

INSPECTION REPORT

ADDINGTON SCHOOL

Woodley, Reading

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 110187

Headteacher: Mr Nick Burnett

Lead inspector: Mr Declan McCarthy

Dates of inspection: 17-20 May 2004

Inspection number: 258861

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2-19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	204
School address:	Loddon Bridge Road Woodley Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG5 4BS
Telephone number:	0118 9540444
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Prior
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a mixed community special school catering for pupils with moderate, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties, aged from two to 19 years. The proportion of pupils with more complex needs, such as autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties, has increased by more than 50 percent since the last inspection, with over a third having an autistic spectrum disorder diagnosis. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and there are currently 204 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage and a few pupils are from other ethnic backgrounds which include Indian, Pakistani, Caribbean and Chinese. There are 21 pupils for whom English is not their first language but none are at an early stage of learning English: their first languages are Punjabi, Cantonese and Urdu. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about average for this type of school. When leaving school, nearly all pupils move on to continuing education and a few move on to employment. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than usual is average. The school has gained a number of Quality Marks including: the International Standards Organisation – ISO 9001/2000 for developing efficient management procedures and Investors In People status in 2002. The school is also involved in a number of initiatives including: provision for under 3s, outreach to mainstream schools and inclusion initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23886	Declan McCarthy	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage
19639	Gillian Anderson	Lay inspector	
22729	Robert Arnold	Team inspector	Mathematics Subjects and courses at post-16
2740	Betty Barratt	Team inspector	English Geography History
17182	Michael Farrell	Team inspector	English as an additional language Religious education Music Physical education Citizenship
21899	Gillian Lawson	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school with excellent features. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has established excellent links with the community and other schools and colleges for the benefit of pupils. Pupils' achievements are very good because teaching and the curriculum are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. The inclusion of all pupils, regardless of their backgrounds and capabilities, is very good. The school is well managed and provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievements are very good because teachers have high expectations for learning and the curriculum provides very good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning.
- The use of assessment information, signing and communication aids to support pupils' learning ensures tasks are matched to individual needs.
- Very good leadership has led to strong teamwork, and a shared vision for improvement throughout the school.
- Although management is good overall governors and subject co-ordinators have yet to formally monitor provision
- Although there are good resources for learning, accommodation for secondary aged pupils and for teaching art and design, design and technology and science across the school is limited, which restricts learning and achievement.
- There are very good links with parents and excellent links with the community, local schools and external agencies. This has led to very good provision for involving parents in developing signing to improve pupils' communication skills.
- High quality care, the very good ethos and very good provision for pupils' personal development ensures that pupils have very good attitudes to learning, are happy at school, have very good relationships, and behave very well.

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in March 1998. The issues identified in the last inspection have been well addressed with significant improvements in all areas. Pupils' achievements have improved, particularly in opportunities for accreditation in Years 10 and 11 and in English, communication, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Leadership and management are now very good. There has been good improvement in teaching, learning and the curriculum. Pupils' achievements are very good because teachers set high expectations for learning, use signing and communication aids more effectively, and make better use of assessment in lessons to move pupils' learning forward. The school is more effective than at the time of the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is very good for nearly all pupils including those with additional special educational needs. There are no differences in the achievements of boys and girls. The achievement of children

in the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning. Standards have risen and pupils' achievements in English, communication, PSHE and in their individual education plan (IEP) targets are very good. However there is a slight dip in the achievement of pupils in Years 7 to 9 in some subjects because of occasional weaknesses in teaching. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their achievement over a longer period at school is very good. Students in Years 12 and 13 achieve very well in their courses. By the time they are ready to leave every student has gained success in at least one external examination, demonstrating very good achievement since they first joined the school.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good and result in very good relationships, very good attitudes and very good behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and respect staff. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good overall.

Teaching is very good in all year groups except Years 7 to 9, where it is good. It is consistently very good in English, religious education and PSHE and, as a result, pupils' learning is very good. Teachers make very good use of signing and communication aids to support pupils' learning and achievement. The strong teamwork between teachers, support staff and therapists ensures that all groups of pupils are supported effectively and achieve equally well. The use of assessment to check and record pupils' progress, set individual targets for pupils and in the planning and delivery of lessons is very good. As a result, learning is very good.

The curriculum is very good with a strong emphasis on communication, speaking and listening. There is a very good work related programme for older pupils and students and a very good range of activities outside the normal school day. Resources for learning are good and accommodation is satisfactory. There are no practical areas for teaching art and design, design and technology and science, which restricts teaching and learning. The school provides very good care for its pupils. Collaboration and partnership with parents are very good; they are excellent with other schools, colleges and outside agencies, enhancing pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and that of senior managers is very good. Through their shared vision and commitment good improvements to the curriculum, teaching and learning have materialised. Management is good overall with a clear focus on self-evaluation. Financial management and management by subject co-ordinators are also good. The work of the governing body is good. Governors are very supportive, and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Statutory requirements are fully met. Co-ordinators and governors monitor informally but have yet to develop formal monitoring.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils view the school very positively. Nearly all parents believe their child is making good progress, behaviour is good, teaching is good and the school is well run. Pupils are happy at school and feel that behaviour is good. They believe staff expect them to work hard and do their best.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to work closely with the LEA to improve those aspects of the accommodation which impact negatively on pupils' learning and achievement.
- Ensure that governors and subject leaders implement more formal monitoring procedures.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is very good overall. It is very good in English and communication, music, physical education and PSHE throughout the school and very good in all year groups except in Years 7-9 where it is good. All pupils make very good progress towards their individual education plan (IEP) targets. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning. Students in Years 12-14 are achieving very well in the National Skills Profile and the Accreditation for Life and Living Skills. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with more complex special educational needs, those at an early stage of learning English and higher attaining pupils achieve equally well as other pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because teaching and the curriculum are now very good.
- There is a slight dip in the achievements of pupils in Years 7 to 9 due to restrictions in the accommodation and some less secure teaching.
- Specialist teaching considerably enhances pupils' achievements.
- Assessment information is used very effectively to promote very good achievement.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievements are very good because teaching is very good and results in their enthusiasm for learning. The very well planned curriculum also has a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The curriculum is highly relevant so that every pupil is fully included in activities on offer. Consequently there are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls or of different groups of pupils. Children's achievements in the Foundation Stage are very good in all areas of learning with good improvements, especially in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are also achieving very well and there is equally good improvement in the achievements of pupils in Years 10 and 11 and students in Years 12-14. At the time of last inspection there were limited opportunities for pupils to gain nationally recognised awards in Years 10 and 11. Both pupils and students are now achieving very well in their Youth Award, Transition Challenge and Entry Level and during the last academic year, they all left school with at least one qualification from an accredited course.
2. Although achievement is very good overall, there is a slight dip in the achievements of pupils in Years 7 to 9, mainly due to the limitations of the accommodation in the secondary department and some weaknesses in teaching and learning. There are still no practical areas for teaching science, art and design, and design and technology, despite the best efforts of the school to improve this situation with the support of the local education authority. Plans for the development of a new school have very recently been put on hold due to limited funding. As a result, the lack of practical areas considerably limits what can be taught in these subjects and impacts negatively on pupils' achievements. However, teachers compensate for the limitations to the accommodation by making good use of available resources, especially through links with other schools, and as a result, pupils' overall achievements in these subjects are good. A few temporary teachers have been appointed to cover staff absence in Years 7 to 9 and these teachers are not as fully skilled in meeting the learning needs of the pupils as other staff in the school. As a result the achievements of pupils in Years 7 to 9 in subject lessons are good overall. However, their achievements towards their individual education plan (IEP) targets are very good because additional highly skilled support is provided to ensure they meet their targets.

3. Pupils' achievements have improved significantly in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), music, physical education, and especially in English and communication skills and in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well adapted by teachers and this has led to effective learning and good achievement of pupils in mathematics. Pupils' achievement in ICT is good because resources and staff training have greatly improved. As a result, all staff are much more confident than at the time of the last inspection in the use of ICT to support teaching and learning in other subjects. Staff make very good use of additional communication aids and signing, with very good support from therapists to enhance the development of literacy and communication skills. The National Literacy Strategy has been very well adapted to pupils needs and implemented effectively throughout the school. Consequently, pupils' achievements in English and communication skills are very good.
4. Specialist teaching, particularly in music and physical education, has led to pupils' very good achievement in these areas. Activities and resources are very well chosen and expectations for learning are high. Lessons are consistently dynamic and interesting, sustaining pupils' concentration and enthusiasm for learning. As a result pupils' achievements in physical education and music are consistently very good across the school.
5. The school makes very good use of assessment information to raise standards of achievement. The school's analysis of attainment over the last two years shows a steady year-on-year upward trend with more pupils reaching or exceeding their *P Scale* targets (progress measured in small steps). Progress against IEP targets throughout the school is very good because target setting has improved with greater use of *P Scales*, more involvement of pupils in the target setting process and highly skilled support provided by teaching assistants and therapists. Teachers take full account of pupils' IEP targets in planning activities and target setting is very well established throughout the school. Challenging targets are set for all pupils and for particular year groups, and there is clearly an upward trend in pupils' performance against these.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school because of the high quality of their personal development.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good because of the high level of mutual respect.
- Pupils mature particularly well in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because the school provides very well for this.

