

INSPECTION REPORT

Gibfield School

Colne

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique Reference Number: 119881

Headteacher: Mr Cohen

Reporting inspector: Steve Crowley
T13011

Dates of inspection: 1st – 5th June 1998

Under OFSTED contract number: 401259

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 for pupils with moderate learning difficulties
Type of control	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
School address	Gibfield Road Colne Lancashire BB8 8JT
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Les Edwards

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Main findings

The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge their attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does, however give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do at the end of key stages. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews.

Gibfield school is a well ordered community which offers very good educational provision for all its pupils within the context of an excellent ethos.

Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all lessons. In nine out of ten lessons it is good and in almost a half it is very good. Overall progress during lessons is good at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. At Key Stage 4, progress during lessons is very good.

Overall progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good. It is often very good at Key Stage 4.

In English, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to listen well. They enjoy listening to stories and ask suitable questions to confirm their understanding. All pupils enjoy looking at books and some use picture clues well while reading. Some pupils are beginning to form letters correctly. Pupils enjoy cutting out pictures and placing them in sequential order. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils gain confidence in talking to adults and each other. They develop an understanding of relevant terminology such as "author" and "title". Pupils use picture clues well to retrieve information from books. Most form letters well and are able to write on lines. Some are able to complete a passage in cursive script and correctly spell more commonly occurring simple words. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils make good use of opportunities provided for them to develop further their ability to discuss and explain their opinions in subjects across the curriculum. Through close attention to set texts, pupils extend their appreciation and understanding of style and genre. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils can reason and follow through a logical argument. They develop good questioning and answering skills. When writing, they understand the importance of planning and preparation, as they demonstrate when writing about their work experience placements.

In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can order shapes by size and represent them in drawings. Lower attaining pupils gain a good understanding of basic concepts of size. Pupils capable of higher attainment can sort objects by size, shape and colour according to a range of criteria. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils match colour patterns using information technology. They recognise the correct value of coins and use counters effectively to check simple addition problems. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils know and can use the terms "radius" and "diameter" demonstrating their understanding of the relationship between them. They know the names and properties of simple two dimensional shapes and understand how they fit together in patterns. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils confidently relate analogue to digital time. They use information technology well to calculate the cost of shopping. They make good use of calculators to check the accuracy of their work. Lower attaining pupils know the two and ten times tables. They can, with help, gather

accurate information from a supermarket about the cost of a variety of familiar items. Pupils make good progress in applying their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in real life situations.

In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to name parts of the body and types of different food. They know that food, exercise and sleep are necessary for a healthy body. Pupils gain first hand experience of animals from visits to farms. They know that ice melts to water under warm conditions and they are aware that the process may be reversed. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can build a simple electric circuit and find ways of varying the current to make the light brighter or dimmer. Some pupils have difficulty with the fine manipulation needed for such tasks. Pupils have an awareness of some of the properties of light for example that it travels in a straight line. Some pupils are beginning to understand the principles of a fair test. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils can form a simple hypothesis and carefully set up simple experiments to test it. Most understand and are able to design a fair test. They can read a thermometer and have a simple understanding of the insulation properties of different materials. They have a growing scientific vocabulary and record their findings in simple sentences, graphs and pictures. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils work well together in small teams to set up and undertake experiments. They become familiar with terms such as "neutralisation", "fermentation" and "reduction". Much of their work addresses earlier topics in greater depth, effectively re-inforcing and extending their knowledge and understanding

Progress is good in art, design and technology, geography, history, information technology, modern foreign language, music and physical education. Satisfactory progress is made in religious education. Pupils make very good progress in careers education.

There are no significant variations in pupils' progress relating to gender, ethnicity or background. Pupils with additional special educational needs make good progress overall.

In general the rate at which pupils make academic, social and personal progress increases the longer they stay at the school. Targets contained in individual education plans for each subject become more challenging as pupils gain confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are successful in achieving these appropriately set targets.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning during lessons and in all other areas of school life are very good. They listen well to their teachers, engage in activities with enthusiasm, sustain effort for long periods of time. They reflect thoughtfully on their own performance and progress over time. As pupils progress through the school they are increasingly able to, and confident in, showing initiative and taking responsibility. Personal development is excellent. The quality of the relationships formed between pupils and with all staff is outstanding.

The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good with many very positive features. At Key Stage 4 it is very good. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons. In almost nine out of ten lessons it is good. In nearly a half it is very good and in one in ten lessons it is excellent. All teachers are hard working and conscientious. Their practice is characterised by effective teamwork, high expectations of work and behaviour and a shared sense of common purpose. Throughout the school lesson plans

contain clearly expressed learning objectives, suitably referenced to the National Curriculum. Activities are carefully considered to match pupils' interests and remain relevant to their lives. Pupils' individual needs are given close attention and opportunities to raise pupils' self-esteem are rarely missed (homework satisfactorily supports pupils' work in class). Where teaching is very good, the teacher's subject knowledge is very secure and pupils are actively involved as participants in the teaching and assessment process. The quality of teaching throughout the school has a very positive impact on pupils' progress.

The curriculum is broadly based and well balanced. All subjects of the National Curriculum are suitably represented, including sex education and religious education. Pupils are very well supported in gaining access to the National Curriculum through schemes of work sensitively developed to make them highly relevant to the needs and interests of all the pupils. The curriculum for the very small minority of pupils who are under five reflects the appropriate areas of learning and prepares them well for the National Curriculum. The use of individual education plans to provide focused targets for improvement is effective but not efficient. The need for streamlining the process to increase efficiency is recognised by the school but yet to be fully addressed.

Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. The provision made by the school for the social and moral development of the pupils is excellent. It is a strength of the school. Spiritual development is supported by imaginative, carefully planned assemblies in which pupils are provided with good opportunities for reflection. Moral development is effectively promoted through a range of discussion groups where pupils are challenged to explore issues of right and wrong. Opportunities for social development are thoughtfully incorporated into all aspects of school life. The school promotes cultural development of the pupils through a wide range of visits to churches, temples, museums and places of local interest.

The school has developed very effective procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development and promoting good behaviour. This contributes significantly to the level of reflection pupils use to help them gain self-discipline. Child protection and health and safety procedures are well established, effective and meet with statutory requirements. The wide catchment area from which pupils come, inhibits the direct involvement parents have in pupils' learning. However, parents are very supportive. Pupils arrive with the full knowledge that their parents approve of the school. This contributes positively to the pupils' attitudes while at school. Parents stated at the pre-inspection meeting that the school provided good quality information for parents about progress and everyday life. The findings of the inspection support this view. The school has developed very good links with the community.

The quality of leadership and management throughout the school is very good with some outstanding features. It is a strength of the school having a positive impact on the excellent ethos. The governing body carries out its duties effectively. Some governors do not involve themselves sufficiently in the life of the school, leaving the remainder with very heavy work commitments. The headteacher provides strong and positive leadership. The aims of the school are clearly reflected in its day to day running. The atmosphere is relaxed, yet purposeful. The quality of teamwork demonstrated throughout the school is outstanding, characterised by a fully embedded shared sense

of common purpose. The senior management team is a well constructed, effective unit in which roles and responsibilities are clearly understood. Subject co-ordinators are mostly effective but they are yet to be fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. The development plan is an effective tool giving clear indication of costings and procedures for monitoring and evaluating educational outcomes.

