

BLOSSOM HOUSE SCHOOL

**8 THE DRIVE, WIMBLEDON, LONDON SW20
8TG**

Reporting Inspector: Andrew Littlewood HMI

Dates of Inspection: 22-24 June 1999

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Information about the school

Type of school:	Speech, language and communication impairments
Type of control:	Independent
Age range:	3-12
Gender:	Mixed
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MAIN FINDINGS

1. Blossom House School is an impressive school with many strengths and a clear understanding of what needs to be done to become even more successful.
2. The pupils make sound progress in relation to their abilities in all lessons and good or very good progress in 30 per cent.
3. In physical education, art, music, science, religious education, geography and elements of mathematics, several pupils are attaining standards in line with national expectations. A few pupils read well and with growing understanding but there are others, mainly those who have only been at the school for a short period, whose attainments could be better.
4. The quality of teaching is sound or better in all lessons. It is good or very good 52 per cent and it is excellent in ten per cent. The teaching staff are well qualified and have a good understanding of the pupils' needs.
5. The work of the nursery is a strength.
6. Classroom assistants provide valuable support in all lessons.
7. The contribution of the music therapist, occupational and physiotherapist, and speech and language therapists to the pupils' educational programmes is a strength which is well established and permeates all the work of the school.
8. A broad curriculum including the National Curriculum and religious education is provided for all pupils. Appropriate emphasis is given to the development of speech, language and communication skills. Subjects which require further attention, namely mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology, have been identified by the school and are already included in their development plan.
9. Good communication between staff ensures that each pupils' individual education plans are well known to all. A co-ordinator is required to monitor and evaluate the school's overall curriculum provision in order to ensure that a balanced programme of study is provided for all pupils.
10. The school's policies for subjects and virtually all aspects of school life, and those schemes of work they have produced are easily accessible, maintain a similar style throughout and are of a good standard.
11. The quality of the assessment of pupils' work is good as too is its use in lesson preparation. However, record keeping is currently, while thorough and detailed, too complex to effectively monitor and identify the degrees of progress individual pupils are making.
12. Good use is made of the grounds and premises to promote the pupils' learning.
13. The school successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
14. Relationships between all staff and pupils are very good and all adults are particularly sensitive to the pupils' special needs.
15. Throughout the inspection the pupils' behaviour was good. Entries in the school's incident book indicate that those few pupils who have behavioural difficulties are making steady progress through their careful management and regular review. There are opportunities for all pupils to develop and demonstrate their independence but more should be available to match the growing maturity of some of the older ones.
16. The school benefits from excellent leadership. The principal has a clear vision and the quality of teamwork, involving all staff, is a strength. The role of subject co-ordinators is growing as also is senior management's responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the quality

of teaching and learning. The financial and administrative arrangements are good.

17. The school is attentive to the pupils' health and safety. It has provided introductory programmes of sex education and misuse of drugs awareness but has yet to plan ways of incorporating them into the curriculum. It has the confidence of its parents. Over half replied to the questionnaire (see Appendix) and the vast majority expressed very favourable views of the school and the help it has provided for their children.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

18. In order to further improve the quality of education at Blossom House School, the principal should:

- continue to develop the curriculum, especially for mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology and identify a teacher to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate the curriculum provision for all pupils;
- ensure that a programme of drug awareness is embedded in the curriculum;
- monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching to ensure that all lessons are of the highest quality;
- review the current assessment and recording processes to ensure that each pupils' progress is easily identified;
- provide pupils with greater opportunities to make choices and develop independence as their ability to accept responsibility grows.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

2. Blossom House School is an independent day school for up to 80 boys and girls with speech, language and communication impairments. It is situated in the London Borough of Merton, opened in 1993 and moved to its present premises, a former local authority old people's home, in 1996. The principal is also the school's proprietor.
3. Currently, there are 56 pupils of school age, ages ranging from 5-12 (see Appendix 2), and 13 who attend the nursery. All the pupils have varying degrees of speech and language impairments. Some have additional emotional difficulties and some display behaviour within the autistic spectrum. Thirty eight of the pupils have statements of special educational need and 36 have places funded by their local education authorities (LEA) with consent from the Department for Education and Employment as the school is still seeking full approval status. The present placing authorities are Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kingston, Lambeth, Merton, Richmond and Sutton (see Appendix 3).