Commentary

6. Pupils are keen to come to school because they think it is a good place to be and so arrive punctually at the start of the school day and for lessons. However attendance levels, whilst satisfactory, are held down by high levels of authorised absence due to medical and hospital appointments dealing with pupils' special needs. The school promotes attendance well, liaises closely with the education welfare officer and immediately makes contact with the home when an unexplained absence occurs. Pupils' attitudes are very positive because they are keen to learn as they feel a very good sense of achievement according to their ability. The very good teaching engenders enthusiasm through high expectations and challenge. Pupils feel secure and confident in school. They are helpful and considerate because the school fosters good levels of maturity through the strong promotion of personal development.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.22
National data	9.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.75
National data	0.6

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

7. Pupils' behaviour is very good because pupils feel valued and respected due to the strong ethos, both in the school and in the other school and community facilities they are welcomed into. Pupils are highly motivated because of the high quality of teaching skills focussed on developing their behaviour and personal qualities. The first rate development of strategies to promote a culture of positive behaviour is being shared with other schools who recognize their effectiveness. Pupils learn very well how to amend their behaviour as their awareness of how this affects others develops. The number of exclusions is very low because it is only used as an option of last resort, and such circumstances are very rare.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	155	3	1
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	12	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

8. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good because it promotes mutual respect and is fundamental in developing pupils' empathy and awareness of others very well. This creates a community of diverse needs and ethnicity where all feel cherished. The confidence generated allows initiative to flourish and this was shown in a Foundation Stage child able to release his own seat belt on arrival, who then went to the back of the coach to assist a needy pupil in releasing hers. The cumulative effect of strong personal development throughout the school is seen in older pupils who behave with maturity and poise when representing their school council, offering consideration and initiating handshakes at the end of the meeting with visiting adults.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The very good quality of education is underpinned by a very positive ethos for learning. Very good teaching and learning is supported by a very effective curriculum. Pupils are very well cared for. Partnership with parents is very good and there are excellent links with other schools, colleges and the wider community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in all year groups except for Years 7 to 9, where it is good. Systems of assessment, and their use by teachers to move pupils' learning forward, are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good training has resulted in high quality teaching and learning in nearly all year groups.
- Specialist teaching considerably enhances the overall quality of learning and pupils' achievements throughout the school.
- The relative inexperience and lack of expertise among some temporary teachers have impacted negatively on pupils' learning and achievement in Years 7 to 9.
- Teamwork between teachers and support staff is very good and staff maintain very good relationships with pupils.
- Teachers use assessment information very effectively to plan for individual needs and to move pupils' learning forward.

Commentary

9. Overall the quality of teaching throughout the school is very good and has led to very good learning and achievement by nearly all pupils. The majority of teachers set high expectations for learning and as a result pupils concentrate and persevere when faced with challenging activities. Pupils work very hard in nearly all lessons, which are usually delivered at a brisk pace. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection because staff benefit from high quality training and support provided by the senior management team. For example, the management of pupils' behaviour has greatly improved so that all staff consistently apply the techniques they have acquired through training. Consequently, despite the increase in the proportion of pupils arriving in school with severe behaviour difficulties, overall behaviour throughout the school is very good. Equally, the development of training and the highly skilled support for teaching and learning provided by therapists has led to the very good use of signing and communication aids by teachers and support staff. The consistent and effective use of signing, symbols, objects of reference and electronic switches to enhance pupils' learning was seen in nearly all lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 81 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (5%)	41 (51%)	22 (27%)	12 (15%)	2 (2%)	0	0

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

10. Specialist teaching of music and physical education throughout the school has led to consistently very good learning and very good achievement in these subjects. These teachers possess very good subject knowledge, set consistently challenging activities, and make very good use of high quality resources in lessons. As a result pupils thoroughly enjoy these lessons and work very hard to improve their learning.

11. A few temporary teachers have been appointed to cover teacher absences in Years 7 to 9. Although they work very hard to meet the needs of their pupils, their limited knowledge of methods to match activities to the learning needs of Years 7 to 9 pupils in a small minority of subject lessons has resulted in unsatisfactory learning and achievement on these few occasions. However, teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good overall because additional support for learning is provided in most lessons and pupils in Years 7 to 9 benefit from the same specialist teaching as other pupils.
12. Very effective teamwork between teachers and support staff, including therapists who support and sometimes teach in lessons, ensures that all groups of pupils, especially those with additional complex special educational needs, learn very effectively. Support staff are fully involved in planning and reviewing lessons with teachers so that teamwork is very strong. Consequently, in almost every lesson seen, support staff adapted their methods and used very well chosen resources to promote pupils' learning. As a result pupils worked on their tasks with increased confidence. The very good relationships staff have with pupils were a strong feature of nearly all lessons seen and this was confirmed in the very positive comments pupils made in their questionnaire responses. Pupils agree that teaching is good, and that they are expected to work hard and do their best.
13. Staff planning to accommodate individual needs in lessons is thorough and meticulous. Lesson plans are based on very good knowledge of all pupils' achievements and take full account of each pupil's IEP to match methods, activities and resources precisely to individual needs. Targets written in small steps, (*P Scales*), are regularly set for most subjects, and particularly English, mathematics, science, ICT and PSHE. The views of parents and pupils are carefully considered in the setting of targets so that all involved are very well informed about what pupils are expected to achieve during their time in school. Full account is also taken of the each child's Statement of Special Educational Needs in formulating targets. Progress towards these targets is regularly reviewed and pupils' achievements against them are reported to parents, which in turn has a very good impact on raising achievement.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good quality and range of learning opportunities through its curriculum. The curriculum is highly relevant to the circumstances of the school, and offers a rich and varied programme of experiences which meet the particular needs of its pupils very well. Overall, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning and organisation have a positive impact on the breadth of learning experiences throughout the school.
- The curriculum includes all pupils fully and is tailored carefully for their individual needs.
- The school provides very effectively for pupils with more complex educational needs, which has a very positive impact on their achievement.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared very well for subsequent stages of education and employment.
- There are no specialist rooms for DT and science, and there is limited accommodation for art and physical education, which has a negative impact on secondary pupils' achievement in those areas.

Commentary

14. The curriculum is very good and provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which fully meet the interests, attitudes, and complex needs of pupils. The school has worked hard to redevelop the curriculum and supporting schemes of work and has made good progress since the last inspection. Now the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the school's changing

population in a more comprehensive and coherent way. This has a strong impact on pupils' achievement. Very effective planning and organisation have produced an inclusive and individualised curriculum that ensures that all pupils achieve well. Planning and organisation now reflect the full breadth of the National Curriculum plus religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in all age groups and meet the specific and individual special needs of all pupils. Across the school pupils are organised into classes according to curriculum access needs, which include their behavioural, physical, sensory and academic demands.

15. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy very well and these are fully embedded in the curriculum. The outcomes of this are clearly seen in the good lesson plans that most teachers devise and in the way lessons are targeted to meet the individual needs of the pupils. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are well founded and promote maximum progress.
16. All statutory requirements are met. The school gives an experience of modern foreign languages to pupils in Years 7 to 11 through a week-long taster programme. This enjoyable and successful week gives opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture, customs, and language of several countries, and strongly enhances opportunities for pupils' social and cultural development. Drugs and sex education is addressed effectively through a well planned and evaluated PSHE programme. PSHE is a vital element in nurturing the pupils' social and personal development and has a central place in the individualised curriculum, having a major impact on pupils' attitudes to school, their level of independence and maturity and their self-esteem. The school provides many effective opportunities for pupils to develop social skills and interact with different groups. A good example of this is the effective involvement of the teaching assistants with parent in assessing and monitoring pupils' achievement in PSHE, particularly at lunch times.
17. The heads of primary, secondary and post-16 departments (Faculty Leaders) and subject co-ordinators manage curriculum development in their areas effectively and work with good commitment to improve the provision in their subjects. They monitor teachers' plans well and ensure they comply with National Curriculum requirements.
18. The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 gives a wide range of courses, some taught through the Youth Award (ASDAN) scheme and the Transition Challenge scheme. These are coherently planned and meet the pupils' priority needs and aspirations very well. The school provides a strong programme for transition, useful work experience placements, and very effective school and college links. The valuable links with Berkshire Education Business Partnership and other business and community groups provide pupils with work placements, team building skills and interview and presentation practice. They also give pupils and students access to greater opportunities in a wider variety of settings to further develop their independence, preparing them very well for subsequent stages of education and employment. Pupils respond very positively and gain socially and academically from these experiences and have a genuine understanding of the world of work. Many pupils go into employment or straight into local mainstream colleges or specialist colleges when they leave school. Pupils with the most complex learning difficulties join the post-16 unit in the school where they make very good and occasionally exceptional progress. Good links with Connexions careers education and developing staff expertise ensure that pupils have secure transition plans, and they are able to plan well for the future in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere.
19. Provision for pupils with additional and complex needs is very good and the development of aids to communication has been strong and successful. All teachers are trained and highly expert at working with pupils with autism, which is reflected in pupils' very good achievement. The provision of behaviour support workers has proved very successful and the needs of these pupils are very well met. The needs of pupils with additional sensory difficulties are well provided for within the school and are supported by advisory teachers for hearing and multi-sensory impairment on the staff at the school who have access to the advisory teacher for the

visually impaired. The needs of pupils with degenerative conditions are met sensitively. The speech and language therapists and physiotherapists provide good support. The school has good relationships with other support agencies, and calls upon their expertise and advice as and when it is necessary.

