

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSWESTON SCHOOL

Napier Miles Road
Kingsweston, Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 109386

Headteacher: Mr. D. Capel

Reporting inspector: Janet Bond
2642

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 November 2001

Inspection number: 191025
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: LEA maintained Community Special School

School category: Learning Difficulties and Autistic

Age range of pupils: 3 - 19

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Napier Miles Road
Kingsweston
Bristol

Postcode: BS11 0UT

Telephone number: 0117 9030400

Fax number: 0117 9030397

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. A. Roberts

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2642	Janet Bond	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1987	George Davies	Team inspector	Information and Communicatio n technology History	Integration
18461	Vanessa Wilkinson	Team inspector	Art and design Geography Physical Education	Special Educational Needs/Autism
1358	Glyn Essex	Team inspector	Religious Education Music	How well is the school led and managed?
7327	Anthony Dunsbee	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Equal opportunities	
14691	Jennifer Hall	Team inspector	Science Modern foreign language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
25265	Mary Cobb	Team inspector	English	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Personal and social education Post 16 provision

The inspection contractor was:

QICS
Ibsley
4, West Cliff Road
Dawlish
Devon
EX7 9EB

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingsweston is a mixed special school for pupils, between the ages of 3 and 19, with moderate and severe learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Many have a wide range of additional special needs including speech and language disorders, medical and sensory difficulties and one pupil is blind. Currently there are 176 pupils on roll including three children of nursery age. The 36 pupils referred to the school by the Local Education Authority (LEA), because they need support from teachers experienced with autistic spectrum disorders, are in six specialist classes. Since September 2001 the school staffs and runs a class in a local mainstream school where ten Kingsweston pupils attend full time, integrating for some lessons. Where appropriate, a small number of secondary age pupils attend the local comprehensive school for certain subjects and to gain accreditation not available at Kingsweston. Post 16 students attend courses at the local college. On entry, most pupils' attainments are below national expectations and averages, and all school age pupils have a statement of Special Educational Need. Eighteen pupils are from ethnic backgrounds with six having English as a second language. Eighty seven pupils are eligible for free school meals which is high in comparison to similar schools. At the time of the inspection two temporary and three newly qualified teachers were in post.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kingsweston is a good school. Pupils achieve well in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education because teaching is good. Leadership and management are effective and the headteacher provides a clear direction for the future development of the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans because staff know them very well and provide effective support.
- Teaching for nursery and primary pupils is consistently good and frequently very good which enables pupils to learn well.
- Very effective inclusion opportunities are provided for an increasing number of pupils which supports their learning and their personal development well.
- Older pupils achieve well in the good range of accredited courses taken.
- Very good development planning and effective financial systems support continuing school improvement.

What could be improved

- Staff training and further developments to support teachers and staff in managing more effectively secondary and post 16 pupil and student behaviour.
- Ensure the curriculum and assessment procedures are in place for all subjects to support pupils building on earlier learning.
- Raise pupils' achievements in music and design and technology.
- To further support pupils' learning, plan for the use of information and communication technology in all subjects.
- Work with the Local Education Authority to enable appropriate planning and development for the autistic department.

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. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Most areas identified as weaknesses in the last report have been improved, although further work is required to strengthen monitoring of pupil progress in all subjects. Achievement and progress has improved because the quality of teaching has improved. Planning for individual needs using targets in individual education plans is now good. Statutory requirements and National Curriculum requirements are now met. The spiritual elements of the curriculum have been improved. There have been significant improvements in the maintenance of the accommodation and in attending to health and safety issues. There have been significant improvements in provision for inclusion and in provision for information and communication technology.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 11	by Year 16	by Year 19	Key
speaking and listening	B	B	B	B	very good A
reading	B	B	B	B	good B
writing	B	B	B	B	satisfactory C
mathematics	B	B	B	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	B	B	B	B	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	C	C	

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

At all ages pupils and students make good progress and achieve well in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education because the curriculum is well planned and because teaching in these subjects is good. This good progress has been enhanced by the school's effective use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Pupils and students make good progress towards the targets set at annual reviews and in their IEPs because teachers plan effectively for them in lessons. Most pupils make good progress in discrete lessons of information and communication technology (ICT) because teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, resources are very good and there is very effective support from the ICT technician. Pupils and students make good progress and achieve well in physical education because staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. Overall pupils in the primary department make good progress because teaching is very good. The progress and achievements of secondary age pupils is unsatisfactory in music and design and technology because teachers do not have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects and because monitoring procedures need updating. In all other subjects secondary pupils, including those in the autistic department and post 16 students, achieve at a satisfactory level. As a consequence of monitoring not being in place and because many of the schemes of work need updating in most of these subjects, it is difficult for teachers to plan effectively to ensure pupils build on earlier learning. In Year 10 and 11 coursework provides a good structure and regular monitoring opportunities for pupils to achieve well and make good progress towards the good range of accredited courses they take. Pupils with additional special educational needs progress well because they receive appropriate support to access the curriculum. The school is preparing to set whole school targets to further raise standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
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Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school; most concentrate well and are enthusiastic when activities capture their interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and in school because they know what is expected of them. In some lessons, pupils lose interest and do not respond well to the management strategies used.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are cooperative and supportive of each other. The good relationships most pupils have with staff support them in being confident in their learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance for a small but significant minority of mainly secondary pupils is poor and the number of exclusions is high.

Most pupils and students want to come to school and enjoy the good range of activities available. The majority of unsatisfactory behaviour is from pupils in the autistic department. Where pupils find lessons interesting and relevant and where they understand the consistent management systems used, pupils behave well. In other lessons, the behaviour of a small number of pupils is unsatisfactory and disrupts not only their own learning but that of others in the class.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 9	Years 9 – 13 And Autistic
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well. Where teaching is good or better teachers have a good understanding of the learning needs of the pupils and of the curriculum. Activities are planned that effectively meet pupils' learning needs and interests. Pupils are actively involved in their own learning, interested and keen to make progress. Where teaching is not as good or is unsatisfactory, teachers do not have a good knowledge of their subject, such as music, do not plan well for individual learning needs and do not use effective or appropriate strategies to manage pupils behaviour. Pupils lose interest, misbehave and learning for all of the class is disrupted.

Teaching in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education is good. Teachers effectively use the targets set in pupils IEPs to help plan their lessons. Good monitoring procedures ensure all pupils are on appropriate work. A good range of resources and approaches are used that help pupils learn. Pupils with additional special educational needs are well supported, with teaching assistants playing a valuable role in this, to fully access learning. The effective approaches used are a result of the good planning between teachers and visiting specialist teachers and therapists. The joint planning by teachers and speech and language therapists has resulted in the introduction of picture assisted learning which has helped raise primary pupils' achievements in their communication and reading skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory with some significant strengths. Accredited coursework, and good inclusion opportunities effectively support pupils' and students' learning. The curriculum for literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education is good. Schemes of work for other subjects require

	updating.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The specialist teacher makes a significant contribution to pupils fully accessing the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for pupils' personal, moral and cultural development. "Circle time" and the personal, social and health curriculum contribute well to pupils' personal and moral development. Satisfactory for pupils' spiritual and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Good procedures for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Good procedures for teachers to know what pupils can do in literacy, numeracy and personal education, but these are not in place for other subjects.

Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and the school works well with them to further support pupils' learning. Information provided to parents and carers is good, and the school is active in encouraging parents and carers into school. The curriculum and the daily act of worship meet statutory requirements. Accredited coursework, the introduction of enquiry skills and appropriate programmes such as "towards independence" effectively support pupils' learning. A wide range of extra activities enriches pupils' learning; they particularly enjoy the lunchtime clubs. Good and effective links with other schools and the wider community enrich the curriculum and support pupils' personal development. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a clear sense of direction to the work of the school effectively supported by very good development planning.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Statutory requirements are met and governors contribute effectively to school improvements and financial planning. Governors are well informed about school developments but less so about standards attained by pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good monitoring procedures are in place and the resulting information is used well to inform school development planning. The school is preparing to use this information to set whole school targets to further raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Management and monitoring of the budget and resources to promote pupils' progress are good.

The headteacher, governors and senior staff share a commitment to school development within the LEA policy, such as the good and effective initiative taken by the school for enhanced inclusion opportunities. The school works hard to achieve best value. Overall staff are well deployed although in some lessons there are insufficient support staff to meet individual pupil needs. Resources are good and effectively used. Accommodation is well maintained and good use has been made of converted buildings to provide improved accommodation. Specialist rooms such as the ICT suite contribute to pupils' improved achievements.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress because teaching is good. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons and is helping children become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed and parents are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school works closely with parents and provides good information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour in school.
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Inspectors agree with the views of parents. A small number of parents felt that information at the beginning of each term about study plans and topics to be covered would be helpful and inspectors support this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Pupils enter the main school with very low levels of achievement, particularly in their communication and personal and social skills. A significant number have additional special needs such as hearing, physical and language disabilities. Pupils in the autistic department enter with significant difficulties with personal and social skills. Many have difficulties in managing their own behaviour and because of learning difficulties and a negative attitude to learning arrive with limited attainments. As a result of good quality teaching and a focus on literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills in pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs), there has been an improvement in pupils' achievements in these areas since the last inspection. Pupils in the Foundation and primary classes achieve well and make good progress in lessons because teaching is consistently good. The very good opportunities for Foundation and primary pupils to work in mainstream classes has contributed effectively to pupils' improved achievements in personal and social development. Pupils in the autistic department achieve at a satisfactory level in most subjects. Teaching in the department is variable; where it is good pupils make good progress. Secondary aged pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and personal and social development because an appropriate focus is given to these subjects and short, medium and long term planning are good and enable pupils to progressively build on earlier learning. Post 16 students' achievements are satisfactory. Currently there is not enough adult time available to support the very wide range of individual needs in this class. Pupils achieve well in the good range of accredited courses they take. Structured coursework and regular monitoring and assessment of progress supports teachers in planning effectively.

- 2 There have been significant improvements in the achievements of pupils in English, literacy and communication. This is because teachers have adapted the National Literacy Strategy well to meet pupils' needs. The close working between teachers and the speech and language therapist has had a significant impact on improvements in communication and literacy, for example through the introduction of picture assisted learning in the primary classes. Pupils achieve well in reading and writing because assessments support teachers in planning for individual needs within lessons and because an effective range of approaches and resources are used well. All pupils, including those in the autistic department, make good progress and achieve well in mathematics because of the positive impact of the numeracy strategy. Pupils achieve well in discrete information and communication technology lessons (ICT) because teachers and teaching assistants are knowledgeable and have good support from the ICT technician and because of the good range of hardware and software available. However, there is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. All pupils in the main school achieve well in physical education because

teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and an enthusiasm that they share with pupils. Secondary aged pupils' achievements and progress are unsatisfactory in design and technology, where the curriculum is narrow. They are not satisfactory for secondary aged pupils, except for those in the autistic department, in music, where lack of staff expertise limits the opportunities made available to pupils. In all other subjects pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory. Currently outdated programmes of work and/or the lack of assessments means teachers cannot plan for pupils to build on their earlier learning.

- 3 Pupils with significant additional special educational needs, such as visual impairment and speech and language difficulties, make good progress and achieve well. Staff work hard to implement the advice from visiting specialist; the purchase of specialist equipment and the very good individual support from teaching assistants allows pupils to access classroom work and make good progress. Pupils with English as a second language make good progress because of the effective support provided by the specialist teacher. Although specialist approaches are used in the autistic department their implementation is inconsistent. Where they are used well and where teaching is good pupils make better progress. There are no significant variations in the progress of boys and girls.
- 4 The school is in the early stages of setting whole school targets for improving achievement. Data is being collected and collated appropriately to enable them to identify targets for next year. A good start has been made with teachers having targets with a more directed focus on raising pupils' standards in lessons. There has been limited work on setting improvement targets to raise achievement within subject development planning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 5 Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and this is reinforced by the pupils' enthusiasm as they enter school in the morning. Pupils listen and concentrate well in lessons where the teaching captures their interest and they are actively involved. In the junior school pupils with more complex needs respond well to the good support provided. In many lessons pupils showed enthusiasm for learning. For example, in a secondary literacy lesson, they spontaneously applauded when one of the lower attaining pupils spelt some words correctly. The introduction of lunchtime clubs has been welcomed and appreciated by pupils who are generally well behaved, both when eating their lunch in the hall and taking part in structured activities. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Although most pupils have positive attitudes to school, a small number of pupils exhibit poor attitudes to learning that impacts on learning, their own and that of their peers'.
- 6 Overall, most pupils behave well in and around school. During the inspection there were instances of poor behaviour in some classes. Pupils responded in a more positive way when staff applied strategies identified in Individual Behaviour Plans and resolved small problems before they become big ones. Pupils understand the school systems for managing behaviour including the use of appropriate rewards and sanctions. In the junior school most pupils behave well and respond to the positive reward system of stickers, smiley faces and sweets. Many pupils in the secondary department enjoy the opportunity to save points and take part in leisure activities on Friday afternoons. In some lessons observed, particularly in the autistic department, pupils lost interest and their behaviour deteriorated and included verbal bullying and threatening behaviour. There has been an increase in fixed term exclusions since the

last inspection and a number of instances of staff being injured whilst trying to defuse difficult situations.

