

INSPECTION REPORT

SAMUEL RHODES SCHOOL

Islington, London

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100469

Headteacher: Jackie Blount

Reporting inspector: Alan Tattersall
20466

Dates of inspection: 4-7 March 2002

Inspection number: 243758

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community Special
Age range of pupils: 5 to 16
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dowrey Street
Islington
London
Postcode: N1 0LS

Telephone number: 020 7837 9075

Fax number: 020 7837 4030

Appropriate authority: CEA@Islington

Name of chair of governors: Patricia Maitland

Date of previous inspection: 20 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20466	Alan Tattersall	Registered Inspector	Physical Education Personal, Social and Health Education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay Inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3055	Clive Tombs	Team Inspector	English Music Equal Opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils?
14691	Jenny Hall	Team Inspector	Science Modern Foreign Language Special Educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30071	John Pearson	Team Inspector	Mathematics Art and Design English as an Additional Language	How well is the school led and managed?
19171	Robin Lee	Team Inspector	Design and technology Information and Communication Technology Religious Education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
20024	Paul Wright	Team Inspector	Humanities (History and Geography)	

The inspection contractor was:

QICS

“lbsley”
4 West Cliff Road
Dawlish
Devon
EX7 9EB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Samuel Rhodes is a maintained special school with 56 boys and 31 girls between the ages of five and sixteen on roll. All pupils have moderate learning difficulties and a few have associated difficulties. . Fifty-five pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average for a school of this type. Pupils' attainment on entry is low. Most pupils come from the Borough of Islington and represent a wide range of ethnic heritages. There are 24 pupils for whom English is an additional language, and 4 of these are at an early stage of language acquisition. The main languages other than English are Bengali, Sylheti, Somali, Turkish and Yoruba. Standards in the school declined after the last inspection when the headteacher left and the school was run by two temporary headteachers. The Local Education Authority withdrew the school's powers to manage staff and the budget during this period. The current headteacher was appointed two years ago and delegated powers were restored in April 2001. Directly after the appointment all but three teachers left the school. The difficulty in recruiting replacement teachers, with a dependence on temporary staff, has slowed improvements. However, through imaginative solutions, the school has filled most vacancies and this is providing more stability.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a fast improving school, rising from a very low base following the decline in its standards immediately after the last inspection. The very strong leadership of the headteacher and senior management team appointed since the last inspection, supported well by the governing body, have ensured that pupils follow a satisfactory range of learning activities. Standards of teaching and learning have improved and are satisfactory. This enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and management.
- The teaching and learning throughout the school in physical education and art and design is good.
- Promotes pupils' attitudes and behaviour, social, moral, cultural and spiritual development well.
- Formed very good links with the community and developed very good opportunities for pupils to attend other schools and colleges.
- Ensures that relationships with parents and the quality of information provided for them are good.
- Provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The science accommodation and learning resources for pupils in years 7 to 11 and the course and the examinations in science for pupils in years 10 and 11.
- Teaching and learning in religious education.
- Pupils' attendance.
- The use of learning support staff to help pupils in class.

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 progress since the last inspection in January 1997. The very effective headteacher and senior management team have worked very hard in partnership with the local education authority to lift the school from a very low point following a fall in standards in the period following the last inspection. The areas identified in the previous report have been largely accomplished. There is better checking of teaching and learning of all pupils and a greater emphasis upon raising standards of teaching and pupils' academic achievement. Consequently, teaching, learning and standards have

improved. The school now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and pupils have more opportunities to take examinations.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 6	by Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	B	Very good	A
Reading	C	C	Good	B
Writing	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	C	C	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils achieve well in physical education, art and design and overall in personal, social and health education. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards the academic targets in their IEPs and towards targets the school sets for them to achieve in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. They achieve other targets well, such as to improve their attitudes or attention in lessons. Although pupils achieve well in communicating, achievement in English is satisfactory overall because there is less emphasis upon learning reading and writing. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory; pupils often make good progress working with numbers but make less progress in solving problems. Pupils have inconsistent opportunities to improve their reading and writing or practise numeracy skills during the day in other subjects. Achievement is good in computer lessons but satisfactory in other lessons because they do not always have the opportunity to use computers.. Achievement is satisfactory in French, music and humanities (geography and history). Achievement in science is satisfactory for pupils in years 1 to 9 but unsatisfactory for pupils in years 10 and 11 because facilities are very poor. Factors such as pupils' behaviour, lack of teacher expertise in a minority of lessons and insufficient support from classroom staff reduces progress in a few subjects. Pupils in Year 11 achieved satisfactory accreditation last year. Two gained GCSE grades in mathematics. A larger number gained accreditation at a lower level in other subjects: Certificates of Educational Achievement in mathematics, art and design, design and technology, computers (information and communication technology) and 'GAPE' (graded assessment profile in English) and most achieve 'ASDAN' accreditation. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those who have additional special educational needs receive sufficient support to make the same progress as others. Achievement is satisfactory in design and technology. However, pupils in years 7 to 11 make unsatisfactory progress in food technology. Pupils' achievement in religious education is unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have pride in it and value the support they receive to develop both socially and academically.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils usually behave well. They are friendly and welcoming in lessons, around the school and on visits. In a minority of lessons pupils misbehave and this reduces the progress that they make in them.

Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop confidence and maturity as they progress through the school. Relationships are good between pupils and with staff. Pupils relish responsibilities such as serving on the school council.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school tries hard to encourage good attendance but attendance rates are below national averages for similar schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons satisfactorily now, which is better than at the time of the last inspection. Overall, they have good expertise to teach the range of specialist subjects. Good teaching takes place in physical education, art and design and overall in personal, social and health education. The teaching of computer skills in discrete lessons is good but satisfactory in other lessons throughout the day. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory, being good to promote communication but satisfactory for reading and writing. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory. There are good examples where teachers plan to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in lessons throughout the day but this is not consistent. The quality of teaching of science, is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in humanities, music and French. The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory overall; it is very good for pupils in years 7 to 11 in the workshop but unsatisfactory in food technology where the temporary teachers lack sufficient expertise. The teaching of religious education is unsatisfactory throughout the school. Teachers usually manage behaviour well. Occasionally they are less successful and this reduces pupils' progress. This is particularly the case in lessons led by teachers who are new to the school or those who do not apply the strategies of the school well enough to ensure that pupils behave and learn. Teachers provide sufficient support so that pupils for whom English is an additional language or who have additional special educational needs make the same progress as others. Teachers often set homework and this helps pupils to make more progress but they do not always ensure that pupils know what they have to do or mark pupils' work consistently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The range of subjects and educational activities the school provides meet pupils' learning needs. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies satisfactorily. Links with schools, colleges and arrangements for pupils to be included in some of their lessons are very good. The lack of suitable facilities restricts what pupils can learn in science in Years 10 and 11.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils receive the support they require and consequently make the same progress as other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Good. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is effective and encourages them to take responsibility for their own actions and to help others. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are promoted well.

development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils and looks after their welfare well. There are satisfactory and improving systems to check how well pupils are learning and developing socially. Methods to improve pupils' behaviour are satisfactory.

Extra-curricular activities are good and senior pupils take part in highly valued residential visits. The good partnership with parents was evident in the good attendance at the parents' meeting and has a strong influence on promoting pupils' learning. There is a very strong partnership with the community. The provision of careers and sex and drugs awareness education is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's very strong and visionary leadership is supported very well by senior staff. They have a good capacity to move the school on further.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The governing body has a clear idea of the strengths of the school and the improvements that are required. Governors support and guide the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The quality of teaching is constantly checked. There are recently introduced good and improving systems to check how well pupils are achieving and to act to improve their progress further.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school spends its money wisely. The school has funds available from previous years but has not had control of them long enough to plan to use them effectively.

The provision of staff is satisfactory. The school has overcome the difficulties of recruiting teachers to provide a more stable staff. Support staff are valuable members of the class. They undertake other responsibilities well such as supporting pupils in lessons in other schools or leading groups to improve pupils' skills in literacy. They have provided much valued stability during the period of extremely high turnover of teaching staff. However, the school recognises that they often leave lessons to undertake other duties and this reduces support for pupils, adversely affecting progress. The school is working to improve this. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory and the school makes very good use of facilities such as sports facilities in the community. The school recognises that accommodation and resources for science for pupils in the secondary department are very poor. It is actively considering how to provide appropriate science for pupils in Years 10 and 11.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff. • Teaching • Pupils are helped to become mature and responsible • Information from the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff staying at the school for longer periods • The behaviour of a minority of pupils • The provision of homework

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. The school has been successful in filling most vacant posts and recognises the importance of establishing a more stable staff. Parents rightly identify that a minority of pupils is disruptive in some lessons and that this affects pupils' learning. The school endeavours to set homework but the team agrees that teachers could ensure that pupils know what to do and that they mark homework more consistently.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards the academic targets that the school sets for them in their individual education plans. Progress is at least satisfactory in all subjects except religious education and food technology for pupils in years 7 to 11 and science for pupils in years 10 and 11. The progress that pupils make towards their other individual targets is satisfactory. Pupils make better progress in most subjects since the time of the last inspection. There was less emphasis upon pupils making progress in subjects than in their personal development at that time. The headteacher and senior staff have provided very good leadership and management to ensure that there is now a greater emphasis upon raising academic achievement whilst continuing to promote pupils' achievement in social skills.
2. Consequently, there is now a satisfactory and improving range of examinations. Last year pupils were successful in several subjects. A small number of higher attaining pupils achieved 'E' and 'G' grades in the GCSE in mathematics. In the Certificate of Educational Achievement, pupils achieved success in art and design, design and technology, computers, and mathematics. The achievement of other pupils in other subjects is satisfactory, where 11 pupils achieved levels from 1 to 4 in the 'GAPE' (English) and 11 achieved the bronze award through 'ASDAN' (Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network). However, the ASDAN assessment for science is not challenging enough for the range of work that pupils complete.
3. The school has begun to set whole school targets for its pupils, and pupils make satisfactory progress towards these targets in literacy, numeracy and personal development. The current results of assessments so far provide a firm basis for the school to set further targets for future years. For instance, there are targets for pupils up to the end of Year 9 to improve their scores using the PIVATS (Performance Indicators for Added Value Target Setting), of up to 25% by 2003. The targets for pupils at the end of Year 11 include very ambitious and challenging ones. For instance, there are targets for 5 pupils to achieve GCSEs in mathematics at levels 'D to G' by the end of 2002 and to increase this to 7 by the following year.
4. There is a strong emphasis upon encouraging pupils to communicate and teachers conduct lessons mainly through speaking, with pupils listening and responding accordingly to make good progress. However, pupils' achievements are only satisfactory overall in English because they only make satisfactory progress in reading and writing. This is because there is less emphasis upon promoting reading and writing in English lessons and in other lessons throughout the day. Pupils' skills, particularly in speaking and listening have improved in the previous year because of the way that lessons follow the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils are confident with the structure of lessons and pupils in the primary department anticipate for instance that the teacher will bring out the big book which they enjoy and use a glove puppet to ask them questions.
5. In mathematics lessons, there are occasions when pupils make good progress. However, a scrutiny of work and records shows that pupils' achievement and progress over time is satisfactory. Achievement and progress has improved since the last inspection, most recently through the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. For instance, pupils in Year 7 took part in a lesson to estimate the number of blocks in

a container. They made good progress working independently to make further estimates of other containers holding counters. However, the weakness in mathematics overall is that pupils do not consistently complete sufficient recorded work in lessons, particularly in solving problems, to make more than satisfactory progress.