20. The school's commitment to providing opportunities for pupils to learn alongside their mainstream peers is very strong and is shown in its partnership with local primary and secondary schools and colleges. At present there are over 70 pupils involved in either individual or small group or class inclusion opportunities throughout the age range. A good example of this is the school's partnership with a local arts college. Secondary pupils have attended the college for regular art lessons in well equipped art studios with specialist teachers, and specialist art equipment can be borrowed from the college. College students also visit and work with pupils from the school. The sixth-formers from three local secondary schools support pupils on an outdoor pursuits residential course in Wales. Younger pupils have very enriching opportunities to take part in activities at a local infant school and primary schools.
21. Pupils enjoy and attend regularly a wide range of activities out of school hours. The school runs rugby, hockey and football sessions as well as swimming, music and youth clubs. There are trips to the theatre, residential visits, and sporting and art competitions with other special and mainstream schools. The school takes part in local arts and music festivals and makes very good use of the local shops, park and leisure facilities. A very popular event held by the school, to which parents and guests are invited, is "Proms in the Playground", showing pupils' achievement in music and dance. Pupils with additional and complex needs go to a local drama studio and they participate in performances at a festival in July.
22. The majority of teachers are suitably qualified with good experience and are deployed effectively. The appointment of specialist teachers is having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. The number of teaching assistants has increased: they are well trained and provide skilled and effective support for pupils. Most staff have a very good knowledge of the pupils, and the very effective relationships in the school are a strong factor in raising achievement. Resources are generally satisfactory. They are good in mathematics, religious education and communication aids, and very good in music and physical education. Despite the best efforts of the school the accommodation in science, design and technology and art is unsuitable for secondary age pupils and has a limiting effect on their progress. There are also not enough showers or changing facilities for physical education. However the school has had a successful LEA bid for additional funding and has plans to resolve these issues.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety very well. It provides them with very good support, advice and guidance and involves them very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The promotion of care is very good because pupils learn more readily as their needs are given the highest priority.
- The support, advice and guidance for pupils are very good because of the high quality of procedures in the school.
- The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good because of the very positive impact it has on their personal development.
- There are concerns about the quality of school lunches that are being addressed by the school.

Commentary

23. This is a very caring school where pupils are known very well by staff and their needs recognised fully. Pupils are very positive about the school because they feel so well supported and cared for. The promotion of pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good because it is embedded in the school's ethos, which underpins its work and permeates those schools and organisations involved in its work. Bullying is not an issue because of the high quality of relationships and behaviour policy. Child protection and health and safety procedures are properly carried out.
24. Teachers know and respect pupils and respond very well to their personal and academic needs. Support, advice and guidance are very effective because they are comprehensive, consistent and involve pupils in their own learning targets very well. Pupils are confident in an adult to turn to for good support. The development of very good strategies to promote a culture of positive behaviour which raises achievement is being shared with other schools. The school's very positive philosophy empowers pupils to think about their behaviour, and by managing it they take control and build their own self-esteem. Even those with least language are fully involved through the use of excellent sign cards. The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development together with personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution in giving pupils the advice and guidance they need to achieve their high levels of personal development and be happy in school.
25. Health professionals give excellent support in addressing the physical and medical needs of pupils. Speech and language therapists are involved very effectively in the delivery of lessons alongside teachers and are regularly involved in meeting parents. Concerns expressed by professionals about the quality of school lunches have been recognised by the school in its documentation on the Healthy Eating Programme, where it states that it is working with those involved to implement a healthier menu.
26. The involvement of pupils in the work and development of the school is a strength because the impact enhances pupils' initiative in promoting ideas for the school to consider. This contributes very well to their self-esteem and developing responsibility by being involved at the heart of the school, for example in the appointment of the new headteacher. For those involved with the school council it has made an excellent contribution to their poise and maturity. All pupils, whatever their disability or ethnicity, are fully involved and valued in their contributions to the work of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the community are excellent because of the profound impact on pupils' developing maturity and social skills.
- Links with other schools and colleges are excellent because they extend pupils' high levels of personal development and achievement.
- Parents have a very high regard for the school.

Commentary

27. The school has a very good partnership with parents because of the importance that the school attaches to this, and parents praise these links. Parents have a very positive view of the work of the school because they see how very well their children are making progress. They value the very supportive and very good ethos, which they observe quickly impacting on new arrivals. These very good links encourage parents to be full partners in their child's learning and this is

supported very effectively by training sessions for parents which include the handling of difficult behaviour. A series of meetings have been organised specifically for Asian minority ethnic parents in liaison with Wokingham's Minority Ethnic Officer. Good advice and guidance is given at annual reviews and home/school diaries are informative. The involvement of parents in organising the Holiday Club during summer and Easter vacations is a particularly strong feature of parental links. The strength of all of these links is that all parents have the opportunity to be fully engaged as effective partners in their child's learning. The School Association is a committed band of volunteers that have raised significant amounts of money to provide additional resources and opportunities for the pupils.

28. Excellent links exist with the community, and these make a sustained and exceptional contribution to pupils' achievement. The local leisure centre makes an extremely valuable contribution to pupils' personal development as they build up good basic skills in the community. This makes a very good contribution to physical education as all pupils are highly motivated because of the high quality of teaching skills focussed on developing their behaviour and personal qualities. Because they feel a great sense of achievement there, post-16 pupils confidently use the facilities alongside adults, and in the cafeteria are indistinguishable from others enjoying the social context. The school capitalises extremely well on the resources in the community to improve pupils' learning. Business has given first-rate financial support to the sponsorship for the specialist bid. A business mentor gives invaluable support to the headteacher to improve management.

Example of outstanding practice

Through a wide range of exceptional links with other schools and colleges the school enables pupils to experience enriched learning opportunities which have a profound impact on their achievement.

As the Foundation Stage pupils arrived at the mainstream infant school they displayed the virtues they gain from the excellent links with other schools. A little boy who was eager to make the visit nevertheless independently and on his own initiative went to the back of the coach to release the seatbelt of a friend less able. Their confidence was displayed as they walked up to the school and one of the pupils greeted a group of adults outside the school with a cheery and confident "Hello ladies". These gestures spoke volumes about the pupils' expectations and the environment in which they found themselves which cherished, nurtured and absorbed them as their own so that they merged imperceptibly with the others displaying standards of achievement of a high order within their ability range. Some joined dancing round the maypole and their delight enabled them to learn how to skip very well, enhance their experiences of local culture, and enjoy their very good social development. The wide range of schools responding to and reflecting the culture of Addington clearly rejoice in the extremely fruitful two-way partnership in which they all flourish. It is something to which they all want to belong and are justifiably proud. This considerably enhances the range of learning opportunities for pupils and enables staff to share and extend their expertise with others.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good and management is good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and has ensured very strong teamwork and a shared vision for school improvement and raising pupils' achievements. Leadership by the deputy headteachers and the senior management team is also very good. Subject leaders provide good leadership and manage their subjects well. The school is effectively managed and school governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Through his excellent leadership, the headteacher has established a strong shared vision for raising standards and school improvement.
- The school promotes very good inclusion for all pupils through its very good ethos.
- The rigorous monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and senior managers has resulted in very good teaching and learning.
- Subject co-ordinators have not fully developed formalised methods for monitoring teaching and learning.

- Governors make a significant contribution to the success of the school by providing good support and challenge for its work, but they have yet to establish formal visits for monitoring the school's work.

Commentary

29. The headteacher's excellent leadership has resulted in a strong and shared drive for raising standards of achievement and school improvement among all staff and governors.

Example of outstanding practice

Through his excellent leadership the headteacher has created a very effective school since the previous inspection.

The headteacher's inspired leadership has resulted in the very high regard by staff, parents, pupils, governors the wider community and the LEA. Since his appointment to the school four years ago, the headteacher gained the National College of School Leadership Associateship for researching 'Leadership of the Special School in the 21st Century' and has established a number of far-reaching initiatives for the benefit for the whole school community. These include a unique NVQ Training and Assessment Centre for learning support assistants, school representation on a wide range of local and regional bodies, excellent partnerships with local schools and the wider community and a strong drive for inclusion, raising standards of achievement and continued school improvement. In turn, this has led to very good teaching and learning, very good achievement of pupils and great satisfaction by parents and pupils with the work of the school. The success of the headteacher is exemplified by the award of Investors In People and the International Standards Organisation Award (ISO 9001:2000).

