

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY GARDEN SCHOOL

Bermondsey

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100881

Acting headteacher: Ms T Neary

Reporting inspector: Mr M G Whitehead
21061

Dates of inspection: 12th – 16th November 2001

Inspection number: 188547

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Macks Road Bermondsey
Postcode:	SE16 3XU
Telephone number:	020 7237 4050
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Nash
Date of previous inspection:	26 th June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21061	M G Whitehead	Registered inspector	Science Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14756	J Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10753	D Drury	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18261	T Hill	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Geography	After-school club
18498	D Morris	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Music Physical education The foundation stage Equal opportunities English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cherry Garden School is a primary/nursery school for pupils aged two to eleven years. There are 46 pupils on roll, comprising 30 boys and 16 girls. Over a third have autistic spectrum disorders, approximately a quarter of the pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties and a quarter have severe learning difficulties. The school also caters for pupils with hearing impairment, visual impairment and physical disabilities. Over four-fifths of pupils are non-white and almost a third have English as a second language. Almost two-thirds of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The attainment of all pupils is very low when compared with the national average. The majority of pupils come from the Borough of Southwark, and a small number come from neighbouring boroughs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cherry Garden School is a good school with very clear aims focused on the well-being and educational development of all children and pupils. The children in the nursery and reception classes make satisfactory progress and the pupils aged five to eleven years make very good progress. The school provides a very high quality of teaching and enjoys excellent leadership from the acting headteacher and her deputy. The strong governing body makes sure that the school meets its responsibilities and monitors the provision well. The very good teaching that prevails helps pupils to make very good progress as they pass through the school and prepare for the next stage of their education. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection and now provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The acting headteacher and key staff provide strong leadership for the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils who are aged five to eleven years is very good.
- All teachers and support staff work effectively together as a team for the benefit of all pupils.
- The school ensures that everyone has the same opportunity and that pupils' individual special needs are well met.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good.
- There is effective partnership between the school and the parents/carers of the pupils.
- The school provides a very good level of resources for the teaching of all subjects.

What could be improved

- The appointment of a substantive headteacher to maintain the strong leadership and secure the future of this successful school.
- Co-ordination of the work in the foundation stage to improve the quality of learning for the children.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and inappropriate, in many ways, for meeting the demands made by the pupils and staff. This has a limiting effect on the activities that can take place in the classrooms.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996 and since then, there has been very good improvement. There has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly

with the older pupils. The planning of the curriculum is now secure and effective, enabling schemes of work to be prepared that plan for pupils' progress through the school. The quality of teaching in humanities subjects and in mathematics has also improved well since the last inspection. There are now very good procedures for the assessment of pupils' work and the results are used effectively when planning future work to make sure that pupils gain most from what is planned. Procedures for monitoring attendance of pupils are now secure and give a clear picture of reasons for any absences that occur. Attendance is now good. The school has a strong commitment to improvement and a good capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	Key	
speaking and listening	B	A	very good	A
reading	C	B	good	B
writing	C	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	C	A	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	C	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	A		

* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

The school has set realistic targets for the progress and achievements of the pupils. The school is working successfully towards meeting those targets. Pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening by the time they reach the age of eleven. They also achieve very well in mathematics and in meeting individual targets that are set at the time of their annual reviews or in the individual education plans. Many pupils also achieve extremely well when they take part in swimming and music lessons, and despite their very great difficulties, they are very highly motivated and very successful. This is true of all members of the school, from the youngest child to the oldest pupil. Achievement is also very good in science, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Pupils make very good progress in English during Key Stage 1 and good progress during Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics is very good at both key stages. Progress is also very good at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in science, history, ICT, music and religious education. Pupils make good progress in art and design and satisfactory progress in geography and physical education. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in all subjects as teachers are very successful in overcoming any difficulties that they encounter. Progress is impeded by the lack of planning to enable clear development of skills in physical education and the limited breadth of study in design and technology. Overall, pupils learn very well, they enjoy their lessons, concentrate very well and show great enthusiasm and interest.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic, work hard and enjoy the rich range of experiences that are provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good and those with challenging behaviour respond well to the strategies used by the teachers and do not disrupt the learning of other pupils. Pupils are very well behaved at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respond very well to opportunities for personal development and enjoy accepting responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. Relationships are very good between pupils and their peers. Relationships between pupils and teachers are also very good.
Attendance	Overall levels of attendance are good and absences usually relate to pupils' medical conditions.

The very good behaviour of the pupils and their very positive attitudes to work are strengths within the school. The care provision within the school is also a strength, as all staff work effectively to support and nurture the very best attitudes and behaviour amongst the children and pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Very good

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

The quality of teaching for pupils who are under five years of age is satisfactory, and teaching in the rest of the school is very good. The quality of teaching of English is satisfactory for the nursery and reception groups and good for the rest of the school. Teachers and support staff are careful to ensure that all pupils are included in all activities. The teaching in mathematics and science is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes. The teaching of mathematics and science in the rest of the school is very good. Within the reception and nursery classes, the teaching of personal, social and health education issues is satisfactory. The older pupils in the school, whose ages range from five to eleven, receive good teaching in these areas. The skills of literacy are taught well throughout the school, though there are some areas for improvement in the teaching of the youngest children. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is also very good as the pupils have very similar needs to their peers. The picture exchange communication system is very effective in overcoming any language difficulty and is used very effectively by all staff. Teaching of numeracy skills is very good throughout the school. In design and technology and physical education, the teaching is satisfactory. It is not as effective as in other subjects because there are limits to the curriculum provided and there are restrictions created by the accommodation and resources for both subjects. The school

is good at meeting the individual special needs of all the pupils in the school. A great deal of time and effort is spent in ensuring that each pupil is treated as an individual and every pupil has full and equal access to the whole curriculum. The provision for educational inclusion is good. There is close liaison between the school and other support agencies to make sure that physical, medical and emotional needs are taken into account. Because of the great attention that is paid to the pupils, they all make progress that is never less than satisfactory and is often very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school makes good curriculum provision that is broad, balanced and meets the wide range of complex needs of the pupils. A whole-school approach is taken to maximise every opportunity to promote learning. The school's inclusive approach ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and are highly valued as members of the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. They are well supported by skilled teachers and support staff who make great efforts to address their language needs and support communication with their parents. This has a positive impact on these pupils' achievements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils benefit from the very good promotion of mutual respect and shared responsibility. The multi-sensory experiences and the stimulating programme of visits all add further strength to the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very good standard of care for its pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' learning are very good in the core curriculum and in personal and social education. They are strengths of the school. Teachers and support staff use assessment well to plan the next stage of teaching.

Parents and the school work well together and this has a positive effect on the progress that pupils make. The school provides very good quality information for parents about the progress of their children. In turn, parents play a very strong role in the education of their children as they work with the school on special programmes of study. The school is very effective in communicating with parents for whom English is an additional language. Forms, letters and other written documents are translated appropriately and there are interpreters available to help parents during meetings, if they are required. The school works very effectively with external agencies to meet their physical and personal needs. The management of pupils' behaviour is excellent. The school curriculum offers very good support to the pupils; it is enriched by the very strong links with the community and the very good extra-curricular activities that are arranged for the pupils. Provision for ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good. Many new initiatives to foster understanding of different races are reflected in practice.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher and her deputy provide excellent leadership and direction for the school. They are well supported by the staff, and the subject leaders' management skills range from satisfactory to very good.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors help to shape the direction of the school and work well with the acting headteacher to support her. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and know where there is still need for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The evaluation of performance is good overall. The acting headteacher and her deputy play a strong role in the monitoring of the teaching and are clearly aware of areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The very good resources are well organised and managed. They are used appropriately by all staff. The school building does not provide sufficient space to accommodate all the pupils and equipment needed for their support and teaching. The accommodation is therefore unsatisfactory.

There is a very good level of staffing to meet the demands of the school and the needs of the pupils. They are very well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Some teachers have special qualifications in working with pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. There are also staff with special subject expertise who prove invaluable to all teachers as they plan lessons together. Professional development also helps to ensure that staff receive appropriate training to meet the special needs of the pupils. The accommodation is unsatisfactory as there is insufficient space for storage of large and small equipment that is vital when catering for these pupils. Consequently, equipment spills into the corridors, which are narrow. This lack of space has a negative impact on the mobility of pupils and the opportunities that can be provided. The acting headteacher and her deputy are very effective in monitoring the performance of the school. They have introduced very effective performance management and appraisal procedures and have made a very positive impact on the quality of education provided by the school. The school is very effective in applying principles of best value. It is constantly monitoring the provision and making comparison with other schools. All spending is carefully and rigorously examined and justified. Competitive tendering takes place on all major expenditure. When changes are to be made to the provision, especially the curriculum, there is very good consultation between the school, outside agencies and parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The high quality of the teaching.• The progress that their children make at school.• The quality of leadership and management.• The good range of interesting activities outside of lessons.• Their children like school.• The school keeps parents well informed about the progress of their children.• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with any questions or concerns.	<p><i>(Parents have not identified any areas that they would like to see improved.)</i></p>

The judgements of the inspectors support the very positive views of the parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When pupils join Cherry Garden School, their attainment is well below that of pupils of a similar age in a mainstream school. All children and pupils in the school have severe difficulties in learning and many pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties, which have a severe and limiting effect upon their ability to learn. The levels of attainment in all subjects are well below the national average. The results of the teacher assessments for the 2000 national tests in mathematics and English show that there are five pupils who are seven years old who are working towards Level 1. There is also one pupil aged eleven years who is also working towards Level 1. This illustrates clearly the severe learning difficulties of the pupils in the school. However, all children under five years of age make satisfactory progress and all pupils aged five to eleven years make good progress in their learning and achieve very well against their individual education plan targets.
2. For a small, but significant number of pupils, their health also affects their ability to learn, especially when they need to be at home or in hospital receiving treatment. The school provides a safe, secure and inclusive environment in which the teaching is stimulating, challenging and enjoyable for all of its pupils.
3. The school enables pupils to follow a wide range of subjects, in line with the National Curriculum requirements, and ensures that the lessons are planned in a manner that is appropriate to the individual special needs of all pupils.
4. The achievement of children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall and achievement is good in speaking, listening and personal development. Achievement is also satisfactory in the areas concerning mathematical development as they learn to count by rote. Children make very good progress in creative development, especially in their music lessons. They join in and sing songs with the teacher as they play simple percussion instruments. Progress in physical development is satisfactory but limited by the lack of structured activities and opportunities for outdoor play. For pupils aged five to eleven years, their achievement in writing is satisfactory, achievement in reading and personal, social and health education is good. Their achievement in speaking, listening and meeting targets set at annual reviews is very good. The progress made over time for children in the under-five groups is satisfactory. Progress is good for pupils aged five to eleven years and by the time they leave the school, they are well prepared for the secondary stage of their education.
5. Achievement by children who are less than five years of age is satisfactory in all other subjects, whilst the achievement of those who are aged between five and eleven years is very good. Where the teaching is of a higher quality, the pupils' achievement is better. The support assistants work closely with teachers and together they enable the pupils to work to the very best of their ability. In one Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils made Romalla cloths similar to those used for covering holy books. Where achievement is only satisfactory, some time is lost as pupils queue for attention or wait a long time to take their turn in the activity. The most capable pupil was encouraged to use his own initiative and printed very attractive patterns on his own cloth. There are some lessons for the under-fives where there is need for greater challenge for the children and higher expectations by the staff.