Financial management, planning and day to day administration are of a very high quality. The school makes efficient use of its budget, staffing and resources.

Taking into account the academic progress and personal development of the pupils, the relationships they form, the quality of the teaching and the ethos for learning the school provides very good value for money.

Key issues for action

In order to sustain and develop further the many strengths of the school the headteacher and governors need to:

improve the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and teaching and learning by clarifying and fully developing the roles of subject co-ordinators

ensure the efficient use of individual education plans by rationalising the process to provide greater focus and avoid overlap with other planning mechanisms.

sustain and improve the effective and efficient operation of the governing body by ensuring that all governors carry out their duties effectively.

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

Gibfield is a co-educational special school for pupils between the age of 4 and 16. There are 143 pupils currently on roll - 92 boys and 51 girls. 25 percent of the pupils originate from Pakistan. The school is situated on the borders of Nelson and Colne in Lancashire. It was opened in 1969 to cater for pupils with moderate learning difficulties from the Pendle region. Although it still provides predominately for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, many of the pupils attending the school now have significantly more complex additional needs. While the roll has remained mostly constant, the balance between primary and secondary pupils being referred has changed significantly. Secondary aged pupil referrals are now much more common. All pupils have statements of special educational needs.

The school's "mission statement" stresses the aim of promoting high levels of independence in the pupils. Curriculum development aims to meet the demands of the National Curriculum by addressing the needs and interests of the pupils as a starting point. The restoring and building of pupils' self esteem is considered to be of paramount importance in preparing them for the next stage of education or life.

Key indicators

Attendance

Percentage of half days
through absence for the latest
reporting year:

		%
Authorise Absence	School	6.55
	National	7
Unauthori absence	School	3.45
	National	1

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of
during the previous year:

	Numb
Fixed period	23
Permanent	1

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or	48
Satisfactory or	100
Less than	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all lessons. In nine out of ten lessons it is good and in almost a half it is very good. Overall progress during lessons is good at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. At Key Stage 4, progress during lessons is very good.

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Progress is good in art, design and technology, geography, history, information technology, modern foreign language, and physical education. Satisfactory progress is made in religious education. Pupils make excellent progress in careers education.

There are no significant variations in pupils' progress relating to gender, ethnicity or background. Pupils with more complex special educational needs make good progress at all key stages.

The rate at which pupils make academic, social and personal progress increases the longer they stay at the school. Targets contained in individual education plans for each subject become more challenging as pupils gain confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are successful in achieving these appropriately set targets.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave well in class. This is heavily influenced by the extent to which they experience curriculum provision and learning activities as being consistently of interest and relevant to their own lives. In almost all lessons they concentrate very well on their work and respond enthusiastically to challenging, interesting tasks. They listen well to their teachers and reflect thoughtfully on their own performance and progress over time. As pupils progress through the school they are increasingly able to, and confident in, showing initiative and taking responsibility. The quality of the relationships formed between the pupils and the staff are outstanding. They have a very positive impact on the progress pupils make. Personal development is excellent. It is enhanced by opportunities provided for pupils to identify and set themselves targets for behaviour and academic work. In addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum, they achieve these within the context of outdoor education, work placements and vocational studies.

Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. Clear guidelines in the

school's code of conduct, state what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Pupils report that they find these helpful. They understand the rules and sign, with their parents, an agreement to observe the school's code for behaviour. Pupils demonstrate a caring and sharing attitude towards each other. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils usually resolve minor everyday conflicts successfully, without the need to involve staff. When there is felt to be a need to involve staff, pupils feel confident that they can approach any member of staff and receive appropriate support. Pupils are very aware of the system of rewards and sanctions. They find them fair and recognise them as having a positive effect on their behaviour and academic progress.

Despite 22 fixed term and one permanent exclusion this year, parents agree that pupils mostly respond well to the school's strategies for promoting positive attitudes and good behaviour.

Attendance

Attendance is satisfactory. There is a small number of pupils who, through long-term medical, social or behavioural problems, have poor attendance. Pupils generally come to school on time. Lessons start and finish on time and registration procedures meet with statutory requirements.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good with many very positive features. At Key Stage 4 it is very good. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons and in almost nine out of ten lessons it is good. In nearly a half it is very good and in one in ten lessons it is excellent.

All teachers are hard working and conscientious. Their practice is characterised by effective teamwork, high expectations of work and behaviour and a shared sense of common purpose. Throughout the school lesson plans contain clearly expressed learning objectives, suitably referenced to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Activities are very carefully considered to match pupils' interests and remain relevant to their lives. This feature has a very positive impact on pupils' motivation. The level of challenge presented for pupils of different attainment is very well considered. Pupils' individual needs are given close attention. Opportunities to raise pupils' self esteem are rarely missed. Classrooms are very well organised prior to pupils entering. Resources are readily available and suitably chosen to support pupils' learning. Teachers and classroom assistants are very aware of targets contained in pupils' individual education plans. They make good use of planned and unplanned opportunities for using them. Classroom assistants are very clear as to their role. They make a very positive contribution to the consistently purposeful educational climate and the progress made by pupils. Marking is mostly carried out in accordance with the school policy and comments provide useful suggestions on how pupils might improve. This is particularly well carried out at Key Stage 4. Homework satisfactorily supports pupils' work in classes.

Where teaching is very good or better, the teacher's subject knowledge is very secure. Pupils are actively involved as participants in the teaching and assessment process, particularly at Key Stage 4. Themes are skilfully developed to provide pupils with a wide range of practical activities, which they experience as relevant to their own lives. Time is very well considered and teachers present material with good dramatic effect.

The quality of teaching throughout the school has a very positive impact on pupils' progress.

The curriculum and assessment

The curriculum is broad, balanced and reflects the aims and values of the school extremely well. It is highly relevant to pupils' needs and successfully addresses their interests. It provides appropriate challenge for them as they progress through the school. While remaining at least sound, it is less effective for a small number of pupils with significantly more complex learning needs.

All subjects of the National Curriculum receive appropriate representation. Religious education is provided in accordance with the local authority's Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum for the small minority of pupils who are under-five reflects the appropriate areas of learning and provides good preparation for entry to the National Curriculum. The curriculum is appropriately developed at Key Stages 2 and 3. It provides a similarly effective springboard for the wide range of accredited vocational courses at Key Stage 4. There are sensitive, well-considered programmes for personal, social, health and drugs education, which are embedded within the daily routines of the school. Sex education is taught appropriately in keeping with the governing body's approved policy. The curriculum is enhanced by outstanding provision for careers education and guidance. It is actively supported by a wide range of sporting links and other extra-curricular activities, such as regular residential trips. The curriculum makes an extremely positive contribution to the pupils' moral and social development.

The curriculum is well planned. Balance within and between the various subjects and courses is well considered. Pupils mostly have equality of access and opportunity and pupils' special educational needs are well catered for. However, provision for the small minority of pupils who have more complex learning difficulties, while remaining at least satisfactory, is less effective. Rigorous planning for these few pupils is not implemented across all the subjects with consistency. The amount of teaching time available is generally good. Transport arrangements mean that the length of the school day for pupils in Key Stage 3, and those in Key Stage 4 who have not yet able to travel to school independently, is marginally below the recommended minimum.

