

INSPECTION REPORT

LANSDOWNE SCHOOL

Lambeth

LEA area: London Borough of Lambeth

Unique reference number: 100654

Headteacher: Ginni Bealing

Reporting inspector: Katharine Halifax
25439

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th October 2000

Inspection number: 223653

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Argyll Close Dalyell Road London
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Sue Stuart
Date of previous inspection:	25 th – 29 th November 1996

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		Modern foreign language (French)	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Physical education	Teaching and learning
			Leadership and management
			Key Issues for action
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			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
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		Geography	
		Religious education	
		Equality of opportunity	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lansdowne School is a mixed day special school for pupils aged eleven to sixteen years. The Local Education Authority has been reviewing its provision for pupils with special educational needs for almost ten years. This has caused uncertainty. The school is very close to the centre of Brixton, an inner city area with a high proportion of social deprivation. The school has changed its designation since the last inspection when it catered for pupils from the age of five to sixteen. The school has grown considerably from a roll of 40 to an approved 100 places with a proposal to increase this further to 130. Of the 104 pupils on roll, 73 are boys. Whilst half the school population is of white European origin, the school caters for a number of ethnic groups including African Caribbean, Chinese and Bangladeshi. Nineteen pupils speak English as an additional language, five of whom are at the very early stages of learning the language. Just over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs mostly for moderate learning difficulties, though an increasing number have complex learning difficulties and associated behavioural difficulties or speech and language difficulties. A few pupils have severe learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection a number of teachers were employed on temporary contracts because of unexpected vacancies and long term staff illness.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. Standards are improving in a number of subjects, particularly by the age of sixteen. Pupils have a good attitude to school and behave well. The school has developed suitable learning opportunities. All pupils have individual learning targets, however their progress is not always assessed accurately, nor always used when planning further work. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their child's progress. The headteacher has been successful in creating an atmosphere where pupils and staff feel valued and work in racial harmony. The school is led and managed in a cost-effective way. Though low when compared to schools of a similar type in Lambeth, costs per pupil are fairly high for a school of this type. Nevertheless, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art, science and French are above those expected of pupils of this ability by the age of sixteen.
- Pupils attain nationally recognised qualifications in most of the subjects they study by the age of 16.
- Pupils are very well behaved; they form very good relationships and are eager to learn.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares pupils well to live in racial harmony in a multi-cultural society and enables them to make very good progress in their personal development.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress because of the quality support they receive.
- All staff at the school work well together to provide a stimulating, secure environment where pupils feel confident to learn.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology and its use in other subjects.
- The consistent use of common assessment systems and individual education plans to enable staff to identify what pupils know, can do and understand and what they need to learn next.
- The monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning.
- The balance of the curriculum, particularly the frequency, length and timing of some lessons.
- Teachers' planning for individual lessons.

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

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Systems are in place to enable the school to continue to improve. The school has undergone a period of turbulence and significant change since the last inspection in November 1996. However, despite the uncertainty regarding the review of special educational needs within the Local Education Authority, the school has taken the initiative to change the age range of the pupils for whom it caters and the complexity of pupils' needs. As a result the number of pupils on roll has doubled. Whilst this has created an atmosphere of optimism and purpose in a school where numbers were falling significantly, it has meant that some developments have not taken place as quickly as they should, in particular the use of assessment and individual education plans as identified by the previous inspection. Nevertheless, by the end of Key Stage 4, standards have improved in a number of subjects and there have been no excluded pupils for the past three years. Standards in information and communication technology remain unsatisfactory. A number of pupils now have the opportunity to study alongside their peers in mainstream schools where appropriate. Suitable training has enabled staff to be more confident when working with pupils with more complex learning difficulties. Though the quality of teaching is not as high as at the time of the last inspection, this is because teachers are coping with additional pupils with greater needs at a time when they are striving hard to take account of national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies and information and communication technology.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 14	by age 16	Key	
speaking and listening	C	B	very good	A
reading	C	B	good	B
writing	C	B	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*	C	C		

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

Pupils achieve a satisfactory standard in most subjects by the age of fourteen. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 have improved and are now good in English, art, geography, physical

education and French since the last inspection. There has been an increase in the number of sixteen-years-olds achieving General Certificate of Education passes (GCSE) and merits and distinctions in other nationally recognised qualifications. This is good achievement in the light of pupils' learning difficulties. Whilst the attainment of younger pupils is satisfactory, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in numeracy and literacy because they are not taught the subjects every day. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory throughout the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve very well in their personal and social education. It is not always easy to judge progress against targets in individual education plans because a number of the targets are too general and therefore not easy to measure. The school has set additional challenging targets for sixteen year-olds in the light of the year 2000 results.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and settle quickly to their work. However some pupils lose concentration when lessons are too long. Most are keen to take part in out of school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There have been no excluded pupils for three years. Pupils attending college are very well behaved.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils have respect for the values and beliefs of others. They respond very well to opportunities for personal development such as becoming members of the School Council and helping younger and less able pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Lessons begin on time. There is no internal truancy.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14	aged 14-16
Lessons seen overall	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 ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent, being satisfactory overall. Good or better teaching was seen in 48 percent of lessons. The quality of teaching is reflected in the quality of learning. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning was seen in 6 percent of lessons. However, these lessons were taught by teachers who also taught good lessons and on occasion very good lessons during the week of the inspection. The very good, excellent and unsatisfactory teaching was spread across both age groups and in a number of subjects. There has been a decline in the standard of teaching since the last inspection when there was no unsatisfactory teaching and a higher percentage of good and very good teaching was seen. Teachers are confident when teaching their specialist subjects and pupils make good progress in these lessons. Whilst the teaching of English is satisfactory and sometimes good, not all teachers are confident when teaching reading and or developing pupils' literacy in other subjects. Consequently, pupils do not make as much progress as they could especially when reading worksheets or using CD-ROM in other subjects. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory; some teachers develop pupils' numeracy skills well in other subjects such as food technology and geography. Teaching in science and personal,

social and health education is good. Teaching for pupils with complex needs and those who have English as an additional language is good. These pupils make good progress because of the good support they receive. Few teachers plan using targets in pupils' individual education plans and not enough opportunities are planned for pupils to use their Key Skills of numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology in other subjects. This reduces the rate at which pupils progress. Teaching in art, history, French and physical education is good. Pupils make good progress in these lessons. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Provision for personal and social education is very good. Pupils study all subjects they should. However, pupils at Key Stage 3 are not taught numeracy and literacy as often as they should be. The timing of some mathematics lessons is at a time when pupils find it hard to concentrate. Many lessons are too long. Pupils benefit from a good number of after school clubs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language receive very good support which enables them to understand their work, improve their vocabulary and thus make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. Provision for pupils' cultural development contributes particularly well to the racial harmony that pervades the school and prepares them well for living in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Staff know the pupils very well and provide a safe, caring environment. However, procedures for assessing pupils progress are not as well developed as they should be and are not always used when planning further work. In addition, targets in pupils' individual education plans are not always clear or in sufficiently small steps to be able to judge progress. Links with parents are good. Useful information enables parents to know what their child is learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is very strong and works particularly well with her deputy. Both have a clear vision for the work of the school. The assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to introduce new systems, but has not fully addressed the issues identified in the previous report.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The governing body supports the school well. It meets all legal requirements in its policies. Governors are clear as to how the school will develop and are clear about the school's strengths.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school monitors the results of national tests well and has set challenging targets for future years. Some subject co-ordinators have not had sufficient opportunity to monitor standards and teaching in their subjects. Whilst management has observed teaching and its impact on learning, they have not identified some of the weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school investigates every possible source of income and provides good quality resources. The school applies the principles of best value well. The school is well staffed, the accommodation is good and overall resources are used well.