30. The very good ethos for learning which is centred on high achievement within a caring and supportive environment has resulted in very good inclusion of all pupils, despite their backgrounds or capabilities. In turn this has led to very good achievement by most pupils. The very good relationships all staff maintain with their colleagues, parents and pupils actively contribute to this ethos. As a result all pupils are comfortable in approaching adults and feel secure and are very happy in school. The whole school community values the strengths and talents of individual pupils and not merely their limitations. This results in very good inclusion throughout the school.
31. The very good support provided by the deputy headteachers and faculty heads, who together constitute the senior management team, has made a significant impact on improving teaching and raising standards. All senior managers systematically monitor teaching and learning and use the outcomes of this to set targets for improvement and provide effective support and training.
32. Subject co-ordinators have improved their subjects considerably since last inspection, particularly planning and assessment. They monitor teaching and learning mainly through informal discussion but they have not yet fully developed formal procedures for monitoring.
33. Governors have a very good knowledge of the school and support its work strongly. They ensure that statutory responsibilities are met and actively promote the interests of the school in the community. Although governors monitor aspects of the school's work through their well-organised committee structure, they have yet to develop formal links with subject co-ordinators and formal arrangements for monitoring the school's work through focused visits.
34. Management is good. The school reflects systematically on its practice and makes very good use of information about its performance in order to set targets for raising standards and improving provision. Governors monitor the impact of spending decisions on school developments effectively and pay good attention to achieving best value. They receive good support from the school bursar, who ensures good management of finances and day-to-day administration.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2,011,078
Total expenditure	2,163,422
Expenditure per pupil	10,817

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	159,830
Balance carried forward to the next	7,486

35. The barriers to learning created by limitations of the accommodation and inexperienced teachers have been minimised through the excellent links established with local schools and colleges and very good training and support provided in the school.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage is organised into two classes; one for children with moderate learning difficulties and autism, and the other for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties. There is no separate nursery provision: the very few nursery-aged children are taught alongside children in the Reception Year. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Lesson planning is very good with precise learning objectives in all areas. Assessment and target setting are used very well to inform planning and to ensure that work is matched to the needs of individual children. The Foundation Stage teachers are providing very good opportunities to extend the children's learning experiences. Very good leadership and management have ensured that the curriculum and record-keeping reflect closely the six areas of learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality of teaching has improved. It is very good in all areas of learning and as a result children are achieving very well in all areas of learning. There is very good liaison with outside agencies and with therapists within the school. Parents are kept very well informed about how their children are doing through the detailed completion of home-school diaries. Children's learning is supported by good accommodation, which is effectively enriched by the activity area and the multi-sensory room.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children clearly enjoy their activities and are very happy.
- Children are very well cared for and they feel secure.
- Children benefit extremely well from excellent opportunities for social interaction within a local mainstream primary school.

Commentary

36. Staff promote warm relationships with the children and teachers have established an excellent rapport with every child in each class. Children are very happy at school and trust the adults who work with them because staff take great care to explain what will happen at each stage in children's daily routines. Wherever possible, staff encourage children to be independent, providing them with good opportunities for them to make choices and as a result their achievement is very good. Nearly all the children show particular preferences and higher attaining children understand the consequences of their decisions. Higher attaining children are learning to dress and undress themselves. Most need help with personal care and all children settle into their daily routines. The children relate positively with one another, taking turns and sometimes holding the hand of the child next to them. Some are beginning to understand the relationships between people and to recognise similarities and differences. They learn to care for pets through a variety of well thought out activities such as role playing as a veterinary nurse and choosing places where animals live and what they should be fed to stay healthy. Higher attaining children show initiative in selecting activities they enjoy. All children, including some with profound and multiple learning difficulties, concentrate for several minutes at a time. The children show enthusiasm for the activities on offer and feel secure. Staff always ensure that individual needs are met and that each child is made to feel valued.
37. Excellent opportunities are available for children to socialise with other children in a local mainstream primary school, which aims to encourage independence by working alongside mainstream children. Children attend for a morning session each week and they look forward to these visits, showing great enthusiasm. Children develop their self-confidence in interacting socially with mainstream children through shared activities such as maypole dancing.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good attention is paid to developing children's language and communication skills.
- Speech and language therapists make a very good contribution to the development of children's communication skills.
- Lessons take full account of children's individual education plan targets, so that learning builds systematically on children's prior attainment.

Commentary

38. Lessons are structured very effectively into three parts. The introduction mainly involves communication by teachers with each class group, where a good range of pictures, symbols and objects is used to support children's understanding. Teachers vary their questioning and ensure explanations are carefully matched to the needs of individual children. Teachers make very good use of signing and symbols to promote spoken communication, always encouraging children to sign. Higher attainers are able to use words and phrases and some often speak in simple sentences. Most children can vocalise and they know a number of signs. Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties use switches to aid their communication and use different sounds to indicate their responses. All are active communicators who benefit from the very good eye contact and enthusiastic interaction that staff provide. Children have direct hands-on experiences in the middle part of the lesson. Higher attaining children write familiar words and most are learning to make simple marks using a variety of resources such as large pencils, crayons and paint. Others make marks with their hands or objects. Most children achieve very well because learning support staff work very effectively with teachers to develop children's communication and literacy skills. Teachers use the conclusion to lessons very well to check with the learning support staff how well each child achieved and to consolidate children's learning and communication skills.
39. All children are making very good progress in developing early reading skills. Average and higher attaining children share books with one another and they are encouraged to say what they have read in their books. All staff expect children to select a book and turn the pages, and as a result they often link pictures with parts of the story. Higher attainers tell the story to one another with expression. Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties look at illustrations in books and show their enjoyment by making sounds and movements when a story is being read to them. Teachers use good questioning to prompt careful looking at the pictures and challenge children to predict what might happen when they look together at a 'big book'.
40. Speech and language therapists provide very good support in lessons is to promote children's language and communication skills. Work is very carefully planned with teachers and support assistants so that everyone knows how to move children's learning forward. Lessons are sometimes led by speech and language therapists, who use an interesting range of resources, such as puppets and a bag full of toy animals, to stimulate children's interaction with a story about zoo animals and develop new language communication skills.
41. Lessons are very well planned to take full account of each child's targets in their individual education plans. For example, a variety of activities were carefully chosen to develop children's skills in sounding out and naming the first five letters of the alphabet. These included looking at large letters, moving them, touching them, matching letters and saying the sounds together. As a result children make very good progress towards their individual targets.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are very well planned with a variety of interesting strategies to promote children's numeracy skills.
- Number songs and number rhymes are used to very good effect to support children's knowledge and skills.

Commentary

42. Staff provide a very good range of activities to support the development of numeracy skills and consequently children achieve very well. Teachers challenge children's understanding of time by asking 'Is it morning or afternoon?' and 'What will we do after circle time?' They are encouraged to point to and select the particular day of the week through the use of careful discussion. For example, the teacher encourages children to decide whether the day is Sunday or not, encouraging the children to think about what they do on a Sunday. Through a process of elimination, children then arrive at the correct day of the week. Children also learn to handle money and solve simple problems with 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p coins. Most children match a particular coin to a dish full of the same coins. Higher attainers recognise coins up to the value of a pound. Children with more complex needs look at coins and touch them with help. They enjoy listening to number songs, such as 'Ten Little Animals', sometimes vocalising as they concentrate and try their best. They are encouraged to touch and handle a range of objects relating to songs, rhymes and counting activities. Most children count together in ones to ten and higher attainers correctly identify 'one more' than a given number and sometimes 'two or three more'. Average attaining children also complete large jig-saw puzzles, take turns in building toy bricks one on top of the other and match objects by colour. Higher attaining children match numbers to objects, and sort by colour.
43. Children learn to take away and add objects, counting them each time through number rhymes. They find and match objects with the same attributes such as size, colour and shape and they measure ingredients when cooking, lining up objects and creating patterns, using biscuits, bottles, toys, and cooking ingredients. They touch objects reacting to songs and rhymes, some using switches to join in parts of songs and rhymes very effectively.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of very good activities supports children's developing knowledge of the world around them.
- Children have very good direct experiences which provide opportunities for them to learn about different materials.

Commentary

44. Children's achievements are very good. They develop their awareness of different pets within their environment through carefully chosen activities. Most children visit the pet area in the garden, looking at and touching a range of animal homes such as hutches, fish tanks and cages, putting toy animals into appropriate homes with varying degrees of support. Children with more complex special educational needs touch, manipulate press and roll a variety of materials such as play dough and pastry with varying degrees of support to make different animal shapes. They also select and handle paints and sponge animal shapes to create

pictures. Children also develop an awareness of other cultures through reading and painting scenes and characters from 'Kakadu Jack'. They talk about the Caribbean, hot countries and different animals.

45. The children explore the qualities of a range of materials, including sand and water, through structured play activities. They learn about different textures of materials through touch and manipulation and they experiment with sieves, funnels and plastic containers, observing whether objects will float or sink. There are very good opportunities to use ICT and to find out about cause and effect with various switches and toys. Higher attaining children are able to use the mouse as well as a number of different switches to make things happen when they are working with the computer. They also know the location of different places in the school.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist teacher provides very good learning experiences to develop children's physical skills.
- Children have very good experiences to develop their fine co-ordination skills.
- Regular early morning exercise is very beneficial to children's learning: they are more alert to learning and develop their skills of working with others very effectively.
- Therapists provide very good support for children's physical development.

