is very good peer support with older pupils looking after the younger ones. Pupils learn to work independently and are happy to devise experiments in science and to help others. Relationships are good throughout the school,

and mutual respect enables relationships to stay secure even if the teacher is dealing with the poor behaviour of pupils. Pupils know when to say sorry.

12. Attendance is good and better than the average for similar schools. A very small number of pupils account for nearly 8 per cent of the absence and the majority of pupils have very good attendance levels. Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and for lessons. Teachers also make sure that pupils withdrawn from class for support for their behaviour are returned as soon as possible. This all adds up to the pupils being in class for as much time as possible and gaining the maximum benefit from their learning experiences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. In all the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory. Good teaching was observed in 30 per cent of lessons, with a further 16 per cent of lessons having very good teaching.

14. A higher proportion of good and very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 3, very good teaching and learning was observed in lessons in English and mathematics for Year 7, French for Year 8, physical education for Year 9, and a lesson led by Dartmoor Ranger for Year 9. One very good English lesson was observed in Year 10. Inspectors' judgements show the quality of teaching to be as follows for each subject, in each key stage of the national curriculum.

Subject	Teaching of pupils 11-14	Teaching of pupils 14-16
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Art and design	Good	None seen
Design technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
French	Good	Not taught to Year 11

Subject	Teaching of pupils 11-14	Teaching of pupils 14-16
Geography	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	Good	Good
Music	Satisfactory	Not taught
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

15. In English, teaching is most effective where teachers know their subject well and can lead pupils to think in greater depth during the lesson. In other lessons where teachers' subject knowledge is less secure, pupils are unable to experiment with language and punctuation and this limits the quality of their finished work. In Key Stage 3, the introduction of the teaching methods

from the National Literacy Strategy is resulting in lively, thought provoking lessons that are leading pupils to concentrate harder and enjoy being more successful with their learning. Teachers are effective in helping pupils to develop good reading habits. However, the work set in Key Stage 4 is largely driven by the examination syllabus rather than by individual learning needs and lessons are sometimes uninspiring. Too many worksheets are used, and are often poorly stored so that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to review their work and to see how well they are doing. Teachers are becoming more effective at teaching literacy in other subjects. For example, pupils in science regularly practise their reading skills and use sentence banks to help them write their experiments. In art, the teacher and assistant help pupils to develop their conversation skills and pupils focus on how words in design and technology are spelt. However, closer monitoring is needed to make sure that this emphasis on improving basic skills is provided in all subjects.

16. In the best mathematics lessons, teachers follow the guidance provided in the National Numeracy Strategy and use a range of different methods in their lessons that proceed at a brisk pace. This helps the pupils to stay interested and try hard to learn more. In other lessons, a good feature is the emphasis on class discussion that shows how problems can be solved in a variety of equally valid ways. In contrast, in Year 10 and in the main activity in Year 9 lessons, pupils work steadily through their text books. Their teacher is quick to spot what each pupil needs to do and provides support that leads to pupils successfully completing their work. The pupils apply themselves to their work and concentrate on doing as much as they can in each lesson, but are unable to learn from one another and do not discuss the subject sufficiently. Appropriate opportunities are taken in other subjects for pupils to develop their numeracy skills. For example: in history, pupils work out the passage of time between dates; and in science, where pupils discuss their measurements and convert fractions into decimals. However, there is no consistent procedure for how pupils should set out the work in their mathematics books. As a result, pupils' books do not show how they can improve and the work included cannot easily be used for revision.

17. In science, however, the teacher enables pupils to make much more effective use of their books. There is a consistent format for the way pupils write up their experiments and this helps pupils to routinely complete their work. This is then presented in such a way that pupils can refer back to previous lessons to remember what they have learnt. The teacher promotes reading and writing skills and makes good use of computers. This leads to pupils reading, writing and talking about what they are doing, as well as experimenting and using computers. As a result, pupils remember their lessons and enjoy looking back in their books to see what they have done.
18. Some common features were observed in lessons that enabled inspectors to make the following judgements:
- Teachers have good skills in behaviour management and apply the school's policy consistently, and with fairness, at all times. This leads to most pupils being present in lessons for most of the time and significantly increases their learning opportunities.
 - Where teachers plan interesting activities and present their lessons with a variety of methods, addressing a wide range of learning styles – pupils do well, are motivated to work hard and achieve more. This is particularly evident in English and mathematics for Years 7 and 8 where a variety of approaches is used such as, oral questioning, good use of overhead projectors, pupils writing on the board, different work being set for pupils of different abilities and effective plenary sessions that reinforce what pupils have learnt in the lesson. Pupils are much more interested in their learning as a result and standards in both subjects are now rising quickly.
 - Where teaching is uninspiring and there is too much reliance on completing worksheets and textbooks, pupils are less motivated and do less well. This was seen in mathematics where the Year 9 pupils are steadily working through their course books and, although they continue to work hard, the younger pupils are rapidly catching them up in their ability to calculate mentally.
 - Where pupils record work methodically in their books, with effective presentation, they are able to see more clearly how well they are doing and revise. For example in science, where this helps them to attain GCSE success.
19. Discussions with pupils show that they would like all their lessons to be equally as interesting and would like less emphasis on just filling in worksheets. Inspectors agree with their views. Most teachers are subject specialists and have appropriate expertise in their subject. They plan their lessons and assess the work of their pupils satisfactorily. However, while these planning and assessment systems work for the individuals concerned, there are variations in the procedures that others may find difficult to follow. The school now needs to develop whole school procedures in these areas so that, with younger pupils attending and a greater emphasis on class teaching, a consistent procedure can be followed in each subject by everyone. Some teachers have high expectations and pupils rise to these and do well. This is seen in French, where pupils try hard to use the language throughout the lesson, and in the work pupils do with computers where the teacher expects the pupils to learn quickly how to use programs for themselves (and they do!). Some teachers are insufficiently aware of what they can expect from the pupils and don't provide quite enough challenge in their lessons. This was seen in a history lesson where pupils were not encouraged to question the information they were given and used the Internet as an 'electronic page' rather than as a research tool to find out more. Time in lessons is generally used very well. Support staff are of good quality and work effectively with teachers as part of a team. They often take part in planning activities in lessons and are included in developing the provision in subjects such as mathematics. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are as consistent in their behaviour management as teachers. Some LSAs also have good subject knowledge and this is utilised effectively by making sure these assistants are deployed in those subjects. Parents expressed confusion over the amount of homework that is provided. Teachers set homework where it is appropriate for the pupil to expand at home upon what has been done in class. For example in Year 7 where pupils were asked to consider at home the value of the angles caused by diagonals within a rectangle so they could consider the meaning of the terms 'obtuse' and 'acute' in coming lessons. However, teachers are sensitive to the behavioural needs of the pupils and make homework optional if it is likely to disrupt family and school success in, for example, controlling anger. The school could explain this more carefully to parents but inspectors judge this policy to be appropriate and satisfactory.

20. A product of the school's success in improving behaviour is that pupils learn to tolerate lessons that are not as stimulating as others and they continue to behave well and finish the work set. Teachers give due regard to the targets set in pupils' individual education plans and generally try to address these in their lessons. Regular reviews help the pupils to have a good knowledge of their progress against their targets and to know how well they are learning to manage their behaviour. However, teachers are not so well informed about the way that each pupil learns best. For example, whether some pupils need practical demonstrations and others need only to read about what they are learning. This means that some lessons may be delivered inappropriately for some pupils and that pupils are not as knowledgeable about their own learning and progress in academic subjects as they are about their improving behaviour.

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

21. There has been effective improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection and it is now of good quality. All subjects of the National Curriculum are now taught, together with sex and drugs education and religious education in line with statutory requirements. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are having a positive impact on developments in mathematics and English provision.