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 progress their child makes particularly towards nationally recognised qualifications. • The help and support given by staff to parents and pupils. • The improvement in their child's behaviour and attitude to school. • The wide range of out of school activities. • The improvements to the buildings and grounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work their child is required to do at home. • A number of parents experience problems with the transport provided. • Parents are concerned in a few cases the provision identified in their child's Statement of Special Educational Need is not being provided.

Parents and carers hold the school in high esteem. The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by the parents. In response to their concerns, the amount of work pupils are required to do at home is satisfactory. The school monitors school transport carefully and problems with transport are being discussed with the appropriate department. Staff are working hard to ensure the needs identified in pupils' statements are being addressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils achieve standards at least commensurate with their abilities in all subjects other than information and communication technology. By the age of fourteen, standards in word processing are satisfactory; standards are unsatisfactory in other aspects of the subject. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory by the age of sixteen. Standards in art, geography and food technology are above those expected by the age of fourteen. By the age of sixteen pupils achieve well in English, science, French, and food technology. Standards in art are well above those expected of pupils of this ability by the age of sixteen, particularly in painting and drawing. Overall, pupils make at least satisfactory progress across the school. Almost all pupils have identified numeracy and literacy needs. Whilst pupils at Key Stage 3 make at least satisfactory progress in numeracy and literacy, they would make better progress if these subjects were taught daily. Where lessons last for one and a half hours pupils lose concentration. This reduces their rate of progress.

2. By the age of fourteen, standards in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, music, word processing and French are satisfactory. Pupils of this age achieve well in art, French, geography and physical education. Achievement in personal and social education is very good. By the age of sixteen standards in English, science, physical education and French are good. Achievement in all other subjects other than information and communication technology, personal and social education and art is satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Pupils achieve very well and attain high standards in art and personal and social education.

3. The school has extended its range of nationally recognised qualifications for sixteen-year-olds. Pupils are now examined in art and science for General Certificate of Education (GCSE). The number of pupils attaining the higher grades in art has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils work towards Certificate of Educational Achievement in English, mathematics, history, physical education, French and lifeskills. An increasing number of pupils are achieving the certificates. In the results for the year 2000 there has been an increase in the number of pupils attaining *merit* and *distinction*. For example all pupils who entered the French examination in the Year 2000 were awarded *distinction*.

4. Standards in English are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 3 and good by the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening at Key Stage 3 and good progress at Key Stage 4. On entry to the school many pupils have limited speaking and listening skills and some have difficulty communicating. Progress for younger pupils could be greater if they were encouraged to speak in phrases or sentences rather than single word utterances. Pupils of all abilities speak with increasing confidence and make useful contributions to lessons. A number of pupils have gained sufficient confidence to read contributions in assembly or at the Harvest Festival. Progress in reading is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Overall pupils read with increasing fluency and confidence. However, at both key stages pupils have few strategies to help them read new words and this limits their progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3 and good progress at Key Stage 4 in writing for a range of purposes. Progress in handwriting and spelling is barely satisfactory at both key stages. This is because there are no structured programmes for the teaching of handwriting and spelling.

5. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress across both key stages. Pupils' number skills are more developed than other aspects of mathematics. Pupils become more familiar with the four rules of number as they progress through the school. By the age of sixteen, many pupils handle money, tell the time to five minute intervals and know the names and properties of simple two and three-dimensional shapes.

6. Standards in science are satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good by the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress at both key stages in their knowledge of living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Pupils entered for GCSE make good progress. Most pupils of all ages have a suitable understanding of how to set up an investigation and more able pupils predict the outcome. A good number of pupils are developing an understanding of the need for a test to be fair.

7. Pupils do not do as well as they should in information and communication technology. At Key Stage 3, whilst pupils make satisfactory progress in word processing and when using a commercial package for reading and spelling their keyboard skills are at an early stage of development and their progress in using technology to sense, model and control their environment is unsatisfactory. Though pupils are beginning to use the Internet and CD-ROM for research, often the words are beyond their reading ability. Other than those pupils attending college, pupils at Key Stage 4 are not taught the subject and as a result make unsatisfactory progress overall. There is little evidence of pupils using new technology in other subjects for example to produce graphs or pie charts in mathematics or for design purposes in design and technology or art.

8. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. Pupils make good progress across the school in their understanding of Christianity and their awareness of other major world faiths. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in personal, social and health education. Most are successful in establishing effective relationships with others and in their acquisition of skills to help them in their life after school.

9. Progress for pupils with additional and more complex learning difficulties has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have received suitable training to help meet pupils' needs. Together with good support from general assistants and a range of therapists these pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Their progress is good when they receive individual support.

10. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in extending their vocabulary and in their learning. This is because the specific grant is used effectively to provide the very good support they receive both in class and individually. Teachers ensure pupils understand new vocabulary and a range of high quality resources produced by the co-ordinator enables pupils to understand what they are doing.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development continue to be a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enter enthusiastically into all aspects of school life. Parents report their child is disappointed during the holidays. In lessons, pupils are generally confident and positive about their work, most concentrate well and listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. For example, in a history lesson about Native Americans, pupils were keen to contribute information and opinions and to ask questions.

The calm and purposeful atmosphere contributes well to pupils' learning. Pupils are not afraid to be wrong and recognise each other's learning needs sympathetically.

12. As a result of the School Charter and behaviour management policy, pupils' behaviour both in and out of lessons is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Parents attending the parents' meeting were unanimous that the behaviour of their children had improved during their time at the school. Older pupils attending the local college behaved particularly well. Pupils are polite and responsive to each other, staff and visitors. A particular achievement is that there have been no exclusions, either fixed term or permanent, during the past three years. There are very few incidences of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. Pupils share a collective understanding of how they are to behave and often seek to enforce that amongst themselves. The behaviour of some pupils, often those with identified behavioural problems, sometimes slips towards the end when lessons are overlong or when the general assistant is not present.