4. The school aims to provide a communication centred environment where children with a range of speech, language and communication impairments are supported in their learning; to provide an opportunity for children to receive support and help with communication skills in a range of learning environments; to provide advice and support for parents and to enable as many of the pupils as is possible to go on to successfully access mainstream education when they leave. It is organised into 8 class groups, including the nursery, and the timetable includes provision for individual and small group therapy sessions for all pupils according to their individual needs. The basic termly fee is £3,140.

Key Indicators

Attendance

5. There has been no unauthorised absence during the past year and during the week prior to the inspection there was 94 per cent attendance. Parents keep the school informed concerning medical appointments and other such absences and contact the school should their child be ill. There have been no exclusions.

Public examinations

6. The school does not enter its pupils for the National Curriculum Tests (SATs) at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, but is intending to do so next year.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

7. While a few pupils attain standards in line with national norms in aspects of some subjects, all have degrees of difficulty due to their speech, language and communication impairment. The school aims to remediate their difficulties as much as possible and provide them with strategies to succeed in their studies to the best of their abilities. Judgements are therefore made in relation to the pupils' progress and capabilities.
8. In all of the 40 lessons observed the pupils demonstrated they were making sound progress and in 30 per cent progress was good or very good. In circumstances where it was sound most of the pupils were consolidating their knowledge and skills and gaining confidence to tackle more demanding work but there were a few who were ready for the next step and could have been given more challenging material. In the best lessons all pupils were working well, making good use of their previous knowledge and newly taught information to solve new problems and learn new ideas in line with the teachers' high expectations.

9. In English, the pupils' progress is at least sound and is good in just under a half the lesson seen. Advances in reading, speaking and listening are generally better than they are in the development of writing skills. There is an appropriate emphasis on consolidating the pupils' understanding and use of language and the identification and use of phonics in the development of reading skills.
10. The pupils' make steady progress in mathematics learning new skills and increasing their mathematical knowledge with confidence. Teachers recognise that a few still need to spend time consolidating their current understanding while the pace of learning could be increased for the others. This may well be achieved in the near future if the proposed improvements are made in the scheme of work and teachers plan and present work to suit different ability groups.
11. Progress in science is generally good. The younger pupils are gaining skills such as observation and prediction and making steady advances in their scientific understanding. Older pupils demonstrate good knowledge and are progressing with interest and enthusiasm. Through careful observation, measurement and testing they have a good understanding of the most suitable conditions for plant growth and can record and present their data with growing fluency and confidence.
12. In art, geography and physical education progress is good with most pupils showing a pride and pleasure in their work. However, in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology (D&T) progress is slow, as the schemes of work have only just been implemented. Most pupils have regular opportunities to practise their ICT skills. Activities involving D&T are included in art, geography and history and are planned, but in neither case are the skills and understanding particular to these subjects systematically developed in line with the National Curriculum programmes of study.
13. The children in the nursery made excellent progress during a music lesson, demonstrating their understanding of tempo and dynamics very effectively, while thoroughly enjoying themselves and showing marked improvements between their practices and the final performance.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

14. All pupils show a positive attitude to study and most gain real pleasure from their success. Some have good levels of concentration and can work independently for long periods during lessons. A few still lack confidence and have low self esteem but records indicate that all have made some progress in this aspect. During lessons all pupils are interested in the work set and are keen to respond to questions or contribute their ideas to the discussions.
15. The pupils' behaviour is generally good. They are polite, considerate and respond respectfully to both adults and each other, apologising immediately should they have accidentally upset someone by their actions or comments. However, there are occasions when certain pupils respond inappropriately and require firm, consistent yet sensitive support before they can continue with their work. The school has a clear and well considered policy for behaviour management which all adults follow effectively. The practice of regular reinforcement of acceptable behaviour through praise and encouragement is having a positive effect and the frequency of poor behaviour has been

considerably reduced. During the inspection no incidents of poor behaviour took place.