6. Pupils who use English as an additional language make good progress in lessons and achieve well. They benefit from good support and high quality resources. The use of the picture exchange communication system (PECS) is very effective as it is not constrained by the English language. Using this approach, the teachers are equally effective with all pupils regardless of their first language. They achieve good standards in communication, particularly when linked to their use of computers and communication aids.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils enjoy school and this is confirmed by their parents/carers. They have very good attitudes to school and their learning, despite their sometimes unpredictable and challenging behaviour, which is well managed. Overall, standards of behaviour are very good and there have been no exclusions in the previous year. Pupils' personal development is very good and the quality of relationships throughout the school is very good and typified by the response of pupils to the acting headteacher as she greets each one of them, individually, as they arrive at school in the morning.
8. Pupils know that they are expected to learn and they participate as much as they can. They enjoy their lessons. They work hard and show considerable determination, effort and perseverance in working towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils on the autistic spectrum learn through effective use of visual symbols and through being gently reminded and encouraged when they lose their concentration. Pupils appreciate the praise of their teachers and the support staff. Independence is encouraged within the limits imposed by the pupils' impairments and pupils respond very well, taking care of equipment and acting in a trustworthy manner. For example, pupils collect registers and are regularly given opportunities to make choices within lessons and during visits. Pupils enjoy these opportunities and rise to the challenges offered to them.
9. After school, a group of pupils participate in activities with the support of staff from an independent organisation. These contribute to their independence and provide very good sensory experiences, which are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils who, for example may beat out the 'Match of the Day' rhythm on a drum, experience the sensation of being brushed with a feather or enjoy the opportunity to climb on equipment independently.
10. Pupils' behaviour is generally very good but, occasionally, a small minority of pupils present challenging behaviour. When this happens, the behaviour management strategies are effectively used by staff. The limited amount of space within classrooms to store equipment imposes restrictions that can, on occasion, affect standards of behaviour. When making a visit within the local community, pupils' behaviour makes it difficult to distinguish them from other children without special educational needs. A very good example of their behaviour in such circumstances was observed when they visited a local 'burger bar' for a drink. Pupils with English as an additional language behave well in and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their activities.
11. The quality of all relationships is very good. All staff have an impressive commitment to ensuring that each pupil is able to achieve their personal goals and that every pupil is included in the full range of learning and play opportunities. Parents and carers appreciate their children's achievements and progress. There is a relaxed yet professional relationship between pupils and their teachers so that successes are celebrated and pupils can take pride in their capabilities at all levels. There is a very strong mutual respect, with staff and pupils wanting to do their best for each other.

Pupils, including those with complex needs, develop very good relationships. Pupils and staff mix together well in play, with staff sharing in activities such as singing or riding playground toys. The majority of pupils are extremely tolerant and understanding of others' difficulties. There is excellent social harmony and play is inclusive with all pupils enjoying experiences such as a smoke machine, which billows perfumed smoke across the playground, and using large outdoor play equipment such as tricycles.

12. Pupils' overall attendance and punctuality are good, and that of all pupils on the autistic spectrum is very good or excellent. The figures for the last year for which there are comparative figures (1999/2000), show a good improvement on the levels recorded at the time of the previous inspection in 1996. In 2000/1, there was a reduction in overall attendance levels, but this masks the very poor attendance of one pupil for medical reasons. Within this small school the extended absence of one pupil has a significant impact on overall levels of attendance. Careful annotations in registers explain the reasons for absence, which are generally associated with pupils' medical conditions. The good levels of attendance have a positive effect upon pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is very good, which results in very good learning overall by the pupils. Of the 64 lessons seen, 63 (98.4 per cent) were satisfactory or better. Eighteen lessons (28.1 per cent) were good and 32 (50 per cent) were either very good or excellent. This represents a very good improvement since the time of the last report when no excellent teaching was reported. The very high quality of teaching is particularly prevalent in classes for pupils aged from five to eleven years. This is true of the teaching of all subjects.
14. There was excellent teaching in mathematics, science, music and physical education. Good and very good teaching also took place in all other subjects. During the entire inspection, only one lesson proved to be unsatisfactory and changes have now been made to ensure that a similar situation will not happen again. Satisfactory teaching was characterised by less effective planning and some lack of pace during the lessons. This resulted in progress during the lesson being only satisfactory.
15. The teaching of numeracy skills is very good throughout the school. In the very best lessons, teachers ensure that all activities are well prepared in order to meet the wide range of capabilities of the pupils. The least capable in the class managed to learn new words and say them to the teacher. These include the names of shapes such as circle, square and triangle. Not only do the pupils learn the names, but they can also identify the shapes correctly. Within the same class, the most capable pupils move on to more demanding work as they learn to recognise and name solid shapes, including sphere, cube and cuboid. This high level of teaching makes sure that the most able pupils are working to their full potential, whilst the least able pupils are receiving appropriate support to help them make progress.
16. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes, whilst in the rest of the school it is good. The pattern of progress made by pupils is the same. As the pupils move through the school, their levels of communication improve. Where it is possible, pupils are able to integrate into a local mainstream school for some lessons and this is a clear sign of success. Not all pupils are able to make such rapid and high level progress. For most pupils, they will continue to need special support for the rest of their time in school.
17. Ten-year-old pupils made very effective use of PECS during a science lesson. This

enables them to communicate very well with the staff. Teachers and support staff are highly skilled in the use of PECS and the staff use their detailed knowledge and understanding of the pupils to make sure that the whole communication system works for them. In one science lesson, the boundless energy of the teacher and her great enthusiasm created an atmosphere in which pupils could not avoid being interested and attentive. Consequently, the pupils worked extremely hard in communicating with the staff and were very successful. Pupils signed their responses to the teacher's questions and made very clear statements about their likes and dislikes concerning the different foods that they had been touching, smelling and tasting.

18. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is equally as good as the teaching of all other pupils. Teachers are fully aware of the needs and learning difficulties of the pupils. Pupils who are at a stage of early language acquisition make good progress. They learn to name correctly the days of the week, the relevant colour that is associated with that day and the name of the fabric also associated with the day. As pupils enter the school each day, they see a large display which tells them what day it is and then lists the colour, smell, fabric and music that will prevail. These strategies prove to be very effective in helping pupils to enjoy learning language skills.
19. Excellent teaching took place off-site when the pupils visited the nearby children's hospital and used the hydrotherapy pool for a swimming session. In this situation, the staff from the school worked very closely with the physiotherapists and, together, they followed a planned lesson in which all pupils benefited greatly. The staff followed excellent procedures to ensure that the non-ambulant pupils were safely transferred from their wheelchairs into the pool. Teachers and support staff treated all pupils with the utmost care and afforded them total dignity and respect. Pupils also receive excellent teaching in music where lessons are very well prepared so that activities ensure the full participation of all the pupils, including those with the most profound difficulties. Staff work well together and there is a wide range of signed songs to give excellent support to pupils as they learn signing skills.
20. The acting headteacher and her deputy give considerable support to other staff and set excellent role models for them. They teach with them and give strong leadership through example. The support staff provide invaluable help to both the pupils and the teachers. Many work closely with individual pupils as well as working to support the class as a whole. Support staff are very skilled in communicating with the pupils and sign to them effectively; they also use PECS very successfully. The hard work of the teachers and support staff ensures that the education for these pupils is totally inclusive. The school takes great care to meet the individual special educational needs as well as the individual social and cultural needs of all pupils. Staff are industrious and effective in minimising the negative impact of the poor accommodation.
21. The very high quality of teaching for pupils aged five to eleven years ensures that the pupils learn very well. The careful planning and presentation of lessons motivate pupils and they are keen to take part in all activities. The staff make very good use of many different forms of communication including speech, signing and PECS. The whole-school multi-sensory approach to communication is beneficial to the pupils and they learn to express themselves clearly and effectively. This is of great benefit to all pupils and they use their knowledge to great effect in and around the school as they work and play together. During break times, learning continues as pupils sing and dance, walk and cycle around the playground. They are very busy using all their communication skills as they interact very positively with each other and with the staff.

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

22. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and now makes good curriculum provision. The curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive. It fully meets the wide range of complex needs of the pupils. It is enriched by very good links with the community and a very good selection of extra-curricular activities. The school takes an holistic approach to maximising every learning opportunity available. The school offers very good support to pupils with special educational needs. However, the early years provision is in need of further development.
23. The school has a curriculum policy backed by policies and schemes of work for each curriculum area. A multi-sensory approach is taken to teaching, which focuses on providing active learning opportunities and removing barriers to learning. The National Curriculum and early years curriculum provide the framework. The curriculum is delivered through carefully differentiated activities broken down into very small steps designed to meet the complex, individual needs of each pupil. Therefore, pupils are able to enjoy the lessons and make good progress.
24. The curriculum has been co-ordinated by the acting headteacher since her appointment to this position 14 months ago. She provides strong leadership and co-ordination of the curriculum across the school. In this role, she has implemented a school self-review process. She meets termly with co-ordinators to monitor progress on targets set for development and uses termly subject planning sheets and teachers' weekly planning files to monitor curriculum delivery. She cross-references these to individual pupil's timetables that include therapy and specialist teaching sessions, to ensure that each pupil has access to a broad and balanced curriculum and makes good progress.
25. A particularly strong feature of the way the school works is that the maximum use possible is made of every moment that pupils spend in school. Every opportunity to learn is maximised, from the early morning arrival through daily routine activities like snacks, drinks, toileting, lunch and beyond to the range of extra-curricular activities available. Learning at all these times is planned and recorded. This is epitomised in the playtime periods. The playground has an excellent range of resources that stimulate and delight and are accessible to all. These facilities include specially adapted swings, climbing frames, bikes, mats, a bubble machine and smoke machine. The school's play policy sets out how these opportunities promote learning and how progress will be noted. This approach ensures the inclusion of every pupil in social play activities.
26. The acting headteacher has identified a number of areas for development. An essential task is to appoint an early years co-ordinator to solve the co-ordination difficulty and to lead on further development, including designing descriptors for levels of progress for each of the areas in the early years curriculum. She also plans to maximise further the role of therapy sessions to enhance curriculum delivery. There are plans to extend the good practice established, in collaboration with the speech and language therapist, to work with other professionals. New curriculum area priorities are for physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
27. The school makes good extra-curricular provision including an art club and activities through the 'Art in the Park' initiative, which gives them access to a resident artist. There is also a daily after-school 'Only Connect Club' that provides a range of activities and respite for families. This is managed by a local initiative, and the provision of transport home ensures that all pupils have full access to these activities.