All pupils have individual education plans (IEPs) in respect of each subject. They are suitably detailed and appropriately developed from targets set at the annual review of the pupil's statement of special educational needs. Procedures pay due regard to the Code of Practice. Transition planning is particularly well addressed.

A comprehensive policy for assessment, outlining effective procedures, is consistently followed by all staff. Pupils are effectively assessed on entry to the school. This

provides a firm foundation for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress. Arrangements are particularly good at Key Stage 4. The structure of the accredited courses systematically addresses assessment. This continually informs the development of the course content. In mathematics, the school's own scheme performs a similarly effective function. An excessive number of targets in IEPs, in addition to occasional imprecise targets in lesson plans, mean that opportunities to address particular aspects of schemes of work with some pupils are not always clearly identified and exploited.

Good opportunities for accreditation are provided at Key Stage 4. Suitable vocational courses and pupils' National Records of Achievement are accredited. The school is developing useful individual portfolios of work to reflect achievement in all subjects and activities. Pupils can gain a variety of in-house certificates and nationally recognised awards. Good work and behaviour is recognised and celebrated through the merit system.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school's ethos is characterised by the promotion of appropriate and consistent values, attitudes and experiences.

Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. A carefully planned programme of assemblies, sometimes led by visiting clergy or members of the local community, offer pupils good opportunities for prayer and reflection. Rewards are presented for academic achievement and good or improved behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on positive changes in the performance of their peers in other areas. Activities in religious education and personal, social and health education encourage pupils to learn about, and have respect for, their own and other peoples' values and beliefs. However, opportunities to excite the pupils' imagination, to arouse their curiosity or create a sense of wonder about the world in which they live are sometimes missed.

Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong. This is reflected in the high standard of behaviour and the positive attitudes shown by pupils towards each other. The school promotes honesty and respect for others. This is a strong feature throughout the school. There is an emphasis on reward for positive behaviour in all activities, well supported by the use of merit certificates. Class rules are negotiated with the pupils. They reflect honesty, fairness, and respect for truth and justice. Moral issues such as the relevance of marriage are debated in discussion groups during religious education lessons.

Provision for social development is excellent. The school is a very caring community. It values highly the acceptance of social rules and sensible behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other and to adults. During lunchtime pupils are given the opportunity to serve others. Opportunities are provided to raise funds for groups less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a positive attitude to their lives and to consider the feelings of those less fortunate. Opportunities to socialise with each other and members of the community are provided through excellent work experience arrangements, integrated courses with the local college and residential visits.

Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school actively celebrates cultural diversity within its population. Resources and displays reflect the cultural mix. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to share experiences different to their own. They enjoy exploring pictures and artefacts from which they learn about the past. Good use is made of the local community through well organised visits to churches, temples, museums and local places of interest.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The school provides a very safe, secure and caring environment. Child protection and health and safety procedures are well established, effective and meet statutory requirements. Parents value the care and support their children receive and the encouragement given by class teachers. Teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils well. They provide high level support in monitoring pupils' achievements and raising their self-esteem. Academic progress is carefully monitored and recorded. It is presented to pupils in a friendly, easy to follow manner. This accurately reflects the school's ethos. Staff encourage pupils to take pride in their work and to identify areas for improvement through self assessment. This is evident at annual reviews. Pupils "sign up" to realistic academic or behavioural targets to be included in their action plans, which are often displayed in class. Records of achievement provide well presented evidence of their success. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' overall progress. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are excellent. The school has a very good working relationship with the education welfare officer. Communication is regular and prompt which effectively supports pupils' attendance.

Health education, sex and drugs education are appropriately taught through personal and social education. Some aspects are to be found in the science curriculum. Pupils express clear appreciation of the opportunities provided for them to discuss issues concerning them with their teachers and with a range of visiting adults such as the school nurse, the police, and members of the fire service.

The school is particularly good at promoting and maintaining good behaviour and discipline. Praise and encouragement form the basis of the approach. Staff provide good strong role models. Firm, fair boundaries are clearly communicated and constantly reinforced in a very relaxed manner through the use of displays around the school and reminders at strategic points in the day. As pupils progress through the school, all staff recognise the importance the school places on encouraging greater self discipline. Management strategies remain supportive but place an appropriately increased emphasis on pupils taking responsibility for their own actions. This policy is effective.

Partnership with parents and the community

The measures taken by the school to establish good relationships with parents and strong links with the community contribute positively to the pupils' attainment and progress. Though daily parental involvement in school is limited, due to the wide catchment area, many parents attend assemblies, Christmas performances and sports days. Annual reviews, at which pupils' progress is reviewed and targets for improvement set, are well attended. Parents expressed the view that these reviews are well organised and preparation for them is good. The findings of the inspection support this view. The school makes good efforts to maintain clear communication with parents through regular newsletters and visits from the home/school liaison teacher. Parents reported that they felt relaxed and confident to approach the school at any time should they have a problem or complaint. The information provided for parents in the school's prospectus is good. Links with the local community are very good. There are many visitors to the school. Artists, jugglers, and students contribute positively to the life of the school.. Local employers take an active role by providing good work experience placements. They have donated a " Book Bus" for pupils in year 4 and a CD-ROM computer. The local Trade and Enterprise Council sponsors Year 10 pupils, to provide good training in leadership and decision making skills geared towards them becoming effective prefects. The careers service and the local college work extensively with Year 11 pupils to help them make decisions about their future.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management throughout the school is very good with some outstanding features. It is a strength of the school having a positive impact on the excellent ethos. A small proportion of the governors do not involve themselves sufficiently, leaving the remaining governors with very heavy commitments. These remaining governors are actively and effectively involved in the life of the school. They have a clear and accurate understanding of its strengths and are aware of areas in need of further development. They provide good support for the headteacher and the senior management team. Effective committees, acting under suitable terms of reference, ensure the development of identified priority areas are appropriately monitored and outcomes are suitably evaluated.

The headteacher provides strong and positive leadership. Policy formulation is mostly well considered and the documented aims and values of the school are clearly reflected in its day to day running. The structure and organisation of the school day makes a significant contribution to the relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere. The quality of teamwork demonstrated throughout the school is outstanding. It is characterised by a fully embedded shared sense of common purposed. Staff are prepared to reflect critically on their own performance and there is an emerging culture committed to continued improvement. The senior management team is a well constructed, effective unit in which roles and responsibilities are clearly understood, although not yet fully formalised. Subject co-ordinators are mostly effective. Their role in monitoring the

quality of teaching and learning is not yet fully established, although the school has appropriate plans to address this. Support staff are very aware of their role.

The school development plan contains clear programmes of action set against appropriate timescales. Resource and training implications are clearly identified. Well expressed success criteria provide a firm basis for evaluation. Procedures for evaluating outcomes are good but the monitoring of the implementation of curriculum initiatives in particular, while sound, is less secure. The plan is appropriately circulated and well understood by all staff.