- 7 Most pupils have good relationships with staff and their peers. They co-operate well and listen and support one another. For example, younger pupils take turns to request a drink and biscuit at break time. Older pupils share resources and help one another, for example explaining how to save work on the computer. In addition they respond well to the opportunities provided for them to spend time in junior classes working with younger pupils.
- 8 Although opportunities are sometimes limited, those who can are confident to take responsibilities, make choices and act on their own initiative. Many pupils who attend college for one day each week, make their own way there and all fulfil the expectation of being in the right place at the right time throughout the day. Junior pupils respond well to the good range of strategies used for encouraging independence for lower attaining pupils, for example signing and the use of symbols. However, there are limited opportunities and fewer strategies in place in the secondary department for lower attaining pupils to respond to taking increasing responsibility.
- 9 Attendance has remained very similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Last year the whole school attendance rate was 81.9% with unauthorised absences at 3.4%. Both these figures are unsatisfactory because they are much lower than those found in similar special schools. Attendance for a small but significant minority of mainly secondary aged pupils is poor. This year the school has one non-attender which is an improvement on last year. A very small minority of pupils have unavoidably been away from school with medical problems. However, the school, recognises that attendance is an issue and, with the support of the Education Welfare Service, has begun to tackle it more systematically this term and already improvements have been recorded. Support from some parents has impacted positively on individual rates of attendance. Punctuality is usually good in the morning with buses or taxis only rarely arriving late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 10 The quality of teaching is good overall and enables most pupils to learn well. During the inspection teaching was good or better in 6 out of every 10 lessons observed. Teaching of Year 1 and 2 was particularly good with all lessons being good or better and with 3 out of every 4 lessons being very good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the primary department. Teaching in the secondary and autistic department was more variable. In the main school teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 9 was good or better in just over three-quarters of lessons observed.
- 11 Several factors have contributed to the significant improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully introduced and the curriculum for English and mathematics re-written. Improvements in monitoring achievements in these subjects means that teachers are now better informed about what pupils can do. The curriculum allows them to systematically plan for what pupils need to do next to progress their learning. New and effective strategies, such as picture assisted learning, have supported teachers in their planning and delivery and pupils in their improving communication. The new IEPs appropriately contain literacy, numeracy and personal and social development targets which support teachers further in their planning to meet individual needs. Where teaching is good, particular strengths are the teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants and the good knowledge and

understanding staff have of pupils' learning needs. Teachers treat pupils with care and consideration and provide good role models for pupils' personal and social development.

- 12 A number of factors contribute to where teaching was less effective or unsatisfactory. Many of the subject schemes of work are out of date and do not support teachers' lesson planning or pupils' learning in a progressive and consistent way. Although the teaching of individual lessons may be good, for example in science, the longer term planning does not allow for pupils to build on their learning or to experience all aspects of the subject. Teaching in art, geography and history is satisfactory overall. There are inadequate procedures for many of these subjects for teachers to know what pupils can do which means that teachers do not always plan work that is appropriate. In the majority of unsatisfactory lessons the behaviour management of the pupils was not effective which meant that pupils' learning was disrupted.
- 13 The quality of teaching for pupils with additional special educational needs is good overall within the primary department and satisfactory overall in other departments. Where it is good teachers know the individual needs of the pupils well and plan lessons that ensure all can participate. Appropriate resources maintain pupils' interest and attention and teaching assistants play a key role in supporting individual pupils in accessing the curriculum. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson the use of a "big book" and pupils' name cards helped them relate the letter sounds to their own names. After the whole class lesson the teacher worked with one group of pupils on constructing sentences while the teaching assistant took another group out of the classroom to work on flash cards and individual programmes on the computer. This allowed each pupil to be on work appropriate to his or her needs and to be given good individual support. Effective strategies and approaches are used that further support pupils' learning and behaviour. For example, pupils in the junior school respond well to the classroom rules and reward and sanctions system. One pupil on a behaviour management programme was quite clear about the consequences of his behaviour and understood the "red card" system used. Advice from other support agencies, such as the physiotherapist, is effectively incorporated into lesson planning.
- 14 Pupils who behave well in lessons do so because they find the work interesting, they have good relationships with staff and teachers manage pupils behaviour skilfully. Appropriate activities are planned and because pupils are actively involved, they are keen to participate and confident to try new challenges. In a well paced and managed physical education lesson pupils responded to the high expectations of the teacher by working on the apparatus well and were confident to show their achievements to others. In the majority of lessons, activities and discussions appropriate to pupils' age aids their personal and social development well. In an English lesson in the autistic department, Year 11 pupils enjoyed looking at newspapers, predicting stories from the headlines and determining which were tabloid and which broadsheet papers, and what the terms meant. However, in unsatisfactory lessons activities do not always reflect the lesson purpose and poor management of pupil behaviour means learning is disrupted.
- 15 Overall, teachers have a good knowledge of English and mathematics. Where teachers have a good knowledge of and are enthusiastic about the subject, lessons are well planned and taught, for example teaching is good in physical education, in French for higher attaining pupils and in information and communication technology. In subjects where good procedures mean teachers know what pupils can do they use the information effectively to plan work appropriate to individual needs. Overall teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of the

pupils and of appropriate and effective strategies that they consistently use. Where this is not the case, teaching is less successful or unsatisfactory as in music and design and technology. Although pupils achieve well in discrete lessons of ICT, teachers do not plan effectively for its use in other lessons.

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

- 16 The overall quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory, with some significant strengths. Provision for the youngest pupils in the foundation stage is good and meets their learning needs well. The development of skills in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education has been a priority in recent years; and provision in these areas is very effective. The overall personal, social and health education curriculum is well established and effective across the school. The introduction of a 'key steps' programme, leading to the introduction of the Youth Award Scheme at 14 makes a good contribution to personal and social development. In the secondary curriculum, the development of enquiry skills has been an important priority in the development of life skills through use of the library and computers. The post 16 curriculum is well developed to meet the needs of the students as they prepare for the next stage in their education and training. The curriculum includes very relevant opportunities to learn shopping and cooking skills through the 'Towards Independence' programme, college provision and weekly educational visits.
- 17 The statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, religious education and careers education are in place. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Provision for French and music for pupils aged 11 to 14 has improved, especially in French, in the main school where the subject does much to boost pupils' self-esteem. Various timetabling arrangements for French in the autistic department, however, result in these pupils having infrequent opportunities to practise speaking and writing French. Because of this their achievements are modest and they are not given access to the accredited course that other pupils take. The time allocation for music, especially in the autistic department, is not generous. Art and music specialists visit the school occasionally but overall provision for creative development through art, music, dance and drama, is not well developed. The school's whole curriculum statement does not adequately reflect how learning opportunities are meeting the wide range of complex needs of pupils on roll. The balance of these needs varies from year to year but the curriculum statement is not reviewed annually to respond to these changes.
- 18 The curriculum is generally effective for pupils in the primary and secondary stages and for pupils in the autistic department. From the age of 14, for example, the curriculum becomes increasingly relevant with the inclusion of the Youth Award scheme, life skills, child care and environmental studies, all of which help to promote pupils' independence. Careers education and links with the Careers Service begin at age 14 and pupils participate in work experience. From the age of 15 pupils begin college courses which continue post 16, but there is insufficient liaison with the college to link college work to work at school effectively. There is an appropriate range of accreditation. However, a small number of pupils in the main school and in the autistic department who achieve very well in national tests in Year 9 are not accessing suitable accreditation at 16, in science for example. Curriculum planning for National Curriculum subjects, other than English and mathematics, is in need of development, and this is reflected in the school development plan. Published

syllabuses and subject guidance are not adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils in the school; and planning does not build on assessments because these are also inadequate. Arrangements for the regular review of subject policies are not effective and schemes of work for most of these subjects are out of date. A rolling programme to improve subject planning began this school year, with one subject the focus each term.

- 19 Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils receive the support specified in their statements of special educational need. The inclusion of pupils with hearing and visual impairment, and pupils with physical difficulties in the life of the school is very good, as it is for pupils whose first language is not English, and the minority ethnic pupils. Relationships with other schools and colleges are good resulting in a wide range of inclusion opportunities across the age range. This is a significant improvement. Inclusion provision in the nursery and primary departments is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' academic and social development. Pupils in the autistic department are provided with good opportunities to work alongside pupils in mainstream classes; but there is no provision for their inclusion in Kingsweston School.
- 20 A wide range of extra activities adds richness to pupils' learning. Good use is made of the local community to support pupils' learning, with visits to shops, farms, museums and the cinema, for example. An appropriate range of visitors to school, including the police to work on road and personal safety, further support the curriculum. The school has strong links with local health promoting groups to support health, sex and drugs education. A summer school is very well organised and highly effective, for example in improving standards of literacy and numeracy. This is a new development since the last inspection. Residential opportunities at camp and in France help pupils to become more independent and use their social skills in different environments. Pupils in the autistic department develop their social skills by assisting with coffee mornings in the local community. Pupils learn in competitive situations through inter-school sporting events. Although lunchtime is short with three very well organised sittings, time is used well to provide clubs like judo and American football, which are much enjoyed. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- 21 The previous inspection found that provision for pupils' spiritual development was unsatisfactory. Most assemblies were not of a religious character and in general there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to enhance their spiritual awareness. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing this key issue. There is now a two-year plan of "worship themes" for all three departments. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on biblical stories and other religious sources, for example this half term for the current topic of "gifts". Statutory requirements for religious education are now met and the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of different beliefs and values.
- 22 "Circle time" and the personal and social education curriculum are used well to encourage pupils to explore the links between spiritual values and moral principles. A class of mainly Year 10 pupils in the autistic department, for example, took part in a discussion of bullying in which they were encouraged to face up to their own feelings about their motivation and responsibility for their actions. Staff make good use of opportunities to discuss pupils' behaviour with them and to reinforce the principles of the school's behaviour policy.
- 23 Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory, and the recent introduction of a School's Council should increase the number of opportunities to give pupils real

responsibility in the development of the school. The Council was referred to several times during the inspection week in conversations between staff and pupils and it is clearly beginning to be regarded by pupils as a useful forum for the expression of their views. Other positive points in this area of pupils' development include the help given by older pupils to the lower school classes and the work done by one of the autistic classes in helping to run coffee mornings in a local church hall once a month. Opportunities for pupils to take on more responsibility in their own classrooms or lessons are limited, however, particularly in the autistic department.

- 24 There is a good range of cultural experiences for pupils. Music workshops, the celebration of the festivals of several different faiths and attractive displays on various cultural themes all make very positive contributions to pupils' cultural awareness. An emphasis on different faiths in religious education is well supported by a very good collection of books and other resources in the main school library. Good examples of the use of other cultures and tradition are planned for in other subjects, such as art, music and history. The good provision for inclusion makes a significant contribution to this area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 25 Overall the school provides satisfactory support, care and advice for its pupils with some good features in some of the practices which are in place in the school. There have been significant improvements in some areas of pupil welfare. For example, in the very good arrangements which now exist for ensuring pupils' safety at the beginning and end of the school day; in the toilet facilities in the school which have been carefully refurbished and in the general security arrangements on the site. However, the current systems to record incidents in many areas across the school are not rigorous enough and do not aid effective whole school monitoring. Incidents of exclusions, of the physical handling of pupils, and of racial harassment are not centrally logged.
- 26 Governors fulfil their role well in ensuring that the large site is maintained to a proper standard and effective procedures are in place to regularly review the health and safety policy. Staff know pupils well and work effectively with the support of many outside agencies to support their varied needs. Individual teachers who are especially well known by some pupils undertake a counselling role and use time flexibly to guide and support pupils who have, for example, more challenging behaviour. Dinner times are orderly occasions with much effective care and attention given to many younger pupils in the primary department. There is a good range and choice of school dinners. Mid day supervisors, however, have not as yet received training in behaviour management which could help them to manage pupils more effectively during play sessions. There are several teachers and teaching assistants who hold first aid certificates. The administration of medicines follows clear procedures and staff are careful to record this properly.
- 27 Procedures for child protection are good overall and the named person has undergone recent training. She also oversees the needs of a small number of pupils in the school who are looked after by the local authority. Many staff have not been trained in the physical handling of pupils. This was identified as a need in the previous inspection report. The school reports that it has been frustrated in its failed attempts to undertake training this year, especially in view of the number of new staff in the school, and it recognises this existing weakness. Accidents, which result in injury to pupil or staff, are recorded according to authority procedures. However, the school keeps no central or bound incident book which it should. Records of major incidents