6. Pupils achieve well in personal, social and health education and make good progress in lessons in the subject and in related lessons in citizenship and careers. This underlines the importance that the school places on the subject and parents appreciate this. Pupils in years 1 to 3 for instance, make good progress in learning social skills during the early morning welcome period. Older pupils make similarly good progress discussing personal issues during tutor time. They make good progress in careers lessons in preparation for leaving school. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in physical education. They are used to the routines of lessons and the high expectations for them to behave and participate in energetic activities. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve very well in swimming. Several pupils achieve the standards expected for their age in distance swimming.
7. Pupils' achievement in science up to Year 6 is satisfactory. In years 7 to 9 it remains satisfactory because the teacher has planned a suitable range of work that pupils can undertake in very poor accommodation, with very limited facilities. However, pupils in years 10 and 11 make unsatisfactory progress because they do not follow a suitable range of work in the very poor accommodation to enable them to achieve a higher level of accreditation. Achievement in using computers is good overall. Pupils make good and often very good progress in lessons taught in the computer suite. This is because of the strength of the teaching. This is a considerable improvement on the standards at the time of the previous inspection. There are a few good examples where pupils use computers to support their learning in other lessons. For example, pupils in Year 7 made good progress in a mathematics lesson to estimate and count objects in containers. They graphed the result using computers and this enhanced their learning of the visual differences between quantities. However, overall, pupils do not receive consistent opportunities to use computers in most lessons.
8. Pupils achieve well in art and design lesson. In years 1 to 6, they make satisfactory progress in design and technology. Those in years 9 to 11 achieve particularly well in design and technology in the craft room. They design well and create impressive products that they are keen and proud to take home. However, achievement in design and technology overall is satisfactory because achievement is unsatisfactory in food technology. Achievement is satisfactory in music where a few of the oldest pupils make good progress learning to play instruments. Pupils in years 7 to 9 make satisfactory progress in French. Achievement in humanities throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement and progress in religious education is unsatisfactory. They produce very little written work in lessons and the teachers' planning is not good enough to ensure that pupils build on their previous knowledge.
9. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support from the school and a specialist teacher. Similarly those pupils who have additional special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because of the support they receive. Staff are sensitive to their needs and there is good planning to provide the support they require. Pupils respond well to the staff encouragement. Consequently, they require less direct intervention as they move through the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes towards the school are good. Most pupils are keen to attend and demonstrate a pride in both their physical surroundings and their achievements in the classroom. They welcome visitors and are pleased to talk about their school. They appreciate the support that the staff provides and believe that their teachers are generally firm but fair. Many of the older pupils, who have attended the school for several years and have seen many changes, readily confirm that they prefer the structure and strong commitment to academic achievement that is currently in place. The parents and carers of pupils have also noted the regard in which their children hold the school. Overall, pupils enjoy lessons. For instance, pupils in years 4 and 5 anticipate reading the big book 'Eat the Alphabet' with pleasure and this encourages them to listen carefully to answer questions. Pupils develop a responsible attitude to working in lessons. For instance, in a computer lesson in Year 8 pupils listened well and responded sensibly to the instructions given to develop skills in using the mouse to change text on the computer screen. Consequently pupils kept up with the work well and achievement was good.
11. The behaviour of pupils in class is good overall. Most lessons are characterised by positive attitudes and good behaviour. There are many examples of pupils being absorbed in their work, showing a real commitment to the topics they are studying and taking a pride in their achievements. This happens in several subjects, particularly in design and technology. In these lessons the finished articles are of a high standard and reflect enormous interest and involvement by the pupils. Pupils behave well. They are encouraged by the way that teachers praise their efforts.
12. There is a minority of lessons where pupil behaviour is unsatisfactory. Pupils in several classes behaved well with one teacher but misbehaved with another. This was evident when pupils' behaviour was unsatisfactory in a Year 11 drama lesson but good in a computer lesson with the same class shortly afterwards. On occasions, when teachers are temporary and unfamiliar with the pupils, then behaviour is not checked sufficiently and this reduces the progress they make. However, pupils also misbehave with several established teachers who do not apply the strategies to promote good behaviour consistently and this has a similar adverse effect on progress and achievement.
13. Pupils behave well outside the classroom. Assemblies are calm, well ordered, and promote a strong sense of community. During break times, pupils are relaxed and the younger ones play together constructively. There are occasional incidents of name-calling and teasing, but staff deal with these firmly. Several pupils state that they have experienced cases of bullying in previous schools that were more serious. They are quick to point out that they do not consider that there is a problem in the school. The inspection team observed no sexist or racist incidents.
14. There was a legacy of bad behaviour during the period of staff instability when the school had several different headteachers. The new headteacher adopted a determined view to prevent pupils fighting. During the academic year 2001-2002, the school suspended 26 pupils temporarily following their involvement in aggressive incidents. This is a high figure but there have only been six since September. Pupils realise that there is strict and consistent enforcement of the policy of 'zero tolerance'. The provision of a safe environment is testament to the success of this approach. The school has not excluded any pupils permanently during the last two years.

15. The personal development of pupils is good. The pupils see themselves as being close to the staff and feel that they can “talk to them about their problems” and receive good advice and support. The strength of the relationship with all adults in the school is evident. There are good relationships between pupils and teachers and learning support staff in lessons. Similarly, they have good relationships with the administrative and other members of staff around the school. They like to help and willingly carry out simple chores, for instance, tidying classrooms after lessons or helping clear dishes after meals. The relationship between pupils is also good. Pupils regularly work together well in classes, for instance, taking part in drama. The younger pupils view many pupils in Year 11 as their friends and as responsible young adults who will look after them. A good example of this is older pupils reading to the younger ones in the library at lunchtime.
16. Pupils respond well to opportunities to make good progress in social development. The School Council for example, helps promote decision-making skills and allows pupils the chance to contribute to the running of the school. Every class votes for a representative to attend the weekly meetings and speak on their behalf. The pupils have decided that the pupils’ toilets need to be improved. They are considering ways to raise money to carry out this work. The teacher present at the meeting has an advisory and non-voting role. The manner in which the School Council carries out its duties is impressive. Older pupils willingly accept responsibilities appropriate to their age and ability. They take pride in being able to make their own way to school by public transport and take pleasure in the privilege of being allowed out of school to visit the local shops during the lunch break. They welcome the opportunity to receive visitors to the school. During the inspection, a local drama group gave a performance as part of a drugs education project, which was much appreciated and courteously received. The highlight of the school year for many is the ‘School Journey’ – a residential week away from London, where pupils have the chance to try a variety of outdoor activities. Pupils also welcome the opportunity to co-operate with each other and staff to perform the highly popular Christmas concert.
17. Attendance levels are similar to those at the previous inspection of 88.9%. During the first six months of this school year they have dropped another 3% which is unsatisfactory and a disappointing figure especially given the active approach the headteacher takes to encouraging all pupils to attend. A group of older pupils contributes to this less than satisfactory level. A small number of pupils being unable to attend for health or transport reasons also adversely affects the attendance figures. However, levels of unauthorised absences have fallen greatly and are now lower than in similar schools. Occasional traffic congestion can cause delays in the mornings. However, punctuality is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The school has taken good steps to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The further improvement in standards remains part of the school’s good plan for future development. During the inspection, although there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, nearly half of the teaching seen was good or very good.
19. During the inspection, three temporary teachers were working in the school. They lacked familiarity with the pupils and the school’s systems to improve pupils’ behaviour and this meant that they could not promote better than satisfactory progress. The temporary teachers for food technology and some lessons in personal, social and health education in the secondary department lacked sufficient expertise in the

subjects. They also lacked sufficient knowledge of the pupils to plan more work for them to make more progress and this affected pupils' progress and achievement in the subjects.

20. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching. In order to do this the school has obtained strong support from local advisers to provide guidance and training. This has been most successful in helping teachers to plan lessons more effectively. This is evident in the way that teachers now prepare lessons. Often lessons have a good structure where the teacher explains the tasks to the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and provides the opportunity at the end for pupils to talk about what they have learned. The teacher planned well in a good English lesson for Year 10 aimed at pupils 'getting a message across'. The teacher introduced the lesson well so that pupils knew what to expect and quickly assumed their roles in miming actions such as being tennis umpires. At the end of the lesson, the teacher ensured that pupils discussed each other's contributions and this helped them to learn from each other. Gathering pupils together at the end of the lesson to discuss what they have learnt is a feature of lessons following the National Literacy Strategy guidelines. This was successful for instance, to check if pupils in years 4 and 5 had learnt the lesson objectives to recognise the initial letters of words. In art, the teacher allows time at the end of the lessons for pupils to look at each other's work; in Year 4 they admired each other's 'Andy Warhol' pictures. They learned from looking at each other's work that there were many alternative designs that they could consider in the future.
21. A feature of most lessons is the way that teachers question pupils regularly to find out how well pupils are learning. This helps them to modify their approach or plan other work for pupils to build upon pupils' understanding. The school has made significant improvements to the formal way that teachers check pupils' progress. These are beginning to indicate what teachers need to plan for pupils to improve their learning in all subjects. Similarly, the recently introduced collections of pupils' completed work in subjects provides an increasingly useful means of judging pupils' progress and to plan what pupils should learn next.
22. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and ensure that they retain pupils' interest through planning interesting activities. One teacher was successful in improving initially unsatisfactory behaviour in a numeracy lesson for pupils up to Year 6 to enable them to make satisfactory progress overall. The teacher stopped the lesson because pupils were teasing each other and making each other upset. Through sensitive talking and firm action pupils agreed their mistakes and made friends. This meant that the lesson could proceed, although pupils only made satisfactory progress because there was less time to complete their work. However, a minority of teachers particularly those new to the school, failed to improve pupils' behaviour. On occasions, this leads to pupils making satisfactory progress in an otherwise good lesson. However, in a few instances when teachers fail to improve pupils' behaviour sufficiently, this leads to pupils making unsatisfactory progress. For instance, this led to pupils in Year 11 making unsatisfactory progress in a drama lesson. Pupils were not clear about what they had to do and lost interest. Their behaviour deteriorated and was not checked sufficiently for them to make enough progress in the lesson.
23. There are strong aspects to the teaching of several subjects throughout the school. Teachers overall have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and how to plan lessons to meet pupils' different needs. For instance, teaching is very effective in design and technology for pupils in years 7 to 9 in the workshop. The teacher shared skills and working practices with pupils effectively. This enabled pupils in Year 7 for instance, to use a range of hand and electric tools in a safe and mature way. The

teacher's skills have a very significant effect on promoting their progress as they follow his example to work with meticulous care to draw and complete products such as storage boxes. Teaching is good in discrete computer lessons where the teacher's skills promoted good progress in a lesson for pupils in years 1, 2 and 3. The tasks matched pupils' needs very well. Consequently, they could succeed in their tasks to add shapes to the screen, move them around and change colours. This captured their interest and the effective support from the nursery nurse and judicious questions from the teacher gradually moved pupils along to make very significant gains in knowledge.