16. The school has no scheme of work related to personal development but all adults make a point of encouraging appropriate responses and provide excellent role models in their relationships with each other and the pupils. Opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively are regularly planned and there are many unplanned occasions during each day, such as play, moving about the school or on arrival and departure when the pupils demonstrate their good social skills, respect for each others' feelings and take responsibility for themselves. This could be extended for the older pupils as their self-worth increases.

Attendance

17. Both the admissions and daily registers are properly maintained and all absences are carefully checked. Parents almost always contact the school should their child be unable to attend and unauthorised absenteeism is not an issue. The 94 per cent attendance for the week prior to the inspection is about the school's average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

18. The quality of teaching is sound in every lesson. It is good or better in 62 per cent and outstanding in ten per cent.
19. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and a clear understanding of the learning difficulties the pupils encounter during their studies. All lessons are well planned, most making good use of the assessments of previous work. However, in those where teaching is sound, more account needs to be taken of the wide range of ability within the class and particularly the teaching strategies used during the previous lesson so the pupils experience a balanced programme of study with opportunities to progress at a suitable pace.
20. In all lessons the collaboration between those adults present is an excellent feature. All contribute considerably to support the maintenance of pupils learning or behaviour, monitor, assess and record progress and identify areas of weakness. This teamwork, which is of a high standard, continuously reinforces the school's strong ethos and provides the pupils with good working practices through example. Good communication between staff ensures that all are aware of their own and each others responsibilities. A further strength of all lessons is the way teachers establish the lessons' objectives during the introduction and remind the pupils of the stage they have reached as the work progresses.
21. The outstanding teaching combines the factors already identified with an obvious enthusiasm for and good knowledge of the subject; very well considered questions to ensure that the pupils' understanding is assessed and no additional confusion is introduced; a pace which is demanding; work which is intrinsically interesting, providing opportunities for practical activities and

which motivates the pupils to give of their best. Other features include a regular review of the work the lesson has already covered, ensuring the pupils are aware of the lesson's objectives and at which stage they have reached and setting interesting homework to reinforce the main points of the lesson. For example, one boy excitedly described the pleasure he had had using his dictionary to search for and list words which followed a particular spelling pattern, and at the end of a science lesson, real enthusiasm was shown for the task of discovering as much as they could about vibrations in connection with work on sound.

The curriculum and assessment

22. The school provides a broad curriculum which includes the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and appropriately gives particular attention to the development of the pupils' speech, language and communication skills. In addition, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy and physiotherapy are provided in varying degrees according to each pupil's needs.
23. The nursery offers a rich programme comprising personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world physical development and creative development as well as access to the range of therapies already described.
24. Sufficient time is allocated to the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT, but the latter has yet to be fully developed across the curriculum. To ensure suitable attention is paid to geography and history only one is studied per term. Design and technology is planned to be taught in conjunction with other subjects, for example, designing and making simple percussion instruments during a music lesson, but this is still in the early stages of development.
25. There are policies for all subjects and schemes of work are available for all except D&T. Those for mathematics, and ICT being reviewed but the others are generally well considered and provide good starting points for lesson preparation.
26. The English curriculum includes the valued contributions of the speech and language therapists, particularly in lessons which focus on literacy and speaking and listening. Of considerable value is their careful analysis of the language content of all classwork and the assistance they provide for teachers and classroom assistants to ensure that the pupils will be able to access the work set and understand and use the subject specific vocabulary. Similar support is provided by the occupational and physiotherapist to ensure that the pupils are using suitable resources, handling them properly, are seated comfortably and are shown the correct way to manipulate equipment.
27. Short term planning, which incorporates assessments of the pupils' progress, the subject's scheme of work and any additional advice from the therapists is good in the majority of lessons but still requires further development in a few.
28. Medium and long term plans have been produced but they need more detail concerning continuity from year to year and the monitoring of each pupil's progress, especially as all class groups contain pupils of different ages. In addition they should also be more closely aligned to the National Curriculum

programmes of study and include details of how the sex education and drug misuse awareness programmes are to be provided.