- are kept in individual pupil files but this system does not allow a clear or complete overview of what is happening on a day to day basis or over time.
- 28 Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are improving and are satisfactory this term. Some pupils are on part-time contracts and for them attendance is monitored closely. Last year the school reports that there was very little effective support for attendance from the Education Welfare Service. This term more effective support, plus a new policy for phoning on the first day of absence, have helped to improve levels of attendance to approximately 92%. Teachers record attendance accurately and are rigorous in marking absences as unauthorised. However, not all teachers mark the register at the beginning of the afternoon session. Good and improving attendance is rewarded but no school targets have yet been formally set. The school is aware that for some pupils, their less than satisfactory attendance rates are detrimental to their progress and achievement.
- 29 Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are satisfactory overall but the very high rates of school exclusion are not formally monitored. Each department has its own systems for rewarding and encouraging good behaviour. These work very effectively among younger pupils. The star of the week is congratulated and rewarded for effort and improvements in work and behaviour in a special golden service on a Friday. Teachers have a range of strategies both informal and more formal which support them in their role of monitoring behaviour. School procedures are not consistently used across the school to clearly identify triggers which could enable work on preventing poor behaviour.
- 30 Assessment procedures overall are satisfactory. They are best in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development where assessments are used very effectively to record and monitor pupils' progress using the new national 'P' scales. The writing of individual targets in these areas of the curriculum has improved significantly. Targets are very precise so small steps in progress can be assessed and monitored over time. The review of pupils' progress in meeting their targets is carried out very effectively during an assessment week held each term. There is some way to go, however, before all pupils understand what it means to have these targets. Good baseline assessments are in place for pupils entering the school and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Arrangements for National Curriculum tests and tasks in English, mathematics and science are also in place and the results are reported to parents. Assessment arrangements to monitor progress in literacy and numeracy during the summer school are very good. The arrangements for the annual review of a pupil's statement of special educational needs are well organised. The school has a very thorough policy for assessment, recording and reporting, the implementation of which is very actively pursued through the enthusiastic leadership of the assessment co-ordinator.
- 31 The school has identified, in the development plan, the need to improve assessment arrangements other subjects. These are currently unsatisfactory. The use of assessments, therefore, to plan the curriculum in each subject, so pupils can build on their earlier achievements, is also unsatisfactory. There are no effective systems to monitor pupils' progress in subjects from year to year. A marking policy is in place but, as reported at the last inspection, the level of annotation continues to be unhelpful in providing teachers with a record about how much a pupil has learned and how much support was provided. In summary, there have been some good improvements in assessing and monitoring progress in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development, but the lack of effective subject assessment limits pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 32 As reported in the previous inspection, the school works positively to develop good links with parents and carers. There have been a number of improvements in partnerships with parents and carers; in particular the successful parent support groups which meet regularly in the school and the greater range of information all parents and carers now receive. Overall links are good.
- 33 Parents and carers have very good views of the school. Twenty parents and carers attended a very positive pre-inspection meeting and many expressed great satisfaction and appreciation with what the school achieves for their children. They see progress being made in a number of areas, especially with pupils' confidence and self-esteem and this pleases them. They believe the school is committed and works hard to support all pupils equally. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, which approximately 20 per cent of parents and carers completed, again a very positive picture of their views is evident. Parents strongly indicated that their children like school, make good progress, and are expected to do their best. Parents and carers who responded also agreed that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems or concerns. A number of written letters received were also very positive. A small number of parents spoken to during the week of the inspection were overwhelming in their positive support for and views of the school.
- 34 Many parents and carers live a long way from the school and have to rely on public transport to travel across the city. Despite this, links with parents and carers are effective overall and, for many, these links help raise pupil achievement. Home school visits are made to new families in the primary department, which provide good opportunities to share information for the benefit of new pupils. Induction programmes are flexible and suit the needs of all pupils. The school nurse is closely involved with and well known to many parents and carers. There is good support for those parents for whom English is an additional language, with an interpreter available if required. The school actively seeks links with all and the telephone is well used to encourage involvement of parents.
- 35 A suitable homework policy now exists and parents share, for example, similar behaviour strategies in the home. Most parents report that they are familiar with targets set by the school for their children. A suitable home school agreement has been drawn up which is signed by most parents and carers when their children start school. Parents and carers are invited to a number of school events, for example the harvest service, a concert at Christmas and coffee mornings in some departments. Free transport to annual reviews, to school events and to parents' meetings is organised and many take advantage of these arrangements. However, despite the school's efforts, a small minority, for whatever reason, rarely comes to the school and chooses to be less involved than the majority.
- 36 The school now sends out a good range of information. The annual report from the governors and the updated school prospectus now contain all that they should and fulfil statutory requirements. The headteacher sends out well written and well presented school newsletters which give a good range of information about past and present events to all parents and carers. As an effective means of communication about their child, tapes are sent to many and on occasions videos too. Home school diaries are very well used by many, but not all parents, to share information on a very regular basis. Staff record honestly and informally what has happened in the day. These diaries also contain timetables, the Golden Rules, and important dates for the year. Many parents and carers, especially of younger pupils, value these greatly.

End of year school reports are detailed and informative across all subjects of the curriculum.

- 37 The small but dedicated Parent Teacher Association raises extra funds for the school. Members of the Parent Support Group, established in the autistic department, speak favourably of recent speakers and help they have received for coping with their children. The successful summer school was very well supported by parents and carers. A small number of volunteer parents help every week in two classes in the primary department and enjoy being involved in school life. Overall the school's current partnerships and links with many parents and carers are good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 38 The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and senior staff provide a clear sense of direction to the school's work and this is amply demonstrated in the very good quality of the school's planning for development. This is a school which has clear aims and objectives for improvement and which makes good progress towards them. The positive work on literacy and numeracy and on the inclusion of pupils in mainstream settings are examples of the effectiveness of the school in planning and implementing change.
- 39 The school has appropriately put the emphasis for development on the core subjects of English, mathematics and personal and social development. This has been effective, but means that insufficient attention has been given to other subjects of the curriculum. This is planned for in the school development plan. Good procedures are in place for the regular review of subjects and the school is aware of the need to carry out the updating of all subject policies and schemes of work. The co-ordination of subjects across three departments and the very wide range of ages and learning needs presents some problems in management structure which the school is working to resolve. At the beginning of the current school year, changes were implemented but there is still a lack of effective, whole-school co-ordination of some subjects. This has an adverse effect on areas such as target-setting, the monitoring of standards and the liaison between the departments in some subject areas. Senior management are aware of these problems and further changes to address them are being considered. In general, however, management at all levels contributes effectively to the ongoing review and development of areas such as the curriculum, behaviour and learning resources through a well-organised pattern of meetings and effective reporting to the senior management team.
- 40 There are very good procedures in place for monitoring all areas of the school's work. The quality of teaching and of teachers' planning is regularly monitored, for example, and a programme of measures to assess the quality of pupils' learning, such as class observation and the sampling of pupils' work, has been effectively begun. The resulting information is used well to inform school development planning and staff development. It is beginning to enable more accurate conclusions to be drawn about pupils' progress in different aspects of the core subjects of English, mathematics and personal and social development. At the moment, however, no whole-school targets have been published for raising standards in these or other areas of pupils' development. The management and development of inclusion opportunities are good. Effective links with support agencies and local mainstream schools have enabled pupils' needs to be more appropriately met in a range of settings.

- 41 The school's development plan is a comprehensive document which provides a very clear focus on its objectives and the action needed to achieve them. It contains specific criteria for success, clear lines of responsibility and estimates of the costs involved. As such, it is a very useful working tool, both for staff and governors, and also makes a very valuable contribution to the quality of the school's budget planning. Outcomes are systematically reviewed but, as mentioned above, specific whole-school targets for improved pupil performance are not yet established as an integral part of this process. The proportion of objectives from previous school development plans which have been achieved is high. The improvement made by the school since the previous inspection provide further evidence of the effectiveness of the action taken by the school to meet its targets.
- 42 Governors provide good support to the school management in the development and monitoring processes. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and of the areas which need to be further developed. They responded well to the recommendations of the previous inspection. They are well-informed about developments in the curriculum but less so about the standards attained by pupils. They carry out their statutory duties well.
- 43 There are very clear links between the school's development work and its financial planning. Careful consideration is appropriately given by senior management and the governing body to the cost-effectiveness of their spending decisions. The governors receive good quality information about the budget, both before, during and after each financial year, and the minutes of their meetings show detailed consideration of budget issues. For the current financial year, for example, they expressed their concern about the proposed level of funding for classroom equipment and directed an increase in the budget allocation for this purpose. Governors are also clearly aware in their budget deliberations of the impact of the school's changing pupil population and this and other strategic issues help to shape their longer-term financial planning. There are no formal systems for the evaluation by the school of the value for money which it provides. However, it follows good practice in the purchase of resources and in its appointment of contractors for work on the school premises as well as in its careful consideration of the outcomes of its spending decisions.
- 44 Specific grants, such as those for the development of literacy and numeracy and for the benefit of ethnic minority pupils, have been very effectively used. There is good management and monitoring of the budget and resources are used efficiently. Financial systems and procedures are reported in the latest audit to be sound and there is good administration of day to day financial matters. The school has recently increased its hours for office staff and this has done much to lighten the administrative load on teachers, as has the well-developed use of new technology.
- 45 There are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils in the school and this represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. They are deployed in a satisfactory manner and the match between their previous phase experiences and the wide age range present in the school is good. Overall, the match between teachers' qualifications and the requirements of the curriculum is satisfactory. There continues to be a need for appropriately qualified members of staff to take responsibility for the co-ordination of the teaching of music and design and technology. Since the last inspection the school has increased the number of administrative staff and has appointed a full time librarian who has developed the library into a very good whole school resource. In addition, the appointment of a very skilled ICT technician/network manager has had a positive impact upon provision in this area of the curriculum. A technician has also been appointed to support the

teaching of science, food and design and technology. These additions to the staff represent good improvements since the last inspection. Overall, the ratio of pupils to teacher assistants continues to be high. There are sufficient numbers of teacher assistants to support work with autistic spectrum pupils but an insufficient number to support teachers in the rest of the school. Certain activities and subjects would benefit from additional teacher assistant support, such as when larger groups are being taught in the ICT suite.

- 46 Arrangements for the induction of new staff are good. A well-organised system is in place, including specific and very well organised procedures to support newly qualified teachers. Training is directly linked to the school development plan. Awareness training and more advanced training has been and continues to be provided for staff working with pupils on the autistic spectrum, including a NVQ L3 course, while a significant amount of training for teachers and support staff in the area of ICT has taken place. This latter training has had a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and the pupils' learning during discrete ICT lessons. The school's well-organised performance management procedures are also carefully linked to the staff development programme. Teachers and teacher assistants value the training provided in school and also welcome the support that is readily available for attending offsite training courses. The school's provision for staff development and support represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
- 47 Overall, the level and quality of resources available in the school is good and this represents a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The resources available for English have been improved with significant improvements made to library provision in location and organisation. Resources for mathematics have been carefully added to during the last three years and a good range of text books and artefacts have been purchased for teaching history. Resources for art and physical education are now good and the resources available for teaching ICT, equipment and programmes, are now excellent. The recently purchased interactive white board is already having a positive effect upon the pupils' learning. A good range of materials effectively supports the teaching of personal and social education. The overall level and quality of resources for pupils at the foundation stage is good.
- 48 Overall, the accommodation available is satisfactory. Improvements made to the accommodation since the last inspection are good. As a result of the work done by the governors' premises sub-committee and the caretaker's commitment to high standards of care, the school now presents as a well-maintained learning environment. The school makes good use of what is a non-purpose built site and has responded very positively to all of the issues raised in the last inspection report. However, the play area for the very youngest children is too small and needs refurbishing. The major internal and external redecoration project has left the school presenting as a well cared for learning environment. In addition to responding to the issues identified in the last inspection the school has also improved its accommodation through many other developments. For example, it has created a purpose built ICT suite, a sensory room and a therapy room; it has refurbished the design and technology area and has created four new classrooms and a careers office for older pupils, including post 16 students. There is a sufficient number of teaching bases for the number of children and students in the school and in addition the "technology wing" contains specialist facilities for teaching science, ICT, design and technology and food technology. The large and well equipped gymnasium is suitable in size for the ages of the pupils and students that use it

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49 In order to further improve pupils' and students' progress and achievements, the headteacher and governors should:

- As a matter of urgency, complete staff training and further develop strategies for managing pupil behaviour more effectively, particularly for secondary pupils and post 16 students.* (paragraphs 6,26,61,70,81,115,117,119)
To further support this:
 - record incidents systematically(paragraph 25,27)
 - train all staff in effective physical restraint procedures* (paragraph 27)
- As a matter of urgency, develop and complete schemes of work and assessment procedures, for all subjects* (paragraphs 12,18,31,39,62,74,78,79,82,83,87,89,100,101,106,114,123,127)
- Improve pupil achievement in music and design and technology (paragraphs 2,17,83,112)
- Plan for the use of ICT in subjects (paragraphs 62,78,80,87,101,)
- Work with the LEA to agree terms of reference and admissions criteria for the autistic unit and plan future developments. (paragraphs135-139)

The following should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Set whole school targets to focus on further raising achievement.* (paragraphs 40,41)
- Review accreditation in science and French. (paragraphs 18,107)
- Review time available for autistic pupils for French. (paragraphs17,109)
- Improve attendance and reduce the number of exclusions.* (paragraphs 6,9)

*Items marked with * mean that the school has identified these in the school development plan.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	114
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	92

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	18	50	38	5	1	0
Percentage	2	16	44	33	4	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	176
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	87

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	14.7	School data	3.4

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) 10 pupils

National Curriculum Results		English	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils working towards NC level 1		100 (100)	100 (100)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 1 or above	School	0	0
	National	12	17

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) 11 pupils

National Curriculum Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 1	School	40 (20)	40 (53)	50 (53)
	National	31	28	26

Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	0 (7)	0(7)	0 (27)
	National	26	31	37

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9) 26 pupils

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 1	School	15 (50)	23 (30)	19 (40)
	National	26	17	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2	School	54 (20)	23 (50)	15 (50)
	National	42	35	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 3	School	15 (10)	23 (5)	50 (0)
	National	13	23	27

Numbers of pupils at NC level 4	School	4 (0)	19 (0)	8 (0)
	National	1	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5	School	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0)
	National	0	0	0

Attainment KS4 and above

Subject	Pass	Merit	Distinction
*English (6 pupils)	14	86	
*Mathematics (7)	29	71	
*Science (7)	14	86	
*Information technology (7)	57	43	
***French (6)	0	0	100
*Humanities (7)	0	86	14
*Art (6)	33.3	50	16.7
**Environmental Studies (7)	29	42	29
*Childcare (5)	100		
*Food Studies (6)	50	50	
*Life Skills (9)	0	22	78

*Certificate of Educational achievement ** OCR Examination board *** AQA Examination board

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	3
Indian	
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	158
Any other minority ethnic group	

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	6	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	56	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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 – Y14

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	23
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.6
Average class size	9

Education support staff: YN – Y14

Total number of education support staff	23.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	709

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	1371920
Total expenditure	1350270
Expenditure per pupil	7586
Balance brought forward from previous year	77753
Balance carried forward to next year	99402

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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

176

Number of questionnaires returned

42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	42	3	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	58	3	3	6
The teaching is good.	58	42	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	35	3	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	34	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	39	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	56	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	33	3	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

One parent expressed concern about the increasing number of pupils being included in mainstream schools, and one had concerns about the availability of staff when one was absent, particularly in the lower school. Two parents felt that wider information at the beginning of each term about study plans and topics to be covered in key curriculum subjects would be helpful to parents. All other comments were very positive about the care, teaching and team commitment to pupils.

