

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BEAUFORT SCHOOL**

Hodgehill

**BIRMINGHAM**

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103627

Headteacher: Miss S Allen

Reporting inspector: Graham Pirt  
14563

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 May 2001

Inspection number: 192592  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	16 Coleshill Road Hodgehill Birmingham
Postcode:	B36 8AA
Telephone number:	0121 783 3886
Fax number:	0121 783 6994
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Muriel Castle
Date of previous inspection:	23 May 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Graham Pirt	Registered inspector 14563	Art, Design and Technology Music	What sort of school is it?  The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well is the school led and managed?  What should the school do to improve further?
Denise Shields	Lay inspector 31718		How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
Helen Jones	Team inspector 18932	Maths Geography History Special Educational Needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Vanessa Wilkinson	Team inspector 18461	Science Physical Education English as an Additional Language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
Trevor Watts	Team Inspector 19386	English Information and Communication Technology Religious Education Equal Opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well are pupils taught?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Beaufort School is a community special school maintained by Birmingham Local Education Authority. It caters for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. Pupils have severe learning difficulties, complex learning difficulties, medical needs and some have autistic spectrum disorders. This means that the level of attainment by pupils is very low. Classes cover a wide age range and so specific year groups cannot be referred to in the report. A number of the pupils have challenging behaviour as part of their learning difficulty. The school is situated 4 miles to the east of Birmingham and most pupils come from an area within 2 to 3 miles of the school. The recognised accommodation is for 40 pupils although the number attending at present is 31 with the authority funding 40 places. This is a reduction on the number of pupils attending in 1999 during the last inspection when there were 39 pupils. The number of pupils with English as an additional language now stands at 61%, with main home languages being Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is 51% which is high for special schools of a similar type.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a satisfactory level of education for its pupils. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory of which a third is good or better. This leads to pupils making satisfactory progress. The management of the school is effective. Although there is a substantial budget provided by the local education authority providing a high income per pupil, the satisfactory level of education provided means that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The work of the school leads to very good links with parents,
- The school develops positive attitudes in pupils and they work hard in school,
- The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities,
- Good use is made of the community to enhance pupils' learning experiences,
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work alongside children from mainstream schools,
- The school provides good support for children and families for whom English is not their first language.

#### **What could be improved**

- Systems for evaluating all areas of the school's work,
- Systems to manage the behaviour and meet the needs of pupils with more complex needs,
- Greater use of information from assessment in planning for the needs and expectations of pupils with additional special needs,
- Statutory requirements for the prospectus and other required policies and procedures.

*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 has made satisfactory improvement since the inspection in May 1999. At that time assessment and recording procedures were not implemented consistently. Procedures for assessment are now in place. There has been some progress in relation to the key issue of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and whole school policies although, as yet, developments related to the school's findings have not been implemented. There has been good progress, since the inspection in 1997 when it was agreed that special measures were required in relation to the school. There is sound capacity for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

<b>Progress in:</b>	<b>by age 11</b>	<b>Key</b>	
speaking and listening	C	very good	A
Reading	C	good	B
Writing	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	C	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	C	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C		

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

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their special educational needs and against the targets in their individual education plans. They make satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy and the other subjects of the curriculum. However, different groups of pupils do not progress at the same rate and although pupils with additional special needs achieve satisfactory standards overall, at times they do not make the progress they might.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils greet staff enthusiastically when they arrive and maintain their interest during lessons
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in the classroom, in and around school and when on visits out of school, particularly when involved with pupils from mainstream schools.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respond well to opportunities for personal development such as returning registers and tidying away equipment. Pupils have positive relationships with each other and with staff.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall

Pupils have a good attitude to school. They arrive enthusiastically, greeting people happily and confidently and try hard to do their work. Pupils' behaviour varies but it is satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave well in classes where they pay attention and are pleasant to each other and to the staff. In the playground, and at lunchtimes, the pupils behave very well as a rule, playing together very amicably. Pupils have respect for each other, and for their differences. When they are given the chance pupils take the opportunity to show they can act responsibly. Attendance is generally satisfactory although there is a higher than average number of absences, largely due to the long-term illness of a small number of pupils. Pupils are punctual to lessons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 5-11</b>
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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

During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching and one third of lessons were good or better. The quality of teaching has been largely maintained since the last inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge of subjects and plan appropriately. Teaching methods are effective for the majority of pupils and support staff and resources are suitably used to support learning. Teachers' expectations are sometimes low in relation to those groups of pupils with more complex needs, and those capable of higher attainment. Management of pupils who demonstrate inappropriate behaviour is not always effective and their opportunities to learn are then restricted. The teaching provision for pupils with English as an additional language enables them to make the same progress as others.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum provides pupils with a suitable range of learning opportunities. There is a good range of additional activities and effective use is made of the community to enhance pupils' learning opportunities. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn alongside those from mainstream schools.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good support is provided by the school for pupils and their families.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. There is good provision for pupils' social and cultural development through visits and activities outside of the classroom. Provision for spiritual and moral development is satisfactory. There is a suitable programme of personal, social and health education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory systems are in place to record pupils' individual progress. However, this information is not used effectively to monitor their progress. Child protection arrangements are good. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall.

The curriculum for pupils is satisfactory. The school has adequately addressed the key issues from the last inspection. However, curriculum planning does not always reflect the needs of pupils of different ages in the same class. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities and effective use is made of the community in order to enhance pupils' learning opportunities. There are effective links with partner institutions that include good opportunities to learn alongside pupils from mainstream schools. Although teachers assess pupils' attainment the information is not sufficiently used to monitor progress. There are very effective links with parents and this is a strength of the school. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning at home and are effectively involved in the work of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior management team have effectively led the school in developing from its previous position of weakness. The role of subject co-ordinators is defined, but at an early stage of development, and they do not yet monitor teaching. The day-to-day management of the school has resulted in an effective community.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is developing a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and makes a satisfactory contribution to shaping the direction of the school. However not all statutory duties are met .
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has recently completed a good evaluation of the performance of the school, which identifies suitable priorities for development. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is satisfactory but could be improved.

The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Learning resources are suitably used and support staff appropriately deployed. The school has a very large budget. A proportion of this is used effectively to support the developing outreach project. However, the school is just beginning to plan to use the remainder to improve provision.
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The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide satisfactory leadership and have led the school well from its previous weak position. Co-ordinators are now in place and are more aware of strengths and weaknesses within the school. Day to day management is effective and leads to the smooth running of the school community. Financial administration is sound with all processes working appropriately. The school development plan is an effectively managed with costs, time scales and responsibilities clearly identified in the documentation. However, it is not sufficiently evaluated. Governors are now more involved in the life and work of the school and are more aware of the educational standards that the school achieves, although some statutory responsibilities are not in place. As yet there is insufficient evaluation of the impact of spending decisions on the quality of provision. The monitoring of teaching and learning, undertaken by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinators, is not fully developed. Accommodation space is satisfactory overall. The school is well staffed and there is adequate accommodation and sufficient resources to support learning.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progress that children make</li> <li>• The work done by children at home</li> <li>• Information about how well their child is getting on</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents that teaching provides pupils with good opportunities to learn, that the school has been well led and managed out of special measures and that pupils are becoming more mature and responsible. However, the team also feels that these areas could still be further improved. The team agrees that some pupils could make better progress. Although the team feels that the homework provision is satisfactory we agree with parents that this could be extended. The team feels that information to parents is generally satisfactory although areas relating to what pupils learn could be improved.