24. Good relationships are a feature of most lessons. Teachers and classroom staff use praise effectively and this usually has the desired effect of encouraging pupils to work hard. Teachers make good use of classroom staff to support pupils' learning. This is evident on many occasions where learning support assistants and nursery nurses provide sensitive support for pupils. This makes a strong contribution to helping pupils to make progress in academic subjects and personal development. Learning support assistants fulfil a vital role. Their value is evident when several staff are required to leave their classes early before lunch to assume their other roles as lunchtime assistants. Frequently lessons that were progressing well deteriorate at this point and pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
25. Teachers plan lessons satisfactorily to implement the National Strategies of Literacy and Numeracy, although there is an overemphasis upon oral work. Teaching is satisfactory in English. Most teachers promote pupils' communication well, changing instructions or questions when required to make them more easily understood. However, as with lessons in subjects such as humanities and religious education, they do not always exploit fully the opportunities available to require pupils to read and write or to use computers for research. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in mathematics. There are good, but inconsistent examples of teachers planning to promote pupils' numeracy skills in lessons throughout the day. The teaching of computer skills is good. This is often very good in the lessons taught discretely. Several of these lessons ensure that pupils learn about other subjects such as art and mathematics. There are good instances of pupils using computers to help them with their work in subjects. For instance, in humanities, pupils in Year 10 use them to complete their written assignments for their ASDAN accreditation. However, teachers miss opportunities to enable pupils to use computers more regularly in all subjects such as using computer encyclopaedias to improve their reading and research skills.
26. The teaching of swimming is particularly good and contributes very well to pupils making very good progress by the end of Year 6. The teaching of personal, social and health education is good. Teachers promote pupils' progress well during tutor periods and lessons in personal, social and health education, citizenship and careers for pupils from Year 8 onwards. The planning is good in most lessons. However, several temporary teachers lead lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 11. Although teaching is satisfactory, the temporary teachers lack detailed knowledge of the pupils, for instance, how to plan to build on pupils' previous learning.
27. The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory overall but teaching in food technology for pupils in years 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory. There is inadequate planning and teachers lack sufficient skill to promote better progress. The teaching of religious education is unsatisfactory. Teachers lack the skills to plan suitable lessons throughout the school. They do not plan for pupils to record their work or assess it sufficiently so that they can plan further work for them to do.

28. There are pupils from different year groups in most classes. Teachers' planning ensures that they provide suitable work for each pupil and this ensures that the tasks match their different levels of attainment. They similarly plan satisfactorily to meet pupils' different special educational needs. For instance, the teacher provides a special mouse in a computer lesson if a pupil finds the usual one too difficult to operate. Teachers ensure that pupils for whom English is a second language make the same progress as others though providing appropriate support and following the advice of the visiting specialist.
29. Teachers set homework overall in a satisfactory way. This provides opportunities for pupils to find out information from home such as food preferences or to complete written assignments such as worksheets. The teacher set homework well in a design and technology lesson for pupils in Year 11. Part of the lesson was devoted to explaining the examination preparation they would do at home, giving examples and ensuring that they all understood. However, there is inconsistency in the way that several teachers set homework. Teachers do not always leave enough time at the end of the lesson to enable pupils to record what they have to do at home to inform them and their parents or carers what the tasks entail. Parents and carers report, and evidence shows, that homework is not always marked or the comments do not provide sufficient information about how well pupils have achieved. The school has tried to improve the setting of homework and it is evident that there is a need to ensure consistent good practice.

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

30. The school provides a satisfactory range of subjects for pupils to learn. The increase in the length of the school day has raised it to above the level in similar schools. There is a satisfactory balance of time overall between subjects and with sufficient time provided for lessons in English and mathematics. This is a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when English lessons received too large an allocation of time. However, there is too little time allocated to pupils for science in years 10 and 11. Teachers have resolved most of the weaknesses present at the time of the previous inspection in relation to planning for pupils to learn. They have developed subject plans that allow pupils to learn systematically as they proceed through the school. Their plans follow published guidelines. The school has worked very well with advisers from the local education authority and specialists in other schools to provide their own plans for pupils to learn for instance, in English, science and French. However, planning for what pupils will learn in religious education is unsatisfactory.
31. The school receives good support from a specialist teacher funded through an Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). The teacher provides effective guidance so that school staff can give the support that pupils require to help them to learn. This includes guidance for the school to provide signs, symbols and translation of documents so that they can improve communication. This, together with the efforts of school staff and support from the speech and language therapist, ensures that pupils for whom English is an additional language make the same progress as others.
32. The school has satisfactory strategies to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers have introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies satisfactorily within lessons in years 1 to 6. Teachers are introducing the Literacy Strategy into lessons for pupils from years 7 to 9. This is having a suitable effect on drawing teachers' attention to meeting pupils' targets for learning literacy in their individual education plans when they plan their lessons. The school is aware that teachers could

plan more rigorously to promote pupils' skills in literacy within lessons throughout the day, particularly for pupils to write and is developing suitable plans to improve this. Although there are good examples of planning to promote pupils' skills in numeracy in several subjects such as music, science and design and technology, this is not consistent throughout the school. Although there has been a good improvement in the provision of discrete lessons in computers, teachers do not always ensure that they plan to make the best of opportunities to use computers in other lessons to support pupils' learning.

33. Pupils in years 10 and 11 receive training that is relevant for them to prepare for the next phase of education. They follow the ASDAN Youth Award scheme. This has satisfactory elements within it to promote for instance, their personal development. Pupils study for satisfactory but improving accreditation, including GCSE, Certificate of Educational Achievement and GAPE. This provides teachers with a satisfactory basis to plan lessons for pupils and to assess how well pupils are doing. Pupils continue to receive lessons in science and humanities. The school makes the correct arrangements for pupils in years 10 and 11 to follow an alternative to a modern foreign language. They follow suitable courses to prepare them for the future for instance, they attend college for a day a week.
34. Careers education is good. Pupils receive good support from local careers officers to begin considering future choices. In a joint project with the careers service and the Education Business Partnership, pupils receive good assistance to take part in work experience placements. They gain valuable experiences in placements such as shoe shops and garages. Pupils keep diaries, which provide a good basis for them to record their experiences. This helps them to talk about what they have learned at work on their return to school. The school is beginning to make good use of computers for pupils to investigate careers and to learn about application forms and interview techniques.
35. There is a good range of lunchtime activities to extend pupils' learning and to promote positive social relationships. Pupils play a good range of organised games such as skipping and group Lego, all organised well by learning support assistants. Senior pupils, with the necessary parental permission, participate in a club to experience hair, skin and beauty treatments, learning how to keep their hair and skin healthy. A professional hairdresser visits the club to cut hair and provide advice. Pupils also practise modern dance moves, using a dance mat linked to a computer. Pupils in the school choir learn to sing with improving expression. They enjoy a story club, learning to skip, climbing in the adventure playground, and playing pool and football. A regular homework club at lunchtimes adds to the support that pupils receive. They can also attend a drama workshop after school at Saddlers Wells. Residential weeks at an outdoor adventurous activity centre give pupils the opportunity to work and play with pupils from other schools. A small number of pupils who have specific learning difficulties attend an early morning support group on three days a week. In addition, a small number of pupils up to year 9, attend a language class on two mornings a week. Both groups are run well by learning support assistants.
36. The school has extensive, and very effective, links with professional agencies, businesses, and with other schools and colleges, to extend pupils' learning. The headteacher has forged extremely good relationships with the local education authority. This effective collaboration has enabled the school to draw on strong support to make significant improvements to the planning for subjects and the quality of teaching, through advice and guidance. The headteacher has a role in developing inclusion for pupils throughout the borough who have similar difficulties to those in the school. This work is paving the way for more pupils to be included in lessons at local schools. The

number of pupils included in nursery, primary, secondary schools and colleges is already good. This enables pupils to learn for instance, literacy, alongside peers in the other schools and it promotes their personal development.

37. The school is very successful in developing relationships with the community. The inspection team met a wide range of local people who support or provide services to the school. These included an educational psychologist, local clergy, police and specialist teachers from the 'Learning Support Service' who provide support for pupils. Theatre groups either visit school, for example, to work with older pupils on drugs education or pupils participate in workshops at a local theatre. Professional footballers coach the pupils. Pupils participate in the London Youth Games. There are visits to museums, London landmarks, and guided tours, for example, of the local underground station.
38. The provision to promote pupils' spiritual development is good in spite of provision for religious education being unsatisfactory. Pupils show understanding of each other's faiths and beliefs and they are pleased to share them with each other. The school assemblies encourage pupils to care for others and to reflect on the problems that others experience. For example, a secondary assembly encouraged pupils to give each other compliments. They listened to a story of Jesus spreading good news and understood that people listening to His message could also choose to ignore it. Pupils considered how they could listen to good advice from adults and other pupils, or simply ignore it. In a junior assembly, pupils were encouraged to think about mothers and Mothering Sunday and how precious they are. Both assemblies closed with a moment for quiet reflection to think and send thoughts to others that may be not so lucky. Pupils have also been involved in a local tree planting ceremony in remembrance of victims of the holocaust. The school promotes a respect for themselves and others. Pupils celebrate religious festivals such as Divali, Ramadan and the Jewish New Year. However, teachers do not always recognise and exploit occasions in lessons when they could promote pupils' spiritual development.
39. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school's attitudes and values have a positive effect on their children. Pupils are encouraged to travel independently and learn skills to enable them to do so. Healthy living is encouraged through personal, social and health education. Staff encourage pupils to consider the consequences of their behaviour. Pupils in years 1 and 2 are involved in exchange visits with pupils from a local nursery. Pupils receive awards for good work and behaviour and they are mostly tolerant and caring towards each other. They are encouraged to work co-operatively throughout the day and the school provides positive group experiences through assemblies, clubs and residential experiences. Pupils in years 1 to 6 are encouraged to take responsibility for helping in class.
40. The school has good provision for pupils' cultural development. There are links with the rich variety of music and theatre groups in the area, for example, Saddlers Wells, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Irish Dance Theatre. An international concert pianist has given performances at the school. Access to a wide range of cultural experiences helps pupils appreciate their own culture and that of others. During a senior school assembly, pupils listened to a composition by Schuman, "Dreaming" as they entered. One pupil named the composer correctly. There is also a school choir. There are good displays of art in the school and pupils recognise the work of different artists. The welcoming display in the school entrance hall celebrates the range of cultures that pupils represent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The quality of care for pupils is satisfactory. Staff maintain good order and pupils feel safe and secure. They have a good knowledge of pupils' needs, through regular meetings in their tutor groups and provide a good level of care and pastoral support. The school receives valuable daily support from speech therapists and the school nurse. In addition, a range of agencies bring their expertise to support pupils, including a specialist educational welfare officer, teachers for vision, hearing and language impairment, and specific learning difficulties. Pupils receive additional support and guidance locally from MENCAP, Barnado's Young Men's and Young Women's Project, and the Islington Youth Offending Team. The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. The school is aware of pupils 'looked after' by the local authority and liaises closely with carers.
42. The supervision of pupils is good during playtimes and on visits for example, to the swimming baths. Staff work closely as a team to support pupils and they can turn to any adult in the school for extra support, especially the headteacher who is very much a guiding presence for all pupils. There are effective health and safety procedures in place and members of the governing body and headteacher are involved in ensuring that the school is a safe place for all. Staff carry out risk assessments routinely. Close attention has been given to rectifying the health and safety issues highlighted in the previous inspection. For example, the school has demolished the badly positioned shed on the infant playground, has upgraded toilet facilities and provided two-way radios to aid the safe exit of the building during fire drills.
43. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are satisfactory overall. Registers are completed twice a day and staff distinguish reasons correctly why pupils are absent. The administrative officer is improving the effectiveness of the computerised recording of attendance. The school has taken effective steps to reduce unauthorised absences but authorised absence remains high. The school telephones parents and carers immediately a pupil is absent and encourages them to send the pupil to school. Current arrangements for support from the education welfare service include regular, twice a term visits but these can be more frequent if asked for. The headteacher and governors have agreed a challenging target to improve attendance to 93% in the coming year.
44. Procedures for encouraging good behaviour are satisfactory overall and parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in school. The school behaviour policy and rules displayed in every classroom provide pupils with clear boundaries. Last year, a zero tolerance stand on fighting resulted in the exclusion of a large number of pupils, although none permanently. This has proved to be successful and exclusions are now a much rarer occurrence. However, the inconsistent use of the school's systems for improving behaviour in lessons is responsible for some unsatisfactory behaviour by a minority of pupils. Pupils value the 'Brilliant' system and it is a good way of encouraging good behaviour. However, staff do not always use these books in the most effective way. For example, Brilliant books being filled in without letting pupils know how well they are doing or why they are being rewarded. To be fully effective the system needs to become a deliberate part of the summing up of all lessons. The behaviour and equal opportunities policies make clear the school's intolerance of bullying and racial and sexual harassment and no incidences were seen during the week of the inspection.
45. There have been significant recent improvements in the school's arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress but these are not yet firmly embedded in the practice of all teachers, many new to the school, and in all subjects. These include,