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

- 50 Children in the foundation stage are in two classes, which also contain children in other year groups. There are appropriate strategies in place for inducting the new children to both classes. These include visits to the nursery prior to admission, home visits by staff and meetings for parents. Assessments on entry show the majority of children enter the nursery and reception class with very limited personal and social skills and speech, language and communication skills. Effective teaching and well-planned lessons support children in making good progress across the six areas of learning of the Foundation Curriculum. Because each child's personal targets in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP) are appropriate to their needs, children make good progress towards their targets. All children, including those with additional special educational needs, make good progress, and there are no significant differences between the progress of any groups of children. As it is unlikely, because of the significant learning needs of the children, that they will reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception class, the school appropriately plans for the Foundation Curriculum to be continued into the primary department.
- 51 Teaching is at least good in the foundation stage across all areas of the curriculum. Both teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and provide them with a rich range of learning experiences. Behaviour in all the lessons seen was good, and the children focused well on the activities provided for them. There was a quiet, purposeful atmosphere in both classrooms, which was conducive to good learning. Teachers and teacher assistants have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children, of learning needs and of the Foundation Curriculum. The curriculum is effectively planned to promote the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, and short, medium and long term planning are good. Activities are appropriate for learning within the six areas and appropriate to the learning needs of the children. Teacher assistants provide effective individual and small group support. The regular use of "P" scales for assessment and the monitoring of children's responses to activities, supports teachers in planning appropriate work. Very good relationships between children and staff help create a secure learning environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 52 Personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority in both classes with staff providing positive role models and creating relevant opportunities. As a result, children work and play well together. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They quickly learn the routines of the classroom and respond well to the encouragement of staff in such activities as hanging up their coat and finding their chair. Because the timetable for the day, in pictures and words, is shared with the children at the start of everyday, they become used to the routines of their day and look forward to particular activities. Teachers provide a stimulating and interesting range of activities which enable children to be active in their learning, for example through exploring a range of materials such as

sand and water. One group really enjoyed filling and pouring sand into and out of containers, and were fascinated when the teacher showed them how, by pouring sand into one container it would make the big wheel spin. Teachers use these opportunities well to introduce an appropriate vocabulary and to talk to children about what they are doing. As they gain in confidence children show an increasingly positive approach to new experiences, as when two children, with the aid of a torch, decided to explore the dark wigwam. Although the majority of play is alongside their peers, children increasingly play co-operatively, sharing the toys and communicating with each other.

Communication, language and literacy

- 53 Teachers use play, language, pictures and signing well to support children's listening and communication skills. Good teamwork with the speech therapist enables teachers to plan more effectively for individual communication needs. However, the speaking skills of many are very limited. Children learn to listen well through activities such as action songs, where they watch the teacher and try to imitate the actions. Higher attaining children remember the actions and participate independently, others need physical or verbal prompts to point to the window and point to the floor. As they progress, reception children select songs they particularly like by using song symbols; they remember many of the words and enjoy singing with the rest of the class. Children listen and respond to instructions such as "wash your hands now" or "line up by the door ready for lunch". Through the use of signs and symbols children begin to associate the written word with meaning such as use of the weather chart, where they recognise and find the appropriate symbol for the day. Higher attaining children extend their vocabulary and comment on things that happen in the classroom and in stories by using phrases such as "tree fell down". Through all activities staff encourage children to talk, through gesture, signing and language, and provide good role models for children to copy. Effective multi-sensory activities are used well to capture children's interest and to encourage them to participate. One class had tremendous fun participating in the known story of "The Bear Hunt". They "read" the book and their attention was successfully drawn to the title and the author before they began. One child dressed as the bear in his cave and the others went in pairs on the journey, through the mud, the forest and the snow (a fan and polystyrene blocks) before they found the bear. Through taking part and listening to new words as they were participating, they began to remember the sequence of events and many could retell the story. Children are encouraged to use paints, crayons, felt tips and pencils through a range of play and planned activities. As part of their topic work one group of reception children had great fun using a light board and pen to draw a bear, and many produced recognisable features of ears, eyes and mouth.

Mathematical development

- 54 Children make good progress in their early mathematical development because activities are planned to use the language of number which is reinforced whenever possible during the day. Children begin to show an interest in numbers and counting through activities such as counting the children in the class, counting along the number line, joining in counting stories and rhymes and through play. One reception boy enjoyed counting the legs, arms and eyes on his junk bear, while a nursery boy matched the shapes on an inset puzzle. Another nursery boy had difficulties fitting his "stew" into the saucepan and getting the lid on, until he realised he needed to take some away. Through a good range of activities children begin to match colours and shapes, to identify more and less, big and little and to use and respond to an increasing mathematical vocabulary. Children begin to record their work, for example

the children in reception were very excited and pleased with the chart they had made to show likes and dislikes after tasting a variety of foods.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 55 Through a good range of practical activities children find out more about the world and the people they meet. For example, children enjoyed dressing up as a variety of characters such as a firefighter. Two children had great fun finding bags to “go shopping”, exploring items such as a flask that takes to pieces to put in their shopping bag, then returning to the home corner to “cook dinner” using a range of cooking implements. One child enjoyed going around the classroom “taking photographs” of the other children with a toy camera. Through more directed and well planned activities children are introduced to day and night, and that we see the moon and stars at night and the sun during the day. Because the teacher used the multi-sensory room, where lights were used well to simulate this, children’s understanding was effectively increased. Teachers plan well to help children learn about cause and effect and off and on. They begin to show an interest in why things happen and how things work, by using switches such as on the bubble tube and the key board. However, some learning opportunities are not fully explored, for example although the children enjoyed looking at themselves through different coloured windows the opportunities for language and discovery were not fully explored. Children enjoy using a range of construction toys and become increasingly competent at joining parts together.

Physical development

- 56 Many pupils have poor co-ordination and control on entry to the nursery. Through a planned range of indoor and outdoor activities, children make good progress in their physical development. Outside, children enjoy using the climbing apparatus, although this is limited, and develop physical control, from sitting on bikes and pushing themselves around to pedalling bikes and steering them. Children become more confident in the ball pool and soft play area and climb up and in and through the apparatus, and enjoy sliding down on their tummies and backs. In more structured physical education lessons, well managed by the teacher, they listen carefully, watch their teacher and try hard at body control, such as lying on the floor and lifting their tummy off, an activity that they find difficult. These lessons are enhanced by the good team work and planning between teachers and the physiotherapist. Through playing with a range of construction toys they improve their dexterity and control, joining and fixing pieces together.

Creative development

- 57 Children make good progress in this area because teachers provide a range of activities that they can respond to by using many senses. They enjoy action songs and joining in with the movements, and have fun exploring a range of sound producing objects such as keyboard and tambourine. Through teachers being involved in the activities, such as a “chicken and chips” tea in the home corner, they support children’s understanding of the ways in which one object can be used to represent another and also extend the children’s vocabulary and use of language. Children use a range of materials to scrunch, rip and tear and begin to use scissors, glue and paint in their artistic efforts.

ENGLISH

- 58 Pupils in the primary and secondary classes achieve well and make at least good progress in English. Primary pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, achieve very well and make very good progress. The achievement and progress of pupils in the autistic department is satisfactory. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on improving teaching and learning, including extending the range of writing opportunities available to pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching in the main school is at least good with a significant number of lessons being very good. In the autistic department teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons teachers make use of a wide range of resources and teaching strategies to involve the pupils and capture their interest. Pupils make good progress towards the literacy targets set in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). There are no marked differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with additional special needs in the main school are well supported and make good progress.
- 59 Because of effective teaching, younger pupils make very good progress in communication skills. This is well supported by the good teamwork between teachers and the speech and language therapist as is evidenced in the effective work on picture supported learning. In one class a teacher used a board with a variety of pictures to enable pupils to make a choice of drink at break time. Pupils with limited communication skills chose one picture and had their drink while other, more able pupils chose three or four pictures to make the sentence "I would like a drink please". Because the words are printed under the picture and the pupils have to stick the pictures left to right in the correct order, reading as well as speaking skills are being effectively developed. Pupils are showing significant gains in their abilities to speak using more complex sentences. Teachers' planning includes focusing on the learning of individual pupils and teaching assistants (TAs) are effectively deployed for this individual support. Pupils with limited communication skills are effectively supported by the use of a variety of approaches, including signing, to help them find and match words from a story and symbols to help them read class rules and timetables. Teachers use resources well to reinforce pupils' enjoyment of stories. The story of the "Very Hungry Caterpillar" was brought to life through the use of felt caterpillars and fruit. Because of this approach pupils are interested in books, learn to talk about the pictures and put pictures in the right order to retell a familiar story. Alphabet games are effectively used to help pupils learn letter sounds. Higher attaining pupils learn to blend single sounds to read and write simple words. Teachers encourage pupils to write using a variety of appropriate strategies including overwriting, copying and making words and sentences using plastic letters. Most pupils learn to recognise and write their name. Teachers' high expectations mean that higher attaining pupils begin to write simple sentences independently, retelling stories or writing information such as their "news".
- 60 Secondary aged pupils continue to develop effectively their communication skills because teaching is good. Higher attaining pupils talk about their work, answer questions, predict what is going to happen next in a story and state their own opinions. Older pupils extend communication skills to other environments and contexts, such as discussing their Action Plan with the careers adviser and attending work experience placements. The extension of the Literacy Strategy into the lower secondary classes has provided a clear structure to lessons. During the inspection one teacher used a Big Book effectively during a shared reading session to reinforce

the correct vocabulary and position of the title, contents and index in a non-fiction book. Some words in the book beginning with “th” were covered so that pupils had to guess them. Because the teacher chose a book that the pupils were interested in and because they used the picture and context clues, pupils were able to guess the words correctly. Resources are appropriate for the pupils’ age, for example the use of an overhead projector to fill in missing consonant blends. Because there is a structured approach to the teaching of reading, including phonics, pupils make good progress and by Year 9 many are able to read simple texts accurately and with understanding. Reading results of pupils using one commercial approach show good gains in their reading ability and understanding. At Year 11 higher attaining pupils successfully achieve accreditation in the Certificate of Educational Achievement. Most secondary age pupils learn to write independently and make satisfactory progress, although lower attaining pupils need considerable support to spell simple three letter words. Pupils are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes including writing biographies, letters, play scripts, poems, stories and completing college application forms. Effective teaching means that all pupils have the opportunity to study a range of books including the work of famous authors. In one lesson, pupils suggested adjectives to describe characters in “Far from the Madding Crowd” and all achieved success because they were given appropriate support and praise.

- 61 Pupils in the autistic department make satisfactory progress in English and achievements are satisfactory. Teachers have successfully adapted the Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of the pupils, many of whom experience difficulties in co-operative work such as shared reading and writing activities. Teaching is most effective when appropriate challenges and teaching strategies are used and when the management of pupils is good. In one lesson the teacher, sensitive to the needs of the pupils, organised the class so that some worked independently in workstations or with a teaching assistant and others worked in a group to discuss the vocabulary used in newspaper articles. Because pupils’ needs were met they responded positively to the lesson and made progress. In some lessons where teachers use a limited range of strategies, poor behaviour has an adverse effect on pupils’ learning. By Year 9 most pupils can read simple text and write for a variety of purposes.
- 62 The planned use of literacy throughout the curriculum is inconsistent. Teachers working with younger pupils have adopted multi-sensory approaches to communication, which effectively involve lower attaining pupils. They use picture supported learning in a number of subjects including personal and social education and physical education so that pupils learn to communicate independently and effectively. These approaches are not used consistently in the secondary classes where lower attaining pupils often rely too heavily on adult support. There is evidence of pupils writing for a variety of purposes, for example descriptive writing in Geography and letter writing in History. Computers are used for word processing and illustrating poems, for example “The Witche’s Spell”, but limited use is made of software such as spelling programmes and interactive “talking books”.
- 63 Teaching and learning for pupils with additional special needs in the main school is good. They are given appropriate support and encouraged to work with other pupils whenever possible. One pupil with visual impairment joined a small group to play a letter game using a board with the letters printed in Braille. The teacher from the ethnic minority support service supports pupils with English as an additional language very effectively. She also advises the librarian on appropriate books for inclusion in the library.

- 64 There has been good improvement in pupils' achievement and in teaching English since the last inspection. This is due to the successful introduction, by the subject co-ordinator, of a range of initiatives, including the Literacy Strategy, that have had a positive impact throughout the school. The policy, which has been recently updated, does not fully reflect the good practice in the school. Assessment procedures, including the use of P level measures, now provide information about pupils' attainment. In the lower school the co-ordinator has used these figures to analyse pupil progress and present findings to parents pictorially using bar charts. A school writing portfolio contains examples of pupils' writing at different levels to help staff compare and identify writing attainments of pupils in their classes. Additional resources have been purchased and stored so that they are easily accessible. These include a good range of Big Books, many with supporting resources to capture pupils' interest. A further improvement has been the expansion of the library and the appointment of a full time librarian. Pupils have opportunities to select books, with support if necessary, from a comprehensive range of fiction and non-fiction books. The books are of good quality and include a selection of books written in Braille and stories from different cultures.

MATHEMATICS

- 65 Pupils' achievement and progress in mathematics are good overall because teaching is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school now gives high priority to improving pupils' progress in mathematics. All pupils have clear numeracy targets in their IEPs, which are regularly and effectively reviewed and revised.
- 66 Since the last inspection, teachers have introduced the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively and it is securely in place in school. The good guidance and support from the subject co-ordinators is a significant factor in improving standards pupils achieve. Lessons are well planned overall. What has already been learnt and what is to be learnt next is clearly identified for pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers are consistent in their use of the correct mathematical vocabulary which helps pupils to extend their learning and explain their work effectively. Teacher assistants are well briefed and work well with teachers to support pupils in group activities within lessons. They also make a good contribution to helping teachers assess and record pupils' progress in lessons towards their individual numeracy targets.
- 67 Because lessons are carefully planned and proceed at a good pace pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good and developing knowledge of both number and shape. Higher attaining pupils order and recognise numbers to 100, use correct language to read sums and state the answers, and solve real-life money problems using coins. Lower attaining pupils develop an awareness of number, match pictures of objects to the right number of objects shown and can count to 10. Teachers maintain high expectations of pupils. They set pupils appropriate challenges to develop their mathematical skills and provide variety in activities to develop their knowledge and understanding. For example, at the start of a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used the song 'Five Brown and Fuzzy Bears' well to test the pupils' knowledge of numbers up to and less than five. Later in the same lesson, the teacher set the pupils the challenge of collecting as many beanbags as they could in a bucket 'against the clock', counted their totals aloud and recorded each pupil's 'score' on a wall chart. After two rounds, the teacher talked to the pupils about 'more than', 'less than' and 'the same'. The pupils used the terms correctly to compare their first and second round scores. Teachers match resources well to the needs of individual pupils and make them available to support pupils' learning in both whole class and small group work. In a lesson seen with pupils in Year 3, the teacher worked well with

a small group of lower attaining pupils by playing a game of 'Teddy Bear's Picnic' to help them learn their numbers from 1 to 10. The pupils took it in turns to count out the right number of cups and saucers and matched the right number of candles to the holes on the top of birthday cakes. By the end of Year 6, the good progress pupils make is shown in the way they can, for example, independently fill in missing numbers in calculations. They know numbers more and less than 20, understand 'longer' and 'shorter' in measuring and name and sort two-dimensional shapes correctly.