**PART B: COMMENTARY**

**HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

**The school’s results and achievements**

1. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactory levels of work in relation to their special educational needs. This matches the progress made at the last inspection. However, different groups of pupils do not progress at the same rate because planning is not sufficiently matched to all pupils' needs. The school does not fully meet the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties.
2. Pupils' standards of achievements in English are satisfactory throughout the school and this is an improvement from the inspection in 1997. Pupils' listening skills are sound and communication skills are well encouraged for the more able pupils, with a good emphasis on speaking, answering questions or holding a simple discussion about the content of a lesson. However, there is too little development of other skills in communication. For instance, the less able pupils often do not respond to what the adult is saying, or repeat words that are important in a lesson. They do not routinely use any signing, or learn to make the signs for themselves, and the progress that they make is occasionally unsatisfactory.
3. Pupils' reading skills are satisfactory although they develop slowly as they progress through the school, with no pupils in the infants being able to read. Only a few read by the time they leave at the age of eleven years. Pupils begin to look at pictures and to hold books correctly by the time they are seven years old. Many of the least able pupils are still at this stage when they leave the school, because of their profound learning difficulties. Others learn to associate the picture with the text and the most able pupils read short passages of text from reading books, with some help from staff.
4. Pupils' achievement and progress in maths is satisfactory overall, although inconsistent across classes and groups of students. Where pupils achieve well this is because teachers plan well, use the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and have appropriate expectations of pupils. However the progress of pupils with more severe difficulties is sometimes restricted as a result of inappropriate activities, slow pace and lack of positive behaviour management strategies. Pupils' achievements in maths have improved since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. This is partly as a result of a new policy and planning based on the National Numeracy Strategy.
5. Achievement for the majority of pupils in science is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the inspection in 1997 when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. However, for pupils with more complex difficulties and those with behaviour problems achievement and progress is still not secure because teaching does not sufficiently meet their need.
6. Pupils' long term progress and their achievements in information technology are satisfactory throughout the school, although their achievements do vary from one aspect of this subject to another, with some areas being covered more thoroughly than others, resulting in better progress in those areas. The higher achieving pupils learn to use a computer mouse and the basic keys on the keyboard, and by the time they leave school, the most able pupils print out their own writing. This may only be a very short piece of text, and they may need varying amounts of help, but they understand the processes, and have a good attitude, trying hard as a rule. Less able pupils learn to use adapted controls such as a concept keyboard, touch screen, rollerball, or single touch switches that will control a computer screen, or produce a spoken sentence.
7. In all other subjects of the curriculum pupils make satisfactory progress overall in their learning due to the effective teaching. The school is setting targets for pupils related to the subjects and

they make satisfactory progress in achieving these. Pupils also make satisfactory progress towards the targets set in individual education plans.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. Pupils have a good attitude to school. They arrive enthusiastically, greeting their teachers and classroom staff happily and confidently. They pay attention at the start of lessons, and are well involved, especially in practical activities. Their concentration is often well maintained when they are motivated by good and relevant teaching, especially in small group sessions. They will try hard to do their work, whether it is writing, working on a computer or in a games lesson. This is an improvement since the inspection of 1997. When the pace of lessons slows down, however, some pupils become restless, and their attention wanders.
9. Pupils' behaviour varies but it is satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave well in classes; they pay attention and are pleasant to each other and to the staff. However, a small minority of pupils sometimes misbehaves in lessons. A small number of the pupils behave in these ways because of their special needs. In the playground, and at lunchtimes, the pupils behave very well, playing together very amicably in games or with the trikes and the climbing frames and slides. Where there has been some bullying, staff react accordingly. There is no indication of any unacceptable behaviour that is concerned with ethnic origins or a pupils' gender. Most pupils are friendly with each other and enjoy positive relationships with staff. Pupils celebrate each other's successes such as in assemblies where they applaud the "good workers" of the week. Pupils have respect for each other regardless of their background.
10. When they are given the chance, pupils take the opportunity to show they can act responsibly. They will, for example, take the registers round the classes, put the playground equipment out, and fetch their own meals at lunchtime. Such opportunities, however, are not created frequently enough for pupils' to develop their personal and independence skills well, particularly for younger pupils. In lessons, few pupils have opportunities to choose their activities, although the least able ones do make choices of what they will have for their morning snack and drink.
11. Attendance is satisfactory overall although there is a higher than average number of absences. These findings are in line with those of the inspection in 1997. Overall rates of absence are higher than average because of those pupils who are absent due to long term illness or taking extended family holidays to the Asian sub continent. Pupils are punctual to lessons.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

12. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. During the inspection, the teaching in all of the lessons was judged to be satisfactory or better. It was good or better in one third of lessons. This is a great improvement on the situation at the time of the first inspection in 1997, and is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.
13. Teachers have a sound knowledge of their subjects, and of the pupils whom they teach, and this leads to better teaching. In English, for instance, there is good teaching for those pupils between the ages of 7 and 11. Most teachers of older pupils have a good knowledge of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and they plan their lessons with regard to it. This leads to pupils making satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress. However, they do not always apply the recommended structure to the lessons and so sometimes activities within the lesson go on for too long. In maths, teachers have a good knowledge of the Numeracy Strategy

and they plan their lessons effectively. This enables pupils to learn well, with a good warm-up activity, and structured groups aimed at number recognition, counting or shape matching. However, as with literacy, not all lessons are planned using the recommended structure. The lessons that involve withdrawing pupils for reading or information technology are well planned and illustrate good knowledge on the part of the staff, often support assistants, in the ways in which the lessons are conducted. Most teachers plan prepare for their lessons well, with pupils' individual targets in mind, suitable activities and a good range of resources, whether they are books, artefacts, worksheets, paints or apparatus for science or physical education. Where lessons are not as well planned, the targets do not always match the needs of the range of pupils in the class. There is a limited amount of teaching of information technology within class lessons. Some teachers lack confidence in this subject.

14. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory overall. Many staff use very clear speech; they repeat key words well; and they sign well when addressing the pupils, whether in a whole class lesson, or in a small group, and this all helps to clarify the pupils' understanding. What staff do not do so much is to encourage pupils to sign back, to learn the signs, and as a result pupils' learning of signing is restricted. Similarly, staff do not always expect pupils to answer verbally, or give them sufficient time to do so. Expectations are better in the small groups and individual sessions, where staff go to much trouble to allow time, and encourage good responses from the pupils. Basic skills such as reading are well addressed by good withdrawal sessions that are targeted at developing the necessary skills. Pupils learn well because of the well-targeted activities in each session, with staff ensuring that each pupil is pays full attention and maintains a high level of attention throughout a lesson.
15. Teachers generally use a sound range of approaches in lessons, with whole class sessions, small groups, and individual work with one member of staff to each pupil. A number of these sessions are in the library or the computer room, where there are fewer distractions, and where pupils' learning is better because of this. Many lessons involve practical, hands-on activities, such as in science and information technology. In science, teachers use a good investigative approach, with pupils predicting what they think will happen when they start an experiment, for instance, when trying to dissolve jelly in cold water, and then hot water. Sometimes, too little is expected of the least able pupils in a class; they may experience some of the main activity, but this is often as secondary participants in the lesson. Where teaching is less effective, a small number of teachers do not plan to have quite enough within the lesson which lose pace as time goes by, and pupils' interest wanes. Lessons sometimes come to an end with no review of what has been learned.
16. Teachers and support staff enjoy good relationships with the pupils, and this helps pupils' learning by providing a secure environment in which to work, good encouragement to try harder and to concentrate. A small number of pupils with behavioural problems are not always consistently managed and motivated as they are sometimes allowed to be inattentive, or to cause some disruption to the other pupils' learning. Most lessons run at a reasonable pace, and they occupy the whole length of time allocated to them. After breaks lessons do not always start on time, however, and occasionally finish early. Those pupils who miss out on occasional lessons because they are withdrawn for other activities such as reading, toileting or therapy are monitored to ensure that they do not consistently miss the same lesson each week. The use that is made of classroom support staff is good at most times. There is a good number of support staff so every class has at least one supporting assistant, and sometimes more at different times. During the group and individual work the support staff come into their own, and they work very well with the pupils, being positive and encouraging. This is a great help to the pupils' learning.

17. Learning resources are used well. In English, for instance, the teachers use puppets, and dressing up clothing, and all kinds of small games, toys and equipment to enhance the pupils' learning by adding the excitement and interest that such items bring, whether for the most or least able pupils. One particular lesson in religious education made good use of a range of items from different religions, including many clothes for the less able children to dress in, and to feel and look at. In a science lessons pupils observed a rabbit to help their understanding. The information technology equipment is used soundly in specific lessons in the computer room, but is not used routinely to support the pupils' learning in most classroom lessons in other subjects, and too little use is made of electronic communication aids to assist the learning of the least able pupils.
18. Teachers interact well with their pupils, giving good feedback in question and answer sessions, especially with the more able pupils, helping to develop their speaking and listening skills. Many of the interactions in small groups form an on-going assessment that helps pupils to learn as there is a constant adjustment in what is expected of them. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and generally consistent and helpful in telling pupils where they have done things properly, and where their mistakes are. Although a number of parents disagreed that pupils received sufficient work to do at home homework is used satisfactorily, especially with the older pupils in English and mathematics. One English lesson, for instance, was based entirely on the weekend news that pupils had brought in.
19. There are teachers and support staff who can communicate with pupils in their first language and during a snack time activity this intervention was used effectively to help a pupil understand and participate in a simple choosing activity.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities planned for pupils are satisfactory. The school has adequately addressed the key issues from the inspections in both 1997 and 1999.
21. The school has a very small number of nursery age children who currently learn alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Considering the very small number the school plans well for what they should learn. This reflects the findings of the inspection in 1999 when provision for children under five was judged to be satisfactory. The early learning goals are appropriately identified within the aims for each lesson and the areas of learning recommended for the youngest children are suitably reflected in the experiences they have. For pupils aged 5 to 11 the school has appropriately implemented the National Curriculum for all subjects and the curriculum for religious education reflects the local education authorities agreed syllabus. This remains consistent with the findings of the inspection in 1999.
22. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. In 1997 the provision for personal, social and health education was judged to be satisfactory but the school was criticised for the substantial amount of teaching time allocated to it. The provision remains satisfactory and the school has appropriately addressed issues about the amount on the timetable. Aspects of health education, such as healthy eating are taught through the science curriculum and the school uses opportunities such as mealtimes, playtimes, visits out of school and assemblies to provide appropriate support for pupils' personal and social development. The school has

recently developed a suitable policy for 'citizenship' but has yet to develop the curriculum planning needed to support its implementation.

23. The curriculum, although judged to be relevant at the time of the last inspection does not sufficiently reflect the needs of pupils with more complex difficulties or those with behaviour problems. Opportunities for these pupils are not assured because the curriculum does not take sufficient account of what or how they need to learn. Behaviour is not managed in a way that enables a significant minority of pupils to fully participate in lessons. The school provides good support for pupils who have English as an additional language and this enables them to make the same progress as others. A member of staff has been employed specifically to provide support for these pupils and is effectively deployed to work with individual pupils and support activities or classes during the day.
24. The school has maintained suitable planning for the majority of subjects since the last inspection. This identifies what pupils in each year group will learn and ensure that there is appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. However, this is not always reflected in the opportunities they are given. All classes have a wide range of ages and teachers often prepare the same experiences for all pupils and this does not reflect what has been planned for pupils in each year group. This means that the school cannot ensure that work takes sufficient account of what pupils have experienced in the past.
25. The school has recently introduced the Qualifications and Curriculum Authorities subject guidance and has purchased materials developed specifically for pupils with complex difficulties but these are not yet being used to provide a model for curriculum development and although available as a resource are not reflected in teachers' planning. Detailed programmes of work still do not exist for information and communication technology, design and technology, history and geography and this has an impact on the effectiveness of teachers' planning in these subjects.
26. The amount of teaching time available during the day was judged to be limited during the 1997 inspection. This has been appropriately addressed and is now satisfactory. Pupils generally arrive at school on time and satisfactory use is now made of the long lunch break to support pupils' personal and social development. The 1999 inspection judged that the amount of time allocated to each subject was satisfactory and this generally reflects the current situation.
27. Monitoring of the curriculum, and judging its effectiveness, were identified as areas for improvement by the last inspection. Although the school has made some progress in this area, systems are still not fully developed. The role of the subject co-ordinator has now been appropriately defined and the majority of subjects have been reviewed and suitable priorities for development have been established. Subject planning is checked each half term by the senior management team but co-ordinators have not had the benefit of observing their subjects being taught. This means they do not have enough information about teaching and learning to help them plan effectively and there have been no opportunities for them to identify good practice so that it can be shared across the school. The amount of time allocated to each subject is satisfactory. However, occasionally, lessons start late and timetables are altered, which means that the time allocated to each subject cannot be guaranteed.