the introduction of PIVATS (Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting) fine graded scales used to measure progress made by pupils year on year. There is a suitable baseline assessment to establish what pupils know when they join the school. When possible, a few pupils participate in Statutory Assessment Tests at the end of Years 6 and 9. Pupils' individual education plans contain suitable precise targets for them to achieve. The school reviews them appropriately every six months. The school has started to collect examples of each pupil's work to improve the judging of progress year on year where the work is assessed and teachers annotate it, for instance, to say if the pupil received any help. The school is now in a good position to analyse this data, inform its own practice, and set meaningful targets for different groups of pupils. Annual reviews are held regularly and parents and other professionals often attend. The yearly reports are satisfactory and keep parents and carers informed of pupils' progress. The school fully meets the statutory requirements for day provision as outlined in pupils' statements of special educational needs.

46. Pupils' progress in personal development is monitored satisfactorily, alongside the programme of personal, social and health education. The school also checks successfully how well pupils are achieving towards the personal targets for development in their individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The headteacher is very committed to developing good links with parents and carers and the school aims reflect this. Parents speak highly of the school's recent success in developing this partnership. There are strengths evident in the many ways the school keeps parents and carers informed. Overall, the school works well with many parents and carers for the benefit of pupils.
48. A very good number of parents and carers attended the parents' pre-inspection meeting. Parents and carers have many good views of the school and they have especially high regard for the headteacher and the open and easy style of communication she promotes. They have faith in her. Parents and carers think the school is definitely helping their children to grow in confidence and become more independent. They recognise that this progress in personal and social development is important because it helps their children achieve. Parents and carers think teaching is a strength in the school. They speak positively of the school's willingness to listen to them if they have any concerns or worries.
49. A few concerns, however, were very apparent before and throughout the inspection. Parents and carers clearly report that there have been major problems for their children because of the many staff changes. The school is aware of this. There is also a very strong consensus that pupils do not get enough homework. Pupils, even younger ones, are not consistently encouraged to take reading books home. They say that if homework is set it may not be marked. The school has tried a number of approaches to improve the provision of homework but they have not been consistently successful. A few parents and carers feel that behaviour is not always managed effectively within the school. The inspection confirms that there is a minority of occasions in classes when this occurs.
50. Information to parents and carers is good overall and has improved greatly in the last two years. The headteacher has been responsible for changes to the annual report from governors and to the school brochure; both are now easy and pleasant to read. Other documents are good. They are written and set out well to provide good clear balanced views of school life and achievements to all parents and carers. Individual

staff send informative newsletters home frequently and parents agree that they are kept well informed. They are invited into school regularly. There are also twice-annual open evenings for every family. More than three-quarters of parents and carers currently attend annual reviews. All sign home-school agreements. The headteacher and staff communicate with parents and carers well by telephone. Written reports at the end of the school year are detailed and helpful and contain all that they should.

51. There is no tradition of a parents or friends association or a drop-in room. However, parents and carers have a satisfactory involvement in school life. It is significant that four parents or carers stood recently for two governor vacancies. Translation facilities are available and used for those parents for whom English is an additional language. The headteacher is committed to seeking parents' and carers' views, sometimes through questionnaires. Overall, she is active in drawing parents and carers in to the school and success is evident in this area.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Very strong leadership by the headteacher has pulled the school out of the decline in standards that occurred because of serious staffing difficulties in the period following the previous inspection. Upon appointment, the headteacher quickly decided what needed to be done, set out a clear and detailed plan and has built up a very strong group of senior managers to help bring it about.
53. Although the headteacher and senior managers provide very good leadership and management, they have not been in post long enough to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is better than satisfactory. However, they have ensured that the school has a clear direction for the future - in contrast to the previous inspection. It is rooted firmly in raising the standard of education for its pupils. Much of the groundwork has been done that will lead to its success. There is a good commitment to the school's aims, which are expressed clearly in all documents. As the initial plan for improvement produced by the headteacher is now reaching completion, another that draws upon the ideas of everyone connected to the school is replacing it. This is building a good sense of shared ownership and teamwork that supports the school well in implementing its plans for improvement.
54. The headteacher makes sure, very successfully, that all staff contribute fully to the day-to-day work of the school and future development. The mixture of clear ideas and direct management of staff has enabled the school to pick up lost ground by dealing with issues raised at the previous inspection. For instance, there is delegation of clear responsibilities to the senior managers for each pupil age group, who in turn pass on responsibilities to the teachers and teaching assistants in their teams. This means that, in contrast with the time of the previous inspection, all staff are responsible directly to a manager who oversees their work.
55. The headteacher has worked in close partnership with CEA@Islington to provide additional expertise to support the management of the school and the promotion of improvements. The school has improved planning for what pupils will learn. Nearly all subjects receive an appropriate allocation of time, and each subject has a designated teacher responsible for its management and further development. The school continues to set targets to improve future performance. The headteacher has agreed good targets for school improvement this year and is beginning to achieve them well. For instance, the targets to encourage pupils to travel to school independently and to hold meetings with parents to promote the inclusion of pupils in lessons in other schools have helped the school to move forward well. There is also a particularly

challenging target to improve attendance. Although this is proving difficult to achieve, it is an appropriate target in view of the level of current pupil absence.

56. The responsibilities of senior staff are very clear, but less clear for subject co-ordinators. As in most cases, the subject manager teaches the subject to all classes and, therefore, does not oversee the work of other teachers. The responsibilities are largely in relation to subject planning, teaching, and the assessment and recording of pupils' achievements. Many teachers are able to manage and develop their subjects with little guidance. Others would benefit from the requirements of their jobs being set out clearly in writing, particularly when they are responsible for other members of staff. The absence of such clarity weakens the ability of senior managers to check if other staff complete tasks appropriately.
57. The school's arrangements for the continuing professional development of staff are good. Senior managers have developed very good procedures for checking and raising the quality of teaching. They each take responsibility for regularly looking at the lesson plans and observing the teaching of a small number of teachers, then enter into discussions with these teachers about their professional development. This same process enables teachers to take part in the national scheme for improving their performance, which is managed well by the school. In addition, it provides a supportive background for newly employed teachers, thus helping the school to overcome some of the difficulty that it has experienced with finding and keeping new staff.
58. Governors work well to meet the challenges raised by their need to make positive decisions in a climate of massive change and development. For example, they know that they need to know more about the school by maintaining closer contacts. They are taking good steps to do so. Their level of commitment has improved since the previous inspection. They now provide good support and carry out their statutory duties well in their main meetings and in committees that cover all of their responsibilities. They have an increasingly good understanding of what the school does well and where it needs further development. They are gaining insight into how their plans for the school fit into the wider view of the future for special schools during the current review of provision and the moves towards inclusion. Although they obtain a lot of information informally, there is a greater need to receive more information through formal reports. For example, the chair of the governing body receives verbal information about the quality of teaching, rather than in a written report that governors can use to inform their decisions.
59. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have a good awareness of the financial constraints on their plans for development. There are costs provided for all elements of the school improvement plan and the total is realistic in terms of what the school can afford. Each subject co-ordinator receives a fixed budget rather than an allocation based on a detailed assessment of financial needs. However, the headteacher and senior managers have introduced good procedures to identify the required resources for each subject and for working out priorities for spending. This will inform the new school improvement plan.
60. During the decline in the school's provision before the appointment of the current headteacher, the local education authority removed the power of the governing body to manage its own financial affairs. They restored it only at the beginning of the current financial year. Since regaining these powers, the headteacher and the governing body have made some good strategic decisions about how they spend the school's money. For example, the school is retaining a sizeable sum that has accrued over two years until the future of the school is clear. This will emerge following [CEA@Islington's](#) review

of special schools and the move towards including pupils within other schools. The school has spent a prudent amount on important items to improve standards for the pupils.

61. The school employs the services of a bursar from CEA @Islington. Together with the school's administrative officer, they carry out the day-to-day management of the school's finances efficiently. There are good procedures for safeguarding the school's money and the school has completed all improvements identified following a recent audit of accounts. Satisfactory use is made of new technology to support the financial and administrative systems. Grants provided directly from the government to improve pupils' achievements are spent wisely. A grant from CEA@Islington to help the part-time inclusion of some pupils into mainstream schools is spent effectively by paying staff to accompany them.
62. The school is making good efforts to ensure that it obtains the best value for its pupils by comparing the quality of its provision with that of other similar schools locally and nationally. This process is aided by using the information it gains from its assessments of pupils' achievements, lesson observations and financial records. In addition, the school's involvement in a local project to include more pupils in mainstream schools is presenting it with the challenge of accepting that some of its pupils benefit more from using resources at those schools. It also constantly challenges the quality of its provision as it seeks to identify areas that need improving. The school makes every effort to gain good value for resources and services that it purchases.
63. The provision of teaching staff is satisfactory. The school has replaced the majority of teachers recently, in spite of the difficulty in recruiting teachers in this area. This has been achieved by imaginative methods such as securing staff from overseas countries. The school has developed good relationships with recruitment agencies and the local education authority to recruit, develop and retain teachers. The number of teachers and their match to their assigned responsibilities is satisfactory. During the period of recruitment, the school had to depend upon a number of temporary staff and this reduced stability. Although most posts are now filled with permanent teachers, there are temporary staff teaching subjects such as personal, social and health education and food technology in the secondary department, and this has a detrimental effect on the progress that pupils make. The school has appropriate procedures for inducting all staff. The headteacher and senior staff provide very valuable support to less experienced members of staff.
64. The provision of support staff is satisfactory. They have been a constant group of staff within the school during a period of great change. They provide valuable help in the classroom and in undertaking other tasks. However, current working arrangements for support staff are unsatisfactory as pupils are regularly left without their support at the start and end of lessons when staff have other duties to perform in school or on school transport. They are often unavailable at convenient times to talk to teachers about tasks throughout the day. The school is aware of this and has begun to prepare the ground for improvements.
65. Accommodation is satisfactory. The staff and governors have made satisfactory improvements to the quality of accommodation since the last inspection. The new library provides a good base for pupils to learn computers. However, there is still no specific provision for teaching science. Internally the school is bright and welcoming. The staff work hard to provide attractive displays of pupils' work. Pupils contribute well by maintaining attractive garden pots at the school entrance. Outside play areas are adequate with an enclosed area for sports activities such as football and short cricket.