28. Provision for personal, social and health education in the school is very good. It is delivered both in discrete lessons and is fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. Personal, social and health education targets, including behaviour targets, are set and progress monitored for all pupils. These inform lesson plans to provide pupils with opportunities for personal development in all aspects of their school life. There is a co-ordinator who plans further developments to implement citizenship and implement the checklists and summative records to more clearly identify progress in learning.
29. The school meets all statutory curriculum requirements. Provision for mathematics, science, design and technology, geography and physical education is satisfactory. For English, art, information and communication technology (ICT), history, and religious education, provision is good. Recent priorities have been the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT. There is very good provision for music and all pupils are able to participate in musical experiences.
30. The school makes very good use of links with the community and is successful in enhancing all areas of the curriculum and, in particular, to support pupils' personal development. The school successfully engages with local people, organisations and facilities. Guy's Hospital hydrotherapy pool and the local swimming pool enhance the therapy and curriculum opportunities. There are reciprocal staff and pupil visits with local nursery, primary and secondary schools. Recent activities during 'Humanities Week' have included collaboration with the local authority and community to focus on 'Black History'. This included a virtual trip to Jamaica and was strongly supported by the pupils' families. There are visits to the local shops, the fast food bar, the fire station, science museum, Kew Gardens, a Sikh temple, the local church, the Monet exhibition and Tate Modern. Pupils have been fruit picking at a local farm, ice-skating and to the Rockingham Adventure Playground. Staff have good access to the Internet and regularly consult the 'severe learning difficulties website for ideas, information and models of good practice.
31. The provision for promoting the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good. There is a whole-school approach to supporting personal development and it is well supported by the individual education plan process. The spiritual development of pupils is met through a range of activities. These include the study and experience of artefacts from other religions in religious education, visits to a Sikh temple and attending harvest festival at the local church, trips to the Monet exhibition and Tate Modern. The daily experience of multi-sensory activities in every lesson clearly delights the pupils. They show wonder at the swimming pool, when playing with the bubble machine and smoke machine and as they experience the sensory, light and dark rooms. There is a strong culture of mutual respect and care in the school. Staff model high standards of behaviour to support moral development. Pupils wait their turn and are expected to communicate 'please' and 'thank you'. They have behaviour plans and targets and show good progress with these. All pupils are expected to take responsibility. There are charts in each classroom to identify the routine tasks allocated to each child. Whatever the level of their need, all pupils are expected to take an active role. No one is excluded from any activity.
32. Pupils' social development is encouraged throughout their school day. They are greeted by staff on arrival, there are 'hello' and 'goodbye' sessions each day and they work in small groups during activities in lessons. There are opportunities to socialise beyond school. Pupils attend sessions at local nursery, primary and secondary schools. Pupils and staff from those schools visit Cherry Garden.
33. Provision for cultural development is made through access to stories and books. Each

classroom has a wide choice of books, good use is made of the well-equipped library and parents can work with their children using the book sacks from the 'Parents' Language Project'. In lessons, very good use is made of artefacts that emphasise cultural heritage, like prayer shawls, incense, spice and a turban. Pupils are familiar with Afro Caribbean hygiene products. The displays and presentation files in the school include pictures of children from other countries, details of religious customs and examples of work with the local community in the 'Black History' project. Pupils' files of work contain photographic evidence of work about artists and musicians as well as activities in art and design and music lessons using art materials and techniques and playing instruments. The very good music provision enables pupils to experience a wide range of music-making activities and to compose and perform their own pieces. The co-ordinator for equal opportunities has also led on promoting and supporting work on the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. She has provided a bank of materials for assemblies and boxes of very good resources for use in classrooms.

34. Special educational needs provision is very good and a strength of the school. The school's special educational needs policy sets out its sensory approach and strategies for close working with the multi-disciplinary team of therapists and specialist teachers. This is supported by the provision of a comprehensive range of high quality equipment and facilities, including a light sensory room and a dark sensory room. Pupils also have access to hydrotherapy, specialist seating and stands, a soft play area, a library of toys, sound beams, communication aids and specialist computer hard and software. Government funding has supported joint working between staff and the multi-disciplinary team. The multi-sensory approach ensures full access for all pupils to every aspect of the curriculum.
35. The acting headteacher is the special needs co-ordinator. Targets on pupils' individual education plans are clear, measurable and achievable and they are reviewed regularly. Individual timetables focus on providing opportunities for pupils to make progress on targets set. Achievements are recorded during each lesson on individual education plan curriculum recording sheets. This information is reinforced with photographic evidence. The school has invested in employing a very experienced member of staff for two days each week to manage the annual review process and to write the individual education plans. This results in a high quality, comprehensive system that greatly enhances the work of the school in meeting the individual needs of the pupils.
36. All staff make consistent use of a wide range of activities and tasks that are carefully matched to the abilities of the pupils. The multi-sensory approach stimulates the pupils and effectively meets their wide range of special educational needs. Staff make consistent use of a wide range of communication strategies including signs, symbols, pictures, expressions, words and speech. They ably support the pupils to develop any communication strategy that works for them. A very strong team approach from all school staff and the multi-disciplinary support staff has been established. Staff are effectively deployed and very good use is made of one-to-one support. Good access to specialist training for staff enhances the support that they are able to provide for pupils and informs their planning and delivery. The very good resources, specialist facilities and equipment and use of ICT support pupils' needs and provide access for all.
37. Very good provision is made to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity. There has been a recent focus to ensure that the school population has a clear understanding of race, following identification of this as an area for development. A multicultural book fair was undertaken in which each class was able to purchase several books relating to different cultural stories. The school also joined in the recent London 'Black History' month in which they focused on Jamaican culture. The school has entered into a

competition in the local authority. The initiatives have been reflected in practice and have ensured that the school is aware of the various needs of pupils from different ethnic groups. A member of staff attends local meetings in which issues are shared and developed with other schools.

38. There is also a youth club that runs after school each evening. This is open to pupils aged seven and over and offers opportunities for social interaction and play.
39. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Some withdrawal activities take place, particularly when pupils need individual support, but the main priority is full inclusion and this is secured wherever possible. Teachers are skilled in providing for these pupils and this has a positive impact on achievements and ensures that the needs of each group of pupils are fully met. The co-ordinator works hard to ensure that provision is good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The support and care provided for pupils are very good and have generally improved since the time of the previous inspection. The school provides a secure, very happy environment, which functions as a very orderly, calm and caring community in which every member is fully included. Pupils work and play together, sharing many happy experiences. All members of the school, pupils and staff are valued for themselves and share in the celebration of their successes. Teachers and staff set very high standards for pupils and act as very good role models. They have a very good understanding of pupils' learning and personal development. There are excellent procedures for consistently promoting good standards of discipline and behaviour and in managing those pupils whose behaviour is sometimes unpredictable and challenging. Procedures for ensuring that the school is free from oppressive behaviour are also excellent. The effective use of speech and signing benefits all pupils' progress and the development of their confidence.
41. Staff work very effectively as a team and are committed to providing an interesting and stimulating range of experiences, within lessons and visits, to support pupils' personal development. For example, each year a group of pupils goes to a major London store in Oxford Street to see the Christmas grotto and meet Father Christmas. One pupil cannot participate in this visit because his oxygen cylinder is not allowed on the coach. To ensure that he is included in having the opportunity to experience the magic of Christmas in a brightly lit store, and to meet Father Christmas, his care assistant walks with him to Surrey Quays to see Father Christmas and have his photograph taken. Staff, who took a group of children from the reception class to a local 'burger bar', provided very good opportunities for each pupil to develop their social skills in a real-life situation with challenges being set for each pupil. These ranged from choosing between two drinks, using symbols, to paying for the drinks at the end of the visit. These opportunities made a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
42. The pupils are supervised well outside lessons, such as at lunchtimes. The school responds sensitively to the needs of all its pupils and takes careful account within its provision for their physical and sensory impairments. All pupils' needs are considered and playground equipment enables all pupils to be fully included. An example of this is the provision of a playground swing capable of taking a wheelchair. Lunchtime activities are a very important part of pupils' social development and provide very good opportunities for them to respond to each other, for example when singing and playing untuned instruments as a group. They also provide sensory experiences which pupils thoroughly enjoy when, for example, the smoke machine or bubble machine is used in the playground. One boy who is blind and deaf explores the platform at the top of a slide

and gains great confidence in moving safely around a limited space. These experiences all provide very good opportunities for pupils' social development and provide very good opportunities for them to develop independence.

43. Staff take great care to ensure safe practice and reinforce safety to pupils when, for example, a group of reception children were undertaking a visit, they were involved in looking and listening when crossing roads. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote health and safety, which involve identifying and assessing potential risks and taking appropriate action, such as providing staff with training in the use of hoists. Equipment is regularly tested and any defective item is taken out of use immediately. Fire evacuation procedures are very good and the school conducts these each term, having consulted with the fire brigade to ensure that assembly points and procedures meet requirements. The school was quick to respond to the two health and safety issues which were brought to their attention during the course of the inspection.
44. The child protection procedures are good. The school has an appropriate policy based on the locally agreed procedures and these comply with requirements. The acting headteacher is designated as having responsibility for child protection and all staff know her role. Both she and her deputy have undertaken appropriate training and they have very good working relationships with other professionals who might have to become involved should concerns arise. All staff have received appropriate guidance in child protection matters and this is reinforced by an outline of the procedures within every register. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities.
45. The school has an appropriate policy for the use of restraint to protect pupils from harming themselves or others, but no recent training has been provided for staff.
46. The arrangements for providing first aid, medical support and administering medication are very good. However, the medical room is too small and this results in some abdominal examinations having to be completed in classroom toilets and some physiotherapy being provided in the home economics room. This situation is unsatisfactory. First aid supplies are safely and securely stored, and are readily accessible when required. Accidents are appropriately recorded and the acting headteacher is made aware of all accidents, enabling any potential risks to be identified and addressed.
47. External specialists provide very good support for pupils' development and regular visits by the school nurse, physiotherapist, speech and language therapist, community paediatrician and the occupational therapist are all co-ordinated. Very good developmental records are maintained for each pupil.
48. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. The issue regarding the recording of absence, identified in the previous inspection, has been fully addressed and registers are very well maintained with detailed annotations explaining reasons for absence. Parents/carers are encouraged to ensure that pupils' attendance is good and the school contacts parents on the first day of any unexplained absence to seek an explanation. Escorts are involved in providing information, which is recorded in the school office. On occasions, when pupils are slow to get ready in the morning, they miss the school transport. In such cases, parents/carers will frequently bring them into school themselves, later in the morning.
49. Procedures for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do are very good in English, mathematics, science, ICT and in personal and social education. These are strengths of the school. Effective use is made of a published scheme that enables small steps of progress to be measured and monitored. When pupils enter the school,

they undertake a good baseline assessment procedure that informs teachers about their levels of ability. This enables their progress to be systematically measured as they

move through the school. At the end of each year, the 'P' level assessments are used to identify pupils' progress over the year in English, mathematics and personal skills. These help to plan new targets. Individual targets are of very good quality and procedures to monitor these are exemplary. Procedures for assessment in religious education are not yet established and at present are inadequate. The school has begun to collate the data collected from annual assessments and this is now used to set whole-school achievement targets. This represents very good practice and helps to ensure that assessment information is used effectively to guide future planning and teaching.