22. The curriculum is broad and balanced, giving all pupils an appropriate secondary programme of work, taught by specialist teachers. The school has worked well to ensure that it is also relevant to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are clear links to moral and social issues throughout the curriculum. Opportunities are explicitly planned to develop confidence and self-esteem, such as the Ivy Project, which involves landscaping and planting an area of the school grounds, and drama workshops with students from a local higher education college. There is a good, planned programme of personal, health and social education through which pupils are encouraged to think about bullying, peer pressure and assertiveness. The physical education programme is strong, helping pupils remain fit, active and skilled in a range of team and individual sports. All pupils participate in a six-week outdoor pursuits module at sometime during the school year. This plays a major role in helping class groups to build positive relationships, trust, and learn about being part of a team. English and mathematics for Key Stage 3 pupils are now incorporating elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This is also helping to prepare teachers to plan for working with Key Stage 2 pupils from September 2001.

23. Opportunities for accreditation are good. Year 10 pupils follow a certificated course in Landbased Industries at a local college. The oldest pupils do GCSE examination courses, and all now leave school with accreditation of their work. This is highly valued by pupils and helps them in the next stage of

education and employment. The time for these courses, however, is not always sufficiently protected and sometimes short-term projects take precedence without there being time to make up for lost lessons. This gives unsatisfactory messages about the importance and priority given to GCSE courses and course work.

24. There are appropriate plans for most subjects showing what will be taught to each class, and each subject teacher submits a termly plan that is monitored by senior managers. This generally ensures a suitably progressive programme, building on what has been done before, although on occasions feedback from monitoring is ignored and not sufficiently acted on by teachers. Also, there are variations between teachers in the way courses are planned and the whole-school consistency recommended at the previous inspection in this area has still to be achieved. Elements of design and technology are taught as two subjects of resistant materials and food. There is too little coordination of this work and the resulting programme is narrow. In other subjects, the move to using nationally published schemes is very helpful in ensuring breadth and balance within each subject, keeping in step with mainstream provision and making it easier for pupils to reintegrate into local schools. This is a major feature of the schools' development in anticipation of its new designation from September this year. Key Stage 2 pupils will be admitted, and placement in school is to be for shorter times with pupils expected to return to their mainstream schools.
25. Pupils are appropriately organised into year groups. All have individual education plans including academic and behavioural elements. Work, however, is not always planned to meet the range of learning needs in each class. While lower attaining pupils are ably supported by adults that know them well, higher attaining pupils sometimes are not sufficiently challenged. The introduction of the numeracy and literacy strategies has led the school to consider ability grouping within Key Stages for English and mathematics. This should help teachers match work more closely to pupils' individual learning needs.
26. Extra-curricular activities are very good. These range from informal opportunities, such as the happy and very active games at lunch and break times when adults participate fully, to residential trips locally and abroad. Pupils participate in sports fixtures, music, art and drama workshops as part of the regular curriculum and out of school. They are encouraged to develop their own interests and skills during options time on a Friday afternoon as a reward for good work during the week. They take part in numerous charity fund-raising events, often creating positive and high profile publicity for the school, as when a famous television personality visited the pupils in this helicopter to say thank you for their efforts. Many of these events give them good links into the local community, focussing on issues such as the South West Children's Hospice or the Devon Air Ambulance Service. Community links are good and well used, with effective contributions from people such as Countryside Rangers, the emergency services and students from higher education colleges. There are also many visits and field trips which support

and extend the curriculum, with regular use of facilities such as the local library and the nearby moors and rivers.

27. The programme for careers education is satisfactory. Some careers lessons are rather dull and opportunities during these are lost to harness pupils' interests in the next stage of their life. There is however, a good programme of work experience, valued both by pupils and employers. This has resulted in some very positive attitudes to employment and positive goals for the future.
28. Links with other mainstream schools are satisfactory and developing well. This process has accelerated recently with the need to build teachers' skills and experience in relation to Key Stage 2. There has been a useful programme of placements in mainstream middle schools, where Barley Lane staff are looking at management, organisation and resourcing the curriculum for younger pupils. Local authority advisers and consultants have been helpful in the implementation and monitoring of national initiatives and curriculum developments.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

29. Overall the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers take formal and informal opportunities to address this aspect of pupils' development throughout the school day and there are many activities specifically planned to develop personal and social skills. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, as well as the religious education programme contains explicit teaching of spiritual elements.
30. Provision for spiritual development is good. There are school assemblies when pupils hear appropriate moral messages that reinforce Christian values. These promote a sense of community and are enjoyed by the whole school. Pupils are rewarded with praise for their behaviour, efforts and for keeping calm when tempted to lose their temper. They reflect on moral issues and bow their heads quietly in prayer. Pupils show that they can respond appropriately to the various elements of these occasions. Grace is said before lunch, and pupils of all ages are keen to volunteer to have their turn to say it for the whole school. Others listen quietly, with sincere respect. In religious education, pupils learn about a range of faiths. Some younger pupils find it hard to show respect for other religious practices, but inappropriate comments are quickly addressed by adults. Where there are opportunities to explore the deeper meanings of existence, such as life and death, these are sensitively explored and pupils given good opportunities to deal with their own emotions and those of others around them. There are times in lessons when awe and wonder is generated. Pupils, for example, were fascinated by close-up photographs of plants and insects on Dartmoor and commented on the beauty of the landscape during a talk by a Countryside Ranger.

31. Provision for social and moral development is very good. Adults go out of their way to demonstrate responsible, polite and friendly behaviour and are good role models. The headteacher, for example, plays alongside pupils at break times effectively modelling good sportsmanship and team play. Pupils respond well and older pupils also show younger pupils how to behave. This can be seen to be effective in the way that Year 7 pupils behave during whole school activities – often much better than in class. Old adages are deliberately used to reinforce this learning – for example ‘if you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all’. They are taught that adults have deep feeling too, and staff use their own experiences to explain how they personally deal with emotions such as anger and disappointment in an honest and open way. Pupils, during discussions, explicitly mentioned their appreciation of the bright and attractive school environment. The cleaning staff works hard to maintain a clean and graffiti-free school. Any writing or drawing on walls is quickly removed, and pupils learn to care for and appreciate this. They are taught respect for books, resources and other people’s property. There was no evidence of any mistreated or damaged equipment, which is rare in this type of school. Pupils know and usually respect school rules, such as those on smoking and mobile phones.
32. There are increasing expectations of pupils to behave well and take responsibilities as they move through the school, and pupils respond well with behaviour clearly improving as they move through the school. Mealtimes are unhurried, friendly and informal, with good friendships and interesting conversation encouraged. Pupils have a school council and are beginning to take some decisions that impact on the whole school community. Representatives have to address some democratic dilemmas, such as arguing for what the class want, even when this is not what you want yourself.
33. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage through discussions and lessons. Rich local resources of countryside and land and sea based industries are effectively used to increase the relevance of teaching. They experience art and literature from many different sources and are encouraged to compare these, empathising and thinking about the influences on different artists. They experience some degree of cultural diversity through meeting overseas students and their studies of different faiths in religious education. Any racism is quickly addressed and pupils learn that this is completely unacceptable. However, pupils are not sufficiently prepared for life in a multicultural society having very few opportunities to meet ordinary members of the community, like themselves and their own parents, from different cultural heritages.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school takes good care of its pupils; staff know them all very well; and these standards have been maintained since the last inspection. As a result, pupils feel valued and try hard to improve their behaviour and to concentrate on their learning.
35. There are good procedures to ensure child protection and the health and safety and welfare of pupils. The head teacher has responsibility for child protection and is alert to his responsibilities, having ensured that he and the whole school have had recent and relevant training. The policy is in line with that of the local education authority, and staff procedures are included appropriately in the staff handbook. The health and safety policy is backed

with good and comprehensive procedures. There are no outstanding issues from the last audit and the school is aware of one minor issue identified during the current inspection. The maintenance officer is very conscientious, looks after the school well and pupils value his high standards. The school has rigorous procedures with regard to smoking and drugs, which are adhered to effectively. Pupils appreciate the good quality school lunches and the provision of breakfast gives them a good start to their day.

36. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development; and the educational, and personal, support and guidance provided for pupils are good. There are good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance resulting in 30 per cent of pupils having maximum attendance, and only a tiny hard core requiring extra support from the school and the educational welfare officer. The educational welfare officer attends open evenings to present a supportive role and is valued by the school. Registrations are properly conducted. There is an ethos of pupils wanting to be in school and an effective reward system that recognizes good attendance.
37. There is a very good foundation for learning laid through the monitoring and promotion of good behaviour, and this is a great strength of the school. Pupils have weekly and termly behavioural targets, which they know and the rewards system ensures they are very well monitored and rewarded. The system is embedded in the school culminating in Friday activities which pupils earn, and should their behaviour fall short, pupils value the opportunity to redeem themselves. The Monday assembly sets the expectations for the week, rewarding pupils with praise for their behaviour last week, reminding them of how well they could behave this week, and what it would lead to on the coming Friday. Pupils are confident in the system's fairness and consistency of application and pupils report that the head teacher "calms you down". There are good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school does not tolerate it. Bullying does exist but fights are very rare, and any teasing is mostly verbal. The head teacher does a lot of work on anti-bullying and older pupils have made a computer presentation on it. The school is also suitably alert to racist and sexist comments and does not accept them.
38. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and for monitoring and supporting their academic progress are broadly satisfactory. Currently, all subject teachers are monitoring attainment but their practise varies in rigour and quality. The school is now putting appropriate measures in place to monitor small increases in attainment, and to make sure that assessment materials in Key Stage 3 are used consistently. This is likely to significantly improve assessment over the next academic year.
39. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is satisfactory, but a number of teachers are much more driven by the syllabus than assessment. However, because staff know pupils' strengths and needs very well they give appropriate support, particularly to lower attainers, to

enable them to access what is being taught. Pupils with higher attainment however, are not always sufficiently challenged. This was evident in science where the pupils were doing the experiment that came next in the text book, even though some pupils already knew the principles it was seeking to establish.

40. Personal development is monitored and supported well. Staff know pupils very well and this informal knowledge helps enables teachers to give support relevant to their needs and the behaviour tracking procedures add significantly to this.
41. It was impossible to inspect the residential provision at the school as this is scheduled to close in July 2001, and no pupils were resident during the time of the inspection. Since the head teacher has been at the school there has been no report on the quality of residential provision by the local social services regulation and inspection unit. However, the previous report of Her Majesty's Inspector reported that the residential provision was very good, and discussions with the Head of Care and pupils show that this quality of provision has been maintained over time.

42. Pupils in Year 9 at the time of the inspection were awaiting transfer to other mainstream and special schools due to the reorganization of the school. The school is taking a positive approach to reintegration and negotiation with pupils, parents and staff is taking place to try to match provision as closely as possible to the pupil's needs, and to ensure that the receiving school has the necessary resources to support the pupil. The head teacher and other key staff work closely with the receiving school, local education authority and, as appropriate, the Educational Psychologist. The head teacher discusses reintegration with every pupil at every review, establishing a culture of reintegration in pupils. Parents reported that the uncertainty over the future is having an impact on their pupils. The school's behaviour records show that the current Year 9 pupils have demonstrated their uncertainty with a slight increase in behavioural incidents. However, the pupils spoken to during the inspection were reluctantly accepting of the situation and appreciative that the school is doing what it can to make the transition as smooth as possible.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents and carers view their school as good and are pleased with what it does for their children. They appreciate that behaviour is handled well, and that the school is consistent in setting and promoting its values. They say that the school gives security, stability and does not give up on individuals. The inspection supports their views. One parent said of the school's approach to a child "like a broken vase put together again and not thrown away". Some parents however, expressed concerns over the changes in the school and how their children are viewing them.

44. The school's links with parents are very effective and based on mutual respect. The school works hard at developing these links, recognizing the benefits to its pupils of having parents 'on side'. The head teacher recognizes and values the parents' commitment. This relationship has been very productive especially in addressing and improving attendance and behaviour. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is good overall, although reports to parents could be better, with clearer information about what pupils have learnt. There are good arrangements for liaison as pupils transfer into the school, with the theme of what is best for their son. This same approach is continued in re-integration liaison as the school seeks to place pupils in Year 9 in other mainstream or special schools. The school reinforces its ongoing partnership with parents from the beginning and after one month the head teacher writes to parents for feedback on the school. The school is alert to parents with literacy difficulties and emphasizes that parents can use the telephone if writing is difficult. All parents have signed the home/school agreement, and it is routinely discussed at parents' evenings. These, however, are not usually well attended partly due to the distance that many parents live from the school; however, all parents attend annual reviews and are fully involved and aware of their child's progress and the targets set for the future.

45. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good because it is an effective partnership where pupils feel that the school and family support them. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory but is restricted day to day by their distance from the school. All parents are supportive of the school and its aims. They make sure their children attend, and support their development and learning at home where they can.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop and improve and is now in a strong position to effectively manage the change in nature of its intake. This improvement is due to the consistent approach of the headteacher and other senior staff who, together, provide good leadership. A significant development has been the continued improvement in the skill of staff in managing pupils' behaviour. This has been achieved by the very good levels of leadership and skill provided by the headteacher in promoting good behaviour. He sets a very good role model for other staff in being consistent and fair and, to quote one of the pupils, "he calms you down before things get out of hand". The school's 'points system' and behaviour policy is known to all pupils, parents, staff and governors. It is implemented consistently in every classroom and monitored rigorously so that the policy is applied fairly. Data is provided that is analysed very effectively to show the progress pupils are making in controlling their behaviours and to demonstrate to parents, staff and governors the success the school is achieving in improving behaviour. For example, very good work has taken place in seeking to reduce the number of occasions when pupils needed to be restrained. The school's data now shows that incidents of restraint are very rare and pupils are requiring much less support for their behaviour during lessons. There is now a culture in the school so that the whole community expects behaviour to improve and this is now seen as pupils influence one another to behave better in class and 'earn' their activities on a Friday afternoon.

47. At the same time, the school has continued to develop the subjects of the curriculum and is achieving success in raising standards, particularly in GCSE awards and English and mathematics in Years 7 and 8. This improvement is effective, but has yet to match the quality of the work carried out in improving behaviour. For example, whilst the quality of teaching and learning is monitored routinely, not all lessons are taught to the same consistent quality at which behaviour is managed. Pupils' progress is assessed satisfactorily by teachers but the variations in the way data is collected make it difficult for the school to clearly demonstrate its academic success to staff, parents and governors. Everyone in the school community has a very clear and shared understanding of the school's vision for improving behaviour. However, discussions with staff and governors show that there is less clarity about the priorities the school is working on to raise standards. Good planning is in place for improvement, for example, there is a good quality action plan for developing numeracy that is being acted upon effectively and leading directly to higher achievement in the pupils. There is

another good plan for developing the quality of provision for information and communication technology. These, and other action plans, are summarised in a statement of the school's current targets but this has yet to be given sufficient focus for all the school community to be clear about what is being done and to know how successful developments are proving.

48. Good leadership has brought the school out of 'special measures' to its current position as a good school. Discussions with governors and senior managers show that the head and deputy have developed their leadership skills on their own and have not received the same degree of support and professional development as many other senior managers in mainstream schools. For example, there are nationally recognised training programmes in school leadership that aim to provide guidance on leading schools into academic excellence. Inspectors judge that, for the school to encompass change and to continue to move to higher standards, the headteacher and deputy should extend their existing skills in leadership so that teaching and learning can be developed to the same high standards as behaviour management.
49. The transition period of changing the nature of the school is being handled well and is, rightly, being viewed as an opportunity for continued improvement. The headteacher is supported by a good leadership team and they are seeking to bring the rigour and high expectations of the best mainstream schools to the work carried out in Barley Lane. Teachers are also having placements in mainstream schools and working with the local education authority behaviour support team to prepare for receiving pupils from Key Stage 2 and returning pupils to mainstream schools as appropriate. This preparation is effective and the return of the current Year 9 pupils to other schools is being handled with sensitivity and care. One effect of the transition on teaching staff is that some teachers are moving to other schools as they prefer working with older pupils. Other teachers are adapting their work and there is now an atmosphere in the school where people are receptive to change and willing to move to further improvement. It is to the credit of the senior staff in the school that this positive and receptive outlook is now evident as the school changes its nature.

