

INSPECTION REPORT

SPA SCHOOL

Bermondsey, London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100873

Headteacher: John Davies

Reporting inspector: Rita Kirkwood
10421

Dates of inspection: 12th – 13th November 2001

Inspection number: 194710

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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:	11 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Monnow Road London
Postcode:	SE1 5RN
Telephone number:	(0207) 237 3714
Fax number:	(0207) 237 6601
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Sheila Moorcroft
Date of previous inspection:	19 th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
10421	Rita Kirkwood	Registered inspector
9519	Susan Pritchard	Lay inspector
21666	Andrew Margerison	Team inspector
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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	4 - 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	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	8 - 11
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	11 - 12
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	12
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	13 - 15

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Spa School is situated in the London Borough of Southwark in a densely populated residential area. It is a mixed day Community Special school, which caters primarily for students with autistic spectrum disorders aged 11 to 19. There have been significant changes since the last inspection in 1997, at which time most of the students had moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and mixed special educational needs. These students are now in the minority. The age of students has been extended from the upper age limit of 17 years. Currently there are 77 students on roll, divided into 10 age-based classes. Two of the classes are for students with MLD who are working their way through the school and one class is for students with severe communication difficulties. The other seven classes have students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and only students with ASD are now admitted. All students have a statement of special educational needs. Nearly half the students are from other than white backgrounds, which is high for this type of school, although none have English as an additional language. Nearly 80 per cent of the students are boys. Forty one students are entitled to free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very well led by the headteacher and senior management team, who are very effectively managing the transition of the school. The governing body meets statutory obligations and members are very supportive and well informed about the work of the school, but as yet there are no formal monitoring procedures. The quality of education is satisfactory overall. The school day is too short and there is a lack of suitable balance in the timetable. However, students make good progress in relation to their capabilities. This is due to the good teaching and the consistent approach to behaviour throughout the school. Students' achievements in personal and social development are very good and satisfactory in the key skills of numeracy and literacy. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school cares very well for its students. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Their relationships with staff are very good.
- Students are taught well, so achieve well, particularly in their personal and social development.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff and resources are being used effectively to improve the quality of education and raise standards.
- The school works well with parents and makes very effective use of the local community to enrich students' learning.

What could be improved

- The length of the school day is too short to enable the school to provide an appropriate curriculum for all students.
- The proportion of time allocated to the development of the basic skills of numeracy, literacy and ICT is too small.
- There is no consistent approach to curriculum planning and the role of teachers in monitoring the curriculum, in order to reflect the changing needs of students as they progress through the school, is not developed.
- The accommodation for physical education is unsuitable for students with autistic spectrum disorders.

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

This is an effective school, which has many more strengths than weaknesses.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in May 1997 the school has made good improvement in the key issues identified. The school is currently in the third year of a five-year transition plan, in which the special educational needs addressed by the school is changing from moderate learning difficulties and mixed special educational needs to autistic spectrum disorders. There has been considerable progress in providing opportunities for the development of spirituality. The regular assemblies and times for reflection and the effective use of music to enhance these occasions and generally throughout the school make a good contribution. The school has a varied and rich programme of cultural development and has made very good progress in developing a co-ordinated approach to the celebration of cultural diversity. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the context of the school has changed radically. The school makes very good use of the local community as a learning resource. The school made some progress in the monitoring, planning and assessment of the curriculum after the last inspection. However, this is still an area for further development, as the curriculum is developed to meet the needs of the changing student population. The good practice in assessment for the students with severe communication difficulties has not yet been developed across the school. The school provides a distinct teaching approach and suitably planned environment for each group of students. Attendance is now satisfactory and the school has effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 11	by Year 13	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	A	A	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.

The school has assessed the level of all students in basic skills and has started to set specific targets for individuals, which could be used to set realistic and measurable whole school targets. Students make very good progress in their personal and social development and satisfactory progress in the development of key skills. As the development of personal and social skills is a major priority for students with ASD, overall they make good progress and achieve well in relation to their capability.

In 2001, four students achieved grades in GCSE art, three in science and one in Turkish. Five students were successful in gaining Certificate of Educational Achievement grades in mathematics and science and three students gained grades in English. Four students gained Bronze Level Youth Award Scheme certificates.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They like coming to school and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good and improves as students settle into the school and develop in maturity.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development of students is very good. They listen to each other, play games well together and work co-operatively in the class

	groups. Relationships between staff and students are very good.
Attendance	Attendance, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection is now satisfactory.