50. Assessment overall is good. Most subjects have a range of assessment sheets that help to inform teachers about what their pupils have learned. These are then used to plan the next stage of teaching. Pupils with English as an additional language are well monitored and supported in all aspects of their school life. Their academic and personal progress is regularly assessed.
51. There has been very good improvement in procedures for assessment and in the use of assessment since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school's partnership with parents/carers is very effective and is promoted through good communications and very good involvement of parents/carers in supporting pupils. The use of interpreters in appropriate cases ensures that all parents can be included in sharing in their child's learning and progress. This partnership makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
53. There has been an improvement in the school's partnership with parents/carers since the time of the previous inspection and their views of the school have improved. Parents/carers have very positive views of the school and believe that teaching is good, children are making good progress and parents/carers are kept well informed. They say that their children like coming to school, that behaviour is good and that there is an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Parents/carers think that the school is well managed and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or any concern. The judgements of the inspection team support these positive views of the school.
54. Parents/carers receive very good information about their child's progress through a very carefully written annual progress report, which refers to the curriculum, to the pupil's attitude and to the progress which has been made. In addition, parents/carers are fully involved in reviews of individual education plans and target setting. This makes sure that all people involved are fully aware of all decisions and plans that are made. The physiotherapist and multi-agency support team involves parents/carers in programmes to integrate physiotherapy and care programmes into everyday activities. They make home visits in appropriate cases, liaising with each other to minimise intrusion into the family home. The school and external agencies recognise that English is not the first language in some homes and make good use of the local interpreter services to ensure that there are no communication problems. All pupils have a home/school book in which teachers make daily comments regarding positive achievements of pupils and any areas of concern. In addition, parents receive a monthly newsletter that celebrates the successes of individual pupils and provides helpful information about dates. In addition to these formal documents, communication with parents/carers is supported by informal communication via the escorts and transport drivers. Each class also produces a termly newsletter, which is sent home to their parents and carers. These reinforce the very close links that are between the school and the families of the pupils.

55. Parents/carers are generally very supportive of their children at school and at home. They have a very good understanding of pupils' targets and support pupils at home, reinforcing and developing their skills and learning. The support of parents/carers has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The school is led by an acting headteacher who has been in this post for 14 months. She was formerly the deputy headteacher, but now has the former senior teacher working as her deputy. In their roles, they have brought about a great improvement in the work of the school and the welfare of the pupils. Together they lead by example as excellent practitioners themselves. In addition to their skills as teachers, they also have excellent managerial skills. The acting headteacher has a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas where there is need for development. For example, the co-ordination of the provision for pupils in the foundation stage.
57. The governors are very respectful of the acting headteacher and work very well with her on committees and in the day-to-day running of the school. The governors are very supportive of the acting headteacher and work well with her as they put into operation the procedures and targets that have been carefully planned to improve the performance of the school.
58. The acting headteacher and deputy are very effective in promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity within the school as well as monitoring the quality of teaching throughout the school. They have generated an ethos of professionalism and commitment to improvement amongst all staff. The school reflects very clearly its aims and mission statement in its everyday work as it adopts a child-centred approach to learning. The experienced staff work in a multi-disciplinary team to enable access to a wide variety of curriculum activities in a safe and secure environment. The school works in partnership with parents, governors and the local community to ensure all children reach their potential. There are now very carefully planned priorities for the future development of the school. These plans focus very clearly on what can be done to improve the school, include a very clear and positive vision for the future and plans for a new school building. This would offer more space and better facilities altogether. Nevertheless, the present building is the one which is serving both pupils and parents and the school does not shirk its responsibility in this respect. Despite considerable problems with the accommodation, the acting headteacher and governors work rigorously to improve facilities. There is due regard paid to all health and safety issues as they arise. The planning documents for improving the school are comprehensive, realistic and very clearly presented.
59. Subject leaders have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and many of them are working very effectively. However, some have been in post for only a few weeks and have not yet established their roles as subject managers. This area is in need of further development.
60. There are very good strategies for the performance management of teachers and they are working well. All staff have had a performance management interview and the system is working positively and helping greatly with their professional development. Performance management procedures are strong and the school is clearly monitoring its provision and constantly striving for improvement.
61. The governing body works well in support of the school. There are appropriate committees that meet termly, and sometimes more frequently, to discuss curriculum,

personnel and other management issues. The chair of governors, chair of finance and chair of personnel form a very strong nucleus of governors. They lead the governors through their responsibilities and ensure that all requirements are met. They report annually to the parents and produce a well-presented annual report that is clear and unambiguous. One or two minor omissions will be addressed before the next report. The school prospectus is also a well-presented document which gives a true and very positive picture of the school, its priorities and the way in which it works. Again, there are one or two minor omissions which will be corrected in the next publication.

62. There is no permanent headteacher and it is a matter of priority that the governors appoint a substantive headteacher in order to continue the very effective management of the school and maintain the high quality educational provision.
63. When new staff join the school, a very good induction procedure operates and is managed by the acting deputy headteacher. The programme includes the observation of senior staff in teaching roles, team teaching and a programme of discussions with senior staff to familiarise new staff with the organisation and administration of the school. The acting deputy headteacher works as teacher mentor and offers guidance and support for as long as they feel that they need it. She also team-teaches with them to gain a good understanding of the individual special needs of the pupils. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon staff training and development and this includes the mid-day meals supervisors and learning support assistants. All staff have training and guidance on how to play with, and interact positively with, pupils who can and do present sometimes difficult and challenging behaviour.
64. Educational priorities are well supported through the school's financial planning and the senior administration officer of the school carefully and properly manages those finances. Accounts and orders are all computerised and commercial software is used for this purpose. There is always appropriate separation of duties when goods are ordered, received and payment is authorised. The school's financial procedures have been audited recently (July 2001) and the recommendations that were made concerning procedures are being implemented. Specific grants are used appropriately for the benefit of the school in raising standards and developing expertise. The school makes good use of new technology in its management and administration systems as well as within the classrooms. There is still room for much more development of new technology by teachers in their own classrooms. Insufficient use is made of computers and relevant software when teaching subjects other than ICT.
65. ICT is used extremely well by the acting headteacher as a monitoring tool. A great deal of information is gathered about the performance of the school and this is carefully analysed and very well presented. Information that is gathered and generated is then used effectively to influence the planning for the future.
66. The school provides a very good level of staffing to meet the special educational, personal and social needs of the pupils. Teachers are well qualified and most have a very good experience of working with pupils who have severe and profound learning difficulties. Teachers and learning support staff are deployed efficiently and in a sufficiently flexible way to enable them to respond to difficulties as they arise in the classrooms or around the school. Support and ancillary staff offer a high level of support to pupils throughout the day and are valued by teachers and pupils. All staff know the pupils well and are able to work together for their common benefit. In-service training and twilight sessions are offered to advance the knowledge and experience of new staff.
67. Accommodation, although well maintained, is unsatisfactory overall. There are good

areas within the school, such as the sensory and dark rooms, and they have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. A lift ensures that all pupils have access to the classrooms and toileting areas. The outdoor play area has improved significantly since the last inspection. It now has a soft play surface and is very well equipped with a wide range of fixed apparatus, enabling all pupils to be included in the playground leisure activities. There are sensory surfaces, an electrical bubble machine and a smoke machine. Fixtures have turned this small area into a rich, colourful and interesting area that is enjoyed by pupils at all levels of personal and social need. A sensory garden has been established outside and pupils have worked with a local charitable arts group to build a colourful mosaic water feature, along with other interesting wooden plaques and rubber mouldings, to enhance the garden. Inside the school, the picture is one of cramped classrooms and poor storage facilities, in particular those for large mobility equipment. The small classrooms, often cluttered with mobility equipment, make it difficult for staff to respond appropriately to pupils on the autism spectrum. They are unable to give individual classroom space to pupils in which they can be supported and taught. They are unable to overcome the constant close proximity of pupils to each other. Teachers cannot provide a personal area to which those pupils can retreat, and the management of their challenging behaviour in the classroom is impeded because of this. The accommodation for medical, therapy and administration purposes is unsatisfactory. Abdominal medical examinations have to be carried out in classroom changing areas and the physiotherapist has to look for whatever space is available to carry out her work. Offices for administration and senior staff are cramped and uninviting. Toilet and changing areas have improved little since they were criticised in the last report and it is still very difficult to offer toileting procedures that are sufficiently dignified and private. Displays around the school have improved since the last inspection and form an impressive and continuous sensory trail throughout the building, that includes examples of pupils' work and creates a homely, yet clearly educational feel to the school. Very good use is made of accommodation off-site, such as a hydrotherapy pool and swimming pool.

68. Resources for learning are very good overall and they enable pupils to learn well. Teaching is not impaired by any lack of resources. They are especially good in the core subject areas and are very well organised and displayed in classrooms and resource areas. There is an impressive range of specialised mobility equipment, adaptive equipment for communication and resources for soft play and playground use. Although the physical education equipment is generally good, there is some large gymnastic apparatus that is past its useful life. There is a very good range of musical instruments. Resources represent a wide range of cultures and ethnic groups, and there are some very good artefacts for religious education and history. The resources for literacy and numeracy are very good and are supplemented by parent project bags that can be taken home by pupils to enable parents to support their children's learning needs. A toy library containing many sensory, constructional and musical toys can be used by any parent or nearby early learning centre that is registered as a member of the library. This helps to involve parents in the education and support of learning. They can borrow from the toy library and, with their children, they choose together.
69. When taking account of the improved quality of teaching, the progress that the pupils make and the improvements since the last inspection, it is clear now that the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to improve further the quality of education provided for the pupils, the governors and senior staff should:
- (1) Appoint a substantive headteacher as soon as possible in order to ensure the future of the school and the continuity of its high quality educational provision. (Paragraph 62)
 - (2) Improve the quality of management and leadership within the foundation stage, to improve the quality of learning for the children by appointing a co-ordinator for this provision. (Paragraphs 79, 80)
 - (3) Make every effort to resolve the accommodation issues, which are having a limiting effect on the success of the school and the progress made by the pupils. (Paragraphs 46, 67, 93, 131)

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

71. The 'Only Connect' club is held every weekday evening after school between 3.30 pm and 5.00 pm. It is run by a charity that works within the local authority to provide specialised respite care for parents. It is managed by caring and hard working staff, who set out a range of soft play and low-level gymnastic apparatus that enables pupils to move freely and safely around the gymnasium or soft playroom. The aim is to provide a different environment to that of the school, where pupils can play with adults and amongst each other in a relaxed and largely unstructured setting. The club is moving towards a more structured organisation, which can maintain the routines that are of fundamental importance to pupils on the autism spectrum. Children delay their return home by using the club, and transport is laid on to take them home after the club has finished. The club supports the personal and social development of pupils, at the same time as it affords some relief to parents, in particular working parents. Both children and their parents value this good, alternative experience.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	24	18	13	1	0	0
Percentage	12.5	37.5	28.1	20.3	1.6	0.0	0.0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	46
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	12
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	10
Any other minority ethnic group	2

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.2
Average class size	6.6

Education support staff: YN – Y6

Total number of education support staff	25
Total aggregate hours worked per week	896

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	859,043
Total expenditure	883,171
Expenditure per pupil	19,200
Balance brought forward from previous year	70,111
Balance carried forward to next year	45,983

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	46
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	83	8	0	0	8
My child is making good progress in school.	67	25	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	33	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	8	8	0	50
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	83	8	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	8	0	0	8
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	25	0	0	17
The school works closely with parents.	75	8	8	0	8
The school is well led and managed.	67	25	8	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	17	0	0	17
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	75	17	0	0	8

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall, the quality of provision for children in the foundation stage of learning, who are under the age of five, is **satisfactory**. Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They make very good progress in the use of early communication aids, and also in music.

Strengths

- Provision for early communication and use of ICT to improve language skills.
- Provision for music, which leads to very high standards.

Areas for improvement

- Co-ordination and the effectiveness of teachers' planning overall, to meet individual needs in lessons.
- Teachers' expectations of what children can achieve within the available time.
- The pace of learning in many lessons.