29. Curriculum co-ordinators are steadily establishing their roles and their specialist teaching is a strength.
30. The school has a good assessment policy and during lessons all adults take careful note of each pupil's progress. On a day to day basis, good use is made of the many evaluations which are undertaken, especially to prepare further work. Individual education plans are prepared for every pupil which include a suitable range of targets to be reached during the following term. These are well known to all staff concerned and copies are circulated to parents so they too can be more actively involved. The school intends to include the national standardised assessment tests (SATs) next year and this too will help to provide details of each pupil's attainment and progress. However, at present it is difficult to create a picture of the overall progress of pupils over a period of time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

31. The school successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at every opportunity during each school day. An adult is available to welcome them on arrival and others supervise free time throughout the day to ensure they behave socially and responsibly while playing. Assemblies provide time for prayer, thinking about issues which affect their lives and the lives of others and celebrating each others' good work. They are well planned, happy occasions which often give the pupils the chance to present a piece of work at which they have been particularly successful, thus developing their self esteem, confidence and social skills.
32. Religious education lessons introduce the pupils to aspects of the major world faiths and help them to understand other people's points of view and how a belief in God has given strength and comfort to many and influenced the way they live their lives.
33. The school has a few easily understood rules concerning behaviour which set clear expectations for all. The pupils respond well, recognise what is right and wrong and are making sound progress in the development of good moral principles.
34. Opportunities for the pupils to grow in social and cultural understanding are well developed through subjects such as history, geography, art, physical education and music, as well as stories during English lessons. In addition, arrangements for trips to places of interest and visit to a local school to play games together are carefully planned with the pupils' social and cultural development in mind.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

35. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. All staff know the pupils well and are sensitive to their individual needs. There are suitable health and safety, child protection and behaviour policies which are understood and properly implemented by all adults. Medical and first aid arrangements are sound. The site is secure and checks are made regularly to ensure there are no

potential hazards. The school's incident book is up to date and properly maintained.

36. The contributions from the therapists has a significant impact on the pupils' academic progress and personal development.
37. Annual reviews are completed for all pupils with statements. They provide a reasonable record of the work the pupil has covered but, as was noted earlier, could give a more focused account of their progress.

Partnerships with parents and the community

38. The school works hard to ensure that partnership with parents and its links with the local community are successful. There are regular contacts with parents especially those who bring their children to school each day, and home school diaries are well established for all who require them.
39. The response to the questionnaire circulated prior to the inspection was very positive. Over half replied and of those received only few raised any concerns, mainly about not being kept as fully informed of their child's progress as they would have wished. The others often included comments underlining their complete satisfaction with the work of the school and the difference they had observed in their child's behaviour, attitude to school and the progress they are now making. Several also appreciated the curriculum meetings which the school arranged.
40. Links with local secondary schools and colleges have been created and students often complete periods work experience at Blossom House. Contact with a neighbouring middle school enables the older pupils form Blossom House to gain experience of playing games in groups larger than would otherwise be possible and generally socialising with other pupils.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

41. The school is effectively managed by the principal who is also the proprietor. There are well understood aims and the quality of the teamwork which has been created through the head's strong leadership and clear educational vision is excellent. Regular meetings keep all informed and the development plan sets priorities for future action and the time scale for their completion.
42. The policies and documentation available to support the good management of the school provide clear guidance for staff and curriculum co-ordinators are steadily developing their monitoring roles.
43. The work of the speech and language therapists is very well co-ordinated by a member of the senior management team. This ensures that they continue to have a considerable influence on the pupils' progress. To ensure that progress in all subjects as well as language and literacy is clearly identified and recorded, an equivalent post of curriculum and assessment co-ordinator would be an advantage.
44. The principal regularly observes lessons and monitors lesson plans and schemes of work especially when new teachers join the school with the aim of

ensuring that the excellent examples of teaching and classroom support provided by both therapists and classroom assistants are as widespread as possible. To achieve this it is suggested that senior management give more attention to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching throughout the school.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