- 68 The class of pupils in Years 4 to 6 who have lessons with their teachers at the local junior school achieve well and make good progress because teaching is effective. In one lesson the teacher made good use of the pupils' senses of sight and touch, while using resources well matched to the pupils' needs, to develop their knowledge and understanding of three-dimensional shapes. The teacher revised with the pupils the names and properties of these shapes, using a wall chart as an effective aid. Then the teacher placed one plastic shape at a time unseen into a box. The pupils took it in turns to feel the shape, describe it in the correct mathematical terms and challenge the other pupils to name it. Because pupils were involved in their learning and because the activity was fun the pupils made good progress in the lesson.
- 69 In lessons with older pupils, tasks continue to be generally well matched to pupils' abilities and teachers use suitable resources well to help them learn. For example, in a lesson with lower attaining pupils in Years 8 and 9, pupils worked in two groups with a teacher and a teaching assistant to practise and learn combining tens and units to make '-teen' numbers. The pupils used number fans very well to find and show these numbers. In a lesson with lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11, the teacher set the pupils the task of drawing the lines of symmetry on various two-dimensional shapes. The teacher gave the pupils mirrors to help them and questioned individual pupils very effectively to make them check their results. In this way, the teacher not only challenged the pupils to think about and explain what they were doing but also assessed their level of understanding. Secondary aged pupils continue to achieve well in acquiring and practising number and calculation skills. Because teaching and planning are effective, by the end of Year 9, pupils use the appropriate units of measurement to calculate time, length and capacity. They represent fractions by drawing on squared paper and recognise fractions as part of a whole. Most explain what is meant by symmetry. Good lesson planning contributes to support pupils' good progress, and by the end of Year 11, pupils can round numbers to the nearest ten or the nearest hundred. They name and identify three-dimensional shapes correctly, collect and show data in a number of ways and plot co-ordinates.
- 70 In the autistic department, pupils' progress and achievements in mathematics are satisfactory overall because the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good aspects. Where teaching is more effective, teachers combine well good classroom management with their knowledge of pupils' individual needs to stretch pupils in their learning and set them tasks well matched to their individual abilities. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils used number squares to find numbers that were 10 more or less than the number stated by the teacher. One higher attaining pupil was given work on a related task, using numbers up to 300. In a Year 10 lesson, the teacher effectively developed pupils' mental arithmetic skills by good use of question and answer. In response, the pupils quickly and accurately added on to make numbers up to 100, double numbers up to 50 and divide numbers by 2 to produce fractions. Where teaching is less effective, the teachers' knowledge of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses is not reflected well enough in lesson planning, pupils lose interest and their behaviour significantly disrupts their learning and the learning of others. Some pupils' reading and comprehension skills are significantly weaker than their numerical skills. For example, in a Year 10 lesson, pupils wrote the answers to

sums based on multiplying numbers by 3 quickly and correctly. However, when given sums based on written problems, they found it much harder to interpret the text and understand what calculations were required to find the answer.

- 71 Numeracy is well used across the curriculum, although not always fully planned for. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in science when recording data, in geography when working out co-ordinates, and in history when using time lines. Most teachers take the opportunities in their subject to reinforce mathematical skills and concepts.
- 72 Mathematics is managed well by the subject co-ordinators. There are good, detailed programmes setting out the topics pupils are to cover from year to year, well linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and ensuring that teachers throughout the school reach consistent judgements about pupils' levels of performance. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are motivated by work accredited by the Certificate of Achievement, and a significant number achieve success in this way. Since the last inspection, the range of resources to support teaching and learning has been significantly improved and is good. However, ICT is insufficiently used to support pupils' learning and achievement.

SCIENCE

- 73 Achievements of pupils in science are satisfactory overall. Because of skilful teaching primary pupils achieve well and make good progress in their observational and comparison skills. They learn about living things and begin to use an appropriate vocabulary. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 in the main school achieve good levels of knowledge and understanding of science. This is reflected in the results last summer in national science tests when a small number of pupils, including pupils from the autistic department, achieved close to the national average. However, the school has yet to decide the best accredited examination for these pupils, now in Year 10, to take at the end of Year 11. Pupils with hearing and visual impairments, and pupils with physical difficulties, receive the support specified in their statements of special educational need and make satisfactory gains in science. Minority ethnic pupils and pupils whose home language is not English are fully included in science lessons and make satisfactory progress like their peers. There is no significant variation between the achievements of girls and boys. Although a few girls can be very quiet during whole class teaching, teachers and assistants actively encourage them to join in. Pupils in Year 10 and 11 in the main school and in the autistic department work towards the Certificate of Educational Achievement and last year pupils gained pass and merit certificates.
- 74 Although the quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall, achievements do not match this because medium and long term planning does not show sufficient breadth or allow pupils to systematically build on acquired skills, knowledge and understanding. In most of the science lessons observed, from Reception to Year 11, the majority of learning focused on developing knowledge of life processes and living things. Resources are well prepared and the recent appointment of a part-time technician has improved the organisation and accessibility of the resources. The use of effective resources motivates pupils and aids their understanding. In primary classes the use of musical games, taped sounds, big books, observing animals, growing plants, and visits to farms, for example, helps pupils learn about a good range of living things. In one lesson, although pupils in Years 3 and 4 recognised familiar sounds, most needed the photographic clues prepared to help them. Just occasionally learning is not as effective as it could be because appropriate resources are not used. An introductory lesson on seeds, for example, was not fully effective because photographs were used rather than real plant material. Teachers

appropriately develop speaking and listening skills during science lessons, for example, a higher attaining Year 4 pupil listened carefully and described the sound as “It’s a crashing sound of water hitting the rocks”. Most individual lessons are well planned to match pupils’ learning needs and grouping pupils by ability in the primary years is very effective. The approaches teachers use effectively promote pupils’ personal and social development, through turn taking and listening to each other in circle activities, for example.

- 75 By Year 9 higher attaining pupils understand the life cycle of a flowering plant, and can discuss the need for ‘nutrients’ to enter the plant through its roots. Where teaching was most effective, skilful questioning challenged higher and lower attaining pupils to think and pupils’ responses were used very well to guide the direction of the lesson, enabling pupils to reach a deeper understanding.
- 76 During the inspection, pupils in the autistic department, from Year 5 to Year 10, learned to read a pulse meter to find their heart beat before and after exercise. The standard of practical skill achieved by older and younger secondary autistic pupils was broadly the same. Although they recorded the results, their skill in interpreting the information collected was very limited. In most lessons, extremes of behaviour are managed well and pupils who want to learn are given every encouragement to do so, even when the behaviour of their peers is very disruptive. Teachers make consistent efforts to encourage quieter girls to participate and specifically invite them to respond during whole class teaching. Methods and questions during whole class teaching do not consistently meet the learning needs of higher attaining pupils. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, a higher attaining boy sat for several minutes without a task; and in the conclusion to the lesson he was not challenged to explain why the heart might beat faster after exercise. There are good opportunities for pupils aged 11 to 14 years in the department to extend their learning in science in a local comprehensive school.
- 77 Pupils use simple equipment to measure and record data, and these achievements are good in relation to learning needs, but progress in the skills of analysis and evaluation are slow. By the time pupils reach Year 11, standards of coursework investigations for the Certificate of Educational Achievement are low. Pupils have difficulty planning investigations, using their observations to consider evidence, and suggesting improvements to their methods.
- 78 Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Across the school, pupils now have better access to practical work in science, but teaching the full range of scientific enquiry skills, as specified in the National Curriculum programmes of study, is not well developed. Teachers have received good quality training in the teaching of enquiry skills, but this has not yet had sufficient impact in lessons. In a Year 10 sports science lesson, for example, questions did not adequately develop pupils’ understanding of the impact of friction on performance in sport, nor how properties of materials determine the different uses of sports equipment. The use of assessment to monitor pupils’ progress needs developing to better inform teachers’ lesson planning. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT to support pupils’ scientific enquiry and learning. Some concerns about the safe storage of chemicals have been reported to the school and action is being taken.

ART AND DESIGN

- 79 It was only possible to observe four art and design lessons during the inspection but pupils’ displayed and stored work indicates that achievement of both primary and secondary age pupils, including those in the autistic department, is satisfactory. This judgement is further supported by the satisfactory progress made by pupils in the lessons observed and by the standard of the work completed by pupils in Year 11.

Pupils' work accredited last year achieved a merit and a distinction pass. Standards of achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils of all ages, including those in the autistic department, make satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of materials and processes and their skills in observing and exploring ideas. The school has not developed suitable procedures to assess or record what pupils 'know and can do.' This makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that pupils build successfully on what they have achieved and, therefore, over time pupils' progress is satisfactory, even though they may have achieved well in some lessons. For pupils in Years 10 and 11 assessment procedures are more secure because their work is assessed through external accreditation.

80 Effective teaching helps primary pupils learn how to use simple art tools competently and they handle tools such as paintbrushes and glue spatulas with increasing independence. When painting most can name the colours they use and match colours to objects they observe. Younger pupils learn how to observe carefully and record accurately and teachers continue to develop these skills as pupils move from class to class. Older primary pupils, for example, observed the need to include key features such as the wheels and ladder when they painted a toy fire engine. Younger secondary age pupils continue to develop their competence, for example when applying paint accurately while making samples of striped and spotted wallpaper. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities that enable pupils to apply the skills and techniques they have learned to an appropriate variety of media. One class looked carefully at a good range of different containers the teacher had provided before deciding how they would decorate their own container. Appropriate opportunities are provided at each age for pupils to learn about different artists, such as Picasso, encouraging pupils to appreciate the artists' work and style. Pupils reflect these different styles in their own work which is effectively displayed around the school. Teachers reinforce pupils' communication skills through effective questioning and discussion of their work. Pupils are encouraged to describe what they see, for example, in a lesson for younger secondary age pupils the teacher encouraged them to talk about the different patterns they had found around the school and in the wallpaper samples they had looked at. Through this discussion pupils clarified their understanding and recognised that patterns are often made up of repeated shapes. Pupils are confident to ask questions about their work and this enables teachers to extend their learning. In a Year 8 lesson pupils noticed that some patterns are regular and some random, the teacher effectively extended pupils' understanding by exploring the difference between pattern and decoration. The activities planned by teachers enable pupils to use skills they have learned in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 9 measured and used a ruler accurately when they drew diagonal and horizontal lines to make wallpaper samples. Although individual teachers use computers to extend pupils' learning these opportunities are not yet identified in curriculum plans and pupils' opportunities are inconsistent across the school.

81 The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with additional special needs are appropriately supported so that they are fully included in the learning experiences provided. Teachers effectively use art activities to support pupils' learning in other subjects such as English. For example, older secondary age pupils made witches hats when they studied Macbeth and teachers provide appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the art associated with the history topics they study. However, in a small number of lessons teaching and learning were not as effective as they could have been because of pupil behaviour. A small number of pupils consistently disrupt learning for themselves and for others. Rudeness, such as swearing, and silly behaviour such as throwing rubbers is ignored by teachers which results in the behaviour escalating until it disrupts pupils who are

trying to work. At other times teaching becomes disjointed because of the constant need to remind pupils to pay attention.