The governors are not meeting their statutory requirement to provide appropriate information on pupils with special educational needs in their annual report to parents. In all other respects statutory requirements are met.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff to provide a a good range of expertise and experience to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. Classroom assistants are very effective in their role. The quality of teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants makes a very positive contribution to the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. The school is very well supported by other non-teaching staff such as the technician, administrative assistants, lunchtime staff, cleaning and caretaking staff. They make a significant contribution to the school's ethos.

An effective teacher appraisal system is firmly established. Provision for the professional development of all staff is good. It is suitably informed by careful consideration of the needs of the school and training needs of individual members of staff. This effectively improves the quality of teaching in the school.

Accommodation is good. A carefully planned major building programme has been completed. A good range of specialist subject areas and facilities now ensure the curriculum is well supported. The building is clean and very well maintained. It is enlivened by a variety of attractive displays. There is no litter or graffiti. The hall is small, and its position makes access to other areas of the school difficult. The playground has been imaginatively developed to improve the outside environment for pupils. It now provides seating areas, an adventure playground, a nature trail and a pond.

The library is a pleasant area. It is well used and has a good selection of fiction books and tapes appropriate for the age and abilities of the pupils. There is, however, a lack of multi-cultural books.

The quality and range of available learning resources is good in most curriculum areas. For information technology, design technology, careers and media studies, it is very good. Resources are appropriate for all ages and ability ranges. They are well organised, accessible and used effectively. The school makes very good use of a wide range of facilities in the community such as the local college, field centres and work places to enrich the curriculum.

The efficiency of the school

Clear systems are well established to secure effective management of the school's budget in relation to its educational outcomes. The school development plan identifies appropriate priority areas for development over suitable periods of time. The governors, through the finance committee, are conscious of the need to scrutinise expenditure and do so effectively. The allocation of resources is based on good current data and sound projections. Governors receive regular budget details, which are carefully examined. Alternative strategies for managing expenditure are well considered.

Staff are effectively deployed across the school. All staff are very aware of their role and join together to form highly effective teams. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together to ensure that time is used productively. Meetings are efficiently run and appropriately monitored for effectiveness. The accommodation is thoughtfully used and resources are readily available for staff and pupils.

Day to day administration runs smoothly and effectively supports the work of the school. There are well established procedures and suitable safeguards to ensure the security of information held on computer systems and for the management of various school funds.

In terms of the academic progress and personal development of the pupils, their relationships, the quality of teaching and the ethos for learning, the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

English, mathematics and science

English

Overall pupils make good progress in English. As Year 6 were on a residential trip during the week of the inspection, no lessons were observed involving them. Judgements on pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 2 are based on scrutiny of work, and teachers' records. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make sound progress. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils continue to make good progress. Literacy skills are well developed throughout the school.

By the end of KS1, pupils enjoy listening to stories. They ask searching questions to check out their understanding of the material. By the end of Key Stage 2, they follow spoken instructions well and engage in conversation with adults with increased confidence. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils extend speaking and listening skills through discussion groups in religious education and history where they offer opinions and explain their thinking. By the end of Key Stage 4, they are able to present their ideas through reasoned logical argument. They are able to phrase questions more effectively and provide better constructed answers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy books. Some use picture clues well and demonstrate their knowledge of initial letter sounds to enable them to read simple words and sentences. By the end of Key Stage 2, some pupils can use the index in a book effectively. They can find simple words in a dictionary. Pupils understand the meaning of words associated with books, like "author" and "title". By the end of Key Stage 3, the introduction of age appropriate literature enables pupils to gain an understanding of style and genre in stories. They begin to read with greater understanding of meaning. They know that soldiers wrote poems during World War 1, through which they communicated their thoughts and feelings. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils understand that a greater understanding of current affairs may be gained from reading newspapers. They apply reading skills well as they retrieve information from a range of books and computer programmes.

In writing, by the end of Key Stage 1, some pupils are beginning to form letters correctly. Others still have considerable difficulty in doing so. Most are able to place pictures in correct sequential order to represent a story. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are able to complete a passage in cursive script. Most form letters well and are able to write on lines. Some spell more commonly occurring simple words correctly. Some use capital letters and full stops appropriately. They can write the alphabet correctly. By the end of Key Stage 3, few pupils use cursive writing freely but most are able to produce good copied examples. Pupils express themselves imaginatively when writing in their diaries. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils are aware of the need for a different approach to writing, in response to a range of different audiences. They understand the importance of planning and preparation, drafting and redrafting in order to produce well written work.

Pupils' responses in English are at least satisfactory and often very good. They enjoy the subject, are keen and enthusiastic and try very hard to do their best. They listen to stories with interest and are confident to offer comments and ideas. Pupils' responses to poetry and drama are particularly good. They enter into the action with excitement and are thrilled to be taking part. They work with increasing concentration and show interest in each other's work. Relationships with each other and adults is relaxed and makes a good contribution to learning.

The quality of teaching overall is sound with some very good features, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4. In the best lessons teachers plan a range of tasks and experiences to meet the needs of all pupils. Planning makes good use of teachers' knowledge of pupils' level of achievement, and identifies what the next steps to learning should be. Teachers have high, realistic expectations of pupils and offer challenge to all, particularly the most able. They encourage pupils to make their own decisions about their work and offer sensitive support and guidance. An emphasis is given to pupils expressing their ideas and thoughts verbally as well as in writing. All attempts are valued. Teachers offer feedback to pupils, which informs them on how they might improve the quality of their writing or response.

There are excellent links with the local college. These enhance pupils' learning and prepare them well for life as young adults. Media studies are particularly well developed at the school.

The newly formed library area is bright and attractive and is a very well used resource. Pupils are encouraged to visit the library during their lunchtime when there is always an adult present to support them. Pupils are timetabled to spend at least half an hour in the library once a fortnight. The support assistant in charge keeps very thorough records of all books loaned and the pupils comments about the books. These are used to inform teachers of progress made by pupils. There has recently been a purchase of good attractive fiction and non-fiction books, which has enhanced the schools' library provision. There is a good supply of audio equipment. However there is an insufficient number and variety of multicultural books.

The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. There are good long and medium term plans in place. A structured phonic scheme has been introduced and it is hoped that this will aid spelling and sentence structure. The subject has a high profile throughout the school and is prominent in most subjects. The support staff are well informed and form very good partnerships with staff when teaching. The subject makes a very good contribution to all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Mathematics

The school makes good provision for mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 make good progress. In Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils can sort objects by size, shape and colour, and develop these skills well. In Key Stage 2 they match colour patterns using information technology, recognising coins, and using counters effectively to check simple addition. Lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 gain a good understanding of basic concepts such as which items are bigger or smaller. In Key

Stage 2 they can sort items by up to four colours. Pupils are introduced to the school's 24 stage scheme for mathematics, and make good progress at the appropriate level of difficulty.

The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory and sometimes good. They know terms such as 'radius' and 'diameter' and understand the relationship between them. They know the names and properties of simple two dimensional shapes and understand how they fit together in patterns. Higher attaining pupils use coins to tally such amounts as 49p, and can do simple multiplication. Lower attaining pupils use coins to tally more modest totals such as 3p. They can add and subtract on their fingers or by using counters. Pupils' progress against the school's scheme is maintained.