28. The school uses the community well to enhance pupils' learning. This includes field trips for subjects such as science. A wide range of visitors to the school, such as musicians, storytellers and theatre groups, effectively broaden the experiences for pupils. Well-planned sessions of horse and donkey riding enable pupils to develop specific skills for which they are awarded certificates. Since the last inspection the curriculum continues to be effectively enhanced by well planned opportunities for pupils to take part in art, dance and drama activities, for example, DJ and circus workshops. These activities also provide good opportunities for pupils to work alongside children from mainstream and other special schools.
29. The provision of extra curricular opportunities is good and this reflects the findings of the 1999 inspection. Activities after school are restricted by transport arrangements but pupils have good opportunities to take part in a range of activities at lunchtimes and during the summer there is a gardening club and the schools 'healthy heart, happy hikers' club. There are also good opportunities for pupils to take part in residential experiences, which effectively contribute to their personal and social development.
30. The school has effective links with other institutions, which include good and developing opportunities for pupils both as individuals and groups to learn alongside children in mainstream school. This reflects the positive comments made about integration opportunities in the 1999 report. During the inspection a group of pupils were observed during a physical education lesson at a local primary school. The lesson was well prepared and enthusiastically taught and pupils made good progress in their subject skills and in their social and personal skills. There are good opportunities for students on childcare courses, nursery nurse students and secondary age pupils, from local mainstream and special schools, to undertake well-planned work placements at the school.
31. The provision for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school has improved opportunities for the development of pupil's spiritual awareness. These are now better planned and appropriately supported through the schools' assemblies and through religious education lessons but there are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly and teachers do not always fully utilise the spiritual elements of activities they plan. The provision for moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are taught right from wrong and are expected to behave appropriately with staff providing good role models and using praise well to help pupils recognise positive behaviour. Moral attitudes are fostered through assemblies.
32. Opportunities for cultural development have been improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school celebrates the festivals of other faiths and provides pupils with opportunities to find out about the cultures associated with them. Literature, art and music provide further opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of their culture in a broader context. Provision for pupils' social development is good. There is an appropriate focus on the development of social skills such as eating and drinking at snack and lunchtime and adults effectively support pupils to develop co-operative play skills during their lunch break. Lessons at the local swimming pool and other visits in the community are used well to teach pupils how to behave appropriately and use public facilities. The inclusion opportunities provided for pupils make a positive contribution to the development of their social skills when they work and play alongside other children. The school's

involvement in national charity events such as red nose day and the opportunities it makes for pupils to develop an awareness of environmental issues provide pupils with additional opportunities to develop their spiritual moral, social and cultural awareness.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

33. Arrangements for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. Child protection procedures have improved since the inspection in 1997 and are now good. There is a suitable policy with clear guidance for staff both about the necessary procedures to follow if they have concerns but also giving guidance about the possible signs of abuse. New staff are given this information although the designated teacher does not have input into an induction programme for staff
34. Staff show care and concern for pupils and relationships are supportive. There is much use of praise and regular celebration of pupils' achievement, no matter how small. The home school liaison teacher has established good relationships with carers of the looked after children and there is good communication about all aspects of these pupils' care. Sufficient staff have received first aid training and a number of staff have received training to deal with the specific needs of some children, for instance with medical needs. There is well-documented information, covering all pupils' medical needs and suitable care plans have been drawn up where they are required. Procedures for the administration of medication are good and routines understood by those staff involved. However, medication is not stored in a suitably locked container; this is a cause for concern. Changing facilities are clean and well maintained and pupils are afforded privacy whilst their personal hygiene needs are carried out.
35. At breaks and lunchtime supervision arrangements are adequate; there are sufficient adults available to support pupils whilst they are eating their lunch or playing outside. Lunchtime organisers, however, have not received any formal training to carry out their role. Whilst incidents and accidents are recorded, these records do not show what follow up action has been taken. There is no restraint policy and any such incidents are not recorded. Whilst there is much valuable input from a range of health professionals the school does not regularly receive its agreed provision of time from the school nurse. This means there is very limited time for on-going health assessments to be carried out.
36. Since the last inspection some aspects of health and safety have improved. Arrivals and departures of pupils are now secure. There is a detailed health and safety policy and the governors have a health and safety committee, which meet regularly and carry out inspections of the school premises. Fire drills are regularly carried out and outcomes recorded. However, there has been no whole school risk assessment carried out covering all aspects of school life; this was an issue identified at the time of the previous inspection in 1997. For example, class teachers have not assessed and recorded possible risks when teaching such lessons as physical education or design and technology and no assessment has been made of the potential risk when lifting pupils in and out of the mini bus. Other lesser concerns, relating health and safety, were reported to the school.
37. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good. The school makes good use of the designated home school link worker to follow up absences. Guides on the transport note reasons for pupils' absence and these are closely monitored. The school involves the education social worker where appropriate, for example where no reason for absence is provided over a period of time.

38. Satisfactory systems are in place for recording pupils' individual progress. These are linked to the National Curriculum where appropriate and are conscientiously maintained by staff. However information gained is not used to monitor pupils' performance over time or of particular groups of pupils and this is unsatisfactory. The current systems are also not sufficiently used to inform curriculum planning. Most teachers briefly evaluate lessons, and use this information to plan the next one, although not all do so. The recording of the small reactions of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to experiences offered is also limited and this restricts their progress. The school has satisfactory methods of dealing with most pupils' behaviour, that are usefully shared with staff throughout the school. However, there are no procedures to check the effectiveness of the programmes. This particularly affects pupils with challenging behaviour and autistic spectrum disorder, whose behaviour is not always successfully managed.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

39. Parents express positive views and support for the school. The school seeks to support parents and it has successfully established a very good working partnership with nearly all of them. The home school liaison teacher and link worker both play a significant part in this aspect of the school's work. Starting with an initial visit to the family home, from the pupils' earliest days in school, an effective partnership is formed. Parents are encouraged to attend the regular support group workshops, which cover a range of issues, all of which are designed to help parents cope with the demands of having a child who has disabilities. During the week of the inspection one such workshop was attended by more than half of the parents. These opportunities are not only informative but also social occasions where parents can talk whilst having refreshments. Parents give good support to events such as the Christmas celebration. They generally attend the evenings, which the school holds, to discuss their children's progress. The Friends of Beaufort School organisation, whilst heavily reliant of the staff to organise events, receives good support from parents. Funds raised have been sufficient to purchase a new computer for the computer suite. Nearly all parents give good support to the work their children do at home. For example, for world book day many of them made books with their children at home and these were then shared with others in the school.
40. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. There are regular newsletters and letters about day-to-day activities. The home / school diary is used well to keep all involved in a pupils' care informed about any issues or concerns. Some staff also telephone parents if a pupils has had a particularly good day at school or if they are concerned about them. Although there is much good practice, the information sent to parents often describes pupils life in the school rather than what they are learning. Annual reports to parents about their children's progress are not always consistent. In the best examples there is a clear picture of what pupils know understand and can do, but there is often too great an emphasis on pupils' attitude or the work covered during the year.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

41. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide satisfactory leadership and are starting to develop a clear vision for the development of the school. This is satisfactory progress since the inspection of 1999. The school's aims are clear, displayed within the school's documents and positively influence the ethos and expectations seen throughout the school. Policies and guidelines for subjects throughout the school are now in place and there are co-ordinators for subjects of the curriculum and other areas of responsibility. They are now more aware of strengths and weaknesses within the teaching of the subjects for which they are responsible.

This is a satisfactory improvement from the previous inspection where co-ordinators were not successfully developing or monitoring their subjects. The monitoring of teaching and learning by co-ordinators is not fully developed. The school has started to monitor its effectiveness and to compare results obtained on baseline testing and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority performance scale results with other special schools. The headteacher and senior management team have maintained the significant improvements in both curriculum and teaching, seen in the last inspection, leading to this now being a school that provides a satisfactory education for the pupils.

42. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are involved in the life of the school through teaching and supporting pupils and staff and their work at lunch and break-times. The day-to-day management is effective and leads to the smooth running of the school community. Financial administration is sound with clear systems for the handling of cash and ordering, invoices and payments. The use of modern technology in administrative matters is well established. The school development plan is an effective process with costs, time scales and responsibilities clearly identified in the documentation. However, although there is a review of previous targets they are not evaluated. This is the same as the findings in the inspection of 1999. Targets are now better focused and generated from within the school through analyses of strengths and weaknesses in subjects. There is a good capacity for improvement in this area when the school implements the findings of the Primary Effective Early Learning Project evaluation that they have undertaken.
43. The governing body has effective committee structures related to aspects of school management and performance and holds accountable those with management responsibilities. Co-ordinators reports are presented to governors and the finance and staffing committee is involved in decisions in relation to the school development planning. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are now more aware of the educational standards that the school achieves, showing a good understanding of areas for development and training needs. This maintains the improvement seen in the last inspection. Governors are starting to visit classes in the school to which they are attached. However, there are no literacy or numeracy governors. The Governors do not report on all statutory aspects in the prospectus and some procedures and policies need further developing.
44. Appraisal of teachers is undertaken through the newly introduced performance management procedures. This helps to identify areas of training and development for staff. The senior management team of the school has taken action to meet the targets of the 1999 inspection action plan in this area and there has been satisfactory improvement.
45. The school uses specific grants well. Grants for National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been used to enhance the resources and training provision for these subjects. The use of extra funding for special schools has been used effectively to increase teaching support in order to improve learning.
46. The application of the principles of best value is not used effectively. Governors assure themselves that they achieve good value for money on purchases made by the school. However, they do not evaluate the impact of this spending on how it has improved pupils' learning.
47. There is a very good number of staff who are suitably qualified for the work they do. Although there is induction of staff taking place, as yet it is not yet formalised or based on a policy and is therefore unsatisfactory. The amount of accommodation is satisfactory overall. There is

suitable provision for hydrotherapy although changing for children and helpers is cramped. Space for storage of large equipment is limited although improvements have been made. Resources are satisfactory in most subjects and are good in English. The school has utilised its high level of funding to enhance staffing to help pupils make links with, and support pupils in, mainstream schools, as yet this is not having a positive effect on standards being achieved. Value for money is satisfactory

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

48. In order to raise standards, and improve the progress made by pupils, the governing body, the headteacher and staff need to:

Develop systems for judging the effectiveness of all areas of the school's work including the application of the principles of best value in order to compare their effectiveness with other similar schools. (Paragraphs 25, 36, 41, 46) This will include;

- monitoring teaching and the curriculum
- monitoring the progress that pupils make
- deciding whether spending decisions have an effect on pupils' progress.

Develop the knowledge and skills of the staff in order to improve progress for those pupils with additional special educational needs and the management of behaviour for those pupils (Paragraphs 7, 14, 21,22,23) to include;

- training in how to manage challenging behaviour and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders
- creation of behaviour plans based on appropriate ways of managing these behaviours
- consistent application of these plans by all staff in the school
- planning for the whole range of age, ability and need of the pupils in the class
- increasing the range of communication techniques used
- taking account of how pupils with additional special needs, such as autistic spectrum disorder, need to learn.

Use information gained from assessment of pupils' progress to inform teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements in the planning of lessons and improve progress for these pupils (Paragraph 36) so that teachers;

- know what children have learned and what they need to learn next
- know that pupils are making progress in relation to their targets and over time.

Ensure that statutory duties are implemented together with developing other required policies and procedures (Paragraphs 33, 43) by

- providing details of admission arrangements, SEN policy and pupil attendance rates in the prospectus
- improving the quality of the reports in the annual report to parents about the progress of the action plan concerning key issues from inspection reports
- producing a restraint policy with associated recording system
- put in place governors with responsibility for literacy and Numeracy

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

*Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed

35
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

30
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## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	29	65	0	0	0

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

## Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	31
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	16

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	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	0

## Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	11.57

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	3.51

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 and 2

Pupils were not entered for Key Stage 1 or 2 statutory assessment tests. Statutory tasks and teacher assessments undertaken show pupils working towards Level 1.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	11
Any other minority ethnic group	3

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani	1	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.1
Average class size	7.75

#### **Education support staff: YN – Y 6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	388

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	579430
Total expenditure	572716
Expenditure per pupil	18475
Balance brought forward from previous year	35191
Balance carried forward to next year	41905

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	31
Number of questionnaires returned	29

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	24	0	7	3
My child is making good progress in school.	52	31	11	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	34	11	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	34	21	0	11
The teaching is good.	72	14	0	3	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	22	3	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	14	3	8	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	31	0	7	3
The school works closely with parents.	62	21	3	7	7
The school is well led and managed.	69	25	0	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	0	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	14	7	7	10

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

### **ENGLISH**

49. The achievement of pupils of all ages is satisfactory and they make steady progress in relation to the learning experiences they have. This is a good improvement since the inspection in 1997 when achievement was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards have improved because there have been significant improvements in teaching which, at the time of the last inspection was judged to be unsatisfactory in almost two thirds of lessons. Teaching is now satisfactory overall. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection and good teaching was seen for those pupils aged between 7 and 11 years. The achievement and progress of pupils who have English as an additional language is satisfactory because they are supported effectively by a bilingual teacher and support assistant.
50. Teachers use assessment such as questions and they monitor pupils' responses to help them plan suitable work which enables the majority of pupils to make satisfactory progress. The school has appropriately implemented the National Literacy Strategy but the teaching methods are not being used as effectively as they could be. Staff are not yet confident with the formal structure recommended. However, planning, particularly opportunities for pupils to practice their literacy skills in other subjects such as science is more effective than at the time of the last inspection and is reflected in improved standards of achievement.
51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in all aspect of English. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. Teachers effectively develop pupils' listening skills when they encourage them to pay attention to instructions and information. However, there are times when teachers do not ensure that all pupils are concentrating and a small minority are allowed to daydream, which restricts the progress they make. When pupils are working in small groups, or individually with staff, they listen well because adults work closely with them, motivating them effectively, and giving individual attention that is well matched to their abilities. Teacher's use signing appropriately to help pupils understand and to reinforce instructions, such as, "look", or "sit down". However, signing is inconsistent across the school and this restricts the development of early attention skills for pupils with more complex learning difficulties.
52. In the majority of lessons there is an appropriate emphasis on developing speaking skills when teachers provide opportunities for pupils to answer questions and discuss what they are doing. For example, when using a 'magic bag' for pupils to find letters making the sound 'c', the teacher uses many questions that lead the pupils to provide suitable responses. This enables higher attaining and verbally able pupils to make good progress. However, lower attaining pupils are not always sufficiently encouraged to respond to what adults are saying, or to repeat new vocabulary that is important, so their speaking skills do not improve as well as they could. Currently the use of electronic communication aids and other communication systems, such as, real objects, photographs or pictures are not used consistently across the school to support communication or provide pupils with an understanding of what a lesson is about, or what they will be doing next.