45. The school employs a good balance of well qualified and experienced teachers and therapists. Those newly appointed receive a very good induction with support from colleagues, regular appraisal and opportunities for further professional development are provided. All staff have clear employment contracts and are aware of the school's pay policy. Staff development generally is well planned with new responsibilities included in reviewed job descriptions and sound links established between the staff development and the needs of the school as recorded in its development plan. It is important that the school keeps up to date with government initiatives as most of the pupils on leaving Blossom House go on to schools in the maintained sector. The school has received copies of the national literacy strategy and should endeavour to keep abreast of developments concerning the numeracy strategy by attending the local courses organised to aid its implementation.
46. All of the classroom assistants and nursery nurses hold additional qualifications including first degrees, NVQs and City and Guilds learning support diplomas.
47. There are many individual strengths amongst the staff but their outstanding quality is the excellent teamwork they demonstrate in all aspects of school life.
48. The school grounds and premises are in good condition and the standard of cleanliness is high. Good displays of pupils' work brighten the entrance hall, stairs and shared areas and classroom displays provide a balance between good examples of pupils' work and educational posters and equipment. Thoughtful use has been made of the smaller rooms to provide work spaces for small groups and individual support.
49. Learning resources are generally good and well used to promote understanding but some of the material to support the English curriculum is old and should be replaced as funding permits.

The efficiency of the school

50. Financial control and school administration is good. The principal ensures that staff time is used effectively, planning is detailed and priorities set, pupils make sound progress and the quality of teaching is generally good. The fee structure is clear. The school provides good value for money.

CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

51. Several pupils are working at levels within national norms in reading and all are making sound progress in learning to read. Their understanding is not so well advanced but nevertheless all are developing and using with accuracy, a broader vocabulary. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are developing well with several pupils making good progress in the sequencing and presentation of their thoughts and making considerable improvements in their ability to listen carefully and follow simple instructions. Their handwriting is given due attention and is improving steadily, with some of the older pupils producing pieces of a reasonable standard. All are encouraged to write and record information and their ideas but, for most pupils, this aspect is the one in which they have progressed least due to their specific difficulties. There are some good examples of ways in which the older pupils are encouraged to increase their confidence in writing by recording their ideas in other subjects such as science.
52. The quality of teaching is good in over two thirds of lessons and this, coupled with the valuable input from speech and language therapists, ensures that all pupils are carefully assessed and their specific needs properly addressed. All lessons are carefully planned and at each stage checks are made to assess the pupils' understanding and their retention and use of the new work. The good contributions of those other adults present means that the progress of each pupil is rigorously monitored through precise questioning. In the best lessons the pace of work is suitably demanding and a variety of oral, practical and written work is prepared to sustain the pupils' interest and concentration. Plenty of opportunities are planned during each week to provide individual therapy, and a balanced programme of spelling, handwriting, role play, discussion and literacy development. The school endeavours to ensure that all English related work stems from a common theme. This could be further reinforced through the introduction of aspects of the framework of the national literacy strategy. The school has a good scheme of work and plenty of suitable resources, including some lap top computers and is encouraging pupils to develop keyboard skills.
53. The pupils show a good level of enthusiasm for and interest in their English lessons. They are sociable and respond positively and with a growing confidence to the work set. They concentrate well and are proud of their achievements in an area in which all experience some degree of difficulty.

Mathematics

54. Standards attained by a few of the pupils in work related to numerical problem solving are in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 most of the pupils can recognise and name simple regular shapes, name and sequence numbers up to 20, complete simple addition and subtraction problems both mentally and in written form. They are learning number facts and are beginning to understand and use the specialist language of mathematics with accuracy and confidence. By the end of key stage 2 the pupils are demonstrating sound skills in the addition of number, reasonable recall of number facts, can calculate using the four rules in simple problems, have a growing understanding of fractions, measurement and have begun to work successfully with data bases.