In Key Stage 4, pupils' progress is good and occasionally very good. They can relate analogue to digital time. They can calculate the cost of shopping using information technology. They can use a calculator to check their work. They know the names and properties of simple three dimensional solids and can identify hollow cylinders within the classroom. Higher attaining pupils know their tables up to 11 and can construct simple bar graphs. They can also work out simple algebraic equations. Lower attaining pupils know their two and ten times tables. They can research the cost of items in the local supermarket with support. Pupils continue to make good progress against the school's scheme. Higher attaining pupils consolidate their understanding by using alternative, commercial schemes. They also make very good progress in applying their knowledge and understanding of mathematics within the context of their vocational education courses.

Pupils' response to mathematics is usually good and often very good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 require intervention from staff to support and encourage them in their work. As they get older they are able to work both independently and collaboratively to better effect. Pupils concentrate when working on their individual programmes extremely well. They take care of their work, materials and equipment, and in these respects their personal development is good. Their behaviour is generally very good. Although there are isolated instances of disruptive behaviour, which restrict pupils' progress in group activities, these are extremely well handled by staff.

The teaching of mathematics is consistently good throughout the school, and occasionally very good in Key Stages 2 and 4. Lessons are well planned and organised. Support staff are deployed to very good effect. Relationships are good. Staff work well together as a team, particularly when considering the needs of different groups of pupils, and in handling the occasional instances of disruptive behaviour. Teaching strategies are varied appropriately to reflect the abilities of all pupils. Homework is not always used. Pupils' classwork is marked promptly and clearly. The school's scheme for mathematics is well understood and consistently delivered in line with the school's policy. In the best lessons, a flexible approach to ways of teaching and learning extend the opportunities for all pupils to make progress. The application of mathematical skills is appropriately emphasised in the context of other subjects and courses.

Mathematics is well led and co-ordinated. The school has developed its own scheme

of work, which accords well with National Curriculum Programmes of Study. There is a clear, coherent policy regarding its delivery. Emphasis is given to using and applying numbers in everyday situations. In this, the scheme reflects the aims of the school very well. Opportunities to consider mathematics in the context of other subjects are recognised, though not always formalised and exploited. The structure of the vocational courses means that the subject makes a significant, accredited contribution to the curriculum in Key Stage 4. Arrangements for assessment are well considered and implemented in line with the policy for mathematics. The scheme of work incorporates regular assessment as a matter of course. The co-ordinator moderates the results on a regular basis to ensure consistency. Classes are well resourced with a good range of simple equipment and software, which are used to very good effect.

Science

Pupils make good progress in science overall. At Key Stage 1 progress is good, satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stages 3 and 4. In some lessons at Key Stage 3 and 4 it is very good.

By the end of Key Stage 1, children are able to name parts of the body and types of food. They know that food, exercise and sleep are necessary for a healthy body. They grow plants from seed and gain first hand experience of animals from visits to a local farm. They know that ice melts in warm surroundings and that the process can be reversed. Pupils record observations relating to daily weather conditions.

By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can build a simple electrical circuit and find ways of varying the current to make a light dim. Some pupils have difficulty with the fine manipulation needed for this task. They are aware that light travels in straight lines. Pupils can explain why some materials dissolve and others do not. A minority of pupils can hypothesise and test out their ideas with some understanding of the principles of a fair test.

By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils can form a simple hypothesis and carefully set up a simple experiment to test it. Most can design a fair test. They work co-operatively, discuss their work and adjust their thinking. They can read a thermometer. They have a simple understanding of the insulation properties of different materials. They understand that magnets can repel and attract. Pupils can relate their work in science to the care of living things and the environment. They record their findings in writing, graphs and pictures.

By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils understand that reactions can be permanent or temporary. Most of them can set up and undertake their experiments co-operatively in a small team. They are introduced to terms such as neutralisation. They use chromatography to separate mixtures. They classify living things accurately and record their work using graphs, diagrams and short written answers, reinforcing work relating to circuits and magnets covered in earlier topics.

Throughout the school, pupils show respect and consideration for each other, their surroundings and staff. They are proud of their achievements and support their

peers in their efforts to succeed. Pupils show an increasing ability to work co-operatively in practical work. They work with careful attention to health and safety issues. At all key stages pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Pupils with more complex needs strive to achieve and accept support when it is necessary.

The overall quality of teaching is at least good. Sometimes it is very good or excellent. Staff have very good knowledge of their pupils strengths and weaknesses. Where teaching is very good, opportunities are taken to apply science to everyday life. Planning is well referenced to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Support staff are used well to help with recording, language development, organisation and to reinforce pupils learning. They fully understand their role. Their contribution has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Planning is almost always good. The best lessons are characterised by lively delivery and practical introductions that effectively engage pupils in the learning process.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and well referenced to the National Curriculum programmes of study. It is enriched by local studies and the use of the college course at Key Stage 4. Progression in pupils' learning is well planned for. Opportunities to reinforce pupils' learning as they move through the school are well considered. Appropriate opportunities for accreditation are available at Key Stage 4.

All pupils have clear and detailed individual education plans for science. Procedures for assessment are appropriate and information generated is well used to inform plans.

The subject is now well resourced. Lessons are conducted in a new, spacious, well-equipped, specialist, science laboratory.

Other subjects or courses

Art

Pupils' progress in art is never less than satisfactory and is often good throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, pupils make collages to illustrate classroom stories such as 'The Gingerbread Man', and use techniques such as blow painting to suggest the wind when making pictures about 'The Weather'. Pupils at Key Stage 2 consolidate these practical skills as they create junk models of skyscrapers. They make and decorate clay tablets in their work on ancient Egypt, and use sketchbooks to develop their observational drawing techniques. At Key Stage 3, pupils use the work of an artist such as Klee in developing their skills and techniques in printing to good effect. They consider other artists, such as Lowry, in gaining an understanding of perspective, and use this understanding when designing the backgrounds for animated films. They apply their craft skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as making rigid boxes in design technology. Pupils at Key Stage 4 apply their knowledge further in the context of relevant, accredited courses in art and design. They use information technology to good effect in exploring the ceramic designs of Clarice Cliff.

Pupils enjoy art. They are good humoured with each other and with members of staff. They concentrate well, pay attention to detail, and become absorbed in their work.

Pupils are keen to discuss their work, and those involved in the animated film festival take particular pride in their achievement.

Opportunities to observe art being taught were restricted because a significant number of lessons took place outside the inspection period. However, where teaching was observed, it was never less than satisfactory and was occasionally very good. Teachers' planning is good and takes account of the needs of individual pupils. Support staff are deployed to very good effect. Lessons are well prepared. They are underpinned by very good relationships. In the most successful lessons, excellent opportunities are created for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding through critical self-assessment. Where teaching is less successful, there is an over-emphasis on practical skills. While opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding are created, they are not fully exploited.