50. The last inspection recommended that the school should continue to improve behaviour. This has been done very well, as has the recommendation that the role of the governing body be improved. Good improvement has taken place against the recommendation that there should be whole school procedures for planning, assessment and behaviour management (although more consistency can be achieved in planning and assessment). In other areas, there has been good improvement in:
- increasing the relevance of the curriculum;
 - the provision for personal, social and health education;
 - the quality of leadership; and
 - GCSE results and standards in English and mathematics in Years 7 and 8
51. Since the last inspection, satisfactory improvement has taken place in:
- The quality of teaching and learning;
 - The use of assessment; and
 - The provision made for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
52. Governors now provide very good support for the school. The governing body is appropriately constituted and carries out all its work effectively and efficiently. A number of governors have professional skills and qualifications relevant to the school. They provide challenge where needed, ensure public money is spent wisely and strive for best value at all times. Governors and senior managers know what the school does well and what needs to be improved. The governing body is well informed of the school's context within the local education authority's provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, they are working very effectively to support the school through considerable change whilst keeping a strategy for the future and a determination to make sure that all pupils receive good quality education. Financial control is good and the school and governors benefit from the good quality support provided by the administration staff.
53. Strategic planning and the use made of resources is good. The school buildings are maintained and cleaned well and this has an impact on the pupils who report that they like coming to school because:
- It is attractively decorated with good display and no graffiti; and
 - The caretaking staff make sure the school is always kept clean;
54. Pupils would also like to see improvements in security to "stop local kids spoiling our football nets". Currently, the school has fewer pupils than usual with staffing and funding levels to meet the needs and costs of changing the nature of the school. Despite this, the school gives good value for money as it is successful in meeting the needs of its pupils, makes a big difference in their lives and helps them to leave school with an appropriate range of qualifications.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. To further improve the school towards excellence in its next phase of development, governors, senior managers and staff should now:

- Continue to provide a high standard of behaviour management and emotional support for pupils* (paragraphs 2, 10, 37, 46)
- Make sure all lessons are equally as interesting and motivating to the pupils by (paragraphs 5-7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 60, 68, 74):
 - Helping all teachers to use a greater variety of teaching methods
 - Identifying more accurately how each pupil learns best
 - Planning activities for pupils that are more closely matched to their learning needs
 - Making sure pupils with higher attainment are sufficiently challenged
 - Showing pupils the work that they do in their books and folders is sufficiently valued
 - Continuing to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching
 - Making sure that effective action is taken after monitoring to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- Make sure all members of the school community share the same vision and commitment to academic success, so that they develop these areas of the school to match the high standards already achieved in behaviour management by (paragraph 47):
 - Establishing a small number of major priorities each year for improvement
 - Making sure these are known to the whole school community
 - Demonstrating routinely how well these priorities are being addressed
 - Celebrating the success of the school in meeting its targets
- Make sure that routine procedures for curriculum planning and assessment are applied consistently in every class* (paragraphs 19, 24, 38, 39, 50, 62).

In addition, the school should also consider including the following points in its action plan:

- Support the headteacher and deputy headteacher in developing their advanced leadership skills to take the school into its new direction and to even higher levels of success (paragraph 48).
- Make sure that music continues to be taught from September 2001 (paragraph 99).
- Make sure that the curriculum for design and technology matches that found in mainstream schools (paragraphs 81, 84).
- Make sure that pupils are prepared more effectively for life in our multi-cultural society (paragraph 33).

* already identified by the school as areas for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	30	54	0	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	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	31
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	7.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Total
	2000	8

Teachers' Assessments		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Numbers of pupils at each NC level	English	1	2	5		
	Mathematics		1	0	4	3
	Science		1	3	4	

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Total
	2000	5

GCSE results		Grade G	Grade F	Grade E	Grade D	Grade C
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	English	1	3			
	Mathematics			1		
	Science (Double)	2	2	1		
	Art				1	4

Other qualifications	Stage 1	Stage 2
Mathematics: SMP Graduated Assessment	1	3

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	31
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y6 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	3.3
Average class size	6.2

Education support staff: Y6 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	217

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	11	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 2001
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	£
Total income	539,620
Total expenditure	540,643
Expenditure per pupil	15,447
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,441
Balance carried forward to next year	18,418

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	31
Number of questionnaires returned	10

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	50	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	70	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	10	20	30	20	10
The teaching is good.	60	40	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	40	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	50	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	40	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	40	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	20	10	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	70	20	0	10	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

There was a small number of questionnaire returns. Those parents who replied agree that:

- their children like school and are making good progress;
- behaviour is good, teaching is good, and parents are kept well informed of how their child is getting on;
- the school is approachable, well led and managed, and works closely with parents; and
- children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.

There was uncertainty about the amount of work that children should be expected to do at home.

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

ENGLISH

56. Overall, pupils' achievements in English are good in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4, where most pupils achieve GCSE passes. Pupils achieve good standards in reading, satisfactory standards in speaking and listening and unsatisfactory standards in spelling and handwriting. The good progress that is now made in Key Stage 3 reflects the introduction of aspects of the National Literacy Strategy with clear objectives and new active teaching methods. GCSE results in 2000 show that most pupils attained a graded pass, with the average for the school being grade F.
57. Throughout the school, pupils achieve success in reading at a level above that usually seen in similar EBD schools. The majority learn to read at an adult level and use these skills effectively to access written material across the curriculum. The school's recent initiative to raise reading ages of the lower attaining pupils has been particularly successful, with a significant number making more than two years progress in one school year. By the age of fourteen, higher attaining pupils read to the class, aware of their audience, paying attention to punctuation and speech, with a few developing some characterisation and expression. Lower attaining pupils read aloud with support but many are confident to try, even though they know that they will make some mistakes. This shows the good quality of relationships and trust between pupils and teachers. Pupils use dictionaries and have a range of research strategies that they demonstrate when using the Internet. By the age of sixteen, skills are similar but pupils use them in a wider range of contexts and are increasingly independent in their work. The understanding of what they read is at times limited by the pupils' vocabulary and general knowledge, but they have a good memory for the topics that they have studied at school including, for example, Greek names and scientific terms. Higher attaining pupils are able to read silently and piece together information from different parts of the text to answer questions or discuss aspects of character and plot.
58. Pupils' progress in writing and spelling over time has been unsatisfactory, especially for older pupils. School records show that many pupils have made little headway during their secondary education. To some extent this is a result of teachers wishing to encourage and accept written work without undue criticism, but the new strategies are already addressing this for younger pupils with regular spelling activities and focussed feedback in the quality of work that is already developing their skills. Younger pupils are keen to 'have a go' at new spellings and a few spell carefully and accurately with good use of punctuation and speech marks by the time that they are fourteen. They learn to use correct technical terms for parts of speech and correctly use vocabulary such as 'alliteration' and 'simile'. Older pupils generally have a good spelling vocabulary of high frequency words, but even those with good phonic skills still spell in a haphazard way, applying rules in idiosyncratic ways. Handwriting is similarly immature for most older pupils, with few regularly writing with a fluent joined style. Many pupils have now developed habits and ways of forming letters that make it difficult or uncomfortable for them to write in cursive script. However, several younger pupils are developing an appropriate style and show that they are able to present work well on occasions.