13. The quality of relationships within the school has improved and is now very good. Pupils and adults like and respect each other and relations between them are warm and open. The balance between male and female staff and their multi-ethnic background ensures that all children are provided with positive role models. There is a climate of racial harmony within the school in which different religious and cultural backgrounds are celebrated. Relationships between boys and girls and between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds are open and friendly. Pupils often support each other in mixed ability pairs, for example, in reading and food studies and show care and consideration for those with more complex learning difficulties.

14. Pupils show some initiative and take on some responsibilities. For example, they offer to show visitors round the school unasked. Many travel to school using public transport, and some older pupils travel to college independently. School Council members undertake their duties conscientiously and talk enthusiastically about their role and activities. Because more able pupils are not given enough opportunities to work independently they do not sufficiently develop their research skills.

15. Pupils of all abilities understand the impact of their actions on others and respect each other's beliefs and cultural traditions. For example, a class in detention was able to identify the difficulties their behaviour had caused others.

16. Attendance at 87.3 percent is below the national average of 89.4 percent for similar schools. Authorised absence of 7.8 percent and unauthorised absence of 4.9 percent compare with national averages of 8 percent and 2.6 percent respectively. Much of the unauthorised absence is accounted for by three or four pupils and is condoned by parents. Attendance is not as good as at the time of the last inspection much of this is attributable to the school now catering for secondary age pupils. Punctuality in the mornings is usually satisfactory though buses are sometimes late because of the heavy traffic travelling into the City of London.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent, being satisfactory overall at both key stages. There has been a decline in the standard of teaching since the last inspection when there was no unsatisfactory teaching and a higher percentage of good and very good teaching was seen.

18. The decline in the quality of teaching is, at least, in part accounted for by the fact that teachers are now teaching pupils of a different age and level of disability and that they are not

all familiar with the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. In the lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, on one occasion a lack of subject knowledge limited the progress pupils made. On another occasion the management of pupils' behaviour was inappropriate. In the other two lessons, because of the length of the lessons, there was no urgency in the way the lessons were conducted, tasks were inappropriate, reading activities were too difficult and as a result pupils made very little progress in their learning.

19. Staff have acquired a good knowledge of a range of learning difficulties and relate well to pupils enabling them to gain confidence, respect each other and work together in harmony. They have improved their knowledge of pupils with more complex learning difficulties as a result of good staff development. Staff have a good knowledge of working with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most manage pupils' behaviour very well. Potential problems are quickly dealt with thus enabling pupils to carry on with their work. Overall, teachers have a satisfactory and often good knowledge of the specialist subjects they teach. This enables pupils to make good progress in these lessons. All teachers now spend 40 per cent of their time with their own class. This has been effective in enabling pupils to settle quickly, to relate well to one particular teacher and to gain confidence. All classes suitably have a reading lesson at the start of each day and general assistants are used well to hear pupils read. Whilst staff are aware of the literacy strategy and are adopting some parts of it in their practice, few are confident in the teaching of reading. Though they emphasise key vocabulary well in the introductions to lessons, few model the new words in writing or teach pupils the strategies to read new words. Where the teaching is more effective, pupils attention is drawn to certain *rules*, for example *ph* is read as "f". Many subject specialist teachers are not aware of the reading ability of pupils in other classes. As a consequence text on work sheets and research using CD-ROM is sometimes too difficult. Pupils become frustrated by this and lose interest. All staff now give pupils good opportunities to record their work in a number of ways such as tables, written accounts and diaries. This enables pupils to make sound progress in writing.

20. Staff are aware of the need to develop pupils' information and communication technology skills, however, the machines have only recently arrived in school and the skills of many teachers are at an early stage of development. This results in unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Much of the time in the technology suite is spent using a commercial program rather than developing keyboard and computer skills. The program enables pupils to make good progress in letter recognition and spelling. However, staff are not sufficiently confident when using the program. As a result some pupils who are timetabled to use the room for twenty minutes complete their task within five or ten minutes and then sit waiting for the end of the lesson.

21. Teachers have improved their termly and weekly lesson planning since the last inspection. However, individual lesson planning is scant in many cases and of limited use. Whilst some teachers clearly identify the knowledge and skills pupils will acquire in their planned lesson, many teachers only record the topics the lessons will cover. Not all teachers take account of pupils' individual targets in their planning. A characteristic of some lessons is the lack of consistency in the provision of different tasks for pupils of different abilities. Pupils with additional needs make good progress in lessons where tasks are matched specifically to their needs, when they are managed well, and when they are supported effectively by general assistants. When these conditions are not in place, the progress of these pupils is limited because the only difference in activities is in terms of the work pupils

produce and the level of support they receive rather than the tasks they are expected to complete.

22. Staff use resources well and sometimes imaginatively. For example in a geography lesson studying volcanoes and tectonics, pupils were allowed to be *giants* to *build the earth* and pull the plates apart. This enabled them to make very good progress in their understanding. Very good teamwork, planning and joint teaching with speech and language therapists and with support for pupils with English as an additional language enables these pupils to make good progress. General assistants are used well to support learning, particularly for pupils with more complex learning difficulties, for instance to help pupils weigh and measure accurately in food studies. Good use is made of individual assistant's skills for example in art. There are occasions however when support staff are not used as effectively as they could be. For example in some French and physical education lessons there are many occasions where general assistants could be used to record pupils' responses and achievement. Most classes experience difficulties when general assistants take their lunch break half an hour before the end of morning lessons. In some cases, pupils with more complex difficulties are left without support and on other occasions teaching staff are giving their attention to pupils with complex needs thus leaving others in the group without support. This affects the progress of pupils of all abilities.

23. Most lessons begin with a useful recapitulation of previous learning and of homework. This enables teachers to gauge pupils' understanding and refreshes pupils' memories, for example when recalling the *storyline* of Macbeth or Julius Caesar. Introductions and instructions are clear; this enables pupils to know what is expected of them and to improve their listening skills. Teachers prepare a range of activities to maintain pupils' interest and to make good use of staff time. However, the length of many lessons at one and a half hours results in a slow pace and whilst pupils are well behaved many lose concentration and do not produce as much work as they could.

24. Though variable, the quality and use of assessment is unsatisfactory. A number of systems have been introduced though not all are used systematically. Teachers use questions well to ascertain pupils' understanding. Where questioning is more effective teachers use *open questions* that require pupils to reason their answers and speak in phrases. This extends pupils' thinking and enables them to improve their speaking and listening skills. All staff move around the classroom during individual work, discussing pupils' work and how it may be improved, this enables pupils to become more confident and make better progress. There has been insufficient progress in the recording of pupils' attainment and skills and its use when planning further work. Many teachers now include a *plenary session* to their lessons. Where this is used well pupils are asked to consider and discuss what they have learned during the lesson, where the plenary is less effective pupils volunteer what they have done rather than what they have learned.