Pupils in years 1 to 3 have a fenced off area with access from their classroom with appropriate play equipment to use during playtimes. The site manager maintains the grounds to a good standard and is highly valued by the school.

66. The provision of learning resources has been improved since the previous inspection. These are now at least satisfactory in all subjects. In mathematics, information and communication technology, music and art they are now good. The library is becoming well stocked with a good range of colour coded books. The provision of a computerised system to check books in and out is an exciting development but was not in operation during the inspection week. Resources for science for pupils in the secondary department are inadequate. The school makes good use of resources in the community to promote pupils' learning, such as using climbing walls at sports centres.
67. When taking into account the pupils' achievement at entry and when they leave, and the expenditure per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

I. Improve secondary pupils' achievement in science by:

- Arranging for science lessons for pupils in years 7 to 11 to take place in suitable accommodation, with appropriate resources.
- Improving the planning for pupils in years 10 and 11 to achieve more success in passing examinations.

(Paragraphs 2, 7, 30, 65, 86-92).

II. Improve teaching and learning in religious education by:

- Improving the planning of what pupils will learn.
- Improving the quality of teaching in the subject.

(Paragraphs 8, 27, 135-140).

III. Ensure that pupils attend more regularly by:

- Implementing planned improvements to promote better attendance.

(Paragraphs 17, 43, 55).

IV. Improve the effectiveness of learning support staff to support the promotion of pupils' learning by:

- Ensuring that they are informed and prepared effectively for what they have to do in lessons.
- Ensuring that they are available in lessons when they are required.

(Paragraphs 24, 64, 123).

In addition to the above key issues the school should also consider including the following in its action plan:

- **Raise standards further in literacy, numeracy and computers by:**

- Ensuring that teachers plan more to promote pupils' skills in reading and writing in English lessons.
- Ensuring that they plan consistently to promote pupils' learning in literacy, numeracy and computers in lessons throughout the day.

(Paragraphs 25, 27, 32, 82, 83, 85, 103, 106, 116).

□ **Improve teaching and learning in food technology in Years 7 to 11 by:**

- Improving the planning of what pupils will learn.
- Improving the quality of teaching in the subject.

(Paragraphs 27, 99-105).

□ **Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:**

- Continuing to provide support and training to teachers new to the school and/or who lack sufficient knowledge of the subjects they are required to teach and of the systems to improve pupils' behaviour.

(Paragraphs 12, 26, 44, 75, 110, 124, 144)

Improve the effectiveness of homework by:

- Ensuring that pupils and parents receive clear instructions consistently of what they have to do.
- Ensuring that pupils are informed sufficiently about the results of their homework.

(Paragraphs 29, 49, 77, 110).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	84

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		6	29	42	3		
Percentage		7.5	36.25	52.5	3.75		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	55

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	24

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	N/A
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

(Pupils can join and leave at any time of the year).

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

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

No pupils reach the National standards in National Curriculum tests or tasks. There are too few pupils assessed to display the results. Too few pupils enter for GCSEs or other vocational subjects to display. The cohorts of pupils in all years are too different to make comparisons year on year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	10
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	1
White	59
Any other minority ethnic group	10

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage	3	
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	17	
Other minority ethnic groups	3	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y 1 – Y 11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.7
Average class size	9.6

Education support staff: Y 1 – Y 11

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

FTE means full-time equivalent.

The school did not gain control of its own budget until April 2001 and therefore was unable to influence the size of the balance carried forward. The surplus has reduced since that time.

(7.6 of the qualified teaching staff are overseas trained teachers who are designated as unqualified).

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

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

Financial information

Financial year	Apr 2000- Mar 2001
----------------	-----------------------

	£
Total income	881166
Total expenditure	832374
Expenditure per pupil	8671
Balance brought forward from previous year	32241
Balance carried forward to next year	81033

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	87
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	37	7	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	34	49	10	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	46	18	0	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	32	26	18	5
The teaching is good.	44	46	5	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	52	7	0	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	2	0	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	37	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	37	49	2	0	12
The school is well led and managed.	49	40	2	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	51	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	34	10	5	19

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

ENGLISH

68. Pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory. Throughout the school, they make good progress in speaking and listening and satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Despite whole school strategies to improve pupils' literacy skills, weaknesses exist. Foremost is the lack of consistent opportunities for pupils to reinforce their reading and writing more regularly in lessons in subjects such as history, geography and other subjects where pupils could read and record their work. Therefore, pupils do not make such good progress in reading and writing because teachers place less emphasis upon this. Pupils are reluctant to write and this is evident in the small amount of written work that pupils produce. Pupils occasionally make good progress in lessons in years 6 and 10 and occasionally very good progress in years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who have different special educational needs make the same progress as others because of effective planning by teachers and the support they receive. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from unsatisfactory to very good and is judged to be satisfactory overall. This represents a satisfactory improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
69. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject overall. When engaged in interesting and challenging work, they are co-operative and well behaved. They make good progress in speaking and listening. Many pupils enter school with speech and language difficulties but they make good progress in their ability to understand and respond appropriately. This is because of good teaching, the effective use of symbols and signing and the high quality of support from speech and language therapists.
70. Teachers have introduced the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily into lessons for pupils up to Year 9. A well-planned lesson for pupils in years 1 to 3 closely followed this structure, with good resources provided including magnetic storyboards, big books, and puppets, engaging their attention well. For example, in a lesson for pupils in years 1 to 3, a puppet held a carrot but said, "This is a parrot?" to which the pupils responded, "No it's a carrot, silly!" The consistent use of praise, "Good girl" and "Well done" helped to maintain pupils on task. The very good relationships and trust that exist in this class and indeed in most classes in the school enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills. Staff listen well to pupils and value their comments and contributions. Pupils made very good progress in speaking and listening in a similar lesson for pupils in years 3 to 6. They interacted very well with the puppet to correct him on the pronunciation of fruit and vegetables. The learning support assistant made timely interventions to encourage responses from all pupils.
71. As pupils move through the school they listen more carefully to each other, learn to take turns in discussions and develop confidence in talking to others. Two different groups of older pupils attend language enrichment programmes before school each morning, organised by two learning support assistants. This helps them to make good progress. By the time they are in Year 11, most pupils express themselves well and listen confidently in different situations. For example, they taking part in school productions, serve on the school council or debate issues of drug abuse in personal and social education lessons. Pupils throughout the school develop skills through drama. A few pupils make additional progress when they are included in literacy lessons in local schools.

72. Reading skills develop satisfactorily as pupils get older. Pupils know books are fun because they share and enjoy 'big books' together regularly. The youngest pupils learn to finger point in their own 'starter books' and repeat words that the teacher pronounces. They show understanding of how a book 'works', for example turning pages and holding it the correct way up. In the class for pupils up to Year 3, higher attaining pupils recognise familiar words in simple texts. Lower attaining pupils recognise print associated with their name. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils read simple, unfamiliar sentences independently. Lower attaining pupils recognise letters of the alphabet by shape or sound. Many lessons start and finish with quick word games, which pupils enjoy and this consolidates their reading and spelling skills. For example, each pupil has a letter card. The teacher calls out a word and pupils put their letters together to make it. 'Guided reading', in which pupils are taught in groups according to ability, has been introduced as a way of raising standards but it is too early yet to evaluate its effectiveness.
73. Higher attaining pupils in Year 9 make satisfactory progress to read simple, unfamiliar passages independently. Lower attaining pupils show a satisfactory understanding of text by commenting on words, pictures or the story. The range and quality of books has been improved but there is a need still for a greater range of reading materials that are suitable, particularly for pupils in years 7 to 11. The school is aware of this and is taking good steps to provide appropriate reading materials. There is a new attractive library and computer area to enable pupils to read and research for pleasure and information. However, at the time of the inspection, the library was not operational.
74. Pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring skills in writing because teachers know how well they are learning and plan further work to build on this. Higher attaining pupils in the class for pupils up to Year 3, produce recognisable words to convey meaning. They form most letters correctly. Lower attaining pupils copy under or over pre-written words. In 'guided writing groups' pupils create sentences with picture cards or use the words 'is' and 'for' to make up sentences. Progress was very good in a lesson for pupils up to Year 3 because planning and preparation were thorough so that learning was continuous and pupils' achievements celebrated. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils' writing conveys meaning beyond a simple statement. Handwriting is legible. Lower attaining pupils write their names with the appropriate use of capital letters.
75. Pupils in years 7 to 9 build on their previous achievements satisfactorily. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils write in an interesting and lively way. Their handwriting is consistent and accurate. Lower attaining pupils' writing shows some evidence of the use of punctuation. They compare publications such as tabloid and broadsheet newspapers and the way that reporters write differently about sport, news, advertisements and entertainment. However, in a lesson that was not well organised, the teacher gave out the newspapers before explaining the task. This distracted pupils from listening to instructions to the lesson. The written task did not provide well for all pupils in the class. Work was too challenging for some and unchallenging for others.
76. Pupils in years 10 and 11 make satisfactory progress in writing, following coursework leading to the 'GAPE English Test – Levels 1-5'. Last year two pupils obtained Level 4. They study 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Macbeth', and visit the theatre to see the plays. Written assignments include tasks to write about 'Myself', 'An Incident' and a comprehension exercise on 'UFOs'. Pupils are generally well motivated and take a pride in the presentation of their work. Teaching for these year groups is satisfactory but teachers are not consistent in managing behaviour in a minority of lessons.