72. Provision for language and literacy is satisfactory overall, with strengths in provision for early communication. For example, the effective use of the picture exchange communication system (PECS), and technological aids to support early interactions, ensure that children make good gains in this aspect of language. In all lessons, children were able to use PECS to make a choice of biscuit or drink, and gained some limited autonomy and decision making. In another session, where individual computer work was a feature, good progress was made in understanding the use of a switch. However, in yet another lesson in which children shared a multi-sensory story, some activities were not sufficiently linked to the abilities of the children. Hence, some found it too difficult and became very passive, observing but not taking part; others found it too easy and demonstrated challenging behaviour because they did not have enough to do. Because needs were not fully met, and too few activities were in place, standards dropped. The highest attaining children in the foundation stage can recognise familiar objects linked to a story, such as 'straw', 'sticks' and 'bricks' in the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. They know that words and symbols have meaning, and they concentrate and enjoy stories.
73. Provision for mathematical development is satisfactory and children make appropriate gains in the understanding and skills of numeracy. Children have individual targets for mathematics, and these are regularly monitored to ensure progress. Children work towards the development of cognitive skills. They learn to identify simple, everyday objects and begin to count by rote with adults, one, two and three. Several use simple switches well to initiate a response to a question. One child was observed counting three objects with a learning assistant. He was able to touch each object in turn and count appropriately. However, the amount of activities planned for, and taught, in lessons is small and does not enable sufficient time for children to improve their skills and understanding. Time is not always used well for mathematical development, and some of the allocated time is used for other curriculum areas, such as communication or personal needs.
74. Provision for the creative development of children is satisfactory overall, but there is a particular strength in provision for music. Where this is taught by the specialist teacher, children make very good gains in learning. For example, in one lesson, children were observed joining in with singing and playing simple instruments to a guitar with great

enthusiasm and high levels of enjoyment. Other aspects of creative development are less successful. Children explore paint and different media with their hands and make simple pictures but there is a lack of opportunity to make choices about different resources, and expectations are often not high enough. This reduces the quality of learning.

75. Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding is satisfactory and it is good and individually very good in ICT. Children make very good progress in the use of switches and switch toys. They quickly learn what to do to make something happen. Their use of technological communication aids is very good and has a positive impact on learning. Children have daily opportunities to talk about the weather, the days of the week and aspects of their own day. However, the focus on wider understanding of the world around them is limited, and there are too few examples of children exploring different structures and developing their understanding of their local environment. When this does happen, as in a visit to the local 'Wimpy', the quality of interaction and learning improves and children made very good improvements in knowledge. At times, children were observed playing with a toy for 30 minutes, with little interaction. This is unsatisfactory and limits progress in this area of learning.
76. Provision for physical development is satisfactory and is very good in swimming. Children make appropriate gains in skills. In movement lessons, they enjoy listening and moving to music, and benefit from very high staffing levels which helps them to take part. A good contribution is made to communication skills as children work in a circle and take turns. However, tasks are not always relevant or linked to the Early Learning Goals. Although there are ample opportunities for outdoor play, children do not have freedom of access or the opportunity to make a choice. Too often, they run aimlessly around the playground, which is a large space shared by older pupils. This inhibits small steps to success in learning to ride and use large play equipment.
77. Provision for personal and social education is also satisfactory. Children benefit from individual targets as part of their education plans. These focus clearly on the next step for development in their feeding, toileting or behaviour programmes, and ensure that children make appropriate gains over time. However, in lessons such as at the beginning and end of the day, when teachers cater for this area of learning particularly, expectations are low. There is sometimes a high level of adult talk; for example, home/school diaries were observed being read aloud to no-one in particular. No real emphasis was placed on the home link that the child had experienced, or any opportunity created to improve understanding by questioning or repeating what was written. The pace of learning at these times is slow and lacks the rigorous approach that helps children learn.
78. Children in the foundation stage have good attitudes in almost all lessons. They behave well and enjoy their activities. They play together well and are developing good relationships with other pupils, including those from different cultural backgrounds. Sometimes they do not have enough to do and behaviour is less successful. At other times, such as when they go out of school to the Wimpy Bar, they become very animated and show high levels of interest. They behave best when they are interested and have lots to do!
79. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage of learning is satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in music teaching and in ICT to support communication skills. Teachers know children well and individual targets are well monitored. The management of children's behaviour is good, and this leads to positive attitudes and a willingness to come to school. Good provision is made for children with additional

special needs and their medical needs are well catered for. Provision for children with English as an additional language is also good. They benefit from good, individual teaching sessions and some very good resources, which lead to good progress over time. Teachers plan effectively to meet the differing needs of pupils and use appropriate systems to ensure that all pupils understand what is being said. They are aware of cultural differences and encourage pupils from all groups to interact and develop positive social relationships with each other. Teachers' planning is appropriately linked to the Early Learning Goals. However, planning to meet individual needs within lessons was not always available. This means that activities are sometimes inappropriate for specific children and this reduces their progress. All children then undertake the same task and some become merely passive observers, unable to take an active part in the lesson. Also, there are times when teachers do not plan enough for the lesson. They do not expect them to do enough work, and there were occasions during the inspection when children were observed with the same toy for almost half an hour. Lessons sometimes start late and finish early, thus reducing learning time.

80. The overall curriculum for children in the foundation stage is satisfactory. All areas of learning are covered, but lack of co-ordination and monitoring is a real weakness and inhibits a clear overview of what children are receiving, and of their progress. The scheme of work and policy are not developed sufficiently to guide practice. Procedures for assessment within the published scheme, and individual education plans, are good. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but lack of access to open and covered play facilities reduces choice in learning. Resources are good and have a positive impact in most areas of learning, particularly ICT and music.

ENGLISH

The overall quality of the English provision in the school is **good** and there has been good improvement in the provision since the previous inspection.

Strengths

- Very good teaching at Key Stage 1 and good teaching at Key Stage 2.
- Very strong leadership and co-ordination.
- Differentiated multi-sensory activities that meet the wide range of special educational needs of pupils.
- Consistent emphasis on developing communication skills across all school activities and by all staff.
- Very good resources and ICT equipment.
- A comprehensive programme of visits and trips.

Areas for improvement

There are no significant areas for improvement, but there are areas which are being developed to improve further the quality of the provision.

- Develop team teaching within the subject.
- Strengthen the links with the pupils' individual education plans.

81. The quality of teaching overall is good. At Key Stage 1, it is very good as the teacher prepares the lessons very well and is meticulous in recording the work that the pupils have done and the progress that they have made. The lessons are delivered in a lively and stimulating manner with good pace. There is a wide range of excellent resources made available to the pupils, and pupils make choices and decisions about their own work, the lesson and the parts that they are going to play in it. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good. Lesson planning is good and teachers make good use of the information

available from pupils' literacy planning files. Learning outcomes are clearly identified and pupils' progress is measured against these and recorded. Teachers provide a wide variety of sensory activities carefully matched to the individual needs of each pupil. Good use is made of the repetition of key words and concepts. All pupils are included in every activity; they are challenged and achievements are consistently celebrated. Progress is reviewed at the end of each lesson and there is discussion with each pupil as their work and progress is recorded.

82. Support staff are well deployed and offer appropriate support to pupils. This is especially true of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Here, pupils who are learning the very early skills of language receive encouragement and support as they use the PECS system very effectively. This, of course, crosses all language boundaries as the 'picture exchange' is a universal way of communicating. The introduction of language, in this case English, is the natural progression. This makes sure that all pupils, regardless of their linguistic skills, culture or experience, make good progress. The careful planning ensures that all staff work as a team. The speech and language therapist makes a significant contribution to the English teaching. She provides direct support in the classroom, modelling strategies and approaches as well as acting in a consultancy role. The good quality planning and very good liaison with the multi-disciplinary team working in the school, ensure that all therapy and specialist sessions enhance the teaching of English, particularly the development of communication and reading. Classrooms are organised to make best use of the space available. A stimulating array of resources supports the pupils' learning. ICT equipment such as switches, roller ball mouse, touch screens, specialised software and concept keyboards ensure access to all. Symbols, pictures, objects of reference and signing also promote communication.
83. Pupils make good progress against literacy targets set in individual education plans. Their attainment varies widely across the school and reflects their special educational needs rather than their chronological age. In Key Stage 1, they take delight in the sensory experience of the water spray, slime pot, rustling leaves and other activities drawn from the big book 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. All can operate the communicator switch. Some stamp their feet to imitate going upstairs and others can do this with support. Two pupils indicate through choices presented to them that they understand the differences between each substance. In the dark room, one pupil was stimulated to roll over and face the fibre optic mat; an exercise not previously achieved. Some pupils recognise objects of reference for routine items and activities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress throughout the school.
84. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to respond well to bubbles blown and touched. They recognise and match correctly simple words to the symbols. The review notes show that some pupils can read key words from stories, like 'fly', 'dog', 'an old woman' and 'swallowed'. Others identify and copy a picture of a bicycle in a story and make up their own symbols' books of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. One group of pupils discusses the story 'Going on a Plane', and talk and sign about their experiences of travelling. Pupils with profound sensory needs can, with support, focus on picture cards and point and use switches to contribute to this work. Most pupils recognise the symbol for passport and glue it to their personal passport. Some pupils repeat appropriate words in familiar parts of stories. They recognise words such as 'straw', 'sticks' and 'bricks' in 'The Three Little Pigs'. Pupils delight in the sensory experiences and make very good use of communicators. They understand the

differences between substances and respond positively. Some make up phrases and indicate choices using symbols. They indicate that they need help and understand the 'wait' symbol. In one lesson, a group showed understanding of the differences between hot- and cold-appropriate clothes to wear in hot or cold weather. Some can read the words for the clothing and match them to symbols and pictures. A few pupils write phrases and a number have pre-writing skills. All of the pupils use some form of communication technique or mixture of strategies, including facial expressions, pointing, signing, using symbols and pictures as well as speaking, reading and writing.

85. Pupils clearly enjoy their work and engage enthusiastically with the tasks set. There are very good, caring relationships between staff and pupils. Staff work co-operatively and their excellent team work in English lessons provides positive models of behaviour for pupils. The pupils are encouraged to take turns and wait patiently. They are kept on task and staff will respond to them only when they use appropriate signs or words. Where pupils have been out of lessons for specialist teaching, therapy, mainstream school integration or the management of challenging behaviour, on their return, they are back to work quickly with the activities and are expected to achieve well.
86. The school has an appropriate policy and very good schemes of work for English. They have fully adopted the National Literacy Strategy, adapting it as a framework to meet the wide range of special educational needs of the pupils with an emphasis on developing communication skills. The English curriculum is delivered through a multi-sensory approach. A range of packages such as 'Equals' and the PECS have been included in a wide range of strategies adapted to the needs of the pupils. Signing, pictures, symbols and objects of reference add to these. The planning ensures the fullest use possible of routine activities and all opportunities throughout the pupils' experience in school to build on the work of the English lessons to develop communication, speech, listening, reading and writing skills. The literacy hour structure is utilised in Key Stages 1 and 2 lessons. The English curriculum is greatly enhanced by a wide range of visits and trips. For example, pupils' visit to the local fast food bar provides opportunities to communicate their choices of food to staff and interact with customers. There are integration opportunities in mainstream schools and nurseries and involvement in projects with local people like the 'Black History' week.
87. The English curriculum makes a very good contribution to the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. All pupils are fully involved in the daily greetings and farewell sessions which focus primarily on the development of communication skills. The grouping in lessons promotes the development of good social skills. The wealth of books and stimulating resources, trips and visits, like shopping expeditions and a day at Kew Gardens, give pupils access to many and varied experiences.
88. The assessment of pupils' progress in English is managed through their individual education plans, six-monthly reviews and annual review process. Specific, clear and measurable targets are set for each pupil, and staff meticulously record pupils' progress against these targets during every lesson. The information from this assessment determines the curriculum content and subsequent activities are planned. There is a clear relationship between the activities delivered in class and the planned individual education plan targets. Together, the activities and individual education plan targets ensure that pupils' work is appropriate to their needs and that they make good progress and learn well. Parents are kept fully informed and involved in their children's progress in English through the daily home/school books, parents' meetings and reviews. Parents are also supported to enhance their children's learning in English through the Parents' Language Project. This provides access to a very good resource of reading materials with guidance notes to support parents.