25. In lessons where teaching is very good or excellent, most of which were taught by one teacher, careful account is taken of targets in pupils' individual education plans when planning the lesson. Rigorous assessment procedures ensure the teacher knows the level of his pupils in each subject and the results of his assessments are taken into account when planning further lessons. In the very good and excellent lessons, very good use is made of the voice to enable pupils to be amazed and wonder at their learning. For example when describing millennium eve the teacher lowered his voice as he described the sky as "*cracked with colour, frighteningly magnificent in its power and beauty.*"

26. Homework is used effectively to prepare pupils for new topics and to support work undertaken in lessons. This makes a useful contribution to pupils' progress.

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

27. The curriculum is broad and relevant to the needs of all pupils, placing good emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills with an appropriate balance between the National Curriculum and acquiring skills for life after school. Very effective links with other agencies such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, teacher for the hearing impaired, social services and the education welfare service contribute to meeting the needs of those pupils with more complex and additional learning difficulties.

28. Religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, including a modern foreign language at Key Stages 3 and 4, but there is no information and communication technology scheme of work for Key Stage 4 pupils. This is identified in the school development plan. Although the school has pupils with a wide range of ability and additional special needs including complex and severe learning difficulties, speech and language disorders and hearing impairment it is able to provide a curriculum which satisfies legal requirements and is followed by pupils of all abilities. The school is committed to ensuring all pupils have equal opportunity to study all subjects. Test results are monitored by gender and race at Key Stage 4, though not at Key Stage 3. A well-planned personal, social and health education programme, including sex education and substance misuse awareness ensures pupils make good progress in these areas. Whilst subject policies have been reviewed since the last inspection many are dated in that they refer to when the school taught all ages and have not been modified in the light of Curriculum 2000. Plans for this are included in the school development plan.

29. Although the curriculum is broad and relevant, it lacks balance. Some lessons are very long particularly for younger pupils, with the result that they lose concentration and do not make as much progress as they could. The construction of the timetable means that pupils are taught French only once a week, as a single forty five minute period in Key Stage 3 and as a single one hour thirty minute session at Key Stage 4. Some pupils find it hard to recall new vocabulary after this period of time and this reduces the progress they make. The balance and quality of the curriculum has not been improved by the school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The strategies are not being applied as effectively as they could be because literacy and numeracy are not being taught consistently on a daily basis to pupils at Key Stage 3. This reduces the effectiveness of the strategies. The phonic programme from the Literacy Strategy has not been introduced and the daily fifteen-minute reading session does not include any word level work to help pupils acquire reading strategies. The implementation of information and communication technology has not been fully effective and there is a need for more emphasis on developing the necessary keyboard skills and the use of new technology in other subjects. The newly introduced independent learning system is still in its early stages and its impact on raising standards in literacy needs to be carefully monitored and evaluated.

30. Opportunities for pupils to gain qualifications in nationally recognised courses have increased since the last inspection and the school has exceeded the governing body's target that 40 percent of pupils would obtain at least one GCSE at grade G or above. For the first time pupils were able to take a GCSE in science in 2000, and this success was due to the school's flexibility in meeting these pupils' needs as much of the work took place voluntarily after school. There are other good examples of this flexible approach. A pupil who was admitted to the school in Key Stage 4 retained a link with her previous school in order to

complete a course. Another pupil was integrated into a local school, with support, which was gradually withdrawn in order to study a dance course and was successful in obtaining a GCSE in the subject. The range of qualifications is currently being increased to include food technology. Other pupils have opportunities to be educated in other schools as appropriate to their needs. For example, one pupil is about to begin attending a local high school one day each week and a second who has severe needs is to take some of his lessons at a local school for pupils with more severe learning difficulties in order to meet his needs more effectively. The school reciprocates these arrangements, as plans are in hand for two pupils with severe learning difficulties to work towards nationally recognised qualifications at Lansdowne.

31. The school's strong community links are also evident in its relationship with the local college. Year 11 pupils visit the college weekly to follow modules in science and information and communication technology. In addition to contributing to progress in these subjects, the arrangement provides an effective link that enables pupils to make good progress in their social development. Pupils are effectively prepared for life after school through the highly effective work related curriculum and careers education programme. The successful programme enables pupils to have a good understanding of the choices available to them on leaving school. Pupils' personal development is furthered in Years 10 and 11 through two weeks of work experience each year.

32. The school provides a wide range of activities that enrich the curriculum. The provision for extra curricular activities is good and the after school clubs are over subscribed. Clubs such as drama, food technology, karate and information technology contribute well to pupils' understanding and progress in these subjects. A number of out-of-school visits extend pupils' experience outside school. Visits to places such as the Imperial War Museum, the Tate Modern Gallery and the Houses of Parliament enhance the curriculum. The most ambitious project took place in September when governors raised enough money to take the whole school to Disneyland, Paris. This provided a wonderful experience for pupils to develop their personal and social skills and to practise their French. Residential experiences such as an outdoor centre in North Wales enrich the physical education curriculum and enable pupils to make good progress in outdoor and adventurous activities.

33. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social cultural development of pupils continues to be an outstanding feature of the school. Staff work hard to treat pupils as individuals whatever their colour, ethnic origin or beliefs. Pupils greatly appreciate the variety of flowers and plants on display in the building which soften the bleak urban environment and help pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils respond sensitively and respectfully to assemblies which further promote their spiritual development. During the Harvest celebrations, pupils were able to empathise with those who had little to eat and no homes to go to, especially when they realised that some of these people would benefit from their harvest gifts. Assemblies give pupils very good opportunities to take part in hymns and prayers to a deity, or to listen respectfully as others participate. The school celebrates a range of festivals from a variety of world religions. All receive equal respect from both staff and pupils. Lessons in religious education allow pupils to reflect on simple themes such as love and justice. Pupils experience and increasingly appreciate the beauty of music, poetry and traditional prayers. In one lesson, pupils listened intently to a quotation from the New Testament about Jesus' love for mankind and through this were enabled to achieve a good measure of understanding of divine love. In geography lessons, pupils showed awe and wonder when they consider great force that can be generated by water and the violence and destructive capacity of volcanic eruption.

34. The school provides a strong moral framework for all its pupils. Staff provide very good models of how to conduct themselves and behave appropriately. Moral values are well

promoted by the school's charter, which is strongly upheld by all staff and pupils. The charter expects pupils to be honest and respect others. Pupils have the right not to be bullied and to be allowed to learn undisturbed. The reasons for this are clearly explained to pupils so are in no doubt as to what is morally right and what is morally wrong. Moral issues are frequently addressed in other subjects such as care of the environment in geography and taking personal responsibility in personal and social education lessons. Pupils understand the morality of giving to charity and are pleased to do so. They delight in taking part in *red nose day*. All treat their school with care and know why they should do so.

35. The school charter also serves to shape acceptable and responsible behaviour. This is promoted and consolidated throughout every school day. Pupils increasingly see how their behaviour affects others and are prepared to take responsibility for their actions. The *classroom covenant* enables pupils to know that good behaviour benefits all of them. In consequence, behaviour in the school is good. The school has responded well to the MacPherson Report to counter sexism and racism with vigour. There have been no racist incidents for some time. The infrequent sexist incidents are, however, carefully noted and pupils counselled appropriately.