53. Achievement and progress in reading is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop early reading skills by looking at pictures and showing them how to handle books, for example, how to hold a book the right way up. Teachers plan suitable activities such as the shared work in the National Literacy sessions which help pupils to recognise that pictures and text are related and pupils are encouraged to point to the pictures and identify what they see. Pupils capable of higher attainment confidently read short passages of text but they do not always fully understand what they have read because teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on developing their comprehension skills. Teachers enable higher attaining pupils to develop an appropriate range of strategies to help them with unfamiliar words. Pupils learn to build words by sounding out the letters and they learn to use clues from the text or the pictures. Pupils with English as an additional language make the same degree of progress as other pupils.
54. Achievement and progress in writing is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. Teachers provide higher attaining pupils with suitable opportunities to write over letters and words that they have written for them. The most able pupils print their names using a model but very few can write independently. Activities are insufficiently varied as pupils spend too much time copying their name, and at times there is insufficient attention paid to correcting pupil's mistakes and encouraging them to work carefully. Lower attaining pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop pencil grip and they are encouraged to make marks on paper. As their skills develop they begin to colour within the outline of a picture. Teachers plan appropriate activities for pupils with more complex difficulties which enable them to develop early skills in writing such as holding and looking at objects placed in their hands.
55. Where teaching is good pupils learn effectively because teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. When teachers plan interesting activities, such as the follow-up to their weekend news, pupils concentrate throughout the lesson and this helps them to make progress. The clear instructions given in good lessons ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to do and they settle quickly to work and are confident to try the tasks they have been set. In one effective lesson the teacher made good use of the homework done by older pupils. There was a good opportunity for the class to discuss an example of one pupil's work which the teacher used to provide inspiration. The individual work, which was developed from this introduction was of good quality. The teacher ended the lesson well by reviewing what each pupil had done and praise was used effectively to help pupils identify their achievements.
56. Teachers use resources well to enhance pupils' learning. The school has a good range of resources such as "Big Books", reading scheme books, puppets and dressing-up clothes for drama and role-play. However, teachers currently make limited use of information technology to support pupils progress although there are appropriate plans to develop this area further as the school improves its information and communication technology provision.
57. The curriculum is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils now have a wider range of suitable learning experiences which support progress. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only taken over responsibility for the subject recently but a suitable subject development plan has already been established.

## **MATHEMATICS**

58. Although there are some inconsistencies across classes and groups of pupils, pupils' achievement and progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall. Where pupils achieve well this is because teachers have appropriate expectations and plan well to meet their needs, effectively using the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. However the progress of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and those with more complex learning difficulties is occasionally restricted because the activities provided do not take sufficient account of the way these pupils need to learn. When the pace of lessons is slow pupils of all abilities find it difficult to maintain their concentration. This means that not all of the pupils are effectively engaged in learning. Pupils' achievements in mathematics have improved since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. This is partly as a result of the new policy and the content of the planned work that reflects the National Numeracy Strategy. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils with more complex difficulties have suitable opportunities to learn early mathematics skills when they are encouraged to hold objects and focus on them. Teachers plan a range of appropriate activities for pupils to develop an understanding of numbers and younger pupils count confidently to 10 as they thread beads onto a cord. Pupils make steady progress and older pupils order numbers to 20. Teachers effectively extend these skills in the use of money and by the time they are eleven the most able pupils accurately make up bags of coins to 20p and 35p when they undertake tasks related to life skills. A small number of older pupils count even numbers to 20, manipulate numbers using a number grid and recognise simple patterns in number.
60. Where teaching is good pupils concentrate well because there is a brisk pace to lessons. Good relationships and effective use of questioning encourages pupils to share what they know. They are keen to talk about what they are doing and teachers use their answers appropriately to assess their achievement and extend their learning. Teacher effectively use resources such as a good quality wall display to maintain pupil's interest and further develop their skills. Clear planning and the good use of skilled support assistants enables pupils to make good progress during a lesson about circles. When teachers plan interesting activities pupils respond well and make good progress, for example, pupils understanding of circles is developed well through painting, the use of play dough and games with a parachute. When the teacher's expectations of pupils are clear and lesson routines are familiar pupils settle quickly to the task they are given. The provision for children with English as an additional language helps pupils with their mathematics.
61. In less successful lessons pupils often lose interest because the pace is slow and they are easily distracted. Teachers do not always manage the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils effectively so that they can participate in lessons. On occasions pupils, particularly those with behaviour difficulties, wander away from activities and teachers do not have the strategies to persuade them to return. In lessons where the learning outcomes are not clearly indicated pupils achievement is not always recognised and on occasions there is insufficient emphasis on acquiring mathematical skills. For example, in a lesson where a pupil was encouraged to practice cutting skills rather than developing mathematical understanding opportunities for progress were restricted. Teachers do not always use signing or other communication aids, such as real objects or symbols to help pupils understand and this restricts learning opportunities particularly for pupils with more complex difficulties.
62. Teachers use assessment effectively in their lessons when they ask pupils questions, and evaluate how successful the lesson has been. Lesson planning is most effective when the outcomes of these assessments are used to help teachers plan work for the

next lesson. However, comments about lessons are often too general and refer to pupils enjoyment of the activity or the effort they have put into participating. They do not provide enough information about what has been achieved and what needs to be taught again,

63. The provision for mathematics has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The subject has benefited from clear direction and co-ordination by the headteacher and the ongoing involvement of the Local Education Authority numeracy consultant. A suitable subject development plan is in place and this helps to identify areas for improvement. However these have not been sufficiently informed by observing teaching.
64. There is a satisfactory subject policy but the programmes of work and subject guidance need updating to reflect current developments in curricular provision for pupils in special schools. Further developments are planned and there is a recognition that greater monitoring of the subject is required. Resources have been considerably and appropriately enhanced since the last inspection. There are now sufficient resources to support learning. However information and communication technology, particularly appropriate software is limited and this restricts its use to support pupils learning.

## **SCIENCE**

65. Achievement in science is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. However, for pupils with more complex difficulties and those with behaviour problems achievement and progress is unsatisfactory because teaching does not sufficiently reflect their needs. The inappropriately managed behaviour of some pupils prevents them from participating effectively in lessons and their opportunities to make progress are restricted. The last inspection report identified that pupils with communication difficulties were not sufficiently supported through the use of communication systems and this still remains the case. Pupils who have English as an additional language are able to make the same progress as the majority of pupils because of the support provided by a bilingual support assistant and their teacher.
66. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. However, most classes have a wide age range of pupils and teachers plan experiences for the whole class, which means that learning does not always reflect what has been agreed for each year group in curriculum planning. Opportunities for pupils to build on experiences are too dependent on individual teachers and the school cannot rely on curriculum planning to ensure or to monitor that pupils have suitable opportunities.
67. Since the last inspection the school has developed a suitable curriculum plan which has resulted in improvements to teaching. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and an example of good teaching was seen for the youngest pupils.
68. Where teaching is good activities are well planned and interest pupils. For example, with younger children, when the teacher uses resources well and pupils' attention is gained as they watch the live rabbit. Pupils concentrate well as the rabbit moves about in its cage. Good use of questioning helps pupils to talk about the rabbit and

what it is doing, which helps them to observe more closely. The teacher provides good opportunities for pupils to compare, looking at real animals and toy resources, and helping to reinforce pupils understanding of living things. By the careful positioning of pupils the teacher makes sure that everyone is effectively involved in the activity with good support from adults. There is a good emphasis on behaviour and the teacher expects pupils to handle the rabbit with care.

69. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to investigate and older pupils look enthusiastically through a soil sample to see if they can find any mini-beasts. The teacher uses questions effectively to help pupils talk about what they did in last week's lesson. This enables pupils to link past experiences to the investigation and develops their understanding further. Teachers pay appropriate attention to health and safety during science lessons and pupils wear plastic gloves to hunt through the soil. An appropriate emphasis is placed on independence, particularly for higher attaining pupils, and they concentrate well and persevere, trying hard to put the glove on without help. Pupils capable of higher attainment, because of adult support, remain focused on activities and this enables them to make progress. Teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to handle scientific equipment and older pupils use a magnifying glass confidently to look at worms and bits of soil.
70. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils with behaviour difficulties are effectively included in activities. They often wander from the table, which means that their opportunities to learn are restricted. Teachers frequently plan different activities for pupils with more complex difficulties; however, these do not always effectively support learning. The introduction of an activity to find plastic insects in a sand tray gains pupils attention but there is insufficient emphasis on the learning outcome planned for the lesson and they do not make enough progress in developing their investigative and observational skills.
71. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities and older pupils participate well during a lesson about the skeleton because they enjoy singing the song 'Dem Bones, Dem Bones'. However there are occasions when teachers plan too many activities. Pupils become over excited because there is too much stimulation and they find it difficult to pay attention. In these lessons it is not clear what pupils are expected to learn because of the wide range of information given to them. The last inspection report identified that pupils did not have enough opportunities to predict the possible outcomes of investigations or to record their work. Both of these areas have been appropriately addressed and are reflected in the improved standards of teaching and learning.
72. Teachers use assessment such as questions and their observations of pupils appropriately to plan lessons but assessment is not used effectively to inform how the curriculum should be developed to better meet their needs. The school has established a portfolio of pupils' work, which demonstrates three levels of achievement. This includes photographic evidence and samples of pupils' work as well as descriptions of what pupils did; however, these examples do not clearly indicate what pupils understand and can do. Frequently they refer to what the pupil has experienced and enjoyed so teachers cannot use this evidence to identify how effectively the curriculum has been taught or if there are areas of understanding that pupils need to revisit.

73. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. A subject development plan has been established, which identifies appropriate priorities for improvement but these have not been informed by observing teaching. The subject policy is satisfactory but the programmes of work and subject guidance produced in response to the last inspection are now out of date and do not sufficiently reflect current developments in curriculum provision for pupils in special schools. There are sufficient resources to support learning.

## **ART**

74. Insufficient lessons were seen in art during the week of the inspection. However the analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Pupils extend their knowledge of the skills necessary for art as they use a range of drawing and paint materials.

75. There has been some improvement since the previous inspection when work in art was unsatisfactory. A range of examples of work seen in the scrutiny of pupils' work shows pupils using different media for painting and drawing, clay used in three-dimensional work and printing using sponge and other material. This progress has been led by an enthusiastic and hard working co-ordinator. Work is now planned in relation to a curriculum policy and a plan of the skills that are to be introduced over the pupils' time in the school. This covers many of those identified in the National Curriculum where pupils have to investigate different materials and processes. The school's plan for the work to be covered by pupils does not take full account of recent developments in the subject. At present it does not focus on the knowledge that pupils need to develop in the subject, for instance about differences and similarities between artists and craftspeople or their roles and purposes. The opportunity that pupils have to evaluate and develop their work is limited.

76. Resources remain satisfactory for the work that is undertaken and there are good displays in evidence throughout the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

77. No lessons were seen in design and technology during the week of the inspection. However the analysis of pupils work shows that pupils achievement and progress are satisfactory. There has been some improvement since the previous inspection when work in design and technology was unsatisfactory.

78. Examples of pupils' work show that, for instance, in the design part of the curriculum, pupils experience and investigate simple objects that move and follow simple instructions. They are able to make models from assorted 'junk' materials and can mark out and measure materials.

79. The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is new to the post. Work is underway in relation to a new curriculum policy and a plan for the coverage of the subject to meet the National Curriculum requirements but this needs to be further developed to reflect recent developments. At present it identifies key experiences in the subject. Resources are satisfactory for the work that is undertaken and there is a shortage of tools for the wider work that is planned. There is a limited budget for the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

80. Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection because of last minute changes to the timetable. However, evidence from teachers, planning and pupils' work, as well as the lesson observed indicates that achievement and progress for the majority of pupils is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the subject did not meet statutory requirements. The progress of pupils who have English as an additional language appears to be similar to that of the majority of pupils. However there was insufficient evidence in the form of pupils' work to make judgements about the achievement and progress of pupils with more complex needs and those with autistic spectrum disorders. Teachers plan an appropriate range of learning experiences through which pupils develop appropriate geographical understanding. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to extend their knowledge of the school environment and the local community. For example, teachers effectively use video and photos to increase pupils' awareness of the school and its grounds.
81. Leadership and management of the subject is now satisfactory and learning is planned in relation to a new curriculum policy and plan which appropriately reflects the National Curriculum. However, planning needs to be developed further to provide teachers with clear guidance about what to teach pupils. Resources, identified as unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection remain inadequate, particularly in relation to those suitable to support learning for pupils with more complex needs. The range of software available for geography is also unsatisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

82. No history lessons were seen during the week of the inspection. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that achievement and progress of the majority of pupils is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress of pupils was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils who have English as an additional language appear to make the same progress as the majority; however, there was insufficient evidence in the form of pupils' work to make a judgement about the progress of pupils with more complex needs and those with autistic spectrum disorders.
83. Teachers' planning is more effective than at the time of the last inspection because the school has implemented a new policy and curriculum plan which appropriately reflects the National Curriculum. Teachers plan suitable learning opportunities that enable pupils to develop an understanding of history when they study topics such as the Greeks and the Romans. Whole school days about particularly aspects of history such as the 'Greek Day' help to develop pupils' understanding further. During whole school activities such as these the needs of pupils with more complex difficulties are addressed well because activities have a suitable sensory element. For example pupils have good opportunities to learn when they taste food, dress up in appropriate costumes and listen to music. However, pupils' work indicates that at other times activities can be limited and there is too much colouring of work sheets which does not sufficiently enhance pupils' historical knowledge. Opportunities for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder to develop a sense of chronology through the use of individual symbols timetables or schedules are also limited.
84. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has established a clear development plan for improving history provision across the school. There have been suitable improvements made since the last inspection when the provision was judged not to meet requirements. Resources for history are limited and there is little use of information and

communication technology to support learning. The lack of artefacts particularly affects the learning of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