59. Pupils make appropriate progress in speaking and listening. Pupils talk with confidence, explaining and justifying, although there are limited opportunities for them to speak at length. Younger pupils enjoy using new vocabulary and revelled in developing the dialogue of the 'Killer Cat' and his victim. When asked to write a commentary, Year 8 pupils show that they are aware of different forms of speech for different purposes, and can replicate a commentator's style accurately in speech, which higher attaining pupils also do in writing. Older pupils listen carefully to each other and to the teacher, making appropriate contributions and asking questions. Throughout the school, pupils show that they remember the details of what they have heard, whether in assembly or during the reading of, for example, a long extract from 'Harry Potter' during reading time.
60. Teaching is good in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4, although good lessons were seen in both key stages and the quality was never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have an excellent and detailed knowledge of their subject matter. In a lesson on a Hitchcock film, the teacher was able to move pupils' focus from plot to character to camera angle, confidently demonstrating key concepts and promoting good knowledge and understanding of the genre. In other lessons where subject knowledge was less secure, teachers did not have the skills to allow pupils to experiment with language and punctuation. Instead, they insisted on routine and standard forms and these limited the activity and the quality of the finished work. Behaviour is very well managed throughout the school with patient good humour, giving pupils a positive way back into lessons when necessary. Teachers use stories and issues that arise from discussion to promote positive attitudes to learning and appropriate social and moral messages. They do not always, however, motivate pupils by bringing interesting and challenging learning activities into their lessons. These are sometimes dull and fail to challenge pupils, especially those capable of higher attainment. Time is generally well used and in the best lessons a brisk and purposeful pace is maintained and even the youngest pupils are kept interested and very well engaged for full sessions.
61. The curriculum is broadly appropriate with the programme for younger pupils reflecting the National Literacy Strategy and the older pupils following a GCSE syllabus. There are good opportunities to write for different purposes, but there are not enough occasions when pupils are expected to write at length. Pupils all have a daily period of sustained silent reading, which is helping to develop good reading habits. There are interesting opportunities for pupils to participate in drama workshops with students from a nearby college of higher education. There is no detailed plan to show how a range of texts will be studied during Key Stage 3, but effective informal collaboration has ensured a good coverage of a range of poetry, fiction and non-fiction as pupils move through the school. Key Stage 3 pupils have not previously been entered for national tests (SATs), but the school's new designation and closer work with mainstream secondary schools mean that pupils will sit the tests from next year. There will therefore be an appropriate study of set books, poetry and plays from next autumn. Pupils all have individual education plans that include literacy targets. These are not always sufficiently specific to allow teachers to plan

work to address them, for example 'improve reading skills'. Work, particularly in Key Stage 4 is driven by the examination syllabus rather than by individual learning needs. Lower attaining pupils are well supported during lessons but there is often a lack of challenge for the higher attainers. Too many worksheets are used, and exercise books are not used regularly. The worksheets are often poorly stored so pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to review their work and to see how well they are doing, and the work is not sufficiently valued. Recent cross-curricular literacy policies have been drawn up following whole school in-service training from the County's Literacy Service. These are very clear and helpful and are beginning to have an impact in some lessons. For example, pupils in science regularly practise their reading skills and use sentence banks to help them write their experiments. In art, the teacher and assistant help pupils to develop their conversation skills and pupils focus on how words in design and technology are spelt. However, closer monitoring is needed to ensure that all teachers are making an equally effective contribution to the development of literacy skills.

62. Assessment is satisfactory. Annual checks are kept on pupils' progress in their literacy skills using standardised tests and this data is now being appropriately used to evaluate literacy initiatives. Teachers evaluate lessons and keep notes on pupils' achievement but the quality and rigour of this varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Marking similarly varies. The best marking is positive while being clear about what the pupil has done well and what they might do to improve their work. This can be seen to be effective, such as when a pupil begins to use capital letters and full stops in response to a comment on their work. There is some monitoring of assessment, but it has not yet resulted in consistently appropriate practice.
63. Resources are limited but of good quality and very well used. The school make good use of library loans to supplement these. Because reading and text books are in short supply, too much use is made of photocopied materials. There are, however, some very well made teacher worksheets, such as those made to accompany the study of Hitchcock's film *North by Northwest* and Anne Fine's *Diary of a Killer Cat*. Computers are used for research and for some wordprocessing. Although good use is made of the supportive facilities of wordprocessors in science, such as word banks and whole-word input, this was not seen to be happening in English. This leads to missed opportunities to motivate and engage pupils and to encourage them to produce work of greater length and quality. There is a small, comfortable and attractive library. It is not used by pupils frequently, again largely due to a limited number of books. There has been good collaboration with the Devon Schools' Library Service. They have made good recommendations about future purchases. A new library and learning centre is planned within the imminent developments. This will contain multimedia facilities as well as a considerably wider range of reading material.
64. Co-ordination of English is currently undergoing a significant change. A new senior manager has just been appointed to oversee the move from Key Stage 3 and 4 provision to Key Stage 2 and 3. He has good experience of primary

literacy initiatives. There is a positive ethos around the teaching of English, but a series of temporary and non-specialist teachers standing in for permanent staff has led to some inconsistencies in practice and expectations. There are appropriate arrangements for the monitoring of planning and assessment, but these are not yet fully effective. Since the last inspection, developments have been carefully planned and can be seen to be raising standards, particularly in Key Stage 3. There is now a shared commitment and enthusiasm for making high quality provision paralleling mainstream standards and practice, and good capacity for realising this ambition.

MATHEMATICS

65. Pupils make satisfactory achievement over their time in school. Most pupils enter the school with significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding and with attainment levels that are below the expectation for their age. By the time they leave school, most pupils have a nationally recognised qualification in the subject. For example, in 2000, most pupils were successful in gaining Stage 2 in their SMP Mathematics and one pupil attained grade E in GCSE. However, the achievement of younger pupils is rising and the school is now likely to show that pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 are catching up with their peers in mainstream schools. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy is being systematically introduced and the pupils in Years 7 and 8 are now taught better, are learning more, and are making good progress. During lessons observed by inspectors, the pupils in Years 7 and 8 were working at almost the same level as the pupils currently in Year 9 and this tide of improvement is set to continue as these pupils move up the school. The pupils who are currently in Year 10 are following a course in SMP Mathematics that leads to GCSE qualifications and will continue this over the next academic year.
66. In lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 7 were able to use their knowledge of the four times table to quickly and correctly answer questions such as, "What is 28 divided by four?" and "What is a quarter of 36?". They recognised 90 degrees as a right angle and understood that 360 degrees is a complete turn. In Year 8, pupils were confident to discuss the methods they used to solve multi-step operations such as $(25 \times 6) + (35 \times 2)$ and worked hard to find the operations they would use to solve word problems. Pupils in Year 9 were able mentally to calculate two digit numbers multiplied by eleven. They then used their knowledge to work out a similar strategy for multiplying by 9. In their written work, these pupils were able to find how to solve word problems at much the same level of difficulty as pupils currently in Year 8. Year 9 pupils also calculated the total amount payable on a hire purchase agreement by reading correctly from a table the amount of interest that would be paid. The Year 10 pupils work individually through their SMP text books and show, for example, that they can use their knowledge that 180 degrees is a straight line to find the value of other angles on the line. They know that length \times breadth will give the area of a rectangle and then multiply this by height to find the volume of a cuboid. Appropriate opportunities are taken in other subjects for pupils to develop their numeracy skills. For example: in history, pupils work out the passage of time between dates; in physical education, pupils add and subtract scores; and in science, where pupils discuss their measurements and convert fractions into decimals. Throughout the school, pupils write the answers to their work in their books and completed work sheets are stuck in place so that a chronological record is compiled of work completed. However, there is no consistent procedure for setting out work, using headings and making sure work is dated. As a result, pupils are not taught sufficiently how to present their work, their books do not show pupils how they can improve and the work included can not be used for revision.
67. The subject is taught by a number of teachers who work together effectively to plan what will be taught and to improve the provision in the subject. Since the last inspection this group has recognised that previous reliance on using text books was not producing standards that were sufficiently high. They have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively in Years 7 and 8 and introduced the oral and mental aspects of the strategy effectively into Year 9. Learning support assistants are included in the development of the subject and full regard is

being given to preparing staff to work with pupils in Key Stage 2 when the school changes its intake in September 2001. This work is effective, and the well constructed development plan is being implemented successfully within the time scale allocated. As a result, standards are now rising and the school is much better placed to work more closely with mainstream schools on the inclusion of pupils.