Commentary

46. Children are achieving very well in their physical development as a result of very good teaching and learning opportunities provided by the specialist teacher for physical education. Tasks are very carefully matched to each individual child's stage of physical development so that children are motivated to succeed. Very good teamwork with support staff ensures that each child engages in physical activities in all lessons. Average attaining and higher attaining children balance on a bench; crawl, slide, climb on large apparatus; and roll, kick or throw a ball. The most capable are also able to catch a ball. Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties travel in various ways, using all the available space, with help.
47. Very good daily opportunities are provided to children by teachers to use scissors for cutting, to write and make marks using brushes, paint, crayons, to feel and explore different textures, to stir, and to glue. These activities systematically improve their physical control. Children have access to soft play facilities, which provide opportunities for them to work at their own individual level. They also have very good experiences in the swimming pool, where they increase in confidence. Higher attaining children succeed in reaching the early learning goals.
48. Children participate in early morning physical exercises, which are very beneficial, particularly for those identified with autism. Not only does this improve their physical skills of travelling, following patterns of movement and dancing in time to music, but it also greatly enhances children's social interaction skills and their ability to concentrate.
49. Therapists, working collaboratively with teachers and learning support assistants, provide each child with a personal exercise programme to develop their co-ordination skills. Higher attaining children work on balancing and on hand-to-eye co-ordination, while children with profound and multiple learning difficulties concentrate on stretching and strengthening their bodies.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist teacher of music provides very good learning experiences to develop children's musical skills.
- Children have very good opportunities to develop their artistic abilities.

Commentary

50. Children's achievement is very good because very good teaching and learning opportunities are provided to develop their creative skills. The specialist teacher of music works closely with class teachers and support assistants to develop children's musical ability. All the children thoroughly enjoy songs and love making music. They have very good opportunities to experience a number of different instruments and all take part as best as they can. Higher attaining children copy simple sound patterns played by an adult, and many children can differentiate between playing loudly or softly. Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties show enjoyment at vibrations made by some instruments.
51. Children explore and experiment with various materials using a variety of very well chosen resources to develop their artistic abilities. Staff provide very good opportunities for children to select materials and to make creative decisions for themselves. For example, in a creative development lesson, average and higher attaining children used the computer, with help, to create their own images and pictures, selecting colours of their choice, and they have daily opportunities to work with a range of media. In one session, children made houses for pets using a variety of paper, cardboard, plastic and other materials to very good effect. They selected appropriate paint to colour the walls and roof of their chosen pet house and some created attractive flat fish to place inside their fish tank designs, using wax crayons, glue, glitter and sequins. Other children painted large pictures of animals, such as horses. Children with profound and multiple learning difficulties are also given very good opportunities for sensory experiences. For example, they created attractive biscuits in different pet shapes with help from support staff.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3 and 4

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' literacy skills are developed very systematically and as a result they achieve very well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils make very good progress in communication skills.
- The National Literacy Strategy has been skilfully adapted to meet pupils' learning needs.
- Subject based monitoring of teaching and analysis of pupils' performance are well established in the primary faculty but not in the secondary faculty.

Commentary

52. In Years 1-11 pupils' achievement in English is very good. Their speaking, listening and general communication skills develop very well. They make very good progress with writing, and progress well in reading. The pupils enjoy their English lessons and have very good attitudes to learning.
53. Writing skills are especially strong. Most younger pupils hold pencils and crayons conventionally and learn to copy and colour with reasonable accuracy. By Year 6, many higher attaining pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) write independently with confidence.

Spelling and the use of capital letters and simple punctuation are mostly accurate. By Year 11, the most able produce good extended writing in project work. Pupils enjoy writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6, for example, worked with enthusiasm in writing about topics of their choice and were very keen to meet their individual targets for the lesson. Lower attaining pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) make very good progress in learning to trace and copy letters and words accurately, and to write stories through matching text to symbols and pictures. Lower attaining pupils in Year 11, for instance, made very good progress in choosing their own symbols to provide clear descriptions of a journey. Pupils often record their work using computers.

54. Higher attaining pupils read clearly, many with meaning and often with enjoyment, especially when reading their own work. Most have a good vocabulary of familiar words and gain information from pictures and the context of the text. Lower attaining pupils read signs and symbols, and are familiar with the use of books, pointing at objects and turning pages.
55. The very good progress made by pupils, particularly those with communication difficulties, owes much to the school's very effective development of alternative methods of communication. The use of symbols, signing, and a wide range of visual and sensory resources is very carefully planned. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in lessons. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson where PMLD pupils were looking at books about pets, the teacher successfully used a range of sensory resources and symbols to help pupils to identify different animals.
56. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The National Literacy Strategy has been adapted very skilfully to meet pupils' specific learning requirements. Pupils are responding particularly well to innovative approaches in the primary faculty. Teachers and assistants work very effectively as a team, and plan extremely well for the different groups of pupils. The higher attaining pupils receive challenging work, and their responses and contributions to lessons are valued. In Year 3, for example, a pupil who was initially reluctant to speak did so with increasing pride as a result of the teacher's encouragement for him to share his news with the rest of the class. In the same lesson, lower attaining pupils made very good progress in shaping their letters because of highly skilled one-to-one guidance. Learning and pupils' self-confidence thrive in a well ordered and purposeful atmosphere in all lessons.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher used a very good range of activities and that captured and held the pupils' interest extremely well.

Pupils were challenged to work at very demanding levels and they responded extremely well to the teacher's very high but realistic expectations of them. Higher attaining pupils relished the opportunity to write independently about topics of their own choice, and were determined to meet their individual targets. They produced imaginative and interesting writing of very good quality which they subsequently read to the whole class. Lower attaining pupils were equally enthusiastic about the tasks set for them. They worked very well with the support of the teacher and assistants, tracing and copying words and letters. Learning thrived in an excellent learning atmosphere. Excellent planning ensured that the lesson was very clearly focused and structured. Pupils' progress was systematically assessed and recorded. The partnership between the teacher and the assistants was an especially strong feature.

57. The development of skills to assist pupils' literacy is a strong feature and much improved since the last inspection. Alphabet work, initial sounds, letter and word blends are extremely well taught and are key to the development of the pupils' very good communication skills. Provision for developing writing skills is especially strong.
58. Assessment is good overall. It is very good in the primary faculty, where baseline assessment provides a very good basis for the tracking of pupils' progress and the setting of targets on pupils' individual education plans. Assessment outcomes are systematically used to inform teaching. Assessment procedures in the secondary faculty are less rigorous and are currently

being reviewed to improve their accuracy in measuring pupils' progress, and to ensure appropriate challenge in the setting of targets. Pupils are involved in their own assessment in their records of achievement throughout the school.

59. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially in subject leadership and management, which are now both good overall. They are very good in the primary faculty, where systematic monitoring and evaluation, including clearly focused lesson observation, strongly supports consistency in teaching and learning. Monitoring and evaluation in the secondary faculty is less rigorous. Resources are good overall, but the lack of a library in the secondary faculty limits pupils' access to books and the opportunities for them to find information independently. This was an issue identified at the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. The development of pupils' language and literacy skills is planned very carefully and systematically. Teachers constantly reinforce language and communication skills. For instance, a Year 8 pupil who was very reluctant to speak in a music lesson was encouraged to do so through skilled encouragement by the teacher. Similarly, in a citizenship lesson the teacher's very clear explanation led to pupils asking questions. In science, Year 10 pupils justify and explain their decisions and opinions, and in mathematics they solve problems posed in words. For example, Year 8 pupils solved word problems in money involving the identification of coins and calculating exchange. Pupils use their literacy skills well in geography, for example in labelling maps and diagrams, and also in writing short descriptions of places in the countries studied.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils is good, because teaching and learning are good overall.
- Planning and assessment procedures are very good and ensure work is closely matched to individual needs.
- Marking and organisation of pupils' completed written work across Years 1 to 9 is unhelpful.
- Pupils are very well managed, have good attitudes and work well together.
- The use of ICT to support the subject is under-developed.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

61. Most pupils achieve well in mathematics across all year groups, which represents good progress since the last inspection. However, targets set for Years 7 to 9 have recently not been achieved, due in part to significant staffing difficulties. Although identification of underachievement is good, action to rectify this is too slow.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but less effective in Years 7 to 9. It is consistently good across the primary faculty. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Pupils work well together in lessons and support each other. They have fun when learning and this leads to high enthusiasm and good attitudes towards all aspects of mathematics. They co-operate well in group work when, for example, pretending to buy goods and give change. Very good use is made of classroom assistants to help all pupils. The better lessons have a very high but appropriate pace and this, combined with meaningful relationships, clear instructions and use of praise, leads to good achievement. This was observed in a Year 5 class when pupils were required to match numbers during a game of bingo. Verbal instructions were very clear and supported by visual clues, leading to very obvious improvement in response time and

accuracy. The teacher quickly engaged and challenged pupils with a fast paced session of mental arithmetic, introducing different numbers by using a visual display and very challenging questions, for example ' what number is one less than 19?'