36. Pupils have very good opportunities for personal development for example all classes send an elected representative to the School Council. Pupils are able to make suggestions for improvements at these meetings. Already, school uniform has been introduced at the instigation of the pupils. A rough patch of playground has been levelled, at their suggestion. As a result of decisions in the School Council, there are now benches for pupils to sit on in the garden, and the school now plays pupils from similar schools at football. The school provides good opportunities for residential experiences which encourage pupils to live harmoniously with others. A striking feature of pupils' social behaviour is their willingness to help others whenever they have the opportunity.

37. Opportunities for pupils' cultural development are outstanding. Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop an understanding of English culture through studying the works of Shakespeare and authors such as C. S. Lewis and Dickens. As part of their music lessons they appreciate a range of English and classical music. In art, they study the work of artists such as Burne-Jones and Bridget Riley. The school makes best use of the rich cultural resources of the capital city, which are on their doorstep. The rich multicultural ethos mentioned in the last report is reflected in the provision the school makes for pupils to celebrate all cultures. During the inspection week, the school staged an arresting exhibition to celebrate *black history month*. As part of their history lessons, pupils were able to appreciate African masks and Benin bronzes. Maps, documents and books on black figures from historic monarchs of Africa to Ignatius Sancho and Alice Walker enabled pupils to extend their knowledge of these and also of American civil rights figures. The visit by a professional drummer at an assembly to celebrate black achievement delighted pupils as they listened intently to the music. Many joining in with the African rhythms which he played on a range of instruments from countries as far apart as Senegal and Venezuela. School lunches often include Caribbean specialities such as *Jerk chicken, rice n' peas*. Pupils celebrate their cultural differences for example, two pupils one from Portugal and one from the Lebanon wrote a touching poem reflecting their many cultural differences, yet concluded that they were both alike in a school where all cultures are accepted and celebrated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The very good provision for the health and safety of the pupils continues to be a strong feature of the school. Parents report, and pupils agree that they feel safe, secure and valued within the school. Teachers and general assistants are alert and responsive to pupils' diverse needs and support them without patronising them. The work of other agencies, including therapists, educational psychologist, medical services and language support, is integrated effectively into pupils' care plans, which are discussed with parents. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress in these areas. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because of the quality support they receive.

39. The school provides a safe working environment for pupils and staff and the quality of supervision in the playground is good. Regular checks are carried out to make sure there are no health and safety issues. Safe working practices are promoted in science, food studies and design and technology, although there are occasions when more attention should be paid to health and safety in physical education. For example, pupils do not remove their jewellery or tie back long hair. Staff are well trained to respond to the medical conditions of pupils and suitable accident records are maintained.

40. The school has well established child protection procedures and training for new and longer serving staff is given a high priority. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer and class teachers attend case conferences where possible. The personal, health and social education curriculum suitably includes modules to help pupils care for themselves, some of which are organised with the local police.

41. The school's behaviour policy, consistently implemented by staff and understood by pupils, promotes high standards of behaviour. It also creates an environment where oppressive behaviour is not tolerated. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They regularly reward good behaviour and address any shortcomings positively through discussion and negotiation. Appropriate records are maintained and monitored and governors are aware of their responsibilities to ensure racial harmony in the light of the MacPherson report. The school has satisfactory arrangements for monitoring attendance and absences are followed up. However, the rapid expansion of the school, the wide area within which children live and the lack of an education social worker for the past year have hampered the school's efforts to reduce the amounts of unauthorised absence. Nevertheless, where possible general assistants contact each pupil's home on the first day of absence.

42. The school has a comprehensive policy for special educational needs, which is aimed at meeting the needs of those pupils with additional and more complex difficulties. Staff know individual pupils very well and the school records and maintains their medical and other needs very effectively. However, the school has not responded satisfactorily to the key issue identified during the last inspection that they should develop detailed target setting for all pupils in all curriculum areas. Such detailed target setting in all subjects does not occur.

43. When the school receives Statements of Special Educational Need it does not always translate the general needs shown in the statement into specific and detailed educational targets, nor does it produce targets that address the full range of identified needs. As a result, pupils' individual education plans are not sufficiently detailed to enable staff to meet pupils' priority needs. Some plans show clear and precise targets, but others contain targets that are not easily measurable for example, *writing – to improve confidence and ability*. It is difficult to measure progress accurately against such targets. Similarly, when targets are reviewed at six monthly intervals the review comments are equally lacking in detail, so that the review of the target identified above reads *she is much better and has made great progress*. The section of the plan devoted to the monitoring time scale highlights inconsistent

practice. Some staff understand this to mean how frequently progress towards the target should be monitored, and includes entries such as daily, while others interpret it as a date for measuring the pupil's success in meeting the target. In addition, the individual education plans are inconsistently presented. They do not all follow the same format and whilst some are word processed, others are hand written and some are very untidy as comments have been typed and then glued scappily on to paper.

44. Monitoring of pupils' academic performance was a key issue at the last inspection and whilst there have been improvements, the use of assessment procedures remains unsatisfactory because they are inconsistently applied. Assessment, recording and reporting remain areas that require significant additional work by the school. Since September 1999 the attainment of new pupils has been tested in reading, spelling and number on entry to the school and is currently being re-tested. However, systems are not yet in place to ensure that the results of this baseline assessment are translated into an individual pupil profile linking directly with individual pupil targets, the individual education plans, the Annual Reviews or the needs identified in their Statement of Special Educational Need. Although class teachers are informed of the results of baseline assessment there is no routine monitoring of progress within the classroom in many subjects. There are no consistent systems in place to ensure that when achievement is recorded it is used as a basis for evaluating pupils' learning or when planning further lessons.

45. A system of recording progress using National Curriculum assessment has been established. Though this is being not used consistently in all subjects. Portfolios of examples of individual pupil's work are being maintained in subjects such as English. This is helpful in assisting staff to monitor pupils' progress. However, not all examples indicate what pupils know and can do. Whilst some teachers complete the assessment sheets for this system conscientiously others leave parts of the assessment sheet incomplete thus reducing the effectiveness of the system. This work has not been incorporated into the overall assessment systems. As the pupil population is changing the school is actively working on extending their National Curriculum assessment to include a system for analysis of the progress of pupils with complex learning difficulties. In order to streamline assessment procedures an individual *tracking system* is currently being introduced. Pupils of all ages are building an individual photographic record of their time in school. Whilst this is useful for tracking progress, again its use is inconsistent by individual teachers and across subjects. Pupils in their final year of school make good progress in improving their word processing skills as they build their comprehensive Record of Achievement.