The good behaviour of students is reflected in the very good progress they make in their personal and social development. They are willing to learn and generally take their lessons seriously. Issues related to bullying in the past have been dealt with effectively by staff, so that the environment supports students' learning. There are very good procedures for monitoring and encouraging good attendance. The Family Centre plays a key role in this work. The majority of students have difficulties socially, due to their special educational needs, so the good progress they make in this area is a credit to their effort and to the skill and hard work of the staff.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory, with nearly two thirds being good or very good and occasionally excellent. Evidence from the 24 lessons seen and from the inspection of students' work shows that teaching is good overall. Teachers' knowledge and management of students and the use of time and support staff are strengths. Assessment and its use in planning are good, although the effectiveness of some teaching is limited by unsatisfactory aspects of the curriculum. A weakness sometimes is the lack of expertise in teaching basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), although the school now has specialist teachers in these subject areas. Students benefit from the good teaching and learn well at all stages. They are interested in lessons and try hard to achieve their personal targets. They maintain their concentration well most of the time and develop independent learning skills in line with their capabilities. The newly refurbished accommodation makes a positive impact on learning and students in both departments in the school learn well. The school's approach to adapting the environment to meet the needs of the students reduces distraction and enables students to settle quickly and concentrate on learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad but not balanced for all students. Extra-curricular activities, including lunchtime and after school clubs, make a valuable contribution to learning.
Provision for students with English as an additional language	There are currently no students with English as an additional language. The funding that the school receives is used effectively to assist students with a range of communication difficulties.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good throughout the school and contributes effectively to the good progress students make while at the school.
How well the school cares for its students	The school has very good procedures for health and safety and for child protection.

The school works well with parents, using a suitable range of strategies to assist communication. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education,

but the time allocated to some subjects is not sufficient. This is because of the short school day, the proportion of time allocated and the large proportion of time given to personal and social education (PSE) activities throughout the school. The very good personal and social development of students is not dependent on having this amount of time set aside for all, although it is very appropriate for the youngest students during their first year in the school. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy, although the lack of suitable literature for Key Stage 3 students limits its effectiveness. The limited time available for some subjects at Key Stage 4 restricts the accredited courses that can be followed, which will disadvantage students of higher ability as they reach this stage in the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The support and guidance that the school offers is carefully targeted to the individual needs of the student. This is important as it leads to students' very good achievements in personal and social development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management by the headteacher, bursar and senior teachers are very good. They are effectively steering the school through its five-year transition period.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities and is supportive and well informed about the work of the school. Informal monitoring takes place and the development of formal monitoring procedures is under discussion.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has clear and ambitious targets that are regularly monitored and reviewed.
The strategic use of resources	Very effective use is made of resources to improve the quality of education offered by the school.

Skilful management by the headteacher is enabling the school to continue to improve and to meet the needs of the diminishing group of students with mixed special needs while developing the resources and expertise for those with ASD. Classrooms have been well adapted for the increasing number of students with ASD, but great care is given to ensure all students have equality of opportunity as the balance within the school shifts. The school effectively applies the principle of best value under the experienced guidance of the bursar. Specific grants are very effectively used to enrich the curriculum. Performance management is in hand, although staff changes and illness have delayed its full implementation.

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 way the school responds to parents' concerns. The clubs and extra-curricular activities, including the breakfast club. The information parents receive from the school about how their child is getting on. The way the school cares for their children. The progress their children make in developing their social skills. Improvements in the internal and external environments of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency in the application of the homework policy and the relevance of homework to lessons in school. Access to the full National Curriculum for higher achieving students at Key Stage 4.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. The team saw homework related to the lessons being set as a matter of course. There is insufficient evidence to make further comment. The inspection supports the views of some parents that students do not have access to a full range of GCSE courses in Key Stage 4, although courses for individual students are arranged.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff and resources are used very effectively to improve the quality of education and raise standards.