55. The pupils' progress is sound in all lessons. However the pace of progress for several pupils is slow as they develop their mathematical language and the school needs to ensure that their pace of progress is sustained. All pupils show an interest in their work, are consolidating their knowledge and broadening their understanding and use of mathematical language in appropriate contexts.
56. The quality of teaching is sound in all lessons and good in a half. Work is generally well planned and includes specific learning objectives which are communicated to the pupils and reinforced as the lesson progresses. This is a common feature of all lessons and is a strength throughout the school. The teachers' subject knowledge is sound and appropriate teaching strategies are used with sufficient emphasis on practical activities. However, in some lessons, too much time is spent introducing the work, with little opportunity for pupils to become actively involved. This inevitably leaves insufficient time for group or individual tasks and an opportunity for the pupils to rehearse what they have learned at the end of the lesson. The degree of differentiation to provide for the pupils' individual needs requires further attention in a few lessons.
57. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and work with concentration and confidence, especially during the whole class introductory session when all are keen to answer questions and show off their knowledge and skills. Many are able to work independently and with a partner with minimal supervision.
58. Some recent developments in mathematics include a review of the policy and short, medium and long term plans. The scheme of work is relatively new and the school are still making adjustments to it. Staff recognise that there is further work to be done including the development of a whole school system to assess and record pupils' progress; the introduction of target setting; the inclusion of the SATs and the implementation of those elements of the national numeracy strategy which can be suitably adapted to meet the needs of the pupils.

Science

59. The pupils make good progress in science and demonstrate increasing levels of both understanding and skills as they advance through the school. Younger pupils are learning about the properties of various common materials through exploration and play, listen and recognise the sounds made by different objects during their normal use and are beginning to develop the idea of a fair test. This is well understood by the older pupils who have devised experiments to discover to effects of water and light on plant growth. These pupils demonstrated good skills of prediction and recording and established simple hypotheses as a result of careful observation and discussion. They know and use many scientific terms with accuracy and confidence.
60. The quality of teaching ranges from sound to outstanding. Work is very well prepared and thoughtfully presented, making good use of suitable equipment. Clear objectives are set during the introductory period as well as a review of what was done during the previous lesson. Careful questioning ensures the pupils' progress is assessed throughout the lessons. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject content and the scheme of work includes appropriate reference to the National Curriculum levels of attainment and programmes of study. Work continues at a good pace and the pupils are set suitable challenges

in line with their abilities. The subject co-ordinator is building up a good collection of suitable resources and is planning to introduce the use of computers into the science work in the near future.

61. The pupils enjoy the work, concentrate well and make very good use of their previously learned studies to tackle new situations. They apply their well rehearsed skills effectively and handle equipment and resources carefully. They are keen to contribute to class discussions and co-operate well with each other.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

62. Art is a popular subject which is well taught. Pupils develop a good range of techniques, experiences and have opportunities to study the work of famous painters. Lessons include both two and three dimensional work and an art club, which takes place after school, is well attended. Good examples of the pupils' work are displayed throughout the school.
63. Work involving D&T is generally planned to illustrate work in other subjects such as geography, history and art where, for example, pupils made models to reinforce their understanding of the ancient Egyptians. The school is planning to produce a scheme of work which identifies the main features of what is to be taught so that the present practice can be improved and the pupils' progression in their development of technological skills and ideas can be clearly monitored. Information and communication technology is in a similar position. Pupils have access to some useful programs to reinforce their spelling and keyboard skills and they produced a newsletter using a range of desktop publishing and word processing skills. The subject is still in the early stages of development and has yet to be included as a resource for learning in all subjects.
64. Music is well taught and pupils have the opportunity to listen to, compose and make music in line with the recommendations of the National Curriculum. All pupils, especially those in the nursery, thoroughly enjoy the work and sing well, particularly during assemblies.
65. Geography and history are taught in alternate terms, geography featuring during the inspection. Both the teaching and learning are of a very high standard with the pupils gaining considerable confidence in their success at learning and using geographical terms. The locality and videos are excellently used to enhance the pupils' understanding of differences in land use.
66. The school's physical education programme provides a good range of activities including games and swimming. The subject is well taught and the pupils make good progress, learning ball skills, swimming, water confidence and safety techniques, to play according to rules and to collaborate with other team members. Opportunities to play in larger groups with pupils from other schools have been planned. In addition, the pupils learn about themselves, their capabilities and why regular exercise is good. Plenty of time is given to the subject which is much enjoyed by all.
67. Religious education lessons are planned for each class weekly and the quality of teaching and learning is of a high standard. The pupils listen carefully to well told stories from the Bible and follow the local Agreed Syllabus which