63. Planning has improved considerably since the last inspection. The detailed schemes are accurately linked to the National Numeracy Strategy and provide good progression across Years 1 to 9. They are sensibly organised and allow teachers easy access to specific targets, which are used in individual education plans. These targets provide a very good system of tracking progress and are supplemented by a recording system, which is easy to complete but yet provides very detailed evidence regarding individual achievement.
64. Older pupils working towards their ASDAN qualification achieve well. Their work files are well presented and include evidence of mathematics being used for very practical purposes. These records give a clear indication that learning overtime is successful and pupils are capable of transferring mathematical skills to different situations. However, work produced by younger pupils is often poorly stored or used to help in the tracking of progress. Marking of work by teachers is generally unhelpful in assisting pupils to improve, especially the more able. There are few evaluative or constructively critical comments, and there is an overemphasis on the use of 'smiley faces' and ticks.
65. In better lessons, relevant computer programs are used well to support the mathematical concepts being taught. For example, a Year 4/5 class displayed data regarding travel to school in the form of a bar graph, generated by the computer, to reinforce the learning objective. However, in general, insufficient use is made of ICT to support lessons.
66. The two subject leaders have developed planning and assessment effectively and have ensured good improvement since the last inspection. They have clear ideas for developing their own faculties. However there is no development plan for the improvement of mathematics for all pupils and consequently transition between primary and secondary faculties is not seamless. Both leaders are fully aware of this and are currently trialling systems to effect improvements.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. Both in lessons and in work scrutiny, there were good instances of mathematics being used to support science, literacy, art, music, geography and physical education. For example, co-ordinates were deployed when entering details on a map in Year 6 and several literacy lessons were enhanced by the use of poems and songs which were involved with counting. The work undertaken by older pupils working towards the ASDAN qualification requires a wide use of mathematics and is the successful culmination of years of work for many pupils.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress overall, with satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9. There are opportunities for the highest attaining pupils to achieve examination certificates.
- The lowest attaining pupils make good progress from reception class to Year 6, and satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 11.
- Teaching is good and assessment is a strength of this, but information is not always available to temporary teachers.
- The curriculum for pupils with complex needs is very good in the primary years, but there are not enough learning opportunities for them Years 7 to 11.
- Opportunities are missed to use ICT to enhance lessons.

- Accommodation restricts what can be taught.

Commentary

68. Pupils' achievement is good in science. Most pupils meet the targets in their individual education plans, as a result of very good lesson planning and assessment. From reception to Year 2, pupils make good progress. For the lowest attainers this may be a sensory experience with physical help, for example encountering animals or visiting the sensory garden. The higher attaining pupils are able to label independently the main human body parts, or can identify a range of sounds and match them to pictures. From Year 2 to Year 6 pupils again make good progress because work is well matched to their needs. The lowest attainers pay increased attention to different materials, while the highest attainers know that some materials are effective in preventing sound travelling.
69. By the end of Year 9 pupils have made satisfactory progress, with the highest attainers independently completing a fact sheet on the solar system. Pupils with more complex needs are given support to touch and smell materials, but their response is not always consistent. By the end of Year 11, the highest attainers are reaching National Curriculum levels 2 and 3 because of teaching aimed at their level. Though they cannot design experiments, they are able to set up their equipment, observe and record accurately, and can reflect on whether their predictions are accurate. The lowest attaining pupils can observe and take part with support in simple experiments such as separating sand and water, but not all topics are matched to their needs.
70. Teaching is good and sometimes, in both primary and upper secondary classes, it is very good. It is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 where there has been a high turnover of staff, and information about what pupils have already learned has not been passed on, leading to repetition. Teachers generally plan lessons around practical investigations and simple recording, offering small groups slightly different work to suit their abilities. This works very well and pupils respond with interest and enthusiasm. In every class, good relationships between themselves and staff give pupils the confidence to attempt experiments, and staff encourage them to be as independent as possible. Teachers and classroom assistants work together very smoothly and all of them contribute to the assessment of pupils' progress. Sometimes, even the younger pupils assess their own progress. Assessment methods are simple but effective. Less successful lessons are where non-specialists have not checked what pupils already know, tried out experiments beforehand, or chosen resources that would make the point clearly.
71. Every class up to Year 9 has timetabled science lessons with their class teacher, based upon a topic which changes termly. In Years 10 and 11 a science specialist teaches all science. This ensures that every pupil has a broad experience of science, and benefits the higher attaining pupils who will take examinations. The scheme of work is set by the co-ordinators and evaluated regularly by all the staff. While learning opportunities for pupils with the most complex needs are very good in the primary faculty, there are not enough sensory opportunities for them in Year 7 and beyond. Nor are there enough opportunities to use ICT to measure, sense, control events or find information in science lessons. There are two co-ordinators for science, primary and secondary, who need to ensure smoother continuity of learning for pupils moving up the school.
72. There is no science room and there is not enough central storage for science equipment in the primary faculty. Most classrooms have water, but the size of some rooms restricts practical activities. There is a small science room in the secondary faculty, but this is also a class base. It is too small for a large ambulant group to move around safely and the increasing number of pupils with mobility difficulties in the primary faculty will find access restricted when they are older. The layout also makes supervision of individual experiments difficult.
73. There were several key issues relating to science in the previous inspection report, including health and safety, the curriculum entitlement in Years 7 to 11, and subject leaders' monitoring

and supporting the teaching of science. These have all been addressed. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for science since the previous inspection. Pupils are taught about a wide range of scientific topics now, and higher attaining pupils are being stretched. Behaviour management is now consistent, and pupils have a very responsible attitude to practical science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils with more complex needs achieve as well as others.
- The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good in specialist ICT lessons. Over time, scrutiny of work shows teaching to be good overall with variation between teachers.
- Curriculum leadership is very good and at times innovative.
- Accommodation and resources restrict the quality of lessons.
- Not all support staff have received sufficient training to enable them to effectively support teaching and learning.
- Formal monitoring of teaching is not yet in place to ensure every pupil has high quality ICT teaching and that opportunities to use ICT are included in all subject planning.

Commentary

74. Achievement is good overall throughout the school, but it is inconsistent between classes. Where teachers and support staff are confident with ICT, pupils make very good progress. When pupils enter reception class from the Foundation Stage, they are already familiar with and enthusiastic about computers because of the very good teaching they have had. Pupils make good progress through the primary faculty but this varies with the teacher's expertise. By the end of Year 9, pupils have not extended the range of their skills as much as expected as a result of staff turnover, but with recent specialist teaching their enthusiasm is undimmed and their recent achievement is good. By the end of Year 11 higher attaining pupils gain confidence and make good progress. The lowest attaining pupils may struggle to have consistent responses to a stimulus. Closer review of individuals' progress is needed.
75. All the resources, including the sensory garden, sensory room and a range of music and recording equipment, are used well to stimulate pupils with complex needs and to allow them to control their environment. In the best lessons, teachers support independent learning by providing symbolised instructions in sequence. Tasks and access devices are well matched to pupils' needs, and assessment is simple but effective, sometimes involving self-assessment.
76. The headteacher acts as the ICT manager and has a very good overview of ICT and how it will be used in the school for administration as well as teaching. The ICT co-ordinators are knowledgeable, and have a clear vision and development plan. Their leadership is very good. The management of ICT across the school is good. The scheme of work supports teachers by giving them suggestions, resources and ideas for assessment. It is being revised to give even more opportunities for pupils with more complex needs. The secondary co-ordinator has supported teaching very well by giving demonstration lessons to teachers in Years 7 to 9 and has produced some innovative teaching ideas. The primary co-ordinator has insufficient time to fulfil his role of monitoring teaching and training. Some classes have discrete ICT lessons, while other classes have ICT as part of other subjects. There is not enough checking by the co-ordinators that all classes have a similar range of opportunities or tracking of individual pupils' progress.
77. Accommodation and resources restrict what can be taught in some classes. Some classrooms are very small. Although all classrooms have two computers, there is no ICT suite

and there are four interactive whiteboards in class bases. Pupils are split into groups with support staff, some of whom are not as confident in using ICT as some teachers are. This affects the quality of lessons.

78. There is a good system for identifying training needs but insufficient time allocated for it. The training programme has not kept up with the turnover of staff, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
79. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement. At the last inspection, there were two key issues related to ICT. The school did not provide a full curriculum entitlement for pupils in the secondary faculty: they now have a full range of experiences. Subject leaders were not monitoring and supporting teaching: teaching is now well supported and the employment of an ICT technician has ensured that the network is more reliable. Formal monitoring of ICT teaching has begun but needs to be developed further to ensure it leads to improvements in teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils use ICT in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. At other times it is part of the sensory curriculum for pupils with complex needs, for example to produce a calming atmosphere in the swimming pool. An area for development is in secondary science, for recording and measuring but also to allow pupils with more complex needs better access to the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported in detail below. Work was sampled in geography and history.