- 82 Management of the subject has been inconsistent. The art curriculum has not been a focus for development for some time and the subject policy is out of date. The school acknowledges this and a full review is planned for next term. The acting co-ordinator, who has only been responsible for the subject since September, has established a development plan with suitable priorities to improve the subject. In line with curriculum developments in other subject areas the school is effectively introducing the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) units of work to provide support and guidance for teachers when they plan lessons. This has resulted in improvements to the art curriculum since the last inspection despite disruptions in management of the subject. Monitoring of the subject, which was identified as an area for development by the last inspection, has been improved. Teachers' planning is now monitored by the acting co-ordinator but there is still no opportunity to observe teaching and the co-ordinator does not have enough information about the quality of teaching and learning across the school to inform priorities in the subject development plan. Since the last inspection the school has made improvements to the accommodation. These have resulted in the creation of a specialist teaching area for art, which has separate accommodation for teaching pottery. This is beginning to have a beneficial effect on teaching and learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 83 Pupils' progress in lessons in design and technology is satisfactory but achievement overall is unsatisfactory. This shows a lack of improvement since the last inspection. Design and technology and food technology are taught as separate subjects through the school. The quality of teaching in lessons seen is satisfactory overall and at times is good. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. However, the lack of records or work previously completed by pupils in any year-group and the lack of assessment information means there is little evidence of pupils' progress over time. During the inspection, the co-ordinator for food technology was absent through illness. Overall, teachers have low expectations of pupils' abilities and because of this pupils make slow progress. Much of the work seen in lessons was very broadly based on teaching pupils to develop, plan and communicate ideas. There were limited opportunities for pupils to work with equipment, materials and components in design and technology. The use of tools and pupils' efforts to exercise choice or evaluate what they had done were seen only in food technology.
- 84 Where teaching is good, teachers know the pupils' abilities well, plan for them and manage the resources well to include further development of learning through practical activities. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, lower attaining pupils used three-dimensional shapes well to make simple constructions. The teacher made good use of wooden building blocks and well chosen language to revise and reinforce pupils' knowledge of the names of shapes and colours. Because of good demonstrations and clear instructions pupils took it in turns to direct each other to build towers, showing they could make the right choices to follow simple instructions.
- 85 Effective use of resources by teachers enables pupils to become more aware of different methods of construction and materials, for example in a Year 9 lesson the teacher used carefully chosen photographs of different types of bridges. The teacher skilfully questioned the pupils in turn, using language appropriate to their level of understanding, to test their knowledge of the bridge's purpose and the materials used to build it. As the questions continued, the teacher challenged the pupils to draw and state their own conclusions about other aspects of the structures, such as their

safety and the ability of the materials used to withstand the effects of different climates and weather conditions. Where teaching is less effective, teachers' own subject knowledge is insecure and lesson planning is not well informed by pupils' past progress and individual abilities. As a result, learning set for pupils in lessons can be unclear and narrow in relation to the practical aspects of design and technology. This leads to pupils being told facts, rather than being given sufficient opportunity to test out this information in practical ways. While most pupils can make spoken contributions to lessons, they find it more difficult to learn from writing and illustrations not well matched to their level of literacy and understanding, or from explanations by the teacher poorly matched to their own level of comprehension. For example, in another lesson seen on the topic of bridges in Year 7, the teacher used a variety of photographs and drawings to judge pupils' knowledge and understanding of where famous bridges are located and the materials from which they are built. The teacher used question and answer effectively to check pupils' previous learning and pupils responded appropriately. However, when the teacher asked the pupils to apply this knowledge in a practical way by using one or more construction kits in the classroom to build a bridge, the methods to achieve this and the expected outcomes were not clearly explained. As a result, the pupils quickly became confused and were unable to begin the task unaided. In the autistic department, in a year 8 lesson about man-made structures and their properties, pupils' learning was limited because the teacher's resources had not been well prepared beforehand. The purpose of the task based on them, to select and draw an interesting structure, was not well matched to pupils' learning needs.

- 86 In the autistic department, pupils in Years 6 and 7 learn to choose ingredients to make something they will enjoy eating. The routines of food technology lessons also provide a good framework for the pupils to develop their social skills. In one lesson, the teacher combined good preparation and good classroom management to help all the pupils put ingredients together to make their own mini-pizzas. The teacher's clear statement of expectations at the start of the lesson helped to ensure that pupils' behaviour did not disrupt their learning. The pupils showed a good awareness of the need for cleanliness in preparing food. The teacher gave a very clear explanation of the food to be prepared in the lesson and pupils took it in turns to choose ingredients to make up their own pizza toppings. In food technology, a strength of the teaching was the attention paid to helping pupils of all abilities to play a full part in lessons. The teacher used questions effectively to enable Year 10 and 11 pupils to establish their understanding of the need for safety and hygiene in the kitchen when they were learning to prepare meals using eggs as the main ingredient. Pupils knew, for example, that eggs should be checked for freshness and how to do this. From other ingredients provided, pupils also knew that fruit and vegetables should be washed before use and that some parts of vegetables, such as the seeds of peppers, have to be discarded. As the lesson went on, with help and support from the teacher and teaching assistant, pupils worked productively in pairs to plan and prepare the main course and dessert of their choice.
- 87 Design and technology and food technology have separate subject co-ordinators. There are programmes outlining the topics pupils should cover from year to year and these cross-refer to National Curriculum guidelines. However, they lack sufficient detail to support individual teachers' planning effectively. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are motivated to sustain their learning until they reach the age of 16 in food technology through work accredited by a Certificate of Achievement. For all other ages there is no clear system of regular assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' achievement to help teachers in lesson planning or in measuring the impact of their teaching. As a result, annual reports to parents for the subject lack detail about pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and the progress they are making.

Teaching resources are satisfactory. However, in lessons seen during the inspection no use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in design and technology or food technology was observed. The teaching accommodation for food technology is satisfactory and appropriate for its purpose. All the lessons seen in design and technology took place in pupils' classrooms which limited their learning opportunities.

GEOGRAPHY

- 88 It was only possible to observe lessons for secondary age pupils and those in the autistic department. Evidence from teachers' plans, pupils' reports and their work indicates that achievement of both primary and secondary age pupils, including those in the autistic department is satisfactory overall. This judgement is further supported by the standard of work completed by pupils in Year 11 as part of their accredited humanities course where a number of merit passes were achieved last year. Standards of achievement have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 89 Pupils of all ages, including those in the autistic department, make satisfactory progress in developing their understanding and skills. The school has not developed procedures to determine what pupils 'understand'. This makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that pupils build successfully on what they have learned and, therefore, over time pupils' progress is satisfactory. For pupils in Years 10 and 11 assessment procedures are more secure because their work is assessed through external accreditation. In the lessons observed pupil progress was variable ranging from unsatisfactory to good. The majority of younger secondary age pupils make good progress. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 and those in the autistic department make satisfactory progress. Pupils make good progress in lessons where there is good teaching.
- 90 Where lessons are planned to be relevant to the pupils and opportunities are provided for pupils to be active in their learning pupils work well. For example, younger secondary age pupils listed leisure and work activities and understood they could gather information about people's work and leisure habits by designing a questionnaire. Each part of the lesson was short which helped pupils to remain focused. Activities were effectively planned to enable them to use their mathematical skills, for example, pupils suggested they use graphs and charts to present their information. The use of very good explanations and clear instructions ensured pupils understood what they were expected to do so they could work independently and confidently. In this lesson the work was very well matched to pupils' abilities; one group designed a questionnaire while other pupils were supported effectively by the teaching assistant to make theirs by cutting photocopied pictures. All pupils made good progress.
- 91 Where teachers use effective and appropriate resources and manage the pupils well pupils make good progress. For example, one teacher used questions and a good range of photograph resources of shops past and present, in the local area, to enable Year 9 pupils to identify how and why shopping patterns have changed over time. Good use of questioning ensured pupils had suitable opportunities to show their skills and contribute to lessons, while enabling the teacher to check their skills and extend their learning. It is most effective in lessons where teachers plan interesting activities so that pupils are keen to learn. In lessons where teaching ensures that there is a brisk pace and clear and consistent expectations of behaviour, pupils concentrate and participate effectively which enables them to make good progress. They are not given the answers too quickly and very good use of prompts encourages them to think carefully. They develop their ideas and clarify their understanding by listening to each other's contributions. Older secondary age pupils know the different seasons and list

different weather conditions. Teachers effectively extend pupils' understanding by introducing concepts such as 'the earth moving round the sun to produce the seasons'. Displays around the school indicate that pupils of all ages have had suitable opportunities to develop map skills and this was reflected in a lesson for pupils in Year 9 when they decided on a 'key' to indicate which activities are leisure or work. Individual teachers use computers to extend pupils' learning but these opportunities are not yet identified in curriculum plans and pupils' opportunities are inconsistent across the school.

- 92 During the inspection teaching was satisfactory overall. It varied from unsatisfactory to very good, with the majority of lessons for younger secondary age pupils being good. Teaching for pupils in the autistic department and those in Year 10 and 11 was satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection and there have been some improvements in terms of the number of good lessons seen. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities for all pupils to gain understanding and pupils with additional special needs are appropriately supported so that they are fully included in lessons. This enables them to make the same progress as others in the class.
- 93 Pupils do not learn as well in lessons where behaviour is not managed effectively and a small number of pupils are allowed to disrupt teaching and learning for the group. In these lessons teaching becomes disjointed because of the constant need to remind pupils to pay attention. Unacceptable behaviour such as verbal taunting and wandering from the group is often tolerated for too long. Teaching is less effective when the teaching assistant does not have a clearly defined role in the management of behaviour which would enable the teacher to continue the activity with other pupils. In a few lessons, lower attaining pupils do not make as much progress as others because work is not well matched to their needs. A work sheet provided for Year 10 pupils was too difficult for them and they were not given enough support to complete it.
- 94 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who has been responsible for the humanities course for the oldest secondary age pupils, has had whole school responsibility for the subject since September. A subject development plan has been established which has suitable priorities to move the subject forward. There have been good improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. A new and satisfactory policy has been developed and the school is introducing the QCA units of work to support and guide teachers' planning. Resource needs are being appropriately reviewed as each new unit is taught. The head of department and the subject co-ordinator monitor teachers' planning but there is no opportunity to observe teaching and the co-ordinator does not have enough information about the quality of teaching and learning in geography to fully inform priorities in the subject development plan.

HISTORY

- 95 Overall, pupils' achievements in history are satisfactory and often good. Good achievements and good progress in lessons are the result of teaching that offers pupils a range of interesting activities within lessons that generate pace and excitement. Pupils are challenged appropriately and the work is well matched to their individual learning styles. History is taught as a discrete subject from Year 2. Year 10 and 11 pupils work towards accreditation through the Certificate of Educational Achievement examination. During the last three years examination results have improved. In 1999, 20 per cent of pupils gained passes and 80 per cent gained a merit

mark while in the year 2001, 86 per cent of pupils gained merit marks and 14 per cent gained distinction marks.

- 96 Teachers regularly draw the attention of Year 1 and 2 pupils to the sequence of activities identified in the daily and weekly timetable. This helps them build up an awareness of the passing of time. Through the effective use of photographs and pictures teachers help pupils develop a better understanding of chronology as they look at their own families and understand that the difference between a baby and an adult is the result of the passage of time. Listening to true stories and mythological tales helps them to understand the difference between fact and fiction and they begin to establish a simple base for historical investigation in terms of “how do we find out about the past?”
- 97 By Year 6 teachers have successfully built on and further extended pupils’ understanding of changes over time through, for example, comparing the lives of the people of Ancient Egypt and Rome with their own lives. This work is made more relevant to them by comparing toys from times past with toys from the present. Stories about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes, confirms to them that history is also about real people. Where teaching actively involves pupils they make better progress. For example, the carefully organised visit to Caerleon provided them with a very clear experience of life in the past, and of how people lived long ago. They particularly enjoyed the practical activities associated with this visit such as making blocks to build a Roman wall. The exciting and colourful display about their lessons on the Great Fire of London provides a good record of their study of a well known event from the past. The flames coming out of the houses had particularly excited one pupil.
- 98 Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 continue to make progress and by the time they are 14 pupils have made good gains in their ability to discuss historical issues in a logical manner and to ask questions with more insight. The quality of their written work is not as good as their ability to discuss historical issues. A group of Year 7 pupils, in the autistic department, responded well when comparing a Viking house with a modern detached home. The teacher’s carefully prepared dioramas generated genuine awe and wonder and a spate of enthusiastic questions. Higher attaining pupils responded with significant effort to his more challenging task of reading a prepared list of Viking items and writing their modern equivalents. Pupils responded well to the teacher’s carefully pitched questions and targeted prompts when discussing the reasons for invasions in general and the Viking invasion in particular. The teacher’s very good use of rapid sketches on the white board helped to maintain a good pace to the lesson and ensured pupils remained focused and working with effort for the whole session. Carefully selected visits also play an important part in the teaching of history. A visit to the American museum in Bath effectively supported work on the history of another country. Photographic evidence of the visit confirmed that pupils enjoyed and benefited from seeing and handling North American Indian artefacts. As pupils get older they are more confident when involved with role play and the teachers’ use of this approach during lessons about Victorian school life was very effective. Pupils responded with enthusiasm and, during the lesson plenary, recalled the facts and issues well. A pupil with significant visual impairment demonstrated real enjoyment during one of these lessons as she, in particular, detected and appreciated the different acting voice used by the teacher. A very well planned lesson for Year 9 pupils on Victorian inventions elicited a similar very positive response from a girl with a marked speech impediment. She alone remembered the word “bacteria” during their discussion of Joseph Lister’s work on aseptic surgery. The praise from and respect shown by peers and staff contributed significantly to her self-esteem. In addition this lesson provided evidence of the pupils’ ability to interpret visual and verbal evidence

and to be confident when making judgements about what can be considered as firm or doubtful sources.

- 99 Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are better at abstracting information from written evidence and can discuss historical issues with more confidence and accuracy. Their firmer understanding of chronology enables them to make informed judgements about how long ago events took place. Pupils extend their earlier work on medieval realms as they study life and the work of the church during this period and they revisit earlier work about the Tudors as they look in greater detail at the effects of Tudor exploration. The 20-Century world is considered as they look at changes in Britain since 1948 and as part of their humanities coursework they study the cause and effects of the Second World War in significantly more detail. In a lesson for autistic pupils which had them exploring the development of a time line for the Viking invasions the class teacher effectively used different work sheets in order to make sure that pupils of different abilities had equal opportunities to succeed.
- 100 The co-ordinator for history has only recently taken on responsibility for co-ordinating the subject throughout the school. She has a clear idea about how she wishes the subject to develop and is aware of the need to amalgamate the two current schemes of work into a coherent whole. She is also aware of the need to develop a whole school recording and assessment approach that will be directly linked to the new scheme of work. The resources available for the subject are good in terms of quality and quantity; they are very well organised and accessible and teachers use them effectively to help pupils learn. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the level and quality of resources for the subject and the previously identified satisfactory level of pupil achievement has been sustained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 101 Overall, pupils' achievements in information and communication technology (ICT) in discrete ICT lessons are good. Their good standard of achievement is the result of well planned lessons that are taught by teachers who are confident in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, despite the good level of ICT competency shown by teachers, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects. Pupils in the autistic department achieve well. The structured routines that are an essential part of working in the ICT room and the direct teaching of skills required by the subject matches their preferred learning style. During the last academic year older pupils, for the first time, sat for the Certificate of Educational Achievements in the subject with 57 per cent gaining passes and 43 per cent gaining merits.
- 102 By Year 2 years pupils know about cause and effect and understand that the on/off process can be created in different ways, including through the use of toggle switches and a variety of press and pull devices. Teachers successfully develop this awareness further through having pupils use a roller ball and a mouse to control a cursor on a screen. This skill is effectively reinforced when applied to simple games linked to their English and mathematics work. The language of direction is stressed as a base for future work. Pupils respond very well to teachers' reminders about the routines that apply to the ICT suite in general and when sitting at their "work stations" in particular. They consequently settle quickly at their stations, log on and attend well when staff give them directions. Direct teaching of ICT skills is a strong feature of teaching in this area of the curriculum. For example, a Year 3 and 4 lesson involved pupils in using a range of carefully selected activities, reading programmes, a painting programme and a simple word processing programme. During the lesson both the teacher and teacher assistants constantly supported pupils in their use of the core

skills of mouse control, key board familiarity and accurate cursor tracking and placement. At the end of lessons higher attaining pupils log off without help while all other pupils understand the need for correct logging off and can do so with help.