89. English and the development of the National Literacy Strategy are a high priority in the school. It has been co-ordinated for the past 14 months by the acting deputy headteacher who has been supported by the local authority literacy adviser. She has introduced the literacy strategy, the use of the literacy hour in Key Stages 1 and 2 and the Equals and PECS approaches. She has lead a review of the policy to establish the National Literacy Strategy as the framework for English teaching across the school and to develop a differentiated, multi-sensory approach. She has been ably supported by the speech and language therapist. The delivery of the curriculum and quality of teaching are monitored by the co-ordinator through the review of class and teacher planning, pupils' individual education plans and observation of lessons. She also leads in some lessons to model good practice and supports teachers in team-teaching sessions. Staff have had access to in-house training, specialist book-making training and support from the literacy consultant. There is a very good range of quality, multi-sensory literacy resources available for staff, the multi-disciplinary team and parents to use. These include big books, readers, pictures, artefacts, book sacks, symbols, computer software and word cards. The very good school library enhances these resources offering a colourful, quiet and comfortable space where pupils can be supported to enjoy and use books.
90. The co-ordinator plans to review the policy, develop a team teaching approach and identify and disseminate good practice across the school. There are also plans to build a portfolio of literacy strategies, strengthen the links with the individual education plan process and investigate new approaches to assessment.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- The quality of teaching throughout the school.
- The standards of achievement and the progress of pupils.
- The leadership and management of the subject.
- The effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy.

Areas for improvement

- Accommodation in some classrooms.
- The awareness of pupils to the cultural background of mathematics.

91. The subject has made a very good improvement since the last inspection, largely brought about by the very good leadership that has ensured the successful establishment of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school. Mathematics is well supported in the planning for other curriculum subjects, notably science, design and technology, food studies and ICT. The quality of teaching is consistently very good, and on occasion it is excellent. Lessons are fully inclusive and the great majority of pupils make very good progress. The multi-sensory approach enables all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, to benefit from the very good teaching.
92. Pupils make very good progress as they work through Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 2, those with more profound and complex learning difficulties have experienced computer programs that have significantly improved their eye-pointing and tracking skills. The very good teaching and use of computer resources have enabled them to develop control using a single switch or adaptive switch to make choices between

images and numbers on the screen. Using sensory light sources, they are able to

develop intentional movement, reaching and grasping as they explore the moving light source. They develop early measuring skills in exploring different textures and objects that enable them to experience size and weight. The most capable pupils are confident in using a switch and click button to choose between different positional options on the screen. Using the PECS, they are able to choose between hard and soft, wet and dry, or between water and road transport. They join in finger games and songs that reinforce their understanding of number. The most capable pupils match correctly a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, by colour and by size. They sort them into sets, with guidance and support, understanding the concepts of 'full' and 'empty'. A few can count accurately to 20 and identify the days of the week in order on the timetable symbol lines. By the end of Year 3, pupils understand the passage of time and know the sequence of timetable activities. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils are able to recognise and order numbers to 20. They have a clear concept of pattern and complete jigsaw puzzles well. They are able to build, sort and match with common three-dimensional shapes, correctly counting the number of sides and corners. They learn to add numbers to 20 and can subtract from 10. Pupils with more profound and complex special needs make very good progress in handling data. Those with significant visual impairment can distinguish between one and many balls from the sound made as they move down a track. In the sensory room, one pupil eye-pointed clearly to the sound of the fan being set up. He anticipated the experience of moving air by becoming more alert as the wind tunnel was switched on. One pupil who has English as an additional language was able to communicate verbally when matching numbers and sorting shapes.

93. The classrooms are small and in some cases, this has a limiting effect upon the work that can be done. It is not possible to do much in the way of practical and investigative mathematics as this naturally involves the movement of pupils around the classrooms and they are just too small.
94. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and respond positively to the familiar structure of the numeracy lessons, working hard to communicate in appropriate ways. They applaud each other's efforts when work is evaluated at the end of the lesson. They respond well to visitors and enjoy communicating their understanding of number to them. On occasion, the playfully defiant response of one or two pupils takes up teaching time and slows down the pace of progress in the lesson. The very good deployment of teaching and support staff helps to minimise such distractions and includes those pupils in the lessons.
95. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages. Teachers and support staff have a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and employ it well in numeracy lessons. Number songs are used effectively, enhanced by objects of reference, to consolidate pupils' understanding of number correspondence. These also serve well to help pupils with English as an additional language to increase their number vocabulary and skills. Different approaches are used for pupils of differing learning needs and appropriate responses are drawn from the pupils, using signs and symbols or 'hand-on-hand' support. Lessons are interactive and fully inclusive, with teachers and support staff showing great patience with pupils and a strong commitment to their work. They work well together in all lessons, showing sensitivity and care as they manage the complex demands of teaching and learning. They are firm with challenging behaviour, although pressure on space makes the management of those on the autistic spectrum difficult and time consuming. Teachers plan well for the use of computers and lessons are paced well to ensure that no time is wasted. The very good teaching and understanding of the needs of the pupils enable them to make very good progress as they move through the school. Pupils are confident in answering questions and responding to the teacher's directions; they enjoy learning.

96. The subject benefits from strong and clear leadership. Medium- and short-term planning is detailed and comprehensive. Guidance on the curriculum is very clear and there are very good systems of assessment and recording that track effectively the progress pupils make. Staff have had whole-school training on the National Numeracy Strategy and are confident in teaching mathematics. Teaching and planning are monitored and the subject has made a very good improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

The quality of science throughout the school is **very good**.

Strengths

- The broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.
- The very high quality of teaching for pupils aged five to eleven years.
- The very good lesson planning.
- The very good resources.

Areas for improvement

- The policy is in need of review.
- There is need for a system to monitor the provision by the subject leader.

97. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when the teaching was satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in science and make very good progress. For the majority of pupils, the progress that they make can only be measured in very small steps. The very good standard of teaching enables pupils to make such very good progress. Teachers have a very good understanding of each individual pupil. Teachers know them and communicate clearly and effectively using many different approaches. This will always include spoken words, but often there will be a picture exchange to help understanding, and signing often supports this. In this manner, the special needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language are met appropriately.
98. Lessons are very well planned and materials and equipment are prepared in advance to ensure that the lesson runs smoothly. The very good resources are carefully managed and are moved from classroom to classroom, as they are required. All teachers are sure to have a very good selection of materials and equipment for their lessons. The resources are sorted to meet the individually planned lessons so there is no time wasted in looking for, or preparing materials during the lessons. For example, a lesson concerning the science of food, taste, smell, texture and healthy eating has a resource pack that includes all the food ingredients that may be needed. This includes different types of bread, different salad vegetables, butter and margarine etc. The timetable is so designed that no two classes need the equipment at the same time. The support staff play a vital role in all science lessons and make sure that all pupils are able to take a full part in the lesson. In one lesson, pupils were preparing a healthy sandwich and were able to use wholemeal bread, lettuce, soft margarine, tomatoes, cress, onions and salami. The pupils who have the most severe difficulties were able to feel the texture of the different ingredients and smell them as the support staff held them close to the pupils' faces. With very careful questioning, it was possible for every pupil to choose the ingredients that he or she wanted to use to fill the sandwich. Though they were not able to assemble the sandwich, they were able to taste the finished result and express their views, often by facial expression or by signing. It was very clear which ingredients they liked and many of them chose lettuce.

99. In a similar lesson with an older group of more capable pupils, they were able to make their own sandwiches, though one pupil was rather impatient and began to eat his sandwich before it was finished. The whole class was successful in producing individually designed sandwiches. They investigated the ingredients, considered the colour and texture as well as the smell and taste.
100. The very good planning of the lessons resulted in very good levels of participation by the pupils. They were very highly motivated and clearly enjoyed their lessons. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that there is a wide breadth of study and although many classes follow a similar lesson plan, they are all taught differently and the depth of study varies according to the learning difficulties of the group.
101. The subject is well managed, though the subject leader has been in post only since September. The policy is in need of review, which is planned for the near future. Documents are very well presented and are comprehensively written. They show how the small steps of progress made by pupils can be recognised and monitored. The youngest pupils are introduced to a wide range of materials, which they investigate. Pupils also enjoy investigating how different objects and substances feel. This includes water and jelly, warm and cold liquids. They also learn of the five different senses through exploration. Many pupils have science-based targets on their individual education plans and through these, there is an added dimension for recording progress.
102. All teachers teach science to their own classes, which makes it very difficult for the leader to monitor the teaching herself. She is aware of the shortcoming and has plans to enable her to get in and teach alongside other teachers as an initial monitoring and evaluation process. The subject is planned especially to be as sensory and practical as possible to help pupils enjoy learning about the wonders of science.

ART AND DESIGN

The provision for art and design is **good**.

Strengths

- Leadership and management of the subject.
- The contribution of the subject to pupils' cultural awareness and understanding.
- The multi-sensory 'inclusive' curriculum.

Areas for improvement

- The use of computer art software.
- The range of resources used.

103. In lessons and work seen, pupils make good progress throughout the school. Their achievements in lessons are often very good because of the very good teaching they receive. In the first two years, higher attaining pupils draw and colour freely, learning to work with some purpose as they choose appropriate colours and begin to control the tools they use. They experience a wide range of media, two- and three-dimensional, sponge printing leaves, splatter painting and making junk models. Their figure drawings show emergent features of face, body and limbs. Teachers introduce appropriate scents into the paints and this helps all pupils to identify the primary colours they use. Pupils with more profound learning difficulties explore paints and different materials and are able to make their preferences known through eye-pointing, gesture and vocalisation. Pupils with English as an additional language are stimulated to communicate through the multi-ethnic, multi-sensory experience of art. They

communicate their pleasure at seeing the bright colours of ethnic fabrics and feeling the tasselled borders. They smear paint onto paper with purpose, using their chosen colours. By the end of Year 6, pupils have had a broad experience of art, including visits to galleries such as the Tate Modern. From these, they look at the work of Kandinsky and, with guidance, they produce effective linear geometric compositions that reflect the style of his work well. They make clear choices of coloured sticking paper or tissue; a few pupils identifying and naming them correctly. With support, they cut simple shapes and apply them to their work. Pupils with more profound learning difficulties respond positively to the well-presented work of Kandinsky and choose appropriate colours to apply to their paintings. After looking at the work of Jackson Pollock, these pupils were able to create large-scale pictures. They used strainers and colanders attached to their wheelchairs to dribble paint onto the floor, painting and creating some very interesting patterns in the imaginative style of Pollock. With the support of a charitable art group working within the local authority, pupils have helped to build a mosaic-tiled water feature for the school's sensory garden. They have also completed group plaster casts that are now well displayed as part of the school's sensory trail.