81. Geography and history are taught as distinct subjects in Years 1 to 11. Both subjects make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, enabling them to improve their relationships with others and appreciate their immediate and wider surroundings.
82. By the end of Year 6, in **geography**, higher attaining pupils have learnt to identify geographical features such as coastlines, islands, hills, valleys and rivers, and use correct terminology to describe these. They also understand the interaction between physical and human processes and the impact these have. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, higher attaining pupils had a very good understanding of the cause and effect of flooding, distinguished between natural and human causes, and identified strategies for preventing flooding. Lower attaining pupils also make good progress in identifying geographical features using symbols to identify them. By Year 9 pupils draw clear plans and maps, use simple map symbols and map references to locate places and features. These skills are built on very well in Years 10 and 11 where pupils locate places accurately on maps and use maps to find information. Their answers in a test showed that they had gained good factual knowledge of the USA by scrutinising a map of the country. Lower attaining pupils also showed good progress in their matching of photographs of places in the USA to text describing them.
83. The teaching seen in geography was good overall, with some that was very good. For example, in one Year 6 lesson on flooding, pupils responded very well to the teacher's constant challenge that they should work accurately in identifying the causes of floods, and of ways in which flooding may be controlled. They worked at full stretch throughout, stimulated by the teacher's clear presentation and questioning, and very well supported in group work by both the teacher and classroom assistants. All made very good progress. Similarly, lower attaining Year 4 pupils made very good progress as a result of the imaginary use of sensory materials which stimulated and held their interest, and enabled them to experience the heat and colour of tropical countries. They joined in the activities with great pleasure, gaining a good awareness of not only the climate in hot countries but also the animal and plant life. In one lesson, however,

the lack of sensory experiences limited lower attaining pupils' awareness of the impact of flooding, and in another, while pupils made satisfactory progress, more could have been achieved with greater pace.

84. Although no lessons were observed in **history**, both the samples of work and the teachers' records show pupils making sound progress in developing a range of historical skills, and gains in knowledge and understanding. From Year 1 onwards, pupils learn to order events in time starting with their own experiences. By Year 6 their work shows understanding of events and people in the past. For example, in lessons and other activities, they experience daily life in Ancient Rome and Egypt, and also life in modern times such as survival in air raid shelters during the Second World War. They also understand the meaning of war and differences across time, and learn to make comparisons, for instance, in housing and living conditions. Year 9 higher attaining pupils are able to choose sources of information, for instance books in the local library, and to work independently. Many are actively involved in their work. Planning appropriately builds upon pupils' own experiences and there is an appropriate emphasis on developing historical knowledge, understanding and skills. In both history and geography the curriculum is well matched to the National Curriculum.

Religious education

The provision for religious education (RE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and leads to good achievement.
- There is a good curriculum supported by well chosen and usually well used resources.
- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory in that, at the time of the inspection, there was no formal co-ordinator for RE.

Commentary

85. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress with lower attaining pupils making excellent progress because of excellent teaching.

Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent religious education lesson for lower attaining Year 2 pupils on the story of Noah, the teacher and learning support assistant created a magical experience for pupils.

The story was enlivened by a series of sensory experiences for the pupils including fine water spray for the rain, wood to touch to represent the ark, silk cloths and streamers for the sky and rainbow. These were very skilfully introduced so that the pupils did not become over-excited. The excellent sensitivity to individual pupils and their responses ensured that all pupils gave attention when required and many showed signs of delight, smiling and laughing as the exciting and colourful lesson unfolded. Pupils' behaviour when they became distracted was excellently handled so that as soon as possible their attention was re-engaged. All this was achieved at the end of the day when it was hot and humid and pupils were tired.

86. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress because teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is very good for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 make satisfactory progress because of satisfactory teaching. Although it was not possible to observe lessons for pupils in Years 10 and 11, examples of their work indicate good progress.
87. Teachers organise lessons well to help convey what pupils should learn. For example, in a very good lesson for higher attaining pupils, the story of Noah was reinforced very well. The very good structure of the lesson, where the teacher read a series of parts of the story followed by the pupils acting scenes such as making the ark, helped the pupils remember the story and was greatly enjoyed. Although resources are generally well used, sometimes opportunities are missed to use them to enliven lessons. For example, in a satisfactory lesson for pupils in Years

8 and 9, the rules of eating Jewish food were conveyed but the extra stimulation of posters and examples of food or other resources was missing.

88. The former co-ordinators for RE have effectively developed the subject, acquiring a range of suitable resources and developing assessment of the subject well so that pupils who are not making sufficient progress are identified and steps can be taken to improve their attainment. However, leadership and management are unsatisfactory because, at the time of the inspection, there were no formal co-ordinators for either primary or the secondary phase. The former primary co-ordinator is still informally consulted by some of the staff and the deputy headteacher is keeping a watching brief over secondary RE. The school expects that by September 2004, co-ordinators will again be in post.
89. Progress since the previous inspection (when RE provision was judged satisfactory) is good.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music and physical education were inspected in full and are reported in detail below. Art and design and design and technology were sampled.

90. Teaching and pupils' achievement in the **art** lessons seen were at least good and in one lesson in Year 1 and 2 teaching, learning and achievement were very good. The very effective teaching seen in this lesson enabled pupils with potentially very challenging behaviour to work in a structured and stress-free learning environment in which they thrived. The very good planning and organisation together with the teacher's calm approach and high expectations ensured a smooth flowing lesson for all pupils. In this lesson pupils looked at the work of a famous artist, "Vertemnus" by Giuseppe Arcimboldo, and were delighted to name the fruits that formed part of the portrait. The teacher's skilful questions and prompts enabled pupils to show what they had learnt in a previous lesson on parts of the body and to extend their communication and literacy skills well. They created their own portraits in a collage of different kinds of dried pasta. The lesson moved at a fast pace. Pupils responded very well and made very good progress.
91. There were several well-finished items on display available for inspectors to examine during the inspection period and some evidence of pupils' work in folders. Pupils in all years have good photographic evidence of their work, well annotated by teachers. These show how with support older pupils begin to research projects, practise skills and combine ideas of colour, pattern and design. Work is variable in quality, but the teachers' accompanying notes show the progress and response of all pupils and some pupils show a developing talent for design and are highly imaginative in their choices of materials, textures and techniques.
92. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 use colour and design in the style of a range of famous artists and go on to represent aspects of the artist's work in their own drawing and painting. They make collages illustrating warm and cold colours and pupils with the most complex needs in this age group make good progress in mixing colours, developing choice, responding well to textures and tactile experiences. Older pupils in Years 7 to 9 make faces in the style of Salvador Dali and demonstrate a range of techniques in working with paper, plaster, glue and paint. Some Year 10 and 11 pupils, as part of their ASDAN course, complete the study and work of famous artists, researching information on the internet.
93. From finished work and pupils' folders and displays around the school it is evident that pupils work with a wide range of materials and media and develop effective skills. The school has strong links with a local arts' college as one of its designated partner schools. These links are proving invaluable in giving access to a wider breadth of experiences and facilities for both staff and pupils. For example, the school is part of the newly created arts forum, which gives very good opportunities for training to staff and has enabled them to produce a very good policy. Secondary pupils have attended the college for regular art lessons in well equipped art studios with specialist teachers. Specialist art equipment can be borrowed from the college and college students visit and work with pupils from the school. These links help to partially overcome the

negative impact of the school's accommodation in art. Many positive and interesting activities take place in the classrooms but the size and design of the school is restrictive. The lack of a designated specialist art room and limited storage space restrict art activities and the opportunities for 3D displays and storing work in progress to be finished at a later date.

94. The subject has been overseen by faculty leaders in the absence of the two co-ordinators. The subject area is well planned and organised and plans for future development are clear and highly appropriate for the needs of these pupils.
95. In **design and technology**, there were several satisfactorily finished items available for inspectors to see during the inspection. However there was more limited evidence of pupils' planning and evaluation. Pupils' work in their folders and teachers' notes shows they make sound progress. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 design and make simple pop-up cards using folding techniques and moving pictures using a sliding device. In Years 3 to 6, following an appropriately adapted commercial scheme, pupils design and make puppets, toys with moving parts, moving vehicles and musical instruments. Pupils have developing skills in cutting, folding and manipulating materials and some make good progress. Older pupils in Years 7 to 11 use a wider range of materials, including plastic, wood and metal and with support begin to develop an understanding of the properties of materials and can make more appropriate choices when they select and make things. They are taught to work safely and begin to extend their measuring and marking out, joining and combining skills. They extend their skills in food technology, making good use of symbols to follow instructions and make choices. Pupils plan and make a picnic lunch, making a box or bag to contain it. They test and evaluate bread and design and make their own pizzas. Teaching is well linked to literacy by, for instance, using a story or a poem to introduce the topic of the lesson and to reinforce the vocabulary for that session with signs and symbols.
96. Teaching seen in a food technology lesson was skilled and effective. Pupils in Year 2 and 3 with complex special needs followed the symbols and enjoyed the multi-sensory approach to making buns. With skilled and sensitive support they took turns to measure, stir and combine the ingredients and helped spoon the mixture on trays ready for the oven. All of the pupils showed pleasure and excitement in tasting and handling the ingredients and they made good progress during the lesson.
97. There had been some difficulties in staffing in the subject area, which were resolved by a new appointment. Good progress followed and although the subject leader left for promotion at Easter there is now a stronger emphasis on planning and organisation. There is a good policy and scheme of work in place which ensures coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. This provides a useful framework for teaching and planning lessons. Teachers are developing work in the subject and adapting the curriculum well to reflect the needs, backgrounds and interests of pupils. The school has a strong vision for the future of the subject. Senior managers monitor teachers' planning and work in the classroom on a regular basis and work effectively to raise standards and the level of resources and to ensure broad coverage of the National Curriculum. The school is aware that accommodation is unsatisfactory for pupils of secondary age and that this limits their achievement.