77. There have been significant developments in English in the last six months. An enthusiastic teacher now leads the subject with energy and commitment and senior staff visit lessons to check teaching and learning. There is a satisfactory assessment system so that the school can set whole school targets for improvement based upon reliable information. Although homework is set, there is a lack of consistency in using it to extend and consolidate pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

78. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in mathematics. When taking into account samples of pupils' work and classroom records, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
79. Pupils in years 1 to 3 make satisfactory progress in mathematics. The teacher usually plans the lessons satisfactorily to follow the pattern of the National Numeracy Strategy. Achievements are satisfactory. For instance, one pupil is able to count to 5, add one more and say "six", another recognises and says 1 and 2 but cannot add one more, and a third pupil is unable to engage with numbers at all. Pupils learn numeracy throughout the day. For instance, they make good progress recognising shapes and numbers during the morning welcome session. This happened when pupils recognised the differences between circles, triangles and square number cards as they selected them from a box. Higher attaining pupils recognised the numbers on them and arranged them in order under the days of the week on the wall calendar.
80. Pupils from years 3 to 6 make satisfactory and occasionally good progress in lessons. They count forward and backwards in 10s responding well to the varying strategies the teacher employs. They are enthusiastic about participating and enjoy the teacher's lively presentation, using number lines confidently to check if each other is correct. They make good progress in group activities where they complete written work. Lower attaining pupils receive sufficient support to complete counting tasks and higher attaining pupils complete appropriate tasks to subtract 4 from 5, imagining that they had eaten 4 of their 5 lollipops.
81. Pupils in years 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress in mathematics. They do not make better progress because they do not have sufficient opportunities for investigative work and problem solving. However, in the most successful lessons, pupils are directly involved in activities that make them think. For example, in a lesson about data handling, pupils in Year 8 are finding out how many counters or blocks they can fit into different sized containers. They estimate before filling the containers and counting. This means that in their next lesson, when they enter the data in to a computer programme and print out block charts, the results have meaning for them.
82. The teaching of mathematics observed in the secondary department was always at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers plan lessons well and explain well to pupils what they will be required to do. The same specialist teacher, who has good knowledge of the subject, teaches all lessons for pupils in this age group. Each lesson forms part of a well thought out programme that builds up progressively as the pupils go from class to class as they get older. However, in a minority of lessons, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to explore mathematical ideas for themselves and apply mathematics practically and this prevents them from making better than satisfactory progress.
83. There are weaknesses in planning that prevent pupils from making more than satisfactory progress in mathematics. During the inspection, most of the lessons seen

involved number work, relating to counting and simple addition and subtraction of numbers. A scrutiny of work, records and displays indicates that there are satisfactory examples of all other aspects of mathematics, including the recognition of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils handle money for simple shopping activities but there is still a predominance of work with numbers that prevents pupils making better than satisfactory progress overall. Most learning takes place by engaging pupils in tasks of a practical nature. The lessons that enable the most learning to take place are those where the tasks are closely matched to the pupils' individual abilities. Pupils work in small groups where they receive different support to complete tasks at their own level. Although the majority of pupils throughout the school behave well and concentrate on their tasks, one or two pupils in each class in a few lessons exhibit unsatisfactory behaviour and teachers do not improve this sufficiently. This distracts others from learning and reduces progress overall to only satisfactory in those lessons.

84. For older pupils, there is a greater amount of direct teaching by the teacher and less opportunity for pupils to undertake activities such as investigating problems for themselves. While this is more appropriate for the examination group, it is less so for pupils with lower abilities. Pupils of all ages enjoy their mathematics lessons and all take part willingly. There is a wide range of ability in years 10 and 11. Pupils work in different groups according to their level of accredited course and this enables the teacher to plan work to meet their needs.
85. The school has introduced National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily in the primary school and is extending it up to Year 9. A comprehensive plan of topics covers all age groups, enabling pupils' learning to progress as they move through the school. All pupils have a good opportunity to have their work recognised by gaining nationally accepted qualifications. Those who have appropriate abilities have the opportunity of taking a course leading to a national examination, while others engage in courses where their topic work leads to nationally recognised certificates. Pupils use computers occasionally in lessons and this helps them to make more progress, for instance in drawing graphs but planning for pupils to use computers is not consistent.

SCIENCE

86. Pupils' achievements and the progress they make in lessons are satisfactory for pupils up to Year 9 and unsatisfactory for pupils in years 10 and 11. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievement in years 7 to 11 is reduced because of very poor accommodation, and pupils in year 11 do not study for suitably challenging examinations.
87. Pupils in years 1 to 3 make satisfactory progress studying science as part of class topics. In the topic 'Myself', pupils learn the parts of the body when they draw a human figure. They develop their body awareness further through the teacher drawing attention to movement in physical education. In the topic on 'Animals' pupils draw and paint animals in art. They notice the differences between them, such as animals with different 'coats', fur and skin. In the topic on 'Transport and safety' pupils make satisfactory progress using play apparatus and equipment to experience push and pull forces. Pupils build on their knowledge of seeds to suggest with staff help, the sequence in which plants grow from seed to flower.
88. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in science by the end of Year 6. Pupils build on their knowledge of the parts of the human body by making a jointed model of the human skeleton. The teacher enhances their learning well by planning for them to make skeletons in design

and technology. Pupils make very good use of the teacher's highly effective three dimensional classroom display of the solar system to help them learn about planets. They locate Mars and understand its features through reading about it in their story books in English. Although there are good examples, teachers do not plan consistently for pupils to use enquiry skills, for instance to experiment, obtain and present results. Although there is a satisfactory range of topics overall, there are fewer opportunities to study some aspects such as investigating materials, what they look like, how they are grouped and how they can be changed and used.

89. In all the primary classes, teachers provide for pupils' needs satisfactorily overall. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive sufficient support to understand their work and to participate with other pupils.
90. In years 7 to 9 pupils make satisfactory progress although lessons take place in very poor accommodation in the design and technology room. This is because the teaching is satisfactory for those pupils and provides a range of tasks that enable them to make progress. They cannot make better than satisfactory progress because the range of work is too narrow. Uneven work benches, lack of suitable gas, electricity and water supplies, very inadequate storage and preparation facilities make the provision for National Curriculum science very difficult. Pupils in Year 7 enjoy the opportunity to use magnifying glasses and a video-microscope to look at small animals, in preparation for a pond dipping exercise at a local country park. Pupils draw in detail, for example, recording the number of legs an insect has compared with a centipede. In a lesson for pupils in Year 9, they made good progress investigating solutions. They dissolved salt in water at different temperatures and measured the result. The teacher promoted numeracy well by planning for pupils to draw graphs of the results. This enabled them to see the difference that temperature makes and this helped them make good gains in understanding. A significant factor in the success of this lesson was the way that the learning support assistant gave advice to pupils to help them use filters successfully.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for pupils in years 10 and 11. The teacher seeks appropriate advice to select interesting experiments that non-specialists can teach in very poor conditions. Although pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall, in Year 10 they enjoy taking part in an imaginary forensic investigation as part of a recently started suitable accredited course. They use scientific techniques well to investigate which pen wrote a message at a fictitious crime scene. They work sensibly and accurately when carrying out the special 'chromatography' investigation to separate the colours used to make the ink. Their skills in obtaining evidence have developed more than their capacity to consider the evidence, draw conclusions, and evaluate whether they could improve the methods they use. This is because the accommodation and the time they spend on tasks prevent them from making more than satisfactory progress.
92. The accreditation for pupils in Year 11 is unsatisfactory since the Youth Award Scheme does not provide sufficient challenge for them. The school is actively researching ways to improve provision for secondary science, especially in Year 11. The introduction of better accreditation in Year 10 is a satisfactory start. However, opportunities for science accreditation in Year 11 since the last inspection have not improved sufficiently. Provision for these pupils is unsatisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Pupils of all ages make good progress in art and design. This is because of the high standard of teaching by a specialist teacher who teaches every class. There has been a satisfactory improvement in teaching and learning in art and design since the last inspection, when pupils' progress was generally satisfactory and often good, as opposed to the consistently good standard now.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are high expectations for pupils to learn and achieve. Lessons follow the National Curriculum guidelines but the activities, tasks and materials have been selected and modified well to meet pupils' needs. This means that all pupils regardless of ability are able to make the same good progress. Pupils experience success at their tasks by receiving good teaching of the required skills. Having developed the skills, pupils have full opportunities to make their own creative choices about the development of their artwork.
95. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons, where there is a good emphasis on design. Even the youngest pupils producing simple linoleum prints introduce their own designs into the marks they make in preparation for printing. In years 3 to 5, they make good progress drawing 'head and shoulders' portraits of themselves. The teacher planned well for them to photocopy their picture to make a repeating pattern. There is good planning to link with other subjects. For instance, pupils up to Year 6 built on this knowledge by creating similar patterns using computers. They made good model rockets out of junk. The teacher asked probing questions about the properties of materials and this enabled pupils to choose wisely to create strong but attractive models.
96. Pupils become engrossed in their work and there are very few occurrences of behaviour difficulties. In one lesson, where pupils were producing their blocks for printing, a pupil in Year 9 remarked, "I can't believe how quickly the lesson has gone. I'm enjoying this!" Pupils have lessons in the computer room to improve their skills in using computers and to explore art. They find out about the work of famous artists. For example, they create images of their faces and with help copy them to make repeating images on the screen. Pupils showed originality in their different choices of image and use of contrasting colours to print impressive art that raised their self-esteem. The teacher promotes originality of design well.
97. More able pupils in years 10 and 11 make good progress when they extend their skills following a course to be assessed either by examination or based on their coursework. Their work demonstrates originality for a wide range of tasks including designs for clothes, self-portraits, still life and sketches. It is evident that they make such good progress because of the expertise and subject knowledge of the teacher.
98. Art and design is a valued subject in the school, and is evident in the many displays of pupils' work in the main hall and corridors. The subject also makes a good contribution to school life by linking lesson activities with seasonal events and festivals, such as Christmas, to provide displays that everyone can enjoy. The range of tasks that pupils follow in art and design is good. Pupils explore and develop their own ideas using a full range of different materials, working in two and three dimensions. They gain ideas from looking at the works of famous artists and are able to express their likes and dislikes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. The progress of all pupils in design and technology is satisfactory overall. There are two distinct elements to this subject that are taught separately within the school – resistant materials, which is the use of ‘hard’ materials such as wood and plastics, and food technology. The progress and achievements of pupils in these two areas are significantly different. In resistant materials, the pupils are making good progress in the primary classes and very good progress in the secondary classes, whilst in food technology, progress in the secondary classes is unsatisfactory. Pupils in the primary department make satisfactory progress in food technology.
100. The youngest pupils come to the school with the need to improve their co-ordination skills and teachers plan appropriately for them to learn skills in using everyday tools. They practise using table knives and cutting accurately with scissors. Pupils develop their skills by learning to thread needles and complete simple sewing exercises. The teacher encourages their creativity by the use of commercial construction sets. Although food technology lessons were not observed in the primary department, it is evident that pupils from years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress in food technology following simple recipes. Lessons enhance their language skills when they describe the taste, colour and texture of the ingredients they use. They also develop sequencing skills as they recognise that they have to follow procedures when cooking.
101. In the secondary classes, the achievements of pupils are often very good in resistant materials when they work in the workshop. They develop impressive collections of work and some of their 3-dimensional drawings are near to national standards for their age. Their skills develop steadily. In year 7, they are aware of a range of resistant materials and can design a board game and make jigsaw puzzles. In year 8, they can make acrylic photograph frames, develop electronic games and ballpoint pens to their own designs. Some of the design work is very intricate and their evaluations of their achievements are increasingly complex and sophisticated. By Year 10, pupils can make model furniture in balsa, carefully using bridle joints. They also create furniture in wood, this time using dowel joints to ensure that it is neatly and strongly constructed. In Year 11, all pupils study for a Certificate of Educational Achievement. They take enormous care over their coursework and some of the ‘clocks for teenagers’ that they have constructed from a range of materials are finely detailed and of a very high standard.
102. Pupils make such good progress because of the strength of teaching and the interest this creates in pupils. The quality of teaching is very good where the teacher uses praise and encouragement very effectively to motivate the pupils. There is an excellent balance between demonstrating a technique and guiding pupils to do it. It reflects a precise knowledge of the pupils’ individual capabilities. The written content of the lessons, where pupils describe their projects and evaluate them once they have completed them, makes a notable contribution to their literacy skills. Pupils who have difficulty reading and writing or have English as an additional language, receive the opportunity to experience great success.
103. The teaching and learning in food technology is satisfactory in years 1 to 6 but is unsatisfactory overall. The satisfactory progress of pupils up to Year 6 does not continue into the secondary department. Part of the difficulty is in recruiting a permanent teacher, and a series of temporary teachers has interrupted the continuity of teaching and learning. They lack the skills to plan for pupils to make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 7 can make simple items such as baked potatoes with different fillings. They are familiar with the common utensils and know main means of cooking food for instance, boiling, frying and baking. The recipes they use become slightly more complex as they progress through the school and by years 8 and 9, they