There is at present no co-ordinator for art. A coherent policy effectively informs practice throughout the school. The scheme of work is appropriately referenced to the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is an appropriate emphasis placed on the developing the practical skills of making and investigating. However a lack of co-ordination inhibits the balance within the subject and restricts opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Provision is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including visits to local exhibitions. The school regularly, and successfully, submits work for consideration in film festivals. Pupils at Key Stage 4 gain suitable accreditation for their work within the vocational courses in arts and media.

There is no specialist room for art, but the classrooms are adequate for the delivery of the subject and a good range of resources are used to good effect.

Design and technology

Pupils' progress in design technology is good at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, and very good at Key Stage 4.

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to draw a series of simple diagrams of pots with cress seeds growing to show the order of the process. They are able to spoon soil and pour water into the containers with some adult help and can name the equipment used. They are able to shell and mash an egg, chose their own sandwich filling, butter bread and cut sandwiches, with adult help.

At Key Stage 2 pupils learn to follow a simple recipe and weigh ingredients out accurately with minimum help. They learn to examine a picture frame and design their own, within certain constraints. They make it, measuring and cutting the wood, with adult help. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are able to investigate the properties of tea bags and design, make and evaluate their own.

At Key Stage 3 pupils learn to choose and manipulate a wider variety of materials and improve the ability to communicate their ideas verbally, in writing and in drawings. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have a good knowledge of how to prepare a variety of healthy meals. They are able to research into and evaluate shop bought products.

They are able to plan, make and evaluate an original moving toy using syringes and tubing. They know the names and uses of a range of tools and materials.

At Key Stage 4, pupils take part in accredited courses in food technology and design technology. They attend the local college for design technology. By the end of Key Stage 4, they are able to use their initiative to research projects, generate their own ideas, make labelled diagrams of their designs and choose materials appropriately. They can name and use the tools needed to make the designs. They can measure and cut reasonably accurately the materials needed, evaluate the finished product and follow safety procedures carefully. In food technology they are able to follow recipes, organise themselves with equipment and ingredients, weigh accurately and use appliances properly, following hygiene rules.

Pupils' attitudes to work are good at Key Stages 1 and 2. They are enthusiastic and keen to answer questions and join in discussions. There are good relationships between pupils and they are able to work together in pairs. Help and encouragement from adults is necessary to maintain levels of concentration and to foster the sharing of equipment and tasks fairly. At Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils' attitudes are very good. They work with interest, enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. They are able to take responsibility for choosing their own materials, use their initiative in the planning and execution of their work and handle tools responsibly. They are keen to answer questions, they are able to work well individually and collaboratively and are able to persevere to complete their work. Their behaviour is good and, throughout the school, they develop the capacity for independent research.

The quality of teaching is very good overall. At Key Stage 4, it is sometimes excellent. Planning is thorough having detailed learning objectives. Skills to be learned are clearly identified and shared with the pupils. Work is suitably adapted for pupils of different abilities and good use is made of day to day assessment. Pupils are effectively managed and relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Questions are skilfully used to help pupils as they plan, make and evaluate their work. Within Key Stage 4 an excellent variety of age appropriate experiences are provided within different settings which equip pupils very well for when they leave school.

Design technology and food technology are well led and co-ordinated. The two co-ordinators plan well together as a team. There are comprehensive schemes of work that provide continuity and progression throughout the school. Assessment is consistent, thorough and used well to inform the planning process. The subject is very well resourced and taught in good quality specialist accommodation.

Geography

Overall progress in geography is good. At Key Stages 1 and 2 progress is good and often very good. At Key Stage 3 it is satisfactory. Progress at Key Stage 4 is good.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can observe and record daily weather changes using symbols and pictures. Most are able to locate their home region with a fair degree of accuracy on a map of the United Kingdom. They are aware of the differences between life in the town and the countryside. Pupils sort clothing according to the

type of weather and season.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about limestone scenery and can explain how it is formed. They can recognise the physical features of a river and are familiar with the effects of glaciation. They understand how locks work on a canal and they can describe the characteristics of a town centre. They can record their work in diagrams and writing, sometimes using information technology.

By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils compare Japan with south and central America. They demonstrate an awareness of some of the underlying causes of volcanos and earthquakes. More able pupils interpret maps at a variety of scales and apply their learning during fieldwork in the local area. They look in greater depth at the patterns of land use and the physical geography of their home country. Pupils with more complex needs have difficulty making the connection between the key and the map.

By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils compose relevant questions for surveys. They have an understanding of what constitutes their local community. Pupils observe evidence of industrial change, although most pupils are not able to explain it. They extend their work on maps to include the rest of the United Kingdom, Europe, and the world using a variety of sources including information technology. Those who attend the local college learn to travel independently.

Pupils' response to geography is very good. Practical outdoor activities are undertaken sensibly and with maturity. Pupils take an interest in their surroundings and are very attentive to instructions. During lessons pupils are attentive and interested. They are willing to take risks in front of the class. Pupils respond less well when lessons lack pace or when tasks do not match pupils' interest or understanding.

Teaching in geography varies from satisfactory to excellent. Overall it is good. Where it is excellent, lessons are based on practical activities where much of the learning is the result of careful planning. Teachers transmit their own enthusiasm to the pupils. Where lessons are less successful planning is insufficiently detailed, particularly where abstract concepts are to be taught. Marking is inconsistent and does not indicate how work could be improved. Fieldwork provides good opportunities for personal and social development, particularly for teambuilding. Study of the physical landscape promotes good spiritual development. Support staff are used effectively.

Co-ordination of geography is shared between two staff, one of whom is a subject specialist. Procedures for monitoring the teaching of geography through the school are unclear.

Planning at Key Stages 1 and 2 is very good. Themes are well chosen and linked imaginatively across the curriculum. Medium term plans are written to the same format by all relevant staff. Assessment and evaluation opportunities are not consistently included. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 does not further develop the successful experiential approach employed at earlier key stages. Pupils gain appropriate accreditation through the diploma in vocational education.

The accommodation for geography is satisfactory. The range of resources to study the

wider world, apart from maps, atlases and globes, is limited. The local area is very well used. There are many good quality 2D and 3D displays of pupils' work around the school, which act as a resource as well as a record of work.

History

At Key Stage 4 no history was taught during the week of the inspection. Judgements regarding pupils' progress at Key Stage 4 are based on work scrutiny, displays and teachers planning and records.

Pupils progress overall is good in history.

At Key Stage 1 progress is good. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand "old" and "new", "before" and "after" and can contrast "a long time ago" with "now". They compare pictures and photographs from the past with the present.

At Key Stage 2, progress is good. Pupils study the Vikings, the Tudors and Stuarts and the ancient Egyptians. They are able to make suitable comparisons between these periods and the present, for example in the games children played. They comment on the contrast between the lives of rich and poor. Pupils capable of higher attainment identify major historical figures from pictures and know of major events. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to record their work in more extended writing. They understand what archaeologists do, that there are different degrees of historical evidence and recognise patterns of local place names.

At Key Stage 3, pupils' progress is satisfactory and sometimes good. Through study of the middle ages, the Romans, slavery and World War 1, by the end of Key Stage 3, pupils appreciate some of the progress there has been over time in medical practice. They know how the Black Death was transmitted. Pupils recount details about Roman life and are able to empathise with the plight of slaves. However for many, their grasp of the sequence of historical events is vague. Some pupils are able to research independently. Others have difficulty interpreting maps given to them to illustrate the first World War. They are, however able, to empathise well with soldiers who served at the Front.