46. The school has appointed an assessment co-ordinator but there is a lack of clarity about the extent of her role and insufficient appreciation within the school that assessment, recording and reporting is a shared responsibility for each subject co-ordinator and each class teacher. There needs to be a common understanding that assessment is not restricted to an annual process but must form part of an active system that identifies pupils' educational needs; informs teachers' planning, and allows progress to be evaluated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school continues to have an effective partnership with parents. This promotes pupils' learning and personal development well. There was a high degree of satisfaction amongst parents responding to the questionnaire and attending the parents' meeting. Parents are particularly pleased with their child's progress, the help and support given by staff, improvements in their child's behaviour and attitude to school and the range of out of school activities. The inspectors agree with parents' views.

48. Some parents were concerned about the amount of homework, several experienced problems with transport to school and a few were concerned that the provision in their child's Statement of Special Educational Need was not met. The inspection team judges that pupils have appropriate amounts of homework and that school transport is monitored carefully. The school is aware that provision in Statements of Special Educational Need is not met in a small number of cases and is seeking to establish full provision.

49. The school values and actively encourages the involvement of parents in their child's education. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. There are good induction arrangements for pupils and parents new to the school, including an informative prospectus. The *home/school agreement* and Year 10 *Academic Agreement* have proved effective in securing parental support, including support for homework. Translation and interpreting services are used regularly to communicate with parents for whom English is an additional language. Parents are also provided with helpful informal support on issues including benefits and social security provision.

50. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory. Parents appreciate the termly curriculum information and the annual calendar of events. The school brochure and Governor's Annual report have been made interesting for parents but the report to parents has some minor omissions. The school endeavours to keep parents informed of educational initiatives but a recent curriculum evening to discuss the National Literacy Strategy was poorly attended. The school is considering providing transport for future meetings. Reports to parents are satisfactory. The best reports include comments about how pupils have achieved against personal targets and attainment levels within the curriculum; others include more information about pupils' attitudes than their attainment.

51. Parents are invited to attend Annual Review meetings and to discuss their child's needs and progress on three other occasions during the year. Almost one half of parents and carers attend review and progress meetings. Parents are also welcomed informally outside these times.

52. The school's *open door* policy and welcoming atmosphere is successful in involving parents in school life. The reading record book is available, but not widely used, for communication between home and school. Appropriate *home to school* records are used for some pupils. Teachers telephone parents regularly to celebrate achievements as well as to discuss problems or offer reminders. Parents are welcomed to special events including performances of plays, celebration mornings and sports events. The school has consulted parents recently on issues including the content of the *home/school* agreement and plans to set up the Friends of Lansdowne School Association.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher is extremely hardworking and enthusiastic and has successfully led the school through a very turbulent period. She has maintained staff morale through a period of uncertainty and has doubled the roll of a school which was threatened with closure. The headteacher was instrumental in the change of age group and in extending the range of learning difficulties for which the school caters. Under her leadership behaviour and standards have improved. The headteacher is very successful in marketing the school. She is well supported by her deputy; they work well together and complement the other's skills. Together with the governors and staff they have a clear vision as to how the school will develop. Under the very strong leadership of the headteacher all have worked well together to successfully create a warm, caring environment where pupils of many races are educated in harmony.

54. Governors are supportive of the school, attending celebrations and taking time to meet with the pupils. There has been an improvement in committee work since the last inspection. Governors use their skills well for the benefit of pupils for example, in the planning of the work-related curriculum and in the organisation of a *business day* for older pupils. A number of governors responded eagerly to the opportunity to observe in classrooms. Governors know the school well and are confident when discussing its strengths of school. At the suggestion of one governor, many governors have worked tirelessly in their bid to raise sufficient funds to take the whole school to Paris to celebrate the new millennium and to give pupils the opportunity to practise their French.

55. Subject co-ordinators are working hard to develop their subjects. All are now managing their own budgets and all have produced a development plan aimed at raising standards. However, few co-ordinators have the opportunity to observe their subject being taught to assess how teaching and learning might be improved. Though in post for over a year, the role of the assessment co-ordinator is not fully developed. Senior managers sample pupils' work, observe in classrooms and monitor teachers' planning and pupils' individual education plans. Whilst monitoring has enabled improvement in some areas it has not highlighted the weaknesses in teaching nor addressed the inconsistencies and weaknesses in assessment and planning.

56. All legally required policies in place. Suitable attention has been paid to developing policies such as those for behaviour management and teaching and learning but some curriculum policies and schemes of work are dated. Most are specific to the all age school of two years ago. Policies and schemes of work do not take account of Curriculum 2000 though this has been identified for development over the next three years. The school brochure and the Governors Annual Report to parents have been made attractive and give parents useful information as to what is happening in the school. Whilst the brochure meets legal requirements there are minor omissions with regard to access and provision for disabled pupils and information regarding professional development of staff is scant.

57. Development planning has improved since the last inspection. The school development plan reflects Lambeth Education Development Plan and clearly identifies improvements in the time the headteacher and deputy have been in post. Subject co-ordinators make appropriate contributions to the overall plan. Whilst the plan is detailed and well costed, it is not prioritised and a number of staff are overwhelmed by the document. The governors have set challenging targets for school improvement which take account of the individual abilities of each year group. Additional targets have been set in a number of areas including additional educational needs and for pupils in Year 8. The targets for 2000 have been surpassed and management is now considering future targets in the light of national test results for fourteen year olds.

58. Equality of opportunity is central to the school's work and staff strive to ensure pupils of all abilities, race and by gender have equal access to all subjects and activities. Arrangements for monitoring equality of opportunity in the school are good. Though there is little formal monitoring by ethnic group or gender in Years 7 and in 8, teachers and support staff are fully aware of the need to be vigilant. Pupils' performance in the national tests is carefully and formally monitored by gender in Year 9. The monitoring of the attainment of those who speak English as an additional language also receives particular emphasis at this time. Pupils' participation in work experience is monitored by gender and ethnic origin. There is rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance in national examinations at the end of Year 11.

59. Staffing levels and expertise are satisfactory. With the exception of art, French and music, which are currently taught by supply staff, there are sufficient qualified teachers to provide a balanced curriculum and meet the needs of pupils. Staff understand and work hard within their specialist subjects, but the school would benefit from a more developed system of sharing expertise where there is a curriculum overlap. The school development plan contains a structured long-term programme of in-service training. This is sensibly targeted to meet the changing needs of pupils who attend the school.

60. The team of keen and enthusiastic general assistants supports teachers very well. The experience and knowledge of the general assistants is invaluable in supporting the teaching because adults work very closely as a team and the highly collaborative approach means that pupils are able to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. School managers and teaching staff value the work of general assistants. This is evidenced in the setting of targets for individual general assistants and the amount of training made available to them. General assistants enjoy their work, and are dedicated to pupils in the school; one assistant encouraging pupils to have the self-confidence to do a French examination entered it herself. Assistants provide continuity as they accompany pupils to their various specialist teachers thus improving pupils' confidence.