make chocolate cakes, bread and butter pudding and bean stews. Recently, the pupils in years 10 and 11 have conducted an analysis of foods bought in supermarkets to identify the ingredients and calorific values, but this is an isolated study. There has not been sufficient exploration of designing menus to create and evaluate a product. Instead, pupils follow the teacher's recipe and take little responsibility for their own learning. The attitude of secondary pupils towards food technology is variable. Pupils can talk constructively in a relaxed atmosphere, while working purposefully and safely together in pairs. Occasionally, however, the lesson lacks pace and the pupils show little interest in what they are doing. There is a lack of writing or evaluation and discussion at the end of lessons.

104. The co-ordination of design and technology is satisfactory overall, being very good in years 7 to 11 in resistant materials. The teacher checks pupils' progress closely, keeping detailed notes and photographs to maintain a continuous record of achievement. Parents comment favourably about their children's successes in this subject. Teachers do not adhere closely to planning for what pupils should learn in secondary food technology classes. The subject does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Record keeping is sporadic. The subject teacher does not mark any of their work, so pupils do not receive an assessment of their efforts.
105. There has been a good improvement in the teaching of resistant materials to the primary and secondary classes since the last inspection. There has, however, been a deterioration in the standard of delivery of food technology to the secondary classes.

HUMANITIES (GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY)

106. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Over time, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and occasionally they are good in individual lessons. History and geography are taught as humanities throughout the school. Pupils follow a satisfactory range of work in both subjects. However, a weakness is the lack of consistency in pupils writing about the subject they are studying.
107. Pupils in years 1 to 3 are beginning to understand the construction of basic maps. They use pictures, words and symbols to show familiar places. Pupils use symbols to mark directions and to represent the key features of an area. Following the story, 'The Bear Hunt', pupils can construct a map using different coloured paper to describe the route taken by the bears in the story. Pupils can also cut out pieces of different coloured paper to represent grass, river and forest.
108. The teaching observed was occasionally good. This was particularly the case when expectations of pupils were high, the pace of lessons was good and pupils were given the opportunity to extend their understanding of historical and geographical concepts. For example, in a good lesson for pupils in years 3 to 6, they understood that each space in a building has a special purpose. Pupils can make a list of rooms required to make a house, plot their best positions and know that a person who draws up building plans is an architect. They can link this to designing a plan for the school library showing the position of different subject books on the shelves.
109. By the end of year 6, pupils are able to show understanding of their local environment. They have a developing sense of chronology and can place events in order. They recognise that their own lives are different from the lives of people in the past. Pupils are able to make distinctions between the past and present. Pupils in years 3 to 6 for instance, understood events of the day by placing activity cards in the correct order. During a question and answer session, higher attaining pupils could recall activities

from the school timetable. They showed a good understanding of daily routines and could describe before and after school events, for example, brushing teeth, getting dressed and walking to school.

110. Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 make satisfactory progress studying Britain from 1750 to 1900 and physical and human geography. In a lesson for pupils in Year 7, they enjoyed making globes and highlighting the continents with paint. There are strengths in the teaching, for instance, the teacher was able to use examples from her native Australia to reinforce textbook information. This enabled pupils to understand that the seasons take place at different times of the year in the northern and southern hemispheres. However, the main weakness leading to lessons being satisfactory and on one occasion unsatisfactory is the lack of expertise in lesson planning. For instance, on several occasions the teacher did not explain, display or check if pupils knew the meaning of new words. The teacher did not provide enough resources such as books or computer programmes and this contributed to pupils losing interest. Opportunities were missed to reinforce pupils' learning because time was not allocated to review the lesson to remind pupils what they had learned. In a lesson for pupils in Year 9, teaching and learning was unsatisfactory. The teacher failed to gain the pupils' attention or improve their unsatisfactory behaviour for them to make sufficient progress. Although homework was set, pupils left the class unsure of what they had to do.
111. In years 10 and 11, pupils follow the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme, which provides a small amount of accreditation for their work in geography and history. Pupils can plan a journey from the Angel Islington to Wimbledon using a computer software programme. Other pupils are able to use the Internet to access information on different areas of the country. However, overall in the subject there is inconsistent planning to promote pupils' learning through using computers. Pupils work independently and understand the challenges they need to achieve credits towards their assessment. One pupil achieved part of his 'Key Skills Communication' assessment by interviewing a member of staff about his life in New Zealand and wrote, "New Zealand has a lot of open spaces and is a beautiful place to live in."
112. The co-ordination of humanities is satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There has been only a small improvement in resources. The recently appointed co-ordinator recognises this and has plans to provide more to support pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Teaching and learning for all pupils is good and often very good. All pupils in the school attend discrete information and communication technology (computer) lessons in the computer suite with a subject specialist. They experience teaching that is characterised by excellent subject knowledge and meticulous planning. The teacher promotes good behaviour very well. Planning avoids potential difficulties. Pupils in years 1 to 3 quickly learn to use the mouse to manipulate simple programmes. They show an ability to recognise shape and colour and will use freeze and erase buttons to create simple patterns. Progress is rapid and they become increasingly confident in their use and familiarity with the computer. Pupils in Year 6 for example, are able to construct a border, draw a detailed face and then copy it to create a picture in the style of a famous artist. All the pupils show good control of the mouse and can print their results independently.
114. The practice of ensuring that pupils can identify the technical words associated with the topic at the beginning of the lesson, is particularly effective for pupils in years 1 to 6.

This supports the school's approach to literacy. There are always clear explanations of the work to be undertaken and high expectations of pupils' performance. The exemplification provided has immediate relevance to the pupils. For example, pupils formatting text, had articles about the 'So Solid Crew' to work with. Occasionally, however, the achievement of the higher attaining pupils is limited because after the completion of a set task, there are no opportunities for independent investigation, exploration and discovery.

115. The progress made by the pupils in years 7 to 11 continues to be good. In Year 7, pupils can recognise that the words 'query' and 'or' can be used to sort data in a search and are able to display the information on a graph. They understand the value of using computers when they use them in other subjects. For example, they swiftly learn to operate a camera attached to a microscope to look at a variety of 'minibeasts'. They can enlarge the magnification to 200 times and view the image on a computer screen. By Year 8, pupils can alter the font and size of text to increase the interest for a reader. Pupils at the end of Year 11 and are working towards completing accreditation through the Certificate of Educational Achievement. They are able to input data on a spreadsheet and save their work on floppy discs. They have individual e-mail addresses and enjoy communicating with former pupils of the school.
116. Teachers' planning for pupils to use computers to support their learning in other subjects of the curriculum throughout the day is inconsistent. There are some good examples, but also missed opportunities when teachers could plan for pupils to use computers in most lessons, for instance, for pupils to record work for their files. Most members of established staff have been undertaking training in order to develop their skills. The subject specialist, who is a relatively recent appointment, is committed and enthusiastic about encouraging teachers to plan consistently to use computers to support pupils' learning. There has been good progress since the last inspection, when there was no separate teaching of computers or sufficient use in other lessons.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

117. Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 study French and make satisfactory progress. Their achievements are satisfactory in listening and in speaking French. Progress in reading and responding, and in writing in French is slower since there is an appropriate emphasis upon promoting oral communication in French. Pupils for whom English is not their first language make the same satisfactory progress as others in the class since they receive appropriate support. The teacher improves the behaviour of pupils who misbehave in other lessons and they play a full part in lessons.
118. Pupils are learning to greet each other in French. They know colours and numbers. Pupils know the names of a range of fruit and vegetables and can match French words to pictures of fruit and vegetables. The teacher has ensured that pupils understand how to play numerous games in French, like noughts and crosses and find the missing picture from a selection of five. The use of games is fun and it tests pupils' skills of observation as well as their recall of French vocabulary. Pupils understand simple classroom commands, but need and receive consistent help, visual clues, gestures and repetition. Pupils are very keen to learn new vocabulary but their pronunciation is approximate and they have not yet reached a stage where they distinguish 'un' from 'une' for example.

119. The teacher varies the methods appropriately to retain pupils' interest and the activities are changed frequently. Consequently, the pace of lessons is brisk. Pupils are relaxed and confident and lessons often good humoured. All these features help to keep pupils' attention on their work and keen to learn. Although there is a considerable amount of conversation in English during lessons, pupils still make satisfactory progress. There are satisfactory plans to improve staff expertise in French. The teacher is introducing computers into lessons to aid pupils' learning but this is at an early stage. There is not a sufficient range of printed resources and artefacts to add more interest to lessons.
120. Overall, the provision for French is satisfactory and is largely the same as at the previous inspection. The new non-specialist French teacher has worked hard and successfully to improve the provision in the last few months, receiving valuable advice from CEA@Islington. The correct arrangements have been made to enable pupils in years 10 and 11 to concentrate on achievements in other subjects and to allow sufficient time to attend college regularly to further their vocational training, as an alternative to studying French.