Music

The provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching was consistently very good in lessons seen, with pupils making very good progress and showing great enjoyment.
- There is a very carefully structured scheme of work, reaching pupils with very varying levels of skill.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

98. It was not practicable to observe lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2 or pupils in Years 10 and 11 during the inspection. But in lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 9 which were observed, teaching was consistently very good because the teacher pitched activities to engage pupils at different levels of attainment and conveyed enjoyment of the subject to which pupils responded very well. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 3 involving making a 'drone' sound to accompany Indian music, lower attaining pupils were very well included. This was because the session was very well structured with a series of short activities and the teacher and learning support assistant took every opportunity to engage the attention of pupils individually. Again in a lesson for pupils in Years 7 and 8 on blues music, the teacher very skilfully encouraged reticent pupils to improvise singing to his guitar accompaniment while other pupils listened attentively. Assessments of pupils are clear and scrupulously kept and they inform subsequent lessons very effectively. Suitable accreditation is in place for older pupils.
99. The music teacher is a specialist who also co-ordinates the subject very well and he has transformed the provision of music in the school since the previous inspection. The curriculum appropriately includes opportunities for pupils to compose and evaluate music and draws on a rich variety of music from other cultures. The co-ordinator has developed many opportunities to enrich the music provision including consolidating links with other schools and arranging visiting musicians. He has drafted ambitious plans to develop the subject further including developing specialist assessments for lower attaining pupils.
100. The subject has a good range of suitable resources including percussion instruments, keyboards, microphones and amplifiers.
101. Progress since the previous inspection (when it was noted that music lacked a specialist teacher and adequate resources) is very good.

Physical education

The provision for physical education (PE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching was consistently very good in lessons seen, with pupils making very good progress and making considerable effort.
- A wide range of challenging activities is offered to extend pupils' learning.
- The leadership and management of the subject is very good, resulting in good improvement.

Commentary

102. It was not practicable to observe lessons for pupils in Years 10 and 11 during the inspection. But in lessons for pupils in Years 1 to 9 which were observed, teaching was consistently very good. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well.
103. The specialist PE teacher who is also the subject co-ordinator organises activities with considerable skill. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 developing striking and fielding skills, the teacher, very well supported by two learning support assistants, conveyed to pupils very clearly what was expected, demonstrated the skills very well and coached individual pupils as necessary to extend their skills. Similarly in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 involving balancing the teacher conveyed what was required very well using symbol words as necessary and this led to very good participation and achievement of pupils. It is inappropriate that sometimes pupils who do not have PE kit do activities in day clothes and the school has undertaken that such pupils will always be provided with PE kit and will change for activities. Assessments of pupils are rigorous and up to date are very well used to modify subsequent

lessons. Swimming lessons taught by the pupils' class teachers are very good because the lessons are very well structured by the teachers and very well supported by learning support assistants. Suitable accreditation includes aspects of the 'ASDAN' framework for pupils aged 16, and British Gymnastics Awards for pupils aged 11 and 12.

104. The PE co-ordinator has had a powerful impact of the provision through her commitment and enthusiasm. She has developed and consolidated links with other schools very well and has clear plans to continue to further develop the subject. Visiting sports coaches and lunchtime and after school clubs further enrich provision.
105. The subject has a good range of suitable resources. The accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory in that there are insufficient showers for pupils to use after activities. Progress since the previous inspection is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and managed and this has led to good improvement in provision.
- Teaching engages pupils very well, enabling them to make very good progress.
- Assessment is clear and thorough and the information gained is being increasingly used to raise standards.
- The curriculum is more secure in the primary phase than in the secondary phase, where further developments are rightly being made to refine aspects for lower attaining pupils.

Commentary

106. The co-ordinators have led and managed the subject very well, making good improvements to assessment and its use to set targets, improving planning to ensure work is matched to individual pupil needs, and improving the quality of teaching and learning through ongoing advice and support for staff. For example, attainment data has been evaluated and pupils who are not making sufficient progress have been identified so steps can be taken to improve their attainment. The co-ordinators have observed lessons and evaluated teaching. Plans are in hand to review the schemes of work for lower attaining older pupils, partly as a consequence of this. Progress since the previous inspection is good.
107. All pupils achieve very well because they are taught very well within an appropriate curriculum structure. For example, in a lesson on team building for pupils in Years 10 and 11, opportunities were frequently used to reinforce the groups working as teams to make different birthday cards. The teacher reminded several pupils, "Are you working as a team?" and used the session towards the end of the lesson to reinforce the point of working together very well. Again, in a very good lesson for younger lower attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher and learning support assistants successfully captured pupils' attention. Pupils said, 'hello' to the group and made choices such as selecting a card such as a train to represent a sound for a class song.
108. Teachers and learning support assistants strike a very good balance between supporting pupils as necessary and enabling them to carry out tasks more independently. For example, in a session when Years 5 and 6 pupils were arriving in the morning, they cleared away their tables after finishing tasks and without further prompting arranged the chairs in a circle for the next session. In a very good lesson for Years 7 and 8 pupils, they were skilfully encouraged to talk about things they valued and were to bring in items such as presents or photographs to illustrate these for the subsequent lesson. Activities progress appropriately for pupils with different levels of attainment and ages. For example, work with some older pupils involves visiting venues outside school such as a garden centre and pupils conducting careers interviews with people at work such as the school administrative officer. Older, higher attaining

pupils are encouraged to formally evaluate their activities, as when a pupil evaluated his contribution to a play performed in an assembly ('excellent - it was a big challenge for me'). There is appropriate accreditation for citizenship education. Pupils respond very well in lessons and try hard, showing interest in what is being taught and consequently making very good progress.

POST-16 PROVISION

Provision for post-16 students in the Maple Unit is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of students is very good, because teaching and learning are very good.
- The courses leading to external accreditation meet the needs of most of the students very effectively.
- The behaviour, enthusiasm and attitudes of all students and staff are very good because monitoring and support for the students' personal development is excellent.
- Links with the community and local colleges are of a very high quality, enhancing students' achievement.
- The Maple Unit is very well led and managed.
- Due to the students' complexity of needs and wide range of educational requirements, the current accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

109. All students in Maple achieve impressive success in working towards their challenging targets. They are fully involved in the process of planning and working towards success in both academic and social learning. Individuals make remarkable progress. One student was incapable of verbally communicating with anyone on entry to Maple but was observed describing the process, to a stranger, of producing a poster on a computer. Another student, with very challenging behaviour, is rapidly learning how to control outbursts of temper so that social interaction can be initiated. The student was observed participating in a discussion involving all Maple students, regarding the foods from different countries, an exercise impossible to achieve on entry to the unit.
110. Courses leading to Accreditation for Life and Living Skills (ALL) and National Skills Profile (NSP) fulfil the needs of most of the students. Students follow one of these courses, which includes the use of communication, mathematics, ICT and personal social and health education. This is all very firmly linked to living in a community. The success rate is very high and annual moderation reports from the accreditation bodies indicate that courses are very well run with students' work, of very high quality, being generated. This indicates a teaching team of very high quality and inspection evidence supports this. All teaching is very good or better. The skills of all staff are used very effectively to provide support and guidance of outstanding quality. Students are happy, enthusiastic, motivated young people who are being provided with learning opportunities of exceptional quality. Normal behaviour is expected and achieved. Students are constantly challenged to become independent learners by all staff, who display a deep understanding of individual needs.
111. Assessment and support for students' personal needs is excellent. Records of achievement are exceptionally well kept and reflect the development across a very wide range of academic and social areas. Here again, there is an expectation that students will maintain these records themselves, with help as required, and they rightly display a pride in this growing history of their successes and improvements.
112. Educational links beyond Maple are excellent. Students attend local colleges, leisure centres, schools and community facilities to become fully contributing members of the general public.

They raise money for themselves, through mini-enterprise activities, and for others. There is an excellent climate for learning that allows for the inclusion of a very wide range of activities and experiences, most of which are manifestations of exam course work creatively adapted to suit individual needs.

113. Although leadership and management roles in Maple are clearly defined and very well operated by the manager, it is the team working that is most impressive. Adults switch roles easily and seamlessly. Teaching skills are very high, students' individual needs are very well known and understood, organisation is efficient, relationships are excellent and communication is effective. Visiting teachers are fully accepted by students and make exceptional, additional contributions, especially where staff expertise is not considered to be sufficiently high. There is a striving for constant improvement; for example, despite high achievement in external accreditation, courses will be changed in the autumn because current exams do not meet the needs of students who will be in Maple in the future.
114. Teaching areas in Maple are small and students are large. Many students have extremely challenging behaviour and social difficulties, necessitating the temporary need to avoid contact with others. Despite very good use being made of facilities beyond Maple, the size and layout of the accommodation makes the task of dealing with complex needs more difficult and it is to the credit of the staff that they achieve such a high rate of success.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>School grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school	2	2
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	3
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	2	2
Overall standards achieved		2
Pupils' achievement	2	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities		2
Attendance	4	4
Attitudes	2	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		2
The quality of education provided by the school		2
The quality of teaching	2	2
How well pupils learn	2	2
The quality of assessment	2	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		2
Accommodation and resources	4	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety		2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1	1
The leadership and management of the school		2
The governance of the school	3	3
The leadership of the headteacher		1
The leadership of other key staff	2	2
The effectiveness of management	2	3

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