61. Good routines are established for the induction of new teachers. A detailed staff handbook is made available to all staff and new teachers each have a mentor who they meet on a regular basis. Newly appointed teachers benefit from a light teaching commitment initially when they have the opportunity to observe their more experienced colleagues teaching. Senior managers are committed to staff development. All staff take part in a professional interview which is an improvement since the last inspection. The recently introduced *threshold procedures* have given mentors the opportunity to give teachers positive support when discussing their good practice and has been useful in encouraging teachers to consider their work carefully and build up personal profiles of their own expertise.

62. Accommodation is good overall. The dedicated caretaker and his team keep the building clean to a very high standard. Pupils take great care of their school, there is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti and pupils discuss the numerous displays of their work with pride. Great efforts are made to enhance the external appearance with plants and the building is very well maintained. Corridors and classroom walls are used very well to display pupils' work and provide a stimulating environment. The hall is used well for physical education but its height limits the physical activities available to pupils of this age. There are specialist facilities for science, design technology, food technology, art and information technology. Whilst most are suited to their use, the art room is cramped with little natural light and is used a thoroughfare. Recent building and refurbishment is incomplete but very soon will be available for use and will greatly enhance the existing accommodation. Managers acknowledge that though work has been done to improve the library facilities, further re-organisation and purchases will be necessary to improve the existing library provision to enable pupils to develop their research skills.

63. The provision of resources across the school is generally good. Purchases are well linked to the priorities in the school development plan. Design and technology and science are particularly well resourced. Resources are of good quality and easily accessible. Resources made by the co-ordinator especially for pupils for whom English is an additional language are of outstanding quality. The school is fortunate in having an information technology technician who is providing helpful support as the new information technology suite is established.

64. Financial planning is good and the school has suitable internal procedures that ensure effective financial controls and the security of computerised records. The school management team, administrative officer and governors' finance committee communicate very well in producing budgets linked to the school development plan. Although some additional funding was received during the year as the roll increased, careful initial planning and monitoring meant that the school was able to meet its management objective of building up a surplus of money to carry forward. As a result, at the end of the last financial year approximately £70,000 was available to the school to spend on improving the quality of learning resources and the learning environment. The school was able to pay for new buildings, including a specialist science laboratory, to improve the number of computers for classroom use, and to support the implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. This is a good illustration of the school's ability to plan expenditure effectively to support educational developments and to make money available for identified priorities. The school has a high level of planning in the school development plan and has targeted expenditure accordingly. This is beginning to be successful in the raising of standards in some subjects. The range of grants received by the school for specific purposes is used well. For example, the effective use of the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Grant means that pupils in the school who have English as an additional language achieve well.

65. The principles of best value are applied well. The school obtains a number of quotations and tenders before committing spending and there are clear guidelines about good value when staff order from delegated budgets. The school compares its results in national tests with those of similar schools in the local authority. Parents are regularly consulted, for example about the change of age group, the establishment of a *Friends Association* and the teaching of numeracy and literacy. The school is improving its use of new technologies to become more efficient but their use is not yet embedded in its administrative procedures. Routine tasks such as individual education plans are not yet in electronic format, though the school has recently installed a new computerised financial package which is beginning to assist in budget control.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to sustain and develop the strengths of the school, the headteacher, governing body and staff should:

- (1) Improve standards in information and communication technology by:
 - providing the planned staff training in information and communication technology as a matter of urgency
 - provide opportunities for pupils of all ages to be taught computer specific skills
 - ensuring all aspects of the subject are given equal merit
 - planning opportunities for pupils to use information technology in other subjects;(Paragraphs: 1, 7, 20, 28, 79, 103, 104, 107, 108)
- (2) continue to develop common systems which record pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and which are taken into account when planning further work;
(Paragraphs: 24, 43, 44, 45, 46, 73, 79, 84, 94, 102)
- (3) further develop the monitoring of classroom practice by senior managers to include subject co-ordinators;
(Paragraphs: 55, 73, 80,120)
- (4) ensure all pupils receive a relevant, balanced curriculum by:
 - ensuring all pupils are taught literacy and numeracy daily
 - reviewing the length of lessons
 - reviewing the timing of some lessons, particularly mathematics(Paragraphs: 1, 23, 29, 73, 79, 80)
- (5) Improve individual lesson planning by
 - identifying opportunities for pupils to develop their Key Skills of numeracy, literacy and information technology in other subjects
 - clearly identifying the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to acquire in each lesson
 - clarifying the activities for pupils of different abilities
 - taking account of targets in pupils' individual education plans.(Paragraphs: 21, 42, 43, 72, 79, 87)

In addition to the above issues, the following minor weaknesses should be taken into account in the governor's action plan

- The teaching of reading (Paragraphs: 19, 69)
- The timing of general assistants' breaks (Paragraph: 22)
- Meeting legal requirements in the Governor's Annual report to Parents (Paragraphs: 50, 56.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	16	29	45	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	104
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	57

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	7.84	School data	4.86

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	7	18

Results of national tests

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
English	No pupils entered for tests	0	0	0
Mathematics	0	0	5	0
Science	0	1	7	1

Results of teacher assessment

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
English	0	16	0	0
Mathematics	0	12	4	0
Science	0	10	6	0

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	2000	10	3	13

General Certificate of Education results

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	Grade F	Grade G
Art	1	1	2	7	1	2	0
Science	0	0	0	0	0	4	2

Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network

18 pupils gained the Bronze level Award

Certificate of Educational Achievement

	Number of candidates	Distinction	Merit	Pass
English	14	1	9	4
Mathematics	12	0	4	8
Science	16	5	8	3
History	14	0	6	8
French	14	14	0	0
Physical education	12	6	5	1
Art	1	0	1	0
Lifeskills	12	3	5	4

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	13
Black – other	17
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	48
Any other minority ethnic group	10

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.7
Average class size	11.4

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	450

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	958 202
Total expenditure	887 851
Expenditure per pupil	8 456
Balance brought forward from previous year	41 665
Balance carried forward to next year	*112 016

** Unusually high balances are currently being used to pay for building of new classrooms.*

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	103
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	21	0	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	48	38	0	0	14
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	46	21	8	4
The teaching is good.	54	33	4	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	39	9	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	29	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	25	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	38	8	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	71	29	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	30	9	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	33	4	0	21

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

ENGLISH

67. In relation to their capabilities, by the age of fourteen pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory in speaking and listening, in reading and in their written work. By the age of sixteen, achievement is good in speaking and listening, in reading and written work; this shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In their final two years at school, pupils work towards nationally recognised qualifications. In summer 2000, the majority of pupils achieved *merit* grade with one pupil achieving a *distinction*. This success at final examination shows an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

68. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening as they move through the school. Though most pupils entering school speak and listen well, many pupils enter school with limited language and a number speak using single words. Nevertheless pupils, make good progress and a good number are sufficiently confident to take part in school assemblies and special occasions such as the Harvest celebration. Many pupils of all ages are eager to engage visitors in conversation. All pupils listen to each other. They wait patiently for their turn to speak and respond appropriately to questions in group discussions, for example when discussing superstitions and omens associated with dreams in Julius Caesar. Pupils who have specific language problems make good progress through the support of speech and language therapists who work co-operatively with teachers in the classroom assisting pupils with more complex learning difficulties, enabling them to be included in all activities. For example, pupils were able to join in the *quiz* at the end of the lesson about Macbeth and demonstrated that they had understood the story and had learned new vocabulary.