1. Spa School is being well led and managed through a period of transition by the headteacher and senior staff. The school was judged to be a good school for students with mixed educational needs at the time of the last inspection. The education provided then for the small number of students with ASD was of a very high standard. Since then the school's designation has changed from mixed special needs to provide solely for students with ASD. Currently the school is in the transition stage as provision for students with mixed needs is phased out. This brings new challenges each year, which have necessitated major changes in school organisation, the environment and curriculum provision. Consequently not everything is yet in place, particularly for the higher achieving students with ASD now being admitted to the school. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning has not been fully developed. However, the school continues to be effective and the priorities for development are appropriate for raising standards. Performance management is in hand, although staff changes and illness have delayed its full implementation.
2. The structure of the senior management team, with three senior teachers instead of a deputy head, is effective in helping to keep a focus on the needs of the two distinct groups of students. As the balance of special educational needs, with their very distinct demands and requirements, has shifted, skilful management has prevented discrimination against either group. Although both groups are separated during lessons, opportunities are used to enable the school to function as a unit and not as two schools under one roof. Examples are during break times, when students mingle freely, and whole school celebrations.
3. The senior teachers have significant expertise in their own specialist fields, which is valuable in building the staff skills. Staff change has been used effectively to appoint teachers with relevant subject expertise. The school improvement plan identifies the need to develop a relevant curriculum at Key Stage 4 and post-16 and to increase routes to accreditation, elements important in the future effectiveness of the school.
4. The school has access to funding from a range of sources. These include the Education Action Zone, which has been used to develop the Family Centre and associated breakfast club and the Globe Theatre project. Ethnic minority achievement grant funding has been used effectively to support cultural activities, such as a whole school carnival and the planned project to create murals depicting ethnic minority heroic figures. The school makes very good use of all the funds available to it. The environment has been improved, although the school hall has poor acoustics and acts as a thoroughfare, making it an unsuitable environment for physical education lessons for students with ASD.

The school makes very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

5. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection, when provision for both spiritual and cultural development was unsatisfactory. Opportunities for spiritual development are

included in assemblies and tutor times, as well as in lessons. Music plays an important part in the promotion of spirituality. For example, students in a Year 7 class listen thoughtfully to 'Tranquillity' when they arrive in the classroom in the morning; one asks about the music, saying he likes it. This provides a good start to the day, as students are settled, relaxed and receptive to learning.

6. Staff provide very good role models for students and help them address their behaviour and develop control of their autism. This increases their self-esteem and therefore their confidence, enabling them to develop their social skills. Some older students travel successfully to and from school independently, a huge achievement for them. Students in Year 13 take turns to choose a piece of music at the start of the day. All students listen carefully and are encouraged to value each other's choices. A lesson on developing thinking skills for Year 11 students with mixed special educational needs that uses the contents of a person's handbag to find out about them makes a very good contribution to students' moral and social development.
7. The school provides rich and varied cultural experiences for the students, making good use of the ethnic minority student cultures. The multi-ethnic carnival dance and music project and the proposed art project, as well as the month's focus on ethnic heroes, make a valuable contribution to students' cultural development. Cultural development is further enhanced by the curriculum, for example Adinkra printing from Ghana in art and by the wide range of visitors and visits outside the school. Customs and beliefs of a range of faiths are explored in religious education lessons and in assemblies. After-school and lunchtime clubs make a significant contribution to the provision for cultural development, for example the music club in which students compose using a range of instruments.

The school cares very well for its students. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Relationships with staff are very good.

8. Students consistently behave well when they are interested and engaged in their lessons. A small amount of silly behaviour may occur when lessons are too long or the teaching approach is insufficiently varied for the younger students. Overall, students are courteous and thoughtful, both to staff and to each other. They take turns, listen and often answer questions with confidence. The school's planned approach to adapting accommodation and teaching approaches as the student population changes is very effective in smoothing the transition. As a result, students across the school mix well with each other and show some understanding of each other's needs. For example, a Year 8 student apologised to an inspector for the behaviour of a fellow student. Students know what their targets are and are proud of their achievements. Students of ethnic minority cultures have equal opportunities within the school. The celebration of diversity is fundamental to the school's approach to meeting the individual needs of its students.
9. Staff know the students very well and target their approach to their individual needs. This is helped by the good use of day to day assessment. The special school support assistants and teachers work well together to provide the consistent approach that students need. The induction of new students is carefully planned and helps them settle quickly into their new environment.
10. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. The number of exclusions has gone down recently. The Family Centre plays an important part in encouraging good attendance. The breakfast club held there each morning provides a valued start to the day for those students who arrive early.

Students are taught well, so achieve well, particularly in their personal and social development.

11. All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory, with nearly two thirds being good or very good and occasionally excellent. Overall teaching is good, with some considerable strengths, particularly relating to the skills and knowledge of staff to meet the special educational needs of the students. Teachers' knowledge and management of students and the use of time

and support staff are strengths. There is a whole school approach and a high level of support from senior management for new staff. This provides new staff without the special needs expertise to become effective members of the team. The school has had difficulty in recruiting teachers, although recent appointments have been successful in providing the subject expertise needed to develop the curriculum. The expertise of senior staff in working with the particular special educational needs of the students is excellent. Staff throughout the school regularly deal with the underlying causes of students' behaviour, which increases students' self esteem and has a positive effect on their behaviour. The school's approach to adapting the environment and teaching methods to meet the needs of the students reduces distraction and enables students to settle quickly and concentrate on learning. Individual education plans are clear and concise and contribute to students' progress. The use of assessment in planning is good and effective verbal feedback in lessons reinforces learning. In the most effective lessons, students understand the relevance of the task to their own lives, extend their understanding and contribute to discussion with increasing confidence. Teachers' good knowledge of individual students' capabilities ensures that staff have high expectations and provide suitable challenge in lessons. A weakness in some teaching is the lack of expertise in teaching basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), although the school now has specialist teachers in these subject areas.