85. The achievement of the majority of pupils in information and communication technology is satisfactory. No judgement was made about achievement at the time of the last inspection because there was insufficient evidence. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to the learning experiences they have. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those with more complex learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders make the same progress as others because they are appropriately supported.
86. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers ensure that higher attaining pupils learn to use a computer mouse and the basic keys on the keyboard correctly. By the time they leave school, higher attaining pupils produce short pieces of word-processed writing. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate levels of support which enables them to be as independent as possible. Pupils clearly understand how to use their word processing skills and clearly enjoy sessions on the computer. Their good attitudes to work and their concentration help them to make progress. Teachers provide lower attaining pupils with appropriate opportunities to use adapted controls such as concept keyboards, touch screens and single touch switches to control the computer screen
87. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities that enable pupils to develop their skills both in the classroom and in the new computer room. Teachers are beginning to use computers appropriately to support pupils learning in other subjects. For example, teachers plan for pupils to use word-processing to support their writing skills and there are opportunities to develop reading skills further when pupils read text and look at pictures on the computer screen. Teachers also use mathematical software to develop pupils number skills when they use programs about counting and they have gained information about the human body to support their work in science.
88. Teachers use computers to help pupils with more complex difficulties develop their awareness and attention by encouraging them to 'look at' and concentrate on the screen. However, the use of simple switches to develop pupils awareness of cause and effect, and their skills in handling and touching equipment are underdeveloped. Teaching and teachers' planning demonstrates a generally lack of confidence in knowing how to use computers to support pupils learning during lessons. Teaching is more secure when computer skills are taught discretely in the computer room.
89. The co-ordinator has introduced suitable assessment to monitor pupils' progress and this is used well by some teachers to set up individual targets for pupils. However, its use across the school is inconsistent. There is no monitoring of what is taught in this subject as a whole, or how well it is taught. Curriculum plans are unsatisfactory as there is no clear agreement about what should be taught and how and this restricts the amount of progress that pupils can make.
90. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection The leadership and management of information technology are now satisfactory and an appropriate development plan has been established which clearly identifies staff training needs. Staff have already taken part in suitable training since the last report, but there is a need for this to be continued. Since the last inspection there have been good improvements to resources, which are now satisfactory and enhanced by the new computer room.

## **MUSIC**

91. Insufficient lessons were seen in music during the week of the inspection partly as a result of some changes to the timetable. However, the analysis of pupils' work and teachers records indicate that pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory over time. This maintains the progress that pupils were seen to be making in the last inspection.
92. In the lesson which was observed, which was very good, the teacher used an electronic switch to help pupils in the introduction and this created greater involvement in the activity. Pupils were given responsibility for selecting their own percussion instrument. They then learnt how to make short and long sounds. They joined in enthusiastically showing clear enjoyment from the activity and made progress through the lesson in both confidence and more controlled use of rhythm. Pupils who have difficulty in maintaining concentration and interest in activities remained involved for the whole of the lesson. The scrutiny of videos of pupils' work showed pupils performing in a range of school performances, singing and playing instruments. The school has good support from a music therapist who works with pupils.
93. There has been satisfactory progress from the previous inspection when work in music was satisfactory to good. The subject is led by an enthusiastic and hard working co-ordinator. There is an appropriate development plan for the subject. However, resources remain unsatisfactory especially in relation to equipment for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and for the application of electronic and computer systems. There is no specialist accommodation for the subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

94. Achievement is satisfactory for pupils of all ages. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory in half of the lessons observed. The last inspection identified that pupils were not always sufficiently well supported in lessons. The level of support offered to pupils is now very good in terms of the number of adults available to help. However, this does on occasions restrict their opportunities to be independent, although it has also resulted in improved achievement for pupils with more complex difficulties and those with behaviour problems because there are now sufficient adults to help them participate. Pupils who do not have English as their first language make the same progress as others because of the good support provided by a bilingual support assistant during lessons.
95. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has developed curriculum plans and subject guidance to support teachers. This has resulted in improved teacher confidence when planning lessons. The school has also increased the number of adults available to support lessons and this is reflected in improved standards of teaching and learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and an example of good teaching was seen for the oldest pupils during a swimming lesson at the local leisure centre.
96. Where teaching is better, activities are organised well to provide opportunities for pupil to be independent. Teachers' high expectations of pupils ensure that they do as much for themselves as possible and this makes a significant contribution to their personal development particularly when they practice dressing skills. The teacher provides good reminders about safe behaviour and clear explanations help pupils to participate effectively because they understand what they are going to do and how

they are expected to behave. Good relationships and sensitive support from the teacher helps pupils to develop water confidence and make good progress. By the end of the lesson two pupils who are clearly reluctant to enter the water at the beginning are pleased with their progress and recognise their achievement because the teacher has used praise effectively to identify when they have done something well. Pupils capable of higher attainment swim confidently and demonstrate emerging stroke techniques.

97. Teachers plan appropriate activities that help to develop pupils balance skills. Pupils confidently negotiate a simple assault course made from small apparatus. Teachers provide clear instructions during lessons and this helps to develop pupils listening skills. Pupils have clearly paid attention when they follow a route around the hall made of carpet square stepping stones and arrows. The teachers' good knowledge of pupils ensures that they make satisfactory progress during a small equipment lesson. During lessons teachers appropriately identify good examples of skill for pupils to watch. However, pupils do not always pay attention and teachers do not insist on them watching carefully, so these opportunities do not always result in improved performance.
98. Pupils' opportunities to make progress are enhanced by well-planned opportunities to learn alongside children from a local mainstream primary school. Teaching is enthusiastic during these lessons and during May pole dancing pupils are well supported and make good progress. These opportunities for inclusion make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.
99. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. A subject development plan has been established, which identifies appropriate priorities for improvement but these have not been informed by observing teaching. The subject policy is satisfactory but the plans and subject guidance produced in response to the last inspection are now out of date and do not sufficiently reflect current developments in curriculum provision for pupils in special schools. There are sufficient resources to support learning and the school makes good use of facilities such as the local swimming pool. The accommodation for physical education, judged to be cramped at the time of the last inspection is still unsatisfactory.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

100. Only two lesson of religious education were seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils work as well as the lessons observed indicate that achievement of the majority of pupils is satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when achievement was judged to be unsatisfactory.
101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop their awareness of different religions when they look at the different types of building used by Christians and Muslims. By the time they leave school pupils have studied a number of different religions and know that there are 'special' clothes, artefacts and rituals associated with each. Teachers plan suitable activities that enable higher attaining pupils to understand that each religion is associated with a different way of living, and that each religion has different beliefs. School assemblies contribute effectively to pupils' progress because they provide opportunities for them to celebrate the festivals of different religions such as Divali and Christmas

102. Teachers use artefacts well to gain pupils' attention and maintain their interest but lesson planning does not always consider how long a lesson is going to be and occasionally there are insufficient activities to 'fill the time'. Pupils then lose their concentration and do not make as much progress. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils with more complex learning difficulties to be involved in sensory activities such as touching the clothes and trying on the headwear which enables them to experience the bright colours and richness of the cloth.
103. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up the responsibility for the subject and leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school now has a policy for the subject and uses the locally agreed syllabus for religious education as the basis for its planning. There has been satisfactory improvement made to the provision since the last inspection when the teaching of religious education was almost entirely through assemblies and resources were judged to be unsatisfactory.