68. The quality of teaching is good for Years 7 and 8. Pupils in Year 9 have good teaching of the oral and mental aspects of the national numeracy strategy, and satisfactory teaching for the rest of their mathematics curriculum. Satisfactory teaching is provided for pupils in Year 10. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of different methods at a brisk pace, and this helps pupils to stay interested and try hard to learn more. For example, in a lesson seen with Year 7 pupils, the teacher made very good use of a number stick to prompt pupils on their use of the four times table. She then moved quickly on to pupils writing number patterns on the white board, followed by quick-fire questions and using a large Chinese fan to demonstrate angles up to 90 degrees. The attractive worksheet produced by a learning support assistant was then used, with effective use of an overhead projector during the plenary session so that pupils could appreciate the meaning of acute and obtuse angles in preparation for the next lesson. The outcome of this lively teaching was that pupils were given no opportunities to lose interest. They concentrated hard, giving significant mental effort to completing the number sequences and were very productive in their written work, finishing within the tight time deadline set by their teacher. The quality of the worksheet also prompted one pupil to say "I like that" and this resulted in all the pupils completing their work with care, so as not to spoil the sheet. In other lessons, a good feature was the emphasis on class discussion about how pupils reached their answers as this led to lively debate that demonstrated clearly how mathematical problems can be solved in a variety of equally valid ways. In addition, pupils were able to see how others had worked and reflected upon which strategies would be more effective for their own use. In contrast, in Year 10 and in the main activity in Year 9 lessons, pupils work steadily through their text books and receive individual coaching from their teacher whenever they reach a new concept or have difficulty understanding what to do. This is satisfactory as the teacher is quick to spot what each pupil needs to do and provides support that leads to pupils successfully completing their work. The pupils work steadily and concentrate on doing as much as they can in each lesson but are unable to learn from one another and do not discuss the subject sufficiently.
69. The subject is led by two coordinators. One has been leading the subject for some time and is now concentrating on seeing the Year 10 pupils through their GCSE course. The numeracy coordinator is leading the implementation of the national strategy well and is preparing the school effectively for its new role. By July 2002, the new developments in mathematics will have phased out the old and this means the subject is now in a strong position to continue to improve.

SCIENCE

70. Pupils do well over their time in school and show good achievement in science. They enter school with significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding. By the end of Key Stage 3, a majority of pupils attain Level 4 in their science tests. This is below the average expected for their age but is a good achievement for most of the pupils upon their attainment levels on entry. All pupils are entered for the double award science GCSE examination. Each year, pupils attain success in this course, with a school average of an F grade. In the 2000 GCSE results, all pupils were awarded a graded result with two attaining grade G, two grade F and one attaining grade E. This good achievement is due to the high expectations of the teacher and the consistent nature of the teaching that leads pupils, over time, to have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject.
71. In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 7 were able to independently collect the equipment needed and set up their experiments to see whether water is given out from leaves. Most of the group knew that water can change its state and were aware of the meaning of 'evaporation'. However, their knowledge was not secure, for example about the boiling point of water or the molecular reasons for the changing state of materials. In Year 8, pupils demonstrated an appropriate understanding of the properties of light knowing, for example, that light travels in straight lines and will only go round corners if 'bounced' off a mirror. They know the image in a pin-hole camera is inverted and use their knowledge to speculate that the angles of incidence and reflection of light on a mirror will be the same. Year 9 pupils were experimenting to see which materials were more effective in removing oil from water. They observed and recorded their results effectively and drew appropriate conclusions from their work, but were unable to say why, for example, detergent and wood shavings worked as they did, or to speculate which could be used to deal with oil pollution at sea. Pupils in Year 10 devised their experiments to measure the impact of temperature and stirring on the solubility of sugar. They showed good independent skills in setting out their apparatus and demonstrated how to ensure through careful measurement that their test was fair. Discussion showed that these pupils could relate their results to molecular changes and speculate whether the rate of collision of molecules may increase the rate at which the sugar dissolved. The work in pupils' books, from Year 7 to Year 11, shows that experiments are written up routinely, with work dated and often neatly presented. Pupils work consistently and make steady progress year on year and lesson by lesson that builds, over time, into good achievement. These books are helpful for pupils as they show how well previous work has been carried out and can be referred to for revision for tests and examinations.
72. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the standards in science and the curriculum has been brought in-line with government recommendations. Computers are now used routinely to support learning, help with literacy, and to research information. The teacher has worked well to improve her own computer skills and is demonstrating effectively how they can be used to help pupils with their learning. In addition, Year 9 pupils are now taught how to approach their end of key stage tests and this has been effective this year in enabling more pupils to attain Level 4.
73. The quality of teaching, in the lessons seen, is satisfactory overall. However, the work in pupils' books and the teacher's records show that there are some good features in the teaching that are helping to raise the level of pupils' achievement. These are:
- The teacher has high expectations that all pupils will be successful in their GCSE course. This leads to all pupils being entered for the examination and usually gaining a graded result.
 - There is a consistent format for the way pupils write up their experiments. This is effective in helping pupils to know what they have to do and in making sure that work is completed routinely.
 - Lessons are planned to have a strong focus on experiments. This results in pupils being able to set out their equipment by themselves and taking care with their measurements and observations so that accurate results are obtained.
 - The teacher makes sure that the work in pupils' books is completed and presented in such a way that pupils can refer back to previous lessons to remember what they learnt.

- In all lessons, the teacher promotes reading and writing skills and uses computers well. Good use is made of writing frames on computers so that pupils who find handwriting difficult can 'click and drag' sentences into place to make sure their experiment is recorded effectively. This leads to pupils reading, writing and talking about what they are doing, as well as experimenting and using computers. As a result, pupils remember their lessons and enjoy looking back in their books to see what they have done.
74. Currently, teachers give too much emphasis to following the directions given for experiments in the textbook rather than building on what pupils know already. This sometimes leads to occasions where pupils already know what will happen and they consolidate their knowledge rather than extending it. For example, in the lesson on light, some pupils already knew the facts that the experiment was seeking to prove and the opportunity to extend their knowledge through discussion, or an extended experiment was not fully taken. In other lessons seen, what pupils were expected to learn was not made sufficiently clear and this led to pupils taking more time than they should to set up their experiments and resulted in more demands being made on the teacher through increased questions and some 'off-task' behaviour.
75. The specialist subject teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and what each pupil is learning. She keeps detailed records and tests how much has been learnt at the end of every module of the course. However, whilst this system works well for her, it is not in a consistent format that others can use or understand easily. Preparation for the changes in school population are in hand, the teacher has been to visit mainstream primary schools and the school's current scheme of work is being extended effectively to include pupils in Key Stage 2.