- 103 By the age of 11 pupils have continued to make progress as they build on previous experiences and are very familiar with the routines of working in the ICT suite. They name the components of their station with accuracy and confidence. The majority of pupils now log on and off without help and higher attaining pupils know how to save their own work to their folders. Simple word processing skills are developing and because pupils have been taught the purpose of the various screen icons that control programmes, they know how to change font size, can highlight words and sentences and consequently can change text colours. Teachers regularly remind pupils about the role of various keyboard features such as space bar and backspace and because of this their keyboard skills improve. In a lesson for Year 6 pupils, which had keyboard skill development as one of its aims, the teacher, despite having a common aim for all pupils, made sure that all made progress through providing task sheets of varying complexity. In addition, both the teacher and the teacher assistant provided carefully targeted support with this aim in mind. Pupils work well on their own; concentrate for long periods of time and persevere at their tasks before asking for help.
- 104 Pupils continue to make good progress between Years 6 to 9. By the time they are in Year 9 they use a mouse with very good control, can track and place a cursor with accuracy and higher attaining pupils can click and drag with success when re-sizing or moving imported images. Lower attaining pupils understand the principles of this operation and can perform it with varying degrees of help. This was well demonstrated when a pupil with significant learning difficulties showed wonder and pleasure after she succeeded in enlarging the picture on the screen. In a well-planned lesson with Year 9 pupils the teacher led a very good discussion about the advantage of word-processed text over hand written work. Her use of a poster to stimulate discussion succeeded in getting pupils to identify the merits of regular print size, being able to change font size and being able to change font by type or through the use of colour. In addition higher attaining pupils made very pertinent comments about the advantages of using ICT as a design tool when creating posters and birthday cards. The recently purchased interactive white board is effectively used by all teachers and has particular value when used with pupils from the autistic department. They focus very well on the large screen and enjoy either operating the master keyboard or working directly on the screen. One teacher effectively used the screen to teach pupils how to create tables using Word and ended the lesson with a good plenary session. This included identifying the link between that session and the more demanding task that would be undertaken the following week, that of abstracting data from a written paragraph and converting it into a table.
- 105 During Years 10 and 11 pupils continue to make progress as they consolidate previous learning and apply the skills acquired in the past to new tasks. They use correct terminology when talking about their work with this being well demonstrated in a lesson which had them produce a simple database. They knew about and understood what a record was, could discuss the merits of having fields that were too long as opposed to being too short and understood the difference between numeric and alphabetic fields. The class teacher had high expectations of the group and through her and the teacher assistant's individual help every pupil managed to produce a simple database. Additionally, they were able to carry out a one-feature sort of the list. Pupils continue to develop their word processing skills and in particular show that they are much more familiar with the purpose of the icons at the top of a standard commercial word processing programme. If lower attaining pupils are not as confident as their peers teachers provide them with a simpler but nevertheless

powerful programme. This programme, because of its additional audio output, enables them also to fully participate in lessons and achieve success. The direct teaching of core and extended ICT skills continues to be a strong feature of teaching at this stage in the school as does the teacher led discussions about the application of ICT in their life in general and the world of work in particular.

- 106 The subject is well led; it has a high profile in the school and the co-ordinator is committed to further development. The whole school policy for ICT is underpinned by a scheme of work that reflects QCA guidelines and the requirements of the Certificate of Educational Achievement. The excellent level of hardware and good level of software that supports the scheme of work has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. In addition the training provided by the co-ordinator and the ICT technician/network manager has had a very positive effect upon teachers' confidence. However, there continues to be a need to develop a whole school approach to recording and assessing progress and a need for future training to focus on the use of ICT across the curriculum. Since the last inspection there has been significant improvement in the resources available for ICT, good improvements in the staff's knowledge and understanding, and good improvements in the pupils' standard of work.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

- 107 Achievements in French are good overall. The achievements of pupils in Years 7 to 9 are good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when there was no provision for French for this age group. The setting of pupils into three groups is very effective because the work and pace of lessons are closely matched to learning needs. Higher attaining pupils can reply accurately to "Comment ca va?" They speak phrases like 'Oui, j'ai un chien'; and can name animals, numbers and colours in French. Lower attaining pupils in Years 7 to 9 are also learning numbers, colours and animals. They are less fluent and accurate in their pronunciation and require lessons to be conducted at a slower pace to allow plenty of thinking time before responding in French. These pupils receive very good support from the teaching assistant, who in turn receives very good support and guidance from the teacher. The teaching of pupils with hearing difficulties is very good, signing by the assistant is used well and these pupils have very good access to tasks. They make good progress over time, for example, recalling and speaking the names of animals, like 'lapin' and 'chien'. Pupils with speaking difficulties have good access to the French activities by using a picture exchange system, and gain some enjoyment from being in the lessons.
- 108 The achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 in the main school is good overall. The highest attaining pupils in this age group achieve very well because the standard of teaching is consistently very high. The achievements of the lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 in the main school are satisfactory. Less use is made of the French language in their lessons which limits their achievements. In the autistic department, pupils make satisfactory progress over time. Pupils in Year 10 made unsatisfactory progress in one lesson observed in the autistic department because most of them had a negative attitude to learning. They could not see the relevance of role playing the ordering of food and drink in a café, as preparation for a visit to France. They were reluctant to speak French, and most of the lesson was conducted in English; the teacher and teaching assistant lacking fluency in French. In contrast, pupils in the main school very much enjoy the opportunity to learn French. It boosts their self-esteem, especially because they can take a public examination in Year 11 like pupils in mainstream schools. All who entered for the examination last summer achieved a distinction in the Certificate of Achievement. Pupils in the autistic department do not take an examination in French at the end of Year 11. There is no school policy for

French to explain why pupils in the autistic department, in contrast to pupils in the main school, follow a different French curriculum and have no access to accreditation.

- 109 The quality of teaching and learning in French lessons is good overall. Pupils with speaking difficulties, and minority ethnic pupils, play a full part in French lessons. In Years 7 to 9 in the main school, the standard of teaching is very high. Lessons are conducted at a lively pace that motivates pupils and holds their interest very well. The teaching assistant makes a very good contribution to the learning of lower attaining pupils and those with additional needs. In Years 10 and 11 in the main school, the overall quality of teaching is good. Higher attaining pupils are taught at a brisk pace, and with much active participation by all pupils. Very good questioning skills establish what has been learned and what still needs to be practised. Pupils know the well established routines and respond very positively in lessons. They and the activities are managed very well, and time is used most productively. The teacher has been highly creative in designing and making resources for the whole department.
- 110 The quality of teaching and learning in the lower attaining class of pupils in Years 10 and Year 11 in the main school is satisfactory. Pupils have very good access to each activity; and the activities planned for them are very relevant in preparation for a residential visit to France next year. The pace of whole class teaching is quite slow, however, because of the time taken to give each pupil in this large group the opportunity to answer in French. In the lesson observed, no use was made of group work with flexible deployment of the teaching assistant to help speed up the pace of learning. French throughout the school is taught by non-specialists who require training to improve their French. Pupils make the most progress in lessons where teachers and teaching assistants use the most French. Not enough French lessons in the autistic department could be observed to make an overall judgement on the quality of French teaching as the subject is mainly taught for only one lesson a fortnight and, in one class, for one day every half term.
- 111 Improvement in French since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, and it is good with respect to the provision for French in Years 7 to 9. A new co-ordinator for the subject has very recently been appointed and is leading and organising the department very well. She has a clear vision of what needs to be done; and this is reflected in some very appropriate priorities in the subject development plan, including the need for a system for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' progress.

MUSIC

- 112 No music lessons for primary classes were seen during the inspection and it is, therefore, not possible to give a judgement on the overall achievements of these pupils in the subject. Two singing sessions involving pupils in Years 1 to 5 were observed, however, and it was clear from these that they make good progress in their ability to learn and sing simple songs. The older of the two groups have developed a good sense of beat and pitch and were able to vary their voices in response to the teacher's instructions. Both classes joined in with enthusiasm, responded well to the very good pace and control achieved by their teachers and clearly enjoy taking part in musical activities.
- 113 The achievements of pupils in the secondary department and the autistic department are unsatisfactory. By the age of fourteen, they are working at a very low level with untuned percussion instruments. Their technique in using these instruments is undeveloped and their understanding of how to use different patterns or combinations of sound is very limited. Planning for the subject in this department shows a good range of musical activities to build on previous work and to develop pupils' abilities in

music in a structured way. However, staff are not teaching at the levels required to achieve this. Pupils in Year 9 responded very positively in one lesson to the playing of pieces by Bob Marley and by Vivaldi but opportunities were missed to promote discussion of the music's qualities and the use of a musical vocabulary. There is a lack of staff confidence in and knowledge of the subject. The teaching of music in the autistic department shows very good use of the subject to promote co-operation and listening skills but, again, while satisfactory overall, it does not develop the musical content of lessons sufficiently and it gives the more enthusiastic pupils little to explore and discuss. One very good lesson was observed in this department, however. Year 11 and 12 pupils were playing drums to produce increasingly sophisticated patterns. They were thoroughly enjoying the challenge of this activity and hearing the results of their efforts which were recorded.

- 114 The provision of music has improved since the last inspection in that statutory requirements are now met. Photographs of a successful music week in the summer also show that there has been effective planning to bring in outside expertise to the school. Some very interesting initiatives have been discussed by the subject's co-ordinator and his colleagues and the results are beginning to be seen, for example, in the use of specialist software for pupils to create their own compositions on their computers. Other ideas, however, such as the introduction of keyboards come up against the problem of the lack of musical expertise on the staff. The co-ordinator recognises that more specialist input and more advice and support for staff are required to help overcome this problem.
- 115 Monitoring of the subject, as it is delivered in the classroom, is inadequate and there is no adequate scheme of assessment to inform teaching and the monitoring of standards. Expectations of what secondary age pupils can do are too low, particularly for those with musical ability and interests. There are few opportunities for pupils to advance their skills so that they can perform for others, although a recorder group has recently been established which is reported to have aroused a good level of interest among pupils. "Morning music", featuring a different composer or style of music each week, is played at the beginning of the school day, but opportunities for pupils to listen to, appraise and discuss music are limited and the subject makes a much smaller contribution to pupils' cultural development than it should.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 116 Achievement of both primary and secondary age pupils is good overall because the majority of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Achievement of pupils in the autistic department is satisfactory although their achievement in Yoga is good and reflects very good teaching by the visiting Yoga instructor. Standards of achievement have been improved since the last inspection. However, in a small number of lessons pupils make unsatisfactory progress because teachers' management of pupil behaviour is unsatisfactory.
- 117 During the inspection teaching was good overall. Teaching for pupils in the autistic department was satisfactory overall. Lessons are more successful when they are taught by physical education specialists or by staff with considerable expertise and enthusiasm for the sport. Across the school teaching varied from unsatisfactory to excellent. Examples of very good teaching were seen for pupils of all ages including those in the autistic department. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Overall pupils have good attitudes to learning and their responses are particularly positive in the very good lessons.

- 118 The youngest primary pupils make very good progress in movement because teachers plan a good range of activities for all pupils. Teachers provide very clear instructions which encourages pupils to listen carefully. Because they have listened well they are able to follow the teachers' instructions to successfully perform a series of movements such as rolling from side to side with knees bent and peddling their legs in the air in time to music. In a well managed and organised lesson, pupils in Year 6 confidently demonstrated ways to move along a bench and the majority performed a forward roll accurately. Pupils showed good physical effort because they were clear about what they had to do and because the teacher had high expectations of their performance. They remembered to bend their knees when jumping and to look over their shoulder when moving backwards. Pupils with additional special needs are appropriately supported so that they are fully included in lessons which enables them to make the same progress as others. However, in a less effective Year 6 lesson the teacher did not establish clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and they did not respond to requests and instructions. Pupils demonstrated good levels of skill and confidence when moving along and jumping off apparatus but their behaviour was inappropriate and they did not make as much progress as they could. Their behaviour also demonstrated scant regard for safety although they clearly understand the 'rules'.
- 119 Secondary age pupils make very good progress in football and basketball because a strong feature of the good teaching is the emphasis placed on proper warm up and cool down activities, the good emphasis on safety, and the links made between physical education and health. Overall, pupils have good attitudes to learning and their responses are particularly positive in the very good lessons. An example of this was in a Year 9 lesson where the teacher had prepared a well planned sequence of lessons with clear learning targets which enabled pupils to develop skills to kick and pass a football with control. In a Year 10 and 11 lesson the teacher had very high expectations of pupils and they responded very well. Because the teacher provided very clear explanations and demonstrations which ensured pupils were aware of the correct techniques for holding the hockey stick, and very clear guidance about how they must behave, pupils made good progress. Very good use of questions at the end of lessons enables pupils to explain what they have learned and enables teachers to check that they have understood the key elements of the lesson properly.
- 120 Pupils in the autistic department learn the basic skills required to play basketball but they find the gymnasium environment difficult and their behaviour affects the progress they make. Teachers plan appropriate activities and provide good demonstrations but pupils are reluctant to join in. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to encourage pupils to participate in the activities and pupils demonstrate that they can dribble a ball at a walk and at a run. More able pupils can bounce a ball with both hands showing good control and can bounce and chest pass to another person. Where progress is limited, the lessons are disjointed by pupils' behaviour and by adults' attempts to engage them in activities. The behaviour of some of the older pupils is very volatile. During some of the lesson these pupils behave in an unsafe way. They kick, throw or bounce the basketball excessively hard, hitting out, taunting each other verbally and making inappropriate physical contact with staff. All pupils in the autistic department demonstrate very different responses in Yoga which is a far more structured activity. They listen well, follow instructions and persevere with a long, fast moving and complicated sequence of poses and movements. Pupils' attention is well focused because they know what is expected of them and the instructor's expectations are high. Instructions are clear and short and the lesson is brisk.
- 121 Pupils of secondary age and students over 16 swim weekly. They make good progress developing water skills and working towards Water Skills awards. Teaching

and learning are good because the award scheme provides a clear structure which enables adults to assess what pupils can and cannot do. Pupils are grouped by ability allows activities to be planned effectively to meet their needs and this enables them to make good progress. An instructor at the swimming pool teaches higher attaining pupils and this makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make. Pupils' opportunities in physical education are enhanced by the provision of a very good lunchtime club for Judo, which is taught by a visiting instructor and American Football, taught by an enthusiastic and experienced staff member. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Displays around the school show that pupils have a wide range of physical experiences which enhance their learning. For example, there are opportunities to absail and canoe during the residential week and there are appropriate opportunities for students over 16 to learn leisure sports such as Ten Pin Bowling.