MUSIC

121. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in music. They make satisfactory and occasionally good progress throughout the school. This is because a temporary specialist teacher plans and prepares well a range of imaginative and challenging activities that most pupils enjoy. Her enthusiasm and command of the subject promotes satisfactory standards. This satisfactory progress applies equally to boys and girls, to pupils with different special educational needs and to those pupils for whom English is a second language. It represents a satisfactory improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
122. Pupils up to Year 6 make satisfactory progress in singing, listening and describing sounds. They participate with growing confidence and enthusiasm in a range of musical activities. Lessons are planned well and proceed with pace. The teacher engages them from the start, for example in one lesson, "Good afternoon everybody! Do I do painting? No. I'm the one who sings", and with that pupils sing together "Hello everybody, what is your name". Pupils take turns to have the responsibility to collect an instrument for the class to use, such as a guitar. This is done with extreme care and raised self-esteem. Pupils passed the guitar around the group, identifying it, holding it correctly and playing on the strings before passing it on. The teacher then reviewed the last week's work on animals, building carefully on prior knowledge. The pupils identified the animals from pictures and linked them to music and to the movements they made. Classroom assistants were used effectively to maintain pupils on task. Their knowledge of the pupils' special needs was invaluable. Relationships were excellent and this helped everyone to join in together.
123. Pupils from Year 7 build on this satisfactory start. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally very good. Pupils develop an appreciation of rhythm and tempo and an understanding of music from different times and places. They sing several playground songs together, clapping in time. Good signing and the use of symbols by the teacher, ensure that pupils know what to expect. Good questioning by the teacher, for example, "What did you like about that music?" encourages pupils to respond and evaluate what they hear. In this way they develop their own musical likes and dislikes. In another lesson, pupils responded well to the challenge to describe the contribution background music makes to a film such as, a 'western' or 'thriller' and how sounds in music are used to create particular effects or moods. Pupils then worked in small groups on a variety of instruments to compose different musical effects to match their

chosen film and then perform for each other. They did this with limited success because the smallness of the room limited their movements and made confrontation more likely. The withdrawal of the two learning assistants to prepare for lunch duty at a critical time in the lesson left the teacher with insufficient support to manage pupils' behaviour and to provide sufficient support for pupils.

124. Pupils up to Year 9 continue to make satisfactory progress as they extend their musical skills. They sing and sign the school song 'From a Distance' with confidence and an awareness of phrase. There are good links with drama. Pupils produce music that represents and helps the appeal of a product such as yoghurt or washing up liquid. The teacher explains the learning objectives clearly and this ensures that pupils know what they have to do in the lesson. Pupils work in groups to investigate music for their product. They find working together in groups and performing in front of their peers difficult, in spite of the good prompting and encouragement of the teacher. In the lesson, two or three pupils had an agenda of their own and continually interrupted learning with immature comments. The teacher was positive and patient in regaining their attention but inconsistent and inexperienced in the use of 'assertive discipline techniques'.
125. The oldest pupils with a particular talent and/or interest in music have the opportunity to work with an instrumentalist who visits the school for two hours each week. These are relaxed but intensive sessions in which much good learning occurs. Pupils learn to accompany their own chosen music tape on the drums and electric guitar. The instructor shows the pupil how to play the drums, how to use wire brushes to 'shuffle' over the beat and how to 'dampen' and 'staccato' sounds. Pupils are totally co-operative and involved. They practise hard and consequently, their performance improves.
126. In her short time in the school, the part-time, temporary teacher has produced satisfactory planning for pupils to make progress as they move through the school. Assessment is satisfactory. A scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that older pupils have produced a 'Listen-up' worksheet with information on their favourite pop star. Pupils in years 10 and 11 are learning to write their own lyrics and play simple tunes using a computer. They have collected data on pupils' likes and dislikes in music and represented this as a block graph. This reinforces pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Pupils use the Internet well to research for information.
127. Resources are good but the music room is too small for whole class groups. This results in pupils working in cramped conditions with a lack of space for group work and the easy potential for pupils to disturb one another. Music plays a very important part in the life of the school. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to and learn about a range of composers, to take part in the school choir, assemblies and in school productions. The subject makes a consistent and good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Pupils achieve well in physical education. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in swimming and gain national certification. Several pupils in Year 6 make very good progress and achieve standards in distance swimming which are at the level expected for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The school has maintained the good standards evident at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils who have additional special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional

language make the same progress as others because explanations of activities are clear and staff provide support so that all can take part.

129. Pupils in years 1 to 3 make good progress running and following stretching exercises on floor mats in preparation for gymnastics. The teacher planned well for them to build on their previous work in a lesson to develop sequences of movements in gymnastics. Each created a sequence such as keeping their balance walking along benches, turning and moving back. Planning was good to allow pupils that are more able to develop additional actions. For instance, they included jumps. A significant reason for pupils making good progress was the participation, demonstration and encouragement provided by the teacher and learning support assistant.
130. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress in developing skills in games. They practised throwing and catching in a lesson in the gymnasium. The teacher provided effective instruction, ensuring that pupils made progress by practising with a partner and moving gradually further apart. Since the teacher divided the instruction into small steps, pupils remembered what they had to do and achieved well. Most improved their catching by the end of the lesson.
131. The teacher plans well to make effective use of the hall and playground to promote pupils' learning for pupils up to Year 9. Pupils often warm up for lessons by running around the perimeter of the grounds. Pupils in years 7 to 9 make good progress in a range of games such as football and soft-ball. They are aware of the need to practise for instance, being careful when swinging the racket because the teacher consistently reminds them. In a lesson in the playground, pupils were not enthusiastic at first to practise bat and ball skills because they would rather have played a game. However the teacher and learning support assistant encouraged them to persevere and they achieved well in developing skills. For instance, they improved forehand strokes that they will be able to utilise when they play competitive games later in the week.
132. Pupils know how to warm up and cool down in lessons. As they progress through the school, they make good progress in explaining the effect of exercise on the body and identify the benefits of warm up activities on muscles. The accommodation is not adequate for pupils in years 10 and 11 but they use very good sports facilities nearby. They take part in a good range of sports such as trampolining and achieve well. Pupils take good advantage of the excellent climbing walls to achieve well with clear delight and pride.
133. A strong feature of lessons is the promotion of pupils' social development. Most lessons require pupils to co-operate with each other in pairs or teams. Through sensitive encouragement, pupils work together well and this promotes good relationships between them. Staff provide good guidance to encourage pupils to develop independence in dressing and personal hygiene. The school is improving the showers to build on the effective promotion of pupils' personal care.
134. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. Planning is good for pupils to learn skills and take part in a good range of sports. They participate in outdoor adventurous activities during regular residential visits. The school has a very high regard for the subject and is improving the provision further and applying for the national recognition of a 'Sports Mark Award'.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. The achievement and progress of all pupils in religious education is unsatisfactory throughout the school. There has been little attention to remedying the many deficiencies in the subject identified in the previous report.
136. Pupils in years 1 to 6 have a story-based approach to the subject, such as following a calendar of festivals. Some pupils in Year 6 are able to talk of the miracles performed by Jesus. They have completed artwork about the parable of the loaves and fishes. However, there is little planning to ensure that pupils build up knowledge over time. Pupils record their work infrequently.
137. Pupils in years 7 to 11 are studying Christianity but are not making sufficient progress. They know little about the events of the time. In lessons for pupils in years 10 and 11, they showed awareness of the meaning of Easter and a perception of its association with new beginnings. They were also able to express an opinion about Judas' betrayal of Jesus and the responsibilities that friendship entails. Higher attaining pupils can relate the events in Jerusalem at the time of Christ to current events in the area.
138. The teaching of religious education is unsatisfactory throughout the school. The subject is taught as a specialist subject to the secondary aged pupils and inconsistently through a topic based approach to the primary aged pupils. Although some good teaching skills are evident, teachers do not plan sufficiently to promote pupils' learning, for instance of the major faiths.
139. The secondary pupils were all studying the same topic in exactly the same way. A discussion followed by a story and the lesson concluding with the pupils drawing a picture. This approach does not always give the pupils with English as an additional language the best opportunity to make progress in the subject. There are few opportunities for writing or recording their work. The teacher lacks awareness of how to provide sufficient work for pupils. This meant that they finished before the end of the lesson. The more able pupils are not given the opportunity to explore the subject in greater depth. The response to religious education lessons by the secondary aged pupils is satisfactory overall. Sometimes the over-emphasis on discussion and the lack of challenge within the lessons frustrates the pupils and their behaviour deteriorates.
140. The co-ordination of religious education is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator for the secondary classes displays an enthusiasm, interest and willingness to develop the necessary skills and to lead visits to local places of worship. However, there is a lack of expertise or previous experience and training. Senior members of staff have prepared an outline syllabus for the secondary classes, but there has been little support and guidance to assist in its implementation. Events that occur through the year – Christmas, Easter, Diwali for example – will take precedence over the other planning. At present pupils have very few examples of work they have produced and the opportunity to help reinforce their literacy skills is being missed. There are no records of pupils' progress and, although the school is prepared to provide additional resources, without guidance the co-ordinator is uncertain what is available or suitable for purchase. There is a missed opportunity to develop suitable computer resources, which would enhance the teaching of the subject. Within the primary classes, there is no scheme of work and the planning for religious education depends on the interest of the class teachers. There is little planned teaching. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

141. Achievement and progress are good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This represents good progress since the last inspection.
142. The teacher for pupils in years 1 to 3 takes good advantage throughout the day to promote pupils' social skills and their personal development. For instance, at the early morning session, pupils learn to settle into routines and learn social skills such as taking turns. They develop social responsibility and wait keenly for the teacher to allocate duties such as being a 'line leader' for the class when they move around the school or to be the pupil who collects the 'book bags.' When pupils go to spend time in the adjacent nursery school, they show how much progress they have made by collecting their coats and dressing with support.
143. Pupils in years 4, 5 and 6 achieve well. They made very good progress in a lesson exploring social responsibility. The teacher planned interesting work, demonstrating enthusiasm and commitment that encouraged pupils to participate well to decide that it was wrong to drop litter and agreed that they should care for their environment. Pupils understand that people can be shocked and angry if others throw litter in the street. Pupils completed one or two sentences about what they should and should not do for instance, ' Don't throw litter in the street.' The teacher and support assistant provided plenty of support and this enabled all pupils to finish their work. They were pleased with their success because they saw that their work was marked correctly. Teachers and support staff guide pupils' personal skills well in undressing and dressing during swimming lessons. The guidance in how to behave when they eat their lunches is a useful part of pupils' social learning.
144. Pupils in the secondary department receive a good series of lessons in personal and social skills, careers and citizenship. This includes appropriate instruction in sex education and the dangers of drug abuse, including effective lessons on these topics from a visiting theatre group. The school plans very well to involve the community in supporting lessons. For instance, pupils in Year 11 made good progress in understanding the importance of expressing their opinion about sexual relationships in a lesson led by a visiting specialist. A visiting dental hygienist led a successful lesson on the care of teeth for pupils in years 8 and 9. Lessons in food technology enable pupils to study healthy diets. However, the lessons led by temporary staff lack planning for staff to check pupils' progress and for teachers to use this information in future planning. This reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning in those lessons.
145. Pupils from Year 8 make good progress in developing an understanding of the factors involved in choosing future jobs. In a careers lesson for pupils in years 8 and 9, they began to identify a range of jobs that would be suitable for them. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress overall in lessons for them to learn about careers. They made good progress in a lesson to use computers to find out about jobs. All pupils made good progress because the teacher and learning support assistant encouraged pupils to try to find out about jobs themselves but provided support when pupils required it. However, in another lesson the pupils only made satisfactory progress looking at photographs to describe the work that pupils do. The work was not sufficiently challenging and there was a missed opportunity for pupils to learn the meaning of important vocabulary such as occupation and trade or to write about their work for future reference. Pupils receive appropriate accreditation for the work they do in personal, social and health education through 'ASDAN'.
146. Although there is sufficient information for teachers to plan lessons to enable pupils to achieve well, this is not secure. The school is without a subject co-ordinator and temporary teachers lead a few lessons in the secondary department.