ART AND DESIGN

76. Pupils achieve well and attain results in their GCSE examinations that match the national average. In the 2000 results, of the five pupils entered for GCSE, four attained grade C, with the other pupil attaining grade D. During the inspection, two lessons for pupils in Key Stage 3 were observed but it was not possible to observe Year 10 pupils. However, the work done by pupils in their folders and displayed around the school has been taken into account in forming any judgements.
77. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are making good progress as a result of good teaching. In the lessons observed, pupils in Year 8 were studying Aboriginal art and devising symbols to add to face masks to illustrate what is important to each of them in their lives. The way the pupils refined their symbols and thought carefully about the visual impact of their mask was at a level appropriate for their age and led them to understand more clearly the importance of symbolism in the work of other artists. In Year 9, pupils sketched leaves with proportion, scale and line as expected for their age. They also worked effectively to practise techniques and ideas in their sketchbooks before transferring them to their clay tiles to combine into a mural. This use of sketch books is seen in all classes in the school and the youngest pupils use them effectively to refine their ideas into a finished work for production. Pupils' work in their folders and around the school shows a clear progression in techniques and sophistication. The pupils in Year 10 have produced attractive and well produced portraits in batik work and the GCSE work of the current Year 11 pupils includes attractive paintings with good distinction between tones of grey that gives a sense of movement and dramatic impact to their work. Most of this work is at the level expected for GCSE grade C and suggests that the 2001 results are likely to match those of last year.
78. Satisfactory improvement has taken place since the last inspection, the curriculum has been brought in-line with other schools in the country and effective methods of assessment have been introduced. As a result, the school is now effectively prepared to teach the subject to younger pupils from September.

79. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. The following points were noted as being particularly effective:
- The teacher keeps a brisk pace, tells the pupils clearly what they are doing, why they do it, and shows everyone at the end of the lesson what others have done. This leads pupils to stay on task and work productively throughout the lesson.
 - The teacher and learning support assistant work well together to keep a good dialogue going with the pupils. This helps pupils to relax and develop their communication skills while they are completing their art work. Adults also give positive reward and patient encouragement that leads all pupils to concentrate and work at improving their skills.
 - Equal value is given to pupils' contributions so that they all come to accept, for example, that different opinions can be formed about the same work of art.
80. The quality of display around the school is good and pupils remarked that they like the impact this has on their environment. They are proud of their work and value the work of others and this is seen in the lack of graffiti around the school and the respect given to fragile three dimensional sculptures and pottery also displayed. The curriculum is interesting for the pupils and enriched with experiences such as visiting art galleries and working on projects with professional artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. Pupils' achievements in design and technology are satisfactory within the narrow programme of work that they study. Pupils have regular lessons in two separate subjects of food and resistant technology. They develop good basic skills in both these areas, particularly in the use of tools and finishing techniques. There is, however, little co-ordination between these subjects so opportunities to generalise design and evaluation skills are lost, and a significant number of areas of the curriculum are not covered with, for example, no work in textiles and too little development of knowledge and understanding of structures and mechanisms. Although there is a significant element of design within the work with wood and plastic, most of the projects that pupils undertake in both areas of the curriculum are heavily directed, with too little development of initiative or underpinning knowledge and understanding of technical processes.
82. By the age of fourteen, pupils have good kitchen skills and know the techniques for making cakes and biscuits and cooking simple meals. They appreciate potential health and safety issues and can say how to keep the environment hygienic. They co-operate effectively in cleaning up and tidying away after cooking and enjoy the fruits of their labours! When working with wood and plastic, pupils learn to use a range of tools and understand the differences and purposes of, for example, different types of saw. They work very carefully and make good quality products, such as book-ends and clocks with good support to measure and mark out materials carefully. They know a good number of decorative techniques and produce useful and well-finished products that they are justifiably proud of. The work that pupils do in Key Stage 4 is driven by an appropriate accredited syllabus. They continue to develop good skills with

tools, produce simple designs for their products and are helped to consider how this is fit for its purpose.

83. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with a number of good features that help pupils develop skills and behave appropriately in potentially hazardous environments. In the best lessons a good working ethos is promoted and pupils respond to this by settling well and working steadily. There are careful demonstrations, showing pupils just how to use particular tools. However, lessons are not always sufficiently planned to develop integral skills such as technical drawing or making prototypes and there are occasions when materials and equipment are not ready and pupils have to wait for them to be prepared. The good skills of support staff effectively support the teacher in explaining concepts and helping pupils to apply numeracy and literacy skills appropriately. Work is appropriately planned, taught and assessed in line with school requirements. However, there is little match of task to individual learning needs and the assessment of pupils' skills does not sufficiently inform what is taught next.
84. Pupils enjoy much of the work in design and technology lessons, appreciating the workshop or kitchen ethos and the things that they make. This subject was not reported on 1999 so comparison with the previous inspection cannot be made. Pupils would welcome wider learning opportunities in this field and inspectors agree that the two subjects should be effectively combined in-line with mainstream schools.

HUMANITIES

(Geography, history and religious education)

85. Humanities includes geography, history and religious education. All three subjects are coordinated and mostly taught by one member of staff. Since few lessons were seen in each subject area, they are being reported together, under one heading. Also, these subjects were not reported on by HMI so comparisons with the previous inspection cannot be drawn.
86. Pupils' achievements in humanities are satisfactory in both key stages. They attain standards in line with pupils in similar schools and make satisfactory progress as they follow appropriate National Curriculum guidance for history and geography, and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
87. Year 7 pupils can talk about the lives of Buddhist monks and nuns, recognising and explaining what they see on a video about Buddhism. By the age of fourteen, pupils understand something of the beliefs and practices of different faiths. They have a very good knowledge of the locality and higher attaining pupils talk at length about the ancient history and geology of Dartmoor, using this to explain particular climatic and flood conditions and the industrial history of the region. They discuss Cromwell and monarchs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, using primary and secondary sources to answer factual questions. Key Stage 4 pupils do not take geography but successfully follow the Certificate of Achievement course in history. Year 10 are currently studying

Greek medicine, and can use information on the Internet to answer questions on his topic developing a secure grasp of the key vocabulary and concepts of the origins of modern medicine.

88. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but several good lessons were seen during the inspection. The best lesson was taken by a Countryside Ranger. He made his expectations very clear at the start of his talk and then captivated pupils with slides of Dartmoor's geography, archaeology, flora and fauna. Pupils were able to contribute their own good knowledge of the topics and places that he presented, and they enthusiastically learned more, asking very good questions and volunteering to stay on during break. Another lesson taught by a supply teacher, made very good links between problems for parliament during the Restoration and the situation in Northern Ireland. However, on most occasions, the lessons and the work set are rather dull, making too much use of worksheets and not encouraging sufficient independent research. There is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and the work done by pupils is largely driven by the programme that has been planned, with insufficient attention to what they already know and how they best like to learn.
89. Since the programmes that are followed are locally or nationally published, pupils experience an appropriately broad curriculum, effectively extended by the contributions of local people and places. Much more should be done, however, to develop the range of teaching and learning styles and to build a wider range of books, artefacts and resources for reference and research. Pupils themselves are aware of ways in which they learn effectively and are motivated by more practical involvement in tasks. Assessment is broadly in line with the school policy but lacks detail or purpose. It is clear from the response of pupils during good lessons that humanities is an area with the potential to develop into rich and exciting provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. Good improvement has taken place since the last inspection. More computers have been provided; they are effectively networked in a computer suite, and throughout the school; teachers are continuing to improve their own computer skills; and pupils are using computers to enrich their learning appropriately in other subjects. The main result of this good work is that there has also been a rise in pupils' achievements and these are now good, with pupils in Year 10 working at National Curriculum Level 5, which is just below the expectation for their age.
91. In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 9 were able to use '*Microsoft Powerpoint*' to make presentations with click commands on screen that animated, for example, three minus one equals two. They were also confident to log-on and select the appropriate software for their tasks. During the lesson, these pupils quickly understood how to insert command buttons on screen to move between slides and saved their work in the appropriate directories and files. Pupils in Year 10 were able to replicate the question screen from '*Who Wants to be a Millionaire*' and set up hyper-links to make each question interactive. These pupils have also made a most effective presentation to consider the impact of bullying on others with good use of digital images overlaid with text, sound and basic animation. In other lessons, pupils were observed using computers to, for example, research history with the Internet, word process work in English and record the outcomes of experiments in science. Around the school, there is clear evidence that the full curriculum is addressed and pupils are using spreadsheets, handling data and controlling events with computers, as well as making appropriate use of the Internet and contacting 'pen-pals' in other schools around the world by electronic mail.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The specialist teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and plans tasks that are interesting and varied. He has good expectations for what pupils can do and this leads to the pupils learning new techniques quickly and trying them out for themselves during the lesson. Pupils are given clear instructions and know what it is they are expected to learn each lesson. The teacher also uses an effective range of teaching methods rather than just demonstrating on screen what should be done. For example, in one lesson, each pupil was given a number and a command to carry out so that, by moving and talking between one another the pupils realised the order in which each command had to be given for the loop to work. This led them to quickly realise that the commands they used on screen would have to follow similar logic and accelerated their learning in the lesson. Good relationships are evident between the teacher and pupils and positive encouragement is given. This results in the pupils growing in confidence, self-esteem and becoming increasingly independent in their computer skills. There are suitable plans for the continued development of the subject and for including pupils in Key Stage 2. These include continuing to develop the skills of other teachers and to use computers in a wider range of other subjects.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