104. The pupils always enjoy art and design lessons, which often blend with design and technology. They behave sensibly and rarely interfere with others' work. They learn to take turns in using the art resources. They take advantage of the many opportunities to develop their communication skills and share their work with others at the end of the lesson. On occasion, the disruption of pupils with challenging behaviour unsettles the class and slows progress down.
105. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good. Teachers work hard to broaden the curriculum, with visits and the support of a group of artists, known as 'Art in the Park'. The co-ordinator has established regular lunchtime art clubs with the group and their influence as visiting artists has been significant with both teachers and pupils. Visiting artists were invited in to help pupils make some flower forms for London's 'Oxo Tower' millennium sculpture. Lessons are well planned and prepared, to ensure a brisk start. Support assistants work well with teachers, enabling individual pupils to maximise their responses to the multi-sensory lessons and to learn to work more independently through encouragement. Relationships are a strong feature of all lessons. Excellent use is made of secondary sources such as textile hangings and prints from the work of famous artists. Lessons are fully interactive and offer very good opportunities to develop social skills as pupils work on group or whole-class paintings. However, insufficient use is made of ICT within the subject.
106. The co-ordinator leads the subject with enthusiasm and a sound knowledge of what works in teaching pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. She monitors the planning of art and design throughout the school and is an effective organiser. She has planned to take pupils to a special sculpture exhibition at the Tate Modern, where they can touch, walk through and fully experience the work of professional sculptors. The artwork of pupils makes an excellent contribution to the presentation of the school through displays in classrooms and public areas. Storage problems make it difficult to store work safely.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The provision for design and technology is **satisfactory** throughout the school.

Strengths

- The curriculum is sound and well managed.

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient opportunity to study control technology through mechanisms and remote control devices.

107. Because of curriculum timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to see any discrete lessons of design and technology. From planning, work seen and from discussion with staff, it is evident that the progress pupils make is at least satisfactory. The subject is closely tied with art and design in planning and organisation and it is not easy to chart the subject or to evaluate the overall progress that pupils make in the subject. Pupils use tools such as rollers, brushes and glue spreaders that are common to both subjects. There are strong curricular links to other subjects, including mathematics, science and religious education, where pupils experience and test different materials, including food, assemble structures and work with moving toys and simple electrical components. Separate lessons of food studies are held in the food technology area. Unfortunately, this is a multi-purpose room that is heavily used through the week because of the lack of general teaching and therapy space in the school.
108. Teachers' records and planning show that by Year 2, pupils with more profound learning difficulties have built brick towers, with support, and re-built them in different ways. They track moving toys well and explore materials such as feathers, wood, clay and jelly. They experience the smell, taste and feel of party food. Higher attaining pupils build kit constructions, knock them down and rebuild them in different shapes, for instance pyramid and semi-circle. In card construction, they add textiles for hair and cut separate shapes for teeth to show the beginnings of the human figure. They learn to use tools, such as scissors and knives, with guidance and support. They use simple finishing techniques, such as paint, for some of their constructions. By Year 6, pupils learn to explore a wide range of different foods and help in preparing salads and sandwiches, often with ethnic foods such as latke potatoes. They show an interest in restaurant menus. Pupils, for whom English is an additional language, receive extra support when it is necessary and their progress is in line with the rest of the pupils. Pupils with more profound learning difficulties find it difficult to handle materials such as sticky tape, and tend to remove it as soon as it is applied. With support, they are able to make simple models from balsa wood pieces. Pupils use their hands well to explore a range of different materials.
109. The curriculum is sound and the subject is well managed. There is a need to ensure that all pupils are given discrete lessons of design and technology. These should offer pupils opportunities to manipulate a wider range of tools and to plan, make and evaluate their work in a more systematic way. The use of computers is developing. There is a limited scope to explore control technology through mechanisms and remote control devices, and this should be developed further.

GEOGRAPHY

The overall provision for geography in the school is **good**.

Strengths

- The curriculum is well planned.
- The subject is well managed.
- The school makes very good use of the sensory trail to help pupils learn about their location within the school or the playground.

Areas for improvement

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

110. Because of timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to see any lessons of geography and it is not possible to report on teaching or the pupils' response to lessons. Geography is taught in weekly rotation with history and is co-ordinated as the humanities.

111. In the first two years, pupils are taught to locate themselves in the classroom and school, using objects of reference to find their way around. By the end of Year 6, those with more profound learning difficulties use the very good sensory trail to determine their location in the school or playground. They have visited the Cutty Sark sailing ship and travelled by tube train as a part of their transportation project. In weather topics, they have experienced rain, sun and fog. Higher attaining pupils are able to identify some weather symbols. They sign the basic weather vocabulary and begin to understand the relationship between weather and the seasons. Pupils go on field trips in the local area, exploring shops and famous buildings. They learn to travel safely on the road, with guidance and support, and recognise some of the familiar signs, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights. They visit Greenwich Park, London Zoo and the Discovery Planet. Through these experiences, they extend their knowledge and awareness of the locality and what activities can be found in different locations. By the end of Year 6, pupils have travelled by road and rail and have experienced travelling to places outside of their locality. They showed an interest in arranging a model town-planning exhibition on one visit. Higher attaining pupils are able to match different types of weather to symbols and can identify weather systems from photographs or from their experience. A visually impaired pupil is able to move around the school, using lift or stairs, with some guidance. He explores the playground slide independently and safely, using a foot to trace the perimeter of the slide platform. Pupils can identify several farm animals by sight and sound, reinforcing their experience of touching and holding some of them. By the end of Year 6, all pupils have taken part in a residential trip to the Cotswolds where they live in a farm setting for a week.

112. The curriculum is good and well planned for the special needs of the pupils and there are very good resources to support it. It is an inclusive curriculum that takes account of the range of special educational needs of the pupils, including those who have English as an additional language. Pupils' progress is well monitored using the school assessment procedures and the subject benefits from good management within the humanities area. Very good use is made of the school setting and of visits to places of interest.

HISTORY

The overall quality of the history provision in the school is **good** and there has been very good improvement in the provision since the previous inspection.

Strengths

- Very good teaching.
- Strong leadership and co-ordination.
- Differentiated multi-sensory activities that meet the wide range of special educational needs of the pupils.
- Very good resources and ICT equipment.
- Visits, trips and events.

Areas for improvement

- There is a need to build on these strengths to further develop history within the humanities curriculum and particularly in the early years.

113. Pupils make very good progress in history and good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. Their attainment varies widely across the school and reflects their special educational needs rather than their chronological age. In Key Stage 1 lessons, pupils understand the difference between the three boxes with items for babies, children and adults. They can recognise themselves as babies and some can identify baby pictures of their peers. They can recognise that the contents of the baby box belong to babies and use signs, symbols and expressions to indicate their choice of answer. At Key Stage 2, they can successfully sort items into old and new. They can eye-point and dictate to identify the correct item. They learn well, making small steps to progress. When the suitcase of old items is opened, all pupils show anticipation. They are able to listen and watch carefully and become absorbed in exploration of the artefacts.
114. In history lessons, staff have good relationships with pupils who are treated with respect and care. All pupils are supported to take a full part in all activities. Every opportunity is taken to promote independence. Pupils can take turns, wait patiently and handle artefacts appropriately. They clearly enjoy the activities and join in enthusiastically. Behaviour is good and pupils stay on task.
115. There is a policy and schemes of work for humanities. History is taught, together with geography, as a humanities course. The National Curriculum early key stage sections and Early Learning Goals have been modified to provide concrete learning experiences through a multi-sensory approach. There is a three-year topic cycle. The curriculum is delivered through strands included in activities that form part of the daily routine. Language is developed on a day-to-day basis. History is developed through weekly sessions or the history based humanities week and at least one history trip each year. Challenging concepts, like the impact of change, are delivered through topics accessible to pupils, such as 'Myself and my Family'. Recent activities during humanities week have included a collaboration with the local authority and community to focus on 'Black History'. This included a virtual trip to Jamaica and was strongly supported by the pupils' families.
116. The personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very well supported by the history curriculum. Discussions about self and family encourage social interaction and tolerance. Pupils work together to identify and handle artefacts. In addition to the 'Black History' week, pupils have visited the Livesley Museum.
117. Pupils' progress in history is assessed through the individual education plans, six monthly reviews and annual review process. Learning targets are set and recorded for each pupil with progress measured against these targets. The information from the assessments informs the curriculum content and subsequent activities planned.

118. The quality of history teaching overall is very good. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good. Lessons are very well planned and structured. Pictures, symbols, word cards and artefacts support multi-sensory activities. Pupils are given the opportunity to indicate their understanding through making choices. Staff work well as a team, and support staff provide very good support to pupils. The activities are presented in a lively and stimulating manner and at a good pace. Excellent use is made of high quality multi-sensory resources and tasks well differentiated to meet individual need. ICT equipment ensures that all pupils can take part in lessons. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good and staff make good use of repetition to emphasise concepts such as old and new.
119. History is co-ordinated by the humanities co-ordinator who has been in post for six months. She has led a major review to support staff to share philosophy and plan activities that are appropriate to meet the complex needs of the pupils. She supports staff with team teaching and monitors through teachers' planners, planning meetings and informal feedback. The co-ordinator has had access to specialist training to organise structured museum visits and subsequently planned the school's visit to the Livesey Museum. She uses the National Severe Learning Difficulty website forum to identify good practice and attends team meetings to disseminate to staff. The co-ordinator has established a very good range of resources including banks of boxes with artefacts. Very good use is also made of ICT equipment to support pupils to recognise change and identify cause and effect.
120. The school has identified the need to build on current development to further develop and embed history within the humanities curriculum, and to focus particularly on developments for early years classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Strengths

- Resources for learning are very good.
- Leadership and organisation of the subject are very good and lead to very good access and progress for all groups of pupils.

Areas for improvement

- Sometimes ICT is not used well enough in lessons to promote interaction and improve literacy.

121. Pupils achieve very high standards in relation to their severe learning difficulties. This is due to very good leadership and very high quality resources, particularly to promote communication skills.
122. Standards in Key Stage 1 are very good. ICT is used well to support skills in mathematics, literacy and communication. Pupils benefit from the very good supporting resources and staff expertise which help to extend their knowledge and understanding of the individual subject as well as of ICT. For example, in mathematics, a pupil with profound learning difficulties was enabled to make a choice by using a switch pad. The support that he received from the learning support assistant ensured that he could take part fully in the lesson, focus clearly on the screen and select the appropriate screen image. The pupil was able to reach out and touch the switch to choose the correct

object. Similarly, in another lesson, the support provided for a pupil for whom English is an additional language, enabled her to make very good gains in her understanding of language. This ensured full inclusion for this particular pupil. The high quality software resources also played a significant part in her acquisition of language and computer skills. By the age of seven, the highest attaining pupils can use simple switches to cause something to happen, understand that many everyday items can be switched 'on' or 'off', and know that they can change what happens on the screen by giving an instruction, such as pressing a particular key. Lower attaining pupils by the age of seven improve their skills through very good support and guidance. They show understanding of the changes involved by pressing a switch or gesturing in the sensory room, and explore different switches, showing a response at the outcomes.

123. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to achieve very well in ICT. They are beginning to be aware of the benefits of using computers and enjoy the effects that can be achieved. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 3, pupils enjoyed using a simple program to identify different shapes. Because of the very good resources, pupils with additional special needs were also able to make very clear progress in mathematics. They were able to eye-point or touch a switch to influence what happened and make a choice. The provision ensured that different groups of pupils were able to access the lesson and make effective progress. In Year 4, pupils were observed using a 'touch-talker' to influence a religious education lesson by asking and answering questions.
124. Older pupils benefit from the very good resources to listen to stories and to present their work in mathematics and also in science. For example, the higher attaining pupils use computers to undertake simple addition and subtraction to ten, and present simple block graphs of work undertaken in science. They show how they make clear choices using computers, and they are beginning to explore information, particularly in humanities. Lower attaining pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make very good progress in using their appropriate switches to gain access to information and to give or receive a response. Pupils in all areas of the school enjoy using switches and computers. They work sensibly with the equipment and respond well to the adults who work with them. Many persevere well so that they achieve the expected response.
125. The quality of teaching in ICT is very good, particularly when taught by the co-ordinator. Her specialist knowledge and high quality individual support for pupils ensure that they make good progress in lessons. For example, in one session, a pupil with English as an additional language learned to press a switch to cause an effect because of the teacher's skill in the use of early communication switches and software. This had a very good impact as the pupil acquired understanding of language. In another lesson, pupils were encouraged to persevere as a learning assistant modelled good practice in using a roller ball to make a choice. Her persistence led to very good progress in the use of a switch to enable interaction. In another lesson, similarly high quality teaching led to success in the identification of shapes on the computer screen. Teachers benefit from the very good support that they receive from the co-ordinator and the recent good training initiative which has helped to improve their own skills and knowledge. They make very good use of the wide range of communication aids and early learning programs that are available to improve pupils' understanding of language. At times, there is not enough use of ICT to support teaching in other subjects in lessons other than English. At these times, there are insufficient means for pupils to answer a question or express a choice.
126. The ICT curriculum is very relevant to the needs of the pupils, and seeks to improve communication for each and every pupil where possible. The high attention paid to equality of opportunity for all pupils is a major strength. The use of ICT to support

communication in subjects other than the core subjects of English and mathematics is less successful, and sometimes has a negative impact on standards. ICT is not used sufficiently to improve the learning experiences of the pupils during art and design lessons in particular. The quality of resources, particularly for communication and language, is also a strength. Their very good quality and their impact are helping to improve pupils' ability to interact and communicate their needs on a regular basis. Assessment procedures are good and help to inform teachers what pupils need to learn next. The subject is very well co-ordinated and managed, but the monitoring of its use in other subjects is not fully developed.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision for music teaching is **very good**, and pupils achieve very good standards.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching by the specialist teacher, which is very good.
- The exciting range of very relevant activities which promote very good responses and enjoyment.
- The good range of resources.
- High levels of support in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Procedures for assessment to record achievement and progress.

127. Progress in music is very good across the school. Pupils benefit from the very high quality of provision that is offered by the specialist teacher. Pupils in Key Stage 1 join in with enthusiasm and enjoyment as they explore the many different resources. They play simple percussion instruments to music, and clap in time to a rhythm. They know and understand how to play simple drums, shakers and bells. They listen carefully as the teacher plays the guitar or piano, and to taped music. They respond instantly to the musical activities provided and show immediate awareness of different sounds and rhythms. During music lessons, their attention and interest improve and they make very good gains in the development of playing skills in particular.

128. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also make very good progress. They develop their skills and knowledge through very good age-appropriate musical activities, which they really enjoy. They improve their personal skills and their language skills through music. For example, in one lesson, a class of boys with very challenging behaviour and autism were observed beating drums to 'marching' music. Many were able to keep the rhythm, respond to requests to play 'loudly' or 'softly', and finish when the music stopped. This represented significant personal achievements for these particular pupils. They enjoyed 'rap' style singing and joined in very well because they were eager to take part. The teacher makes very effective use of a dictaphone, as well as discussion with support assistants, to assess what each pupil has learned during the lesson. This is a very good strategy and helps future tasks to be adapted to meet their needs.

129. Simple composition is a feature of lessons for the oldest pupils in the school. They choose notes and help to put them together to make simple tunes. They achieve very high standards as they play and listen to their own tune.

130. Music is taught by a specialist teacher and all pupils benefit. Full inclusion is ensured and all pupils benefit from learning about the traditional music of people who are

different from themselves. The quality of the teaching is exceptional and leads to very high levels of achievement. For example, each class works on songs and activities that have been specifically designed to meet their needs and to be relevant to their age. This promotes dignity and respect and makes a considerable contribution to personal development. The evident very good subject knowledge and expertise in special needs lead to high quality teaching and learning, with many excellent features. Particular strengths are the pace of lessons and the breadth of activities. Lessons are full of exciting opportunities for pupils to sing, play and enjoy music. This leads to very highly motivated pupils who enjoy the lessons and are keen to 'have a go' at all activities. Pupils' attitudes are very positive towards music. Very good support from assistants enables lessons to run smoothly and ensures that any challenging behaviour is appropriately handled.

131. The music curriculum, as taught in lessons, is very good. All aspects that are relevant to each class are included, and this ensures that there is good breadth and balance. The provision of good ethnic resources helps pupils to understand how different communities make music and to develop positive attitudes towards different customs and sounds. Extra-curricular activities are less successful. However, pupils visit the Royal Festival Hall in London where they listen to live musical performances. The school also benefits from a visit each year from musicians who give live performances especially for pupils in schools. Ongoing assessment is good, and is undertaken regularly in lessons, but overall procedures to identify how pupils have progressed over time are a weakness in the provision. The lack of space for music is also a weakness. There is no music room and the good resources are stored in boxes, which have to be carried around the school. When music is taught in the hall, there are opportunities for pupils to move around, which works well for the autistic pupils. When the hall is unavailable, lessons are more restricted and the breadth of learning drops.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, pupils achieve **satisfactory** standards in physical education and they achieve **very good** standards in swimming.

Strengths

- Quality of provision for swimming and hydrotherapy in the local community is very good.
- Quality and number of support staff are very good.
- Quality of teaching, when taught by the co-ordinator, is good.

Areas for improvement

- Health and safety within apparatus work.
- The range of opportunities for pupils to build upon their previous knowledge, skills and understanding.

132. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in movement as they benefit from individual support and good quality resources. They look and listen and move to music and interact appropriately with adults. They are beginning to reach out to touch brightly coloured resources, and know when the lights change and the lesson is coming to an end. They are beginning to stretch their hands and a few can move to the beat of the music.

133. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in most aspects of physical education, and the progress that they make in swimming and hydrotherapy is always very good. On the apparatus, pupils sometimes make unsatisfactory progress because

the purpose of the lesson is unclear and there is too much waiting time as pupils take turns. Too little attention is paid to improving their skills, so learning is reduced. In other aspects of physical education, pupils achieve better standards. They change for lessons quickly and good warm-up activities help them to focus on their work. Occasionally, too many adults in the room reduce learning because too much is done for pupils. At other times, adults enable pupils to learn by encouraging and supporting them to try new movements. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 can run, jump, climb and roll independently. In movement activities, they move well to music and work well together as a group. They achieve better standards when taught by the co-ordinator because objectives are more clearly focused on improving their skills through the lesson. Pupils from different groups and backgrounds make similar progress to that of their peers.

134. Progress in swimming throughout the school is very good. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities benefit from the excellent external facilities and the very high levels of skill of the physiotherapists and swimming teachers. Very high levels of safety and attention to pupils' health needs ensure that the provision is very good. Because they enjoy it so much, pupils are highly motivated and their pool behaviour is exemplary. Many are beginning to have high levels of confidence in the water and relax appropriately. They are able to move their legs in the water and more able pupils are learning to float, kick and swim. Swimming and hydrotherapy help to increase the very limited movement of some pupils.
135. Pupils enjoy physical education, and particularly swimming. They look forward to lessons and behaviour is good, and often very good. They develop very good personal autonomy as they make simple decisions about their movements. Relationships in lessons are positive, and this has a good impact on the development of skills.
136. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is very good in swimming lessons. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection where the safety of pupils was at risk due to faulty equipment. Teachers generally plan appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils and usually make effective use of the high number of support staff. Planning does not always reflect the difference in the age of pupils, consequently, the assessment procedures are not as effective as they should be in helping pupils to make good progress and take part in challenging activities. For example in movement lessons, pupils of different year groups undertake the same activities. This inhibits their progression in skills and limits the range of experiences that they have. Teaching is best when taught by the co-ordinator. Also, when all issues concerned with the health, safety and well-being of pupils are assured, and when lessons are planned to meet the very special needs within each age group. At these times, learning is very good, pupils are well motivated and they achieve the aims of the lesson. When taught by the co-ordinator, lessons are good and pupils make good gains in skill. Occasionally, there are weaknesses in teaching, which revolve around planning and the appropriate use of equipment.
137. The physical education curriculum is satisfactory overall, with strengths in provision for swimming and hydrotherapy. There is a lack of planning of activities to make sure that they are progressively difficult in order to challenge pupils all of the time. Recent improvements in resources are a positive feature and leadership is developing well, but lack of monitoring has led to the imbalance of quality across the different aspects of the subject. The annual sports day is a popular feature of the provision, but there are too few links established with other similar schools to enable practice to be shared and improved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The teaching of religious education in the school is **good**.

Strengths

- The quality of the curriculum and its management.
- The very good range of artefacts available to the staff.
- The commitment of staff to teaching the subject.

Areas for improvement

- The recording and assessment of pupils' achievements and the progress that they make.

138. The subject is under relatively new management. The subject leader has been in post for one and a half years and has had a very positive impact upon the teaching of religious education in the school. There has been very good improvement since the time of the last inspection when it was judged unsatisfactory.
139. The teaching is now good and, for the older pupils in the school, the teaching is very good. Lessons are very well prepared and plans are monitored and guided by the subject leader. This results in good progress for all pupils of all ages as they concentrate very hard during lessons.
140. During one lesson observed, the pupils were learning of the Sikh religion and how their holy book is kept covered by a Romalla cloth. The eight-year-old pupils looked very closely at the pictures that they were shown and were very keen to decorate a piece of cloth in the style of a Romalla cloth. Very good teaching and very good support from other staff made sure that all pupils were successful in creating the cloth. The teacher managed some very challenging behaviour in an excellent manner and avoided interrupting any activity during the lesson. The difficult pupil was also successful in completing the task. Within the class, there was a wide range of ability; one pupil was able to spread the fabric paint without any help from an adult whilst others needed constant hand-over-hand support to enable them to make the cloth. One of the most capable pupils printed some gold dots on his cloth and was very careful about the positioning of them. Clearly, he was very pleased with the outcome.
141. Nine-year-old pupils studied the origins of the Romalla cloth in greater depth. They learned that the holy book is called the Guru Granth Sahib and that it was written in a special script by the fifth Guru, Guru Granth Arjan. These pupils who are older and have less severe learning difficulties used a good range of vocabulary and were encouraged to develop their speaking skills all the time.
142. The curriculum is very well planned and monitored and is in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The dedication and enthusiasm of the subject leader have resulted in a much higher profile for religious education within the school. It is also an area that makes a large contribution to pupils' cultural development as they study major world faiths and share the thoughts and ideas of the different religions represented within the school community.
143. There is a very good selection of religious artefacts and they are extremely well organised. All staff have access to them and the subject leader offers support to any teacher who needs or wants it. The subject has gained in strength since the time of the last inspection and should continue to do so. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are not yet fully established and consequently, it is very difficult for staff to demonstrate how well each individual pupil is achieving and the amount of progress that he or she has made.