12. Students benefit from the good teaching and learn well at all stages. They are interested in lessons and try hard to achieve their personal targets. They maintain their concentration well most of the time and develop independent learning skills in line with their capabilities. The newly refurbished accommodation makes a positive impact on learning and students in both departments in the school learn well.
13. Students' achievements overall are good, their very good achievements in personal and social development being necessary for raising standards in basic skills. Achievements in literacy are satisfactory. The school has started to implement the National Literacy Strategy, but there is not yet a whole school approach to phonics or handwriting. The school has had difficulty in finding age appropriate but accessible literature for the students. In a literacy lesson students with ASD in Year 8 take turns to read a story aloud with confidence. Good use of questioning gives all students the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Students answer questions about the story and suggest adjectives to describe people, such as 'intelligent', 'spiky', 'scruffy' and 'silly'. They know that one character in the story would feel embarrassed and write their own stories with differing amounts of support. One pupil uses the dictionary independently. Teachers' good knowledge of the students enables planning to be focused on individual needs in order to provide a suitable level of challenge. For example in one Year 9 class, a higher attaining student writes a complex story with well developed characters using words to create an atmosphere. The student discusses corrections with the teacher in a mature way. Higher attaining students with mixed special educational needs in Year 11 enter and edit text on the computer, draft and redraft their work. Lower attaining students need considerable help with spelling and work hard to distinguish letter sounds. Year 13 students learn extremely well in a lesson about identifying and asking for help appropriately. This is because they are clear about the aims of the lesson and understand its relevance to them. The use of key sentences by the teacher helps develop a routine and structure for students, who respond with growing confidence and skill, using increasingly complex sentences and instructions. Very good links with the speech and language therapist ensures that staff use appropriate techniques. The positive relationships enable students to feel confident to talk and to learn from their own errors, without feeling threatened. Last summer three students were successful in gaining grades in Certificate of Educational Achievement examinations.
14. The implementation of the Numeracy Strategy is also at an early stage of development. Students' achievements are satisfactory. Good teamwork by the classteacher and special school support assistant in a Year 7 lesson provides an environment in which students learn well at an appropriate level. Lower attaining students extend their ability to add to 20 and higher attaining students use coins to make up £1. In Year 9, students learn well, although the relevance of the task to everyday life is not clear to them. However, they are clear about what is expected of them, there is good class organisation, a smooth and brisk pace and good use of a plenary session at the end to give praise and to assess learning. Higher attaining students add and subtract in 20s

accurately. Lower attaining students see a pattern in odd/even numbers and some students divide 10 by 2. In Year 11 a group of students work hard on a Certificate of Educational Achievement module, using a calculator to work out total costs of a number of items. Clear explanations and reinforcement by the teacher helps students to understand the meaning of 'total'. Last summer five students gained grades in Certificate of Educational Achievement examinations.

15. The science curriculum is supplemented by horticulture based on the City and Guilds Skillpower course. The school plans to extend the opportunities for students in this area as a possible route to employment for some of them in the future. Students in Year 7 distinguish between herbs, grass and trees. They know plants grow in different environments, naming pond, garden and greenhouse. The newly developed school garden is a valuable resource for this study.
16. Students with mixed special educational needs have access to work experience and courses at local colleges. Year 13 students with ASD spend one day each week at a local college and on work experience either on or off the school site. The work related curriculum is being further developed for younger students with ASD.
17. Students in Key Stage 4 and post-16 have access to accreditation in General Certificate of Secondary Education in science, art and occasionally other subjects. They follow courses in Certificate of Educational Achievement in a range of subjects and Transition Challenge Youth Award Scheme in Life Skills and Towards Independence. The standards students achieve are related to their special educational needs rather than ethnic differences.

The school works well with parents and makes effective use of the local community to enrich students' learning.