93. Pupils' achievements in French are good throughout the school and the youngest pupils are working at a similar level to pupils in mainstream schools. The good progress that pupils make is due to focussed, motivating teaching and lessons crammed with a variety of relevant activities that encourage pupils to generalise and use their knowledge and skills. The Year 11 pupils are

dissatisfied from French in order to concentrate on their work experience and other GCSE subjects.

94. The youngest pupils have a good receptive vocabulary of the language of classroom management, and are comfortable in an environment where most of the language spoken is French. They are keen to have their turn to ask and answer questions, speaking confidently with a good accent as a group and individually. They know the routines and expectations of lessons and work hard, for example, to have a game of French bingo as a reward for good work. Higher attainers use language flexibly recombining the vocabulary of number, colour, home, date and personal details into new sentences. By the time that they finish the French course, pupils have vocabulary in a good range of topics, many relating to daily living and tourism. They have some appreciation of basic grammar, gender and simple tenses.
95. Teaching is good, and sometimes very good. There is a very brisk pace to lessons, and pupils respond by stepping up their pace of work too, with lots of sharp question and answer activities. French is used throughout, with pupils hearing a good model of speaking which leads them to imitate confident and flexible use of the language. There are good teaching methods that allow pupils to quickly recognise, hear and use new vocabulary. All pupils are challenged at an appropriate level by differentiated questioning and giving them different roles within the group – for example taking a turn at being the questioner or the bingo caller.
96. The subject has continued to develop from the good start made at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum for younger pupils is the nationally published scheme followed in mainstream schools. This is giving them a rich and broad experience of French. The trip to France, made by pupils residential in the hostel, has motivated those that did not go as well as those that went. It is hoped to have another expedition to Normandy during the next school year.
97. Assessment is in line with school practice, and is used effectively to plan work for each pupil. Teaching and learning in French are an unexpected strength of the school. This is a subject where pupils in similar schools can quickly lose motivation and lack confidence. It is to the credit of the teachers that this is not the case in Barley Lane as success in this area will be particularly useful for pupils reintegrating into mainstream secondary schools.

MUSIC

98. At the time of the last inspection, music had only just been introduced into the curriculum. Since then, appropriate improvement has taken place and pupils in Year 9 now show satisfactory achievement over their attainment on entry to the school. Music is not taught to pupils in Years 10 and 11. However, the school is aware that there is still much to do and significant areas of the curriculum are not sufficiently emphasised at present. In the one lesson seen, pupils were able to demonstrate how to produce three differing pitches and tones from an African drum. Reference to previous lessons on videotape shows that most pupils can hold a steady beat against a more complex rhythmical pattern and that the workshops with professional musicians are stimulating and interesting events. Satisfactory teaching was observed in this lesson with the teacher emphasising reading and writing skills by asking pupils

to name a range of African instruments and identify how they are played. Discussion with pupils shows that they value the workshops that have been organised and they have enjoyed experiencing the music from Africa, Bali and the Caribbean.

99. Discussion with the subject coordinator shows that the main improvement since the last inspection has been in the attitudes of the pupils. Their initial reaction when the subject was introduced was very negative and the coordinator has worked hard, and effectively, with the result that pupils are now positive about their lessons. She has rightly spent time helping pupils to listen more closely to sound effects, film music and advertising jingles to appreciate the wide variety of music in everyday life. There has also been an expectation that adults will be non-judgemental and positive about pupils having a try with instruments and each lesson contains a variety of tasks so that pupils can show success in at least one area during the lesson. However, there has not been as much emphasis on singing and performing pupils' own compositions; and computers, electronic instruments and pupils' current musical interests are not used as fully as they might be. Also, the teacher has been temporarily employed and is leaving the school at the end of the current term. Effective use is made of a learning support assistant with musical qualifications, but there is no guarantee at the time of inspection that the work already started will continue in September.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. Pupils' achievements in physical education (PE) are good throughout the school. Pupils make good progress within a broad curriculum and most attain standards in line with those in mainstream schools. The progress that they make is largely due to good teaching by staff with very good subject knowledge and skills who enjoy physical activities and effectively share this enthusiasm with all pupils. The previous inspection did not refer to physical education so comparisons of current and previous provision cannot be made.
101. In Key Stage 3, most pupils throw and catch accurately, with some displaying very good fielding skills. They understand the rules of team games and apply these in new or adapted circumstances when they have to play with very small sides. They learn conventional athletic techniques. During the inspection, most Year 8 pupils had mastered the Western Roll technique for doing the high jump and were keen to learn the Fosbury Flop. Year 10 pupils had heard of practicing throwing techniques with eggs to develop gentle catches, and one brought eggs on his way to school for everyone to use. This proved a tremendously motivating and exciting (though messy!) activity in which skills were significantly improved and some pupils and a support assistant displayed remarkable skills. They also demonstrated excellent team playing and skills in a softball game in the same lesson.
102. Teaching is good. In lessons during the inspection it was sometimes very good. Lessons are very well planned and structured from the basis of good subject knowledge, so pupils are taught skills correctly and quickly learn the rules of the game. Warm ups are purposeful, with good explanations of which muscles are being stretched and for what reason. This gives pupils a wider understanding of healthy and safe exercise. Adults model good sportsmanship and energetic participation and pupils work hard to emulate this, developing good skills and positive self-esteem. Management of potential behavioural problems is skilful, non-confrontational and relationships are very good. The oldest pupils enjoy developing their skills and are keen to get on with the game, behaving impeccably. Expectations are high and almost everyone works hard to give of their best. Gains in self-confidence are good and the sessions successfully and cheerfully include pupils of all abilities. In some lessons with younger pupils, there is insufficient attention to details of class organization, which would minimize any risks of disruption.
103. The curriculum is well planned to provide a developmental sequence of activities in a good broad range of individual and team activities promoting fitness, skills and self-confidence. Every class has a six-week module of outdoor pursuits, with all Year 9 pupils taking a recognized award in kayaking. Pupils understand how this builds each year and look forward to new and more challenging experiences as they get older. In the summer, pupils do athletics and record their personal best statistics in a special booklet, comparing these with what they attained the previous year. There are additional sporting activities during options, such as swimming and cycling which help to promote positive recreational interests. Break and lunch-time activities also contribute

to the PE curriculum with active, well resourced, good humored ball games in which adults and pupils participate. The school successfully competes in fixtures and athletic events with other schools on a regional basis ensuring that pupils of all abilities have their turn.

104. Resources are good and well used. All equipment is very well maintained. The field is a good size for games but has a significant slope. This provides opportunities for active fielding but leads to much time wasting amongst younger pupils. Very good use is made of community facilities, including the local swimming baths and athletics track.

105. PE is a strength of the school promoting good behaviour, very good relationships between pupils and staff, very good skills for participating in out of school activities and providing many opportunities for social development.