- 122 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had whole school responsibility for the subject since September. A subject development plan has been established which has suitable priorities to move the subject forward, and there are good plans to extend the range of opportunities pupils have in outdoor pursuit activities. There have been good improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. A new and satisfactory policy has been developed and the school is introducing the QCA units of work to support and guide teachers' planning. The head of department and the subject co-ordinator monitor teachers' planning but there is no opportunity to observe teaching. The co-ordinator does not have enough information about the quality of teaching and learning to fully inform priorities in the subject development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 123 Achievements in religious education are satisfactory for all ages and pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons. The lack of a school system for monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress in Religious Education makes it difficult for teachers to plan to meet the full ability range in each class or to build fully effectively on earlier modules of work.
- 124 No religious education lessons were seen in the lower school during the inspection week. For these pupils, the subject is taught on six whole days at different points in the school year. Photographs of these sessions show pupils taking part in various activities to extend their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity, for example, celebrating the Chinese New Year by making and parading with a dragon and working with various artefacts connected with Hinduism and Islam. The work is effectively and appropriately planned to ensure pupils actively participate in lessons. Using foods from different cultures and dressing up in different cultural costumes helps pupils use, for example, their sense of smell and taste to support their learning and understanding.
- 125 Pupils in Years 6 to 9 continue to study the beliefs and practices of Christianity and other religions and by the time they are 14, their knowledge of topics such as the background of stories from the New Testament has developed at a satisfactory rate. Planning of the subject for these pupils also includes elements of moral education linked with the lives of famous religious figures and, as elsewhere in the school, lessons in personal and social education are also used well by staff to reinforce the moral and ethical teachings of religion. Pupils' recognition of religious symbols and of objects associated with particular religions develops satisfactorily but their understanding of their use and meaning are still very limited. It was not possible to

observe any lessons for the older secondary pupils in order to assess the extent to which their understanding of these and other aspects of religion increases. Their written work in the subject does show some evidence of more demanding work, for example, a comparison of the Christian and Islamic concepts of marriage.

- 126 Pupils in the autistic department achieve well in religious education. In one lesson for a class of mainly Years 6 and 7, for example, pupils were very effectively helped to discuss the question "What is God?" by the teacher's use of simple terminology which prompted all pupils to make a contribution. These pupils also demonstrated knowledge of the names and basic characteristics of some Hindu gods in this discussion. By the time they are Year 11, pupils are showing a much clearer grasp of the meanings of religious symbols, although the photocopied text used in the lessons observed was difficult for them and did not help their understanding because of the level of conceptual language which it used. In general, however, the quality and appropriateness of resources used are good, particularly the collection of books on the subject in the library.
- 127 There is effective co-ordination of the subject, with good schemes of work to support teachers' planning. Assessment, however, is inadequate. It does not track pupils' progress through or link specifically with the various modules of the course followed. There has been satisfactory improvement in religious education since the last inspection. The allocation of time to the subject has been increased and statutory requirements are now met. The confidence of teachers in their ability to teach the subject has also clearly developed since the last inspection.

POST 16 PROVISION

- 128 The curriculum in the Post 16 department appropriately emphasises the importance of life skills as well as continuing with basic skills such as communication and numeracy. This helps prepare students for transfer to college courses when they are 19 and to be as independent as possible in their free time. College link courses and visits to local shops and places of interest provide relevant opportunities for students to practise their acquired skills in the wider community. Students in the department have a very wide range of learning needs and require extensive individual support in their behaviour and learning. Currently, there is insufficient adult time available to the post 16 department to fully support individual learning. Students appropriately work towards accreditation in the National Skills Profile for basic skills and the "Towards Independence" Scheme. The post 16 department is based in the same building as the classrooms for pupils aged fourteen to sixteen which restricts transfer to a different, adult environment. However, the new and attractive building is away from the main school and provides more age appropriate facilities. Although there is not a separate common room, the large classroom has facilities for preparing hot drinks and a snack. The students use this facility independently and enjoy the privilege of staying in the room during breaktimes.
- 129 Overall achievements and progress are satisfactory. Students progress well towards the targets set for them in their IEPs. Most students are using their skills in more practical activities appropriate to their age, for example, to practise their social skills students attend college and use the refectory and drinks vending machines. Teaching for post 16 students is satisfactory. Where structured coursework is followed, lessons are planned for students to build on earlier learning and teachers' plan for individual needs within these lessons. In a religious education lesson, for example, the work for the half term was well planned and artefacts and a video helped keep students interested. The students listened well and tried hard to answer the good

questions of the teacher. The discussion that followed was well managed and the teacher skilfully referred to previous work done by the students. Where work is not planned as well for individual needs students lose concentration and need more help. In a mathematics lesson, because the worksheets used were not appropriate for the wide range of learning needs, the teacher found it difficult to give all of the students the support they needed to complete the task. In a number of lessons, particularly more practical activities, there is insufficient adult support to enable all students to work purposefully all of the time. There is insufficient adult support for those students showing more difficult and challenging behaviour. This means that the teacher's time is taken in managing behaviour and actual learning time is lost by the other students. Where the teaching meets individual needs, students respond well, listen, concentrate and try hard. Overall, teaching methods are appropriate to the age of the students. However, for the lower attaining students there are insufficient strategies used to enable them to become as independent as possible in making choices and decisions.

PROVISION FOR INCLUSION

- 130 The school's inclusion provision is good. It is underpinned by a carefully developed policy and is translated into practice through carefully considered systems and procedures. The policy clearly identifies the various strands that make up its response to being an inclusive school. It effectively includes references to its policies and practices for optimising equality of opportunity, the reduction of racial harassment and the role of its anti-bullying policy. In addition, it identifies the principles that guide the approaches that it has in place to provide opportunities for all pupils and students to have fullest access to the curriculum and gain maximum accreditation for their achievements.
- 131 The school responds positively and rapidly to pupils with additional special educational needs such as visual impairment. It works closely with the visiting specialist teacher and has responded very quickly to advice provided by the service about materials, equipment and the need to make changes in the accommodation such as providing hand rails and white warning lines. Pupils from ethnic minorities who may also need support with English as a second language receive good additional support. The visiting specialist funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) provides a well-balanced programme of support for class groups and individuals and is particularly effective in providing links with the pupils' homes. A start has been made to increasing inclusion opportunities for pupils in the autistic department, as shown by the placement of one group in a local high school, but opportunities for more substantial inclusive practices in the main part of the school have not been fully exploited.
- 132 The school also targets training as part of its drive towards being an inclusive school. For example, it has responded positively to the special training needs of the teacher assistant who supports the pupil with visual impairment and has recognised the training needs of staff working with pupils in the autistic department. It continues to make provision for such training through the staff development plan and is imminently providing the opportunity for 10 teacher assistants, including those who work with pupils in the autistic department, to start on a specialist NVQ level 3 in Autism. Training to support access to the curriculum also includes teaching and support staff attending specialist courses such as approaches to autism, signing and picture assisted learning as well as an ongoing programme of ICT training.
- 133 Good links have been established with local schools and colleges. Older students attend two local colleges, where they work towards end of module certificates of achievements. A group of pupils from the autistic department in Years 8 and 9 attend

a local high school for courses in mathematics, science and English which may lead them to sitting public examinations. Students and pupils enjoy their out of school placements and demonstrate confidence and growing social skills when in other educational settings.

- 134 Pupils from Years 4, 5, and 6 are permanently and successfully based in their own class in a local primary school with all costs being met by Kingsweston School. Although only having been in place for a very short period of time one pupil is already attending mainstream literacy lessons and pupils from the host school are supported by the inclusion class staff for reading support sessions. These pupils have settled well into their “new” school and are showing clear gains in their social skills and some gains in their language development. Mainstream experiences are also provided for two early years classes when they attend a local nursery for half a day a week. They mix happily with the other children and enjoy using, what for them, is a new range of materials and equipment in a new setting. The school’s provision for inclusion is further supplemented by it having procedures in place that promote and support the placement of individual pupils into their local primary schools. All these initiatives are very well supported by the school despite the significant demands that they make upon the school’s funding and its pool of teacher assistants.
- 135 The school is committed to being an inclusive school. Reports about provision are regularly provided for governors; the co-ordinator attends relevant training courses including regional conferences and is significantly involved with the local education authority’s steering group. The school development plan confirms that the school, in liaison with the local education authority, is planning ahead to a future when it may be a “school without walls”. All provision for inclusion represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

Autistic Provision

- 136 The school make satisfactory provision for the pupils taught within the autistic department. There are 55 pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs associated with autistic spectrum disorder. The Local Education Authority (LEA) has specifically referred 36 of these pupils to the school and is providing additional funding for their education. This funding requires the school to teach these pupils within small groups which have high levels of staff support. There are currently 6 groups, with six pupils of mixed age in each group. Pupils are grouped according to their social needs and not their ability. This results in groups with a very wide spread of ages, for examples pupils in Year 7 and 10 are in the same group. Pupils are almost all of secondary age although the LEA has recently placed a very small number of primary age pupils with the school. These pupils are being taught in groups of secondary age pupils. Each group is staffed by a teacher and an assistant and the autistic department has a non-teaching manager who provides additional support for staff and pupils throughout the day. The remaining 19 pupils identified as having autistic characteristics are educated within appropriate year group classes in the main part of the school. The LEA does not provide additional funding for these pupils.
- 137 The school is aware that there are issues associated with appropriate peer group and curriculum opportunities when teaching primary and secondary age pupils in the same class and younger and older secondary age pupils together. It is also aware that there are issues associated with equal opportunities for the 19 pupils in the main body of the school who do not receive the same levels of funding or support. However, the school currently has no control over the pupils placed by the authority in its autistic department although it has very recently had agreement that 36 pupils is the maximum number that the school can cope with. The school has carefully considered how best to group these pupils and the current classes are considered to

be the most appropriate. The school looks carefully at the behavioural needs of pupils to ensure that groups are socially balanced to enable effective teaching and learning to take place.

- 138 The special educational needs of the 36 pupils currently within the schools autistic department are very wide ranging. There are no admission criteria for the department and although there is an understanding that the school makes provision for 36 secondary age pupils with Aspergers Syndrome the needs of a significant number of pupils currently being taught in the department are very complex. Frequently pupils have additional special needs. Although they clearly have some of the characteristics associated with autistic spectrum disorders their primary need is the management of their behaviour. The justification for their placement within the autistic department is a requirement within their statement of special educational need. This identifies that any provision made for the pupil should include teaching by staff with expertise in autistic spectrum disorders. There are few pupils in the department who have a clear diagnosis of Autism or Aspergers.
- 139 The department has been established for five years but clear terms of reference for the provision it makes have never been agreed with the LEA. The number of places, which started as one group of 6 pupils, has grown rapidly in order to meet the demand for specialist teaching of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. The head of department has established a satisfactory development plan. This identifies suitable priorities to improve the department and it is focused on developing staff expertise and school provision to meet the needs of pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders. However, without some control over the admission of pupils it is difficult to see how the school can plan confidently for the future. These development plans include working towards National Autistic Society accreditation. In order to achieve this the school will need to be clear about the needs of its pupil population and the role it will play in meeting those needs.
- 140 The curriculum for pupils in the autistic department is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy and personal and social development, which makes it relevant to pupils' needs. In line with the rest of the school, the autistic department is improving the curriculum by introducing the QCA units of work for all subjects to support and guide teachers' planning. Pupils in Year 11 have the same opportunities as others in the school to study modules of work for accreditation in most subjects. Pupils' curriculum opportunities are enhanced further by good opportunities to work alongside pupils at a local secondary school. However, there are currently no opportunities for them to work with their peers in their own school and they do not have social opportunities to mix with them at lunch or playtimes. This restricts the opportunities pupils have to make progress socially.
- 141 The curriculum needs of pupils in mixed age classes are appropriately addressed in curriculum planning. This clearly identifies learning which is appropriate and teachers are expected to plan from the relevant QCA units of work ensuring that tasks and activities are matched to pupils' abilities. However this does not always happen. During the inspection, pupils of different ages in the same class were often given the same work to do. Although the long term subject plans ensure that pupils can build on past experiences, teaching and lesson planning do not ensure that pupils make progress across the curriculum. Pupils' learning in English (literacy), mathematics (numeracy) and personal and social education is more secure because teachers plan work with the focus on pupils' IEP targets. However, the targets set in these plans are often too broad and do not provide the teacher with enough information to plan learning or monitor pupils' progress effectively.