includes an awareness of other people's beliefs and aspects of the world's major faiths.

INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

- 40 lessons or parts of lessons;
- two assemblies;
- nine therapy sessions (parts of);
- school documentation including schemes of work, parents brochure and staff handbook;
- annual reviews, IEPs, and a sample of the pupils' records.

Pupils' work

- 40 parents questionnaires;
- discussions with principal, teachers, speech therapists, classroom assistants, occupational therapist, music therapist, physiotherapist.

Appendix 1

Pupil and teacher numbers

Number of full-time pupils	Girls: 11; Boys: 45; Total: 56
Number of part-time pupils	Girls: 5; Boys: 8; Total: 13
Number of pupils on roll	69
Number of pupils with a statement	38

Full-time qualified teachers	6
Part-time qualified teachers	1
Part-time unqualified teachers	3

Other staff	
Full-time speech and language therapists	6
Part-time physiotherapist	1
Part-time occupational therapist	1
Full-time nursery nurse	2
Full and part-time classroom assistants	12

Appendix 2

Pupil numbers according to National Curriculum years

	Boys	Girls	Total
Nursery	8	5	13
Reception	7	1	8
Year 1 (age 5-6)	9	2	11
Year 2	7	2	9
Year 3	6	1	7
Year 4	9	3	13
Year 5	3	1	4
Year 6	3	0	1
Year 7 (age 11-12)	1	1	2
Total	53	16	69

Appendix 3

Pupil funding

Private	33
Ealing LEA	3
Hammersmith & Fulham LEA	1
Hillingdon LEA	1
Hounslow LEA	1
Islington LEA	1
Kingston LEA	4
Lambeth LEA	1
Merton LEA	20
Richmond LEA	3
Sutton LEA	1

Appendix 4

Income

	Financial year 1997 (£)	Financial year 1998 (£)
School fees	415,914	523,889
Other income from facilities/services	40,213	42,946
Total	456,127	566,835

Full-time fees

A basic fee of £3,140 per term.

PARENTAL SURVEY

<i>Number of questionnaires returned:</i>	Agree	Disagree
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<i>40 (58 per cent)</i>		
I am happy with the school my child attends.	39	1
I think this school meets my child's special education needs.	39	0
I believe that the school helps me to understand what my child is taught.	38	2
I think that the school keeps me well informed about my child's progress.	34	5
I am happy with the standards of behaviour at this school.	36	1
I believe that this school helps my child have positive attitudes to school work.	39	1
I believe that this school helps my child to mix well with other children.	36	1
I believe that this school promotes the personal and social development of my child.	38	1
I think that this school prepares my child for the next stage of education and training.	30	3
I feel supported by the school.	37	2
I feel that my child is safe at this school.	40	0
I believe my child likes this school.	38	1

Views expressed by parents

The overwhelming majority of the responses were very positive. Comments include "excellent, the nursery always give me time to discuss my son" in response to question 4, "absolutely delighted" to question 1, "he enjoys all aspects of school life and has a positive attitude to it" to question 6; "for the first time in his school life my son is truly happy" (question 12), "fantastic progress since joining Blossom House" (question 8), as well as several longer endorsements of their satisfaction with the school. However, there were a few parents who were concerned they only received

one report per year, or found it difficult to discuss matters with their child's class teacher.