18. The Family Centre, which has been developed since the last inspection, provides rich links with parents. A range of services is offered, including a parent support group and a venue for meetings of the National Autistic Society. Information about benefits, post-16 options and organisations and activities that may benefit parents or students is available from the Centre. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is supported by parent workshops on literacy and numeracy, run in the Centre by South Bank University. Parents value the after school clubs and other student activities, such as cycle training, arranged by the Centre. Staff contact parents regarding imminent annual reviews, seeking their verbal contributions if they have not written their views down. Centre staff monitor students' attendance and liaise with the Education Welfare department and parents over any matters of concern. The Centre has proved to be a valuable addition to the school's provision and is having a positive effect on the achievements of students.
19. Parents are confident about approaching the school with any concerns and know that any issues will be dealt with promptly. Parents of prospective students have an opportunity to visit the school and discuss the school's approach with one of the senior teachers at regular parents' mornings held in the Family Centre. End of year reports to parents are satisfactory but do not offer guidance on how they can help their child improve.
20. The school makes very good use of places of interest in the local area, such as the Pumphouse Museum, as well as local shops and other parts of the community. Students with mixed special educational needs attend college for part of the week and undertake work experience in local businesses. Students with ASD in Year 13 attend link college courses and have work experience opportunities either on site or, where possible, outside the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The length of the school day is too short to enable provision of an appropriate curriculum for all students.

21. The school day is shorter than that recommended by DfES for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. It is also significantly shorter than that for most schools of this type. The impact of the short day makes it impossible for the school to expand the curriculum options and accreditation for Key

Stage 4 to meet the increasing range of ability of the students. The School Improvement Plan includes an extension of the school day by 30 minutes from September 2002, which has been agreed by the governing body. This may still not be adequate to teach the curriculum at Key Stage 4 fully.

The proportion of time allocated to the development of the basic skills of numeracy, literacy and ICT is too small.

22. The balance of the timetable does not provide sufficient time for the development of basic skills. The proportion of time allocated to literacy and numeracy is low in comparison with all special schools. Students have one lesson a week for ICT, which is also a small amount, although ICT is increasingly being used across the curriculum. The proportion of time given to science is high, as is that allocated to physical education lessons.
23. Students are prompt to school and punctual to lessons, but within the school day a high proportion of the time is allocated to PSE activities. This is sometimes extremely useful time that makes a valuable contribution to students' personal and social development. The current pattern is appropriate for Year 7 students as they settle in to the school for their first year. However, the timetable is not suitably balanced for older students. The early morning PSE session is well used and helpful in setting the scene for the day. It often involves listening to music and makes a good contribution to the spiritual development of students. The school approach is to provide consistent routines, but the large part of the day allocated to PSE reduces the time available to other areas of the curriculum. The end of the school day is often protracted, with a great deal of time spent having a drink and getting ready to go home. Sometimes this time is well used for focused learning activities, but this is not the case throughout the school. Some phasing of leaving time for students travelling independently in Year 13 is appropriate, as it allows them to avoid the closing time of other schools. This does not apply to many students.

There is no consistent approach to curriculum planning and the role of teachers in monitoring the curriculum, in order to reflect the changing needs of students as they progress through the school, is not developed.

24. The role of the subject co-ordinators is developing. The headteacher and senior management team effectively identify and provide support and guidance for individual staff, but the monitoring of the curriculum across the school is under-developed. This was an issue at the last inspection and, at the time, was addressed. The radical changes to the school population since then, along with the high turnover of staff, altered the school's priorities. Training staff, managing student behaviour and addressing their special needs have been successfully achieved. Now the school is in the position of having identified curriculum development and increasing the routes to accreditation as priorities.

The school hall is an unsuitable environment for physical education lessons for students with ASD.

25. The hall is a large room with poor acoustics. It also acts as a busy thoroughfare in the school. This causes distraction and reduces the quality of learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The senior management team and governing body should:

- a) increase the length of the school day (paragraph 21);
- b) review the timetable to provide a suitable curriculum balance for all year groups (paragraphs 22 and 23);

- c) develop the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators to provide a suitable curriculum and appropriate progression through the school for all students (paragraph 24); and
- d) provide a suitable environment for physical education (paragraph 25).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	11	9	0	0	0
Percentage	4	13	46	37	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	77
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.3	School data	3.0

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	42
Any other minority ethnic group	14

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	6	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	14	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y 13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.3
Average class size	7.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	26
Total aggregate hours worked per week	715

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	990,262
Total expenditure	1,020,265
Expenditure per pupil	13,603
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,121
Balance carried forward to next year	9,119

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	77
Number of questionnaires returned	16

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	44	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	0	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	44	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	56	13	6	0
The teaching is good.	56	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	37	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	31	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	37	13	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	44	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	38	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	38	6	0	0