At Key Stage 4, pupils make progress in applying their understanding of history within the context of the "Self and the Environment" module for the diploma in vocational education. Pupils research their local area and select key features that best describe it.

Pupils respond enthusiastically to history lessons where teaching involves practical work. Tasks are completed with great interest, care and concentration. They respond very well to dramatic incidents and to opportunities provided for them to relate their learning to their own lives. Pupils like to empathise with characters in history and enjoy class discussions.

The quality of teaching in history ranges from satisfactory to very good. Where teaching is good it effectively focusses on establishing a sense of the passage of time, growth and change. This centres on pupils' own experience and observation. Good use

is made of photographs of the pupils themselves when they were babies. Pupils' memories of their own personal history are used effectively. Where teaching is very good, lessons are introduced in a lively enthusiastic manner. A range of practical activities are well considered to provide good links with other curricular areas. Classroom assistants are well briefed to provide focussed support for pupils. Suitable resources, such as life sized models and genuine artefacts are used well to maintain pupils' interest. Assessment is verbal and samples of children's work are dated and kept. Where teaching is less successful learning activities do not always build systematically on prior learning and the use of day to day assessment is inconsistent.

The co-ordination of history is shared between two staff, one of whom is a history specialist. Topics from the National Curriculum programmes of study are well matched to simultaneous work in other areas of the curriculum. Appropriate visits are organised to local places of historical interest. Resources are good, including a wide variety of artefacts and some useful books, videos and CD ROMs.

Information Technology

Pupils make sound progress in information technology at Key Stage 1, good progress at Key Stage 2 and very good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4, where it is taught as a discrete subject by a specialist teacher.

Pupils at Key Stage 1 become increasingly familiar with a variety of information technology hardware and software which is used to support learning in other curriculum areas. By the end of Key Stage 1, they can run a simple programme on the computer, control a tracerball with increasing accuracy and start to use the concept keyboard with adult help. Skills are systematically acquired as they move through Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are able to turn the computer on, load a programme, use the space bar, return and delete and use a concept keyboard and tracerball more fluently. Most pupils are starting to use the mouse, able to print out work, and some can change fonts and print size. In geography pupils use an ion camera and scanner to record visits.

At Key Stage 3, pupils become increasingly competent in the use of the computer. They learn how to change the font, colour and size of their writing in word processing. They learn to draft work on the computer and use the keyboard with reasonable fluency. By the end of Key Stage 3 they are able to use a mouse to draw with reasonable accuracy. Pupils use all the tools in a graphics programme. They are starting to use a database. At Key Stage 4 pupils work on an accredited course. They are able to load programmes, design and print out a poster and, with some help, save it. They know what a spreadsheet is, can enter data, change the variables and describe what happens. Pupils apply their knowledge and understanding to every day life well, for example, in the use of teletext, video recorders and cameras. They use information technology with increased confidence in a variety of ways to support work in other subject areas. They are able to word process their work and use a CD-ROM to research information. Pupils make excellent use of information technology in media studies where they create, film and edit videos.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning in information technology and enjoy using the resources. They concentrate well, are prepared to attempt work that is challenging and are able to persevere with their work to overcome problems. They show pride in their achievements.

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4. Planning is very thorough. Learning objectives are clearly identified. Teachers and support assistants work well together as a team. They have good subject knowledge which allows them to teach new skills with confidence. Day to day assessment is used effectively to modify the teaching strategies. Pupils are well managed and the quality of the relationships between pupils and adults is excellent. A very good range of resources are used most effectively.

Information technology is very well led and co-ordinated. The two co-ordinators plan well together to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school. Well planned, comprehensive schemes of work are established, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4. Assessment is consistent, thorough and used well in planning. The subject is well resourced. They are regularly used during extra-curricular activities, which has a positive effect on pupils progress.

Modern Foreign Language

French

Pupils make good progress in French at both key stages. At the beginning of Key Stage 3, pupils know the French for "fish and chips", "apples" and a range of other familiar fruits. They use their knowledge of French words to design their own menus in French. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils scan French magazines, making suitable and pertinent observations relating to French culture. They recognise famous French brand names, designer labels, car manufacturers and trademarks. Pupils know that France and Britain are sometimes involved in joint business ventures. They can provide examples of an Anglo-French project such as Concorde.

By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils are able to greet visitors in French and understand simple replies provided in French. Almost all pupils know the names of some of the numbers between 1 and 20. Others are able to count from 1 to 20 with confidence. Pupils capable of higher attainment listen to simple sentences spoken in French and understand the meaning. Almost all are able to identify features in the local environment that may be of interest to tourists. Pupils at both key stages make good progress towards understanding the French culture and way of life. From their existing knowledge they make good links with learning in other curricular areas and ask searching questions to further their understanding.

Pupils at Key Stage 3 are very well motivated during French lessons. Those at Key Stage 4, who stated that they see no point in learning French, require sensitive encouragement from the teacher and classroom assistant in order to fully engage in the lessons. However, all pupils work hard during French lessons. They concentrate well as they attempt to correct pronunciation. A few find concentration difficult if individual support is unavailable. All pupils relate well to each other and to the adults

teaching them. They support each other well during oral work and take risks in front of each other without fear of ridicule. Boys and girls work together comfortably. They enjoy the relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere in which lessons are conducted and appreciate the opportunities provided for learning to be supported using tactile approaches.

The quality of teaching in French is at least good and sometimes very good at both key stages. It has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are thoughtfully planned in considerable detail and well-chosen resources are used to motivate pupils during planned activities. The teacher establishes very good relationships with the pupils and uses a wide range of well selected teaching strategies in response to individual needs. The teacher and classroom assistants work together effectively demonstrating a clear understanding of each of their roles in carrying out the task.

The subject co-ordinator is very hard working. She ensures that learning is well supported through a well considered scheme of work that appropriately develops pupils' knowledge and understanding from their interests. Continuity and progression of learning benefits from the co-ordinator teaching French throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. Displays and visual aids are eye catching and attractive. They successfully capture the pupils attention. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good and the information generated is used well in the planning process. The subject is very well co-ordinated and suitably resourced.

Music

During the course of the inspection it was only possible to observe three Music lessons two at Key Stage 2 and one at Key Stage 3.

At Key Stage 2 pupils are able to work together and maintain a simple beat by clapping hands in time. They watched the teacher carefully and stopped playing instruments at the appropriate time in response to the teachers' actions in the role of conductor. Pupils take turns to lead the group while performing. They select appropriate instruments according to the sound they wish to make. Pupils match sounds to the animals that make them begin to realise that sounds can represent meaning, thoughts or feelings. Some recognise that musical sounds can be used to represent animals movements. At Key Stage 3, pupils explore melodic phrases using their voices or sometimes even a xylophone. They are able to distinguish between different styles of music for example blues or reggae.

Pupils generally enjoy music and enter into activities with enthusiasm. Some younger pupils enjoy and benefit from multi-sensory approaches used to heighten their awareness and encourage relaxation. They make good use of opportunities to explore their feelings. Older pupils listen well and perform activities in a controlled yet responsive manner. They perform in front of their peers and self-assess with increasing confidence.

Insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in music throughout the school. Of the lessons seen the

quality of teaching was at least good and sometimes very good. Lessons are well planned and carefully prepared. Classroom organisation is well considered and classroom assistants are effectively deployed. They make significant contribution to the success of the lessons. Teaching follows a sequential pattern and individual needs are responded to in a sensitive manner. Lessons continue at a good pace. Tactile approaches are carefully used at appropriate times to support pupils learning.

The subject benefits from having one person, teaching music throughout the school. This helps to maintain continuity and progression. There is an appropriate scheme of work suitably referenced to the National Curriculum program of study. It takes account of pupils individual interests and needs. Assessment procedures are sound and the subject is adequately resourced.

Physical Education

Physical education makes an extremely positive contribution to the life of the school. Pupils' progress is usually good and often very good. Pupils at Key Stage 1 gain confidence in the shallow water of the learner pool and gradually learn the basic skills of front crawl in deeper water. Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 enter and exit the water from the poolside and develop their swimming skills to move through the water with increasing fluency. Other pupils at Key Stage 2 learn basic ball skills such as throwing and catching in the school hall. These skills are practised by pupils at Key Stage 3 in the context of team games, such as cricket, on the school field. Younger pupils make good progress in learning how to move under, over and round apparatus. They combine sequences of such actions in gymnastic displays as part of the Christmas concert. Older pupils develop more complex routines, and perform them with increasing team spirit and discipline. Pupils throughout the school apply such skills in a wide variety of appropriately challenging outdoor activities, for example by scrambling, slithering and crawling their way through cave systems whilst on residential trips in the Yorkshire Dales. At Key Stage 4, pupils further apply their experience in the context of vocational courses focusing on health and fitness, and sport and leisure.

Pupils respond very well to the activities. They have a sensible, mature attitude to health and safety issues and co-operate well, helping and encouraging each other to very good effect. They are very enthusiastic, and display an excellent team spirit in group activities. They tolerate cold, damp cave conditions with equanimity, and show considerable determination in rising to the associated physical challenge. In these respects, their personal and social development is very good.

The teaching of physical education is usually very good and often excellent. Lessons are extremely well planned and founded upon the excellent relationships between all staff and pupils. Teachers have excellent knowledge of the subject, know the pupils very well, and generate extremely positive attitudes. There is a sensible approach to health and safety issues. Teachers employ a very good range of strategies to ensure that all pupils understand and can apply the points under consideration. Excellent opportunities for pupils' personal and social development are created and exploited. Reference to other subjects, such as science and geography, is often acknowledged. In the small minority of lessons which are less successful, the range of teaching

strategies is more limited, particularly with regard to challenging higher attaining pupils. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance, particularly in mathematical terms, are under-exploited.

The subject is very well co-ordinated. Carefully planned and revised schemes of work reflect all areas of activity in the National Curriculum programmes of study. Emphasis is given to games and outdoor education, the latter being co-ordinated separately as part of the residential visits programme, but this is entirely appropriate and the subject endorses the aims of the school extremely well. The part that physical education can play in other subjects is acknowledged, though not always formalised. The provision makes an extremely significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. Assessment procedures are good and pupils can gain awards in such schemes as 'Endeavour' (swimming) or 'Ten Step' (athletics). Pupils at Key Stage 4 can gain accreditation for their vocational coursework. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of sporting links with other special and mainstream schools.

The hall provides an adequate area for indoor activities, although it also serves as a throughfare and dining hall as well. There are appropriate changing facilities and a good range of well maintained apparatus and smaller equipment. Outdoor facilities are good, and include marked-out hard-surface and grassed areas, and an adventure playground. Provision is further enhanced by facilities such as the local community swimming pool, the local authority youth club, and the very impressive resource of Foxwood Farm, all of which are used extremely well.

Religious education

Pupils make satisfactory progress across Key Stages 1, 2, and 3 and good progress at Key Stage 4. Few religious education lessons were observed. Judgements include the observation of assemblies and work completed in lessons. At a simple level pupils at Key Stage 1 acquire an understanding of the difficult concepts associated with the subject. They respond well to familiar bible stories. At Key Stage 2, they respond well to opportunities provided to speak about for instance a visit to church. They are able to make comparisons between Christian and Muslim prayers. At Key Stage 3 pupils are able to recall the visit of the local vicar and talk about his responsibilities. By Key Stage 4, pupils have a good understanding of trust, commitment responsibility and promises. They are beginning to understand the meaning of partnership in marriage.

Attitude across all key stages is good. Pupils listen attentively and are willing to ask questions. They respond well to tasks set by staff. They are developing a respect for a wide range of opinions, feelings and beliefs. Pupils show interest in lesson topics. They work hard at tasks set and reveal a growing confidence in talking about their own and others' faiths and values. At Key Stage 4 in particular, pupils are able to discuss their thoughts and feelings and place them in the context of religious and moral issues.

The quality of teaching overall is very good and excellent at Key Stage 4. In all lessons seen the planning was at least good and particularly impressive at Key Stage 4

where activities and presentation are stimulating. Here excellent partnership is achieved between the teacher and the support assistant, both have high expectations when delivering the lesson. Teachers are generally confident in their ability to teach the subject and have benefited from the strong example and support of the co-ordinator. Where the subject is combined with collective worship the teaching is particularly strong and this is across all key stages.

There is a very good scheme of work planned in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The scheme covers the two belief systems of Christianity and Muslim. Judaism is introduced at Key Stages 3 and 4. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon issues relating to religious events and upon their own actions. The study of Islam and Judaism promotes pupils' cultural development. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership and has a clear view of its development. Accommodation is satisfactory. The resources available for the subject are used well and are of good quality. Through careful management they are generally sufficient for the effective study of most aspects of the subjects. The local community and visitors to the school are used well as a resource for the subject.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

The school was inspected by six inspectors including a lay inspector, and a total of 65 hours were spent observing lessons. School documents, including the school development plan, staff handbook, prospectus, minutes of the governing body, curriculum and other policies were scrutinised as well as a proportion of pupils work, their statements and individual education plans. All teachers were interviewed and their lesson plans scrutinised. Discussions were held with the chair of the governing body, classroom assistants, visiting specialists and many of the pupils.

18 parents responded to the questionnaire and seven attended the pre-inspection meeting called to hear their views of the school.

Data and indicators

PUPIL DATA

Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
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TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR - Y13)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)

14.1

Number of pupils per qualified teacher

10:1

FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:

1997/98

	%
Total income	752842
Total expenditure	807316
Expenditure per pupils	5892
Balance brought forward from previous year	114938
Balance carried forward to next year	60464

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires

143

Number of questionnaires

18

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of	40	53	0	0	7
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to	46.5	46.5	0	7	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	40	53	0	0	7
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	6	70	6	18	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	40	13	7	7
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	30	47	6	6	6
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their	46	47	10	13	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at	13	26	26	41	0
The schools values and attitudes have a positive effect on my	24	48	6	6	6
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	20	47	13	7	13
My child(ren) like(s) school	47	33	20	0	0