69. Progress in reading is satisfactory in Years 7, 8 and 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. All pupils enjoy their daily reading practice, they explain the story they are reading and some predict how it will end. Many pupils use initial letters as the main means to read unknown words, some use phonic skills but, overall, pupils have few strategies to help them read new words because the school has not agreed on a consistent phonic strategy and not all teachers are confident in teaching reading. Recently the school has introduced computer-assisted learning to improve reading skills but, at present, this is only available to pupils in Years 7 and 8. There is a wide range of high interest reading materials and pupils are actively encouraged to take their reading books home regularly. During the daily reading time a reading record is completed but this is not used constructively to inform teachers' planning nor is it used as a record of pupils' progress towards their individual targets. Pupils who have English as an additional language are able to make good progress in reading because of the good support they receive and the imaginative resources available for them such as *drama boxes* and *mini-stages* to help in their understanding of new texts. Most pupils try hard to improve their reading in other subjects for example when reading work sheets or undertaking research. Whilst this contributes to their overall progress, on occasions pupils become frustrated and despondent because they are faced with text which is too difficult for them to read containing words they don't understand.

70. Progress in writing is satisfactory in Years 7, 8 and 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. In all years pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes. Younger pupils produce some good work writing newspaper captions and short sentences in speech bubbles to animate the pictures. Older pupils on courses produce good work based on the work of World War 1 poets as they write diaries of life in the trenches and touching letters home to relatives. Work on the World War 1 poets was enhanced by a visit made to the Imperial War Museum that clearly motivated pupils and fired their imagination. As at the time of the last inspection there is no handwriting policy and the handwriting of many teachers does not

present a good model for pupils. As a result, pupils write in a print script using a mix of lower case and capital letters with only a few pupils joining their letters. There is no consistent spelling policy and many pupils have not embarked on a structured spelling programme, this reduces their progress in writing. Awareness of punctuation remains limited to full stops and capital letters although some older pupils are beginning to use paragraphs. Some pupils have individual writing targets but the common marking policy is not used to demonstrate pupil progress towards their targets but rather as general motivation and encouragement for effort.

71. When given the opportunity, pupils use their literacy skills well in other lessons. For example, pupils make good progress in using their literacy skills in geography because well chosen text-books and informative worksheets are carefully matched to pupils' abilities.

72. Overall, the quality of teaching in English is satisfactory throughout the school. This is reflected in pupils' learning. All teachers have been trained in the National Literacy Strategy but only three classes were observed putting this into practice. Where the principles of the National Literacy Hour are adopted lessons are well paced with a range of activities to motivate pupils, maintain their concentration, enabling them to produce a good range and quantity of work. For example, some good work was achieved when pupils used *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as their *shared text* and wrote stories imagining themselves in Narnia or as one of the characters. In lessons where the strategy is not being implemented, pupils engage in routine copying producing, sometimes, as little as two written words in the lesson. Some year groups have more than one class of pupils of the same age. Although they are using the same books and materials the progress made by pupils is inconsistent. This is because pupils of all abilities are often given the same work, though some receive more support and are not expected to complete as much work. Where teaching is more successful pupils of differing abilities are set different tasks that challenge their ability enabling pupils to make better progress. In Years 10 and 11 teachers show good knowledge and understanding of the course requirements and their planning and use of time and resources is good this enables their pupils to make better progress in reading and writing. Work is more focused, pupils have clear goals and have acquired the skill of drafting their work as a matter of routine. Pupils' behaviour is managed well throughout the school. All classrooms have a calm atmosphere that helps concentration and gives pupils the confidence to strive harder.

73. Overall the co-ordination of English is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in the improved results in national qualifications for sixteen-year-olds. He is in the process of incorporating pre-National Curriculum work for pupils with more complex learning difficulties. Whilst the co-ordinator is working hard to introduce the Literacy Strategy there is little evidence that monitoring has ensured all the elements are being taught or that the strategy is sufficiently linked to the promotion of progress in reading and writing. Because not all classes in Key Stage 3 are taught literacy daily the effectiveness of the strategy is reduced. The use of on-going assessment to ascertain pupils' knowledge and understanding and to plan further work is not consistent across the school. All pupils are accumulating an individual portfolio of work samples aimed to show progress during their time in school. Whilst some of the work is dated and annotated some is not, neither is all work referenced to National Curriculum levels. The *where next* section does not aid progress. For example, in many cases this is not completed for some pupils, for others the target is *next unit* when clearly the next stage would be the teaching of specific skills such as the use of paragraphs. Consequently though the system is in place it is not easy to track progress nor to set challenging targets. The school recognises that the library is an area for development. Whilst not consistent across the school, a good number of pupils make satisfactory progress using computers to word process and draft their work. Good use is made of visits, for example to the theatre. Theatre visits and the teaching of literature make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

74. Since the last inspection the school has made progress in its provision for mathematics through the recent focus on numeracy training and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy which is beginning to influence the structure of lessons. There is an increasing emphasis on encouraging pupils to apply their number skills in other subjects. Attainment is satisfactory at both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress when they are supported by the *additional language* co-ordinator.

75. At Key Stage 3 younger pupils add and subtract numbers to ten, with more able pupils subtracting from twenty. Pupils are familiar with the relevant vocabulary of *minus*, *less than* and *subtract*. Older pupils in the key stage consolidate their knowledge of mathematical symbols and become more adept in counting forwards and backwards in twos, fours and sixes. Pupils recognise and name cubes, prisms and cuboids and more able pupils identify these shapes in objects around the classroom. Pupils have an understanding of the difference between two and three-dimensional shapes and for example know that a square has four edges and corners and that a cuboid has six faces. More able pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 use money in small cash transactions and work with *factors* and *products* recalling their two, three and four times tables to help them. Other pupils know the time to quarter-hours, and know number bonds to ten. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils understand the twenty four-hour clock, and read and compile simple tally charts and block graphs. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties are ordering numbers to five.

76. At Key Stage 4 younger pupils work on shape. They use cubes to make models and work out the numbers of faces, edges and corners on their models. They recognise a variety of two-dimensional shapes using the correct names to identify them, and more able pupils know the difference between regular and irregular shapes. By the end of the key stage pupils have a satisfactory understanding of weight. They use their knowledge of their own weight to help estimate the weight of another person. Most use a balance to decide if objects are more than or less than a kilo, and when they use scales they record the weights of objects in table form. By the end of Key Stage 4 most pupils tell the time to five minute intervals and measure accurately using centimetres. A lack of work aimed specifically at more able pupils means these pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Over the past four years the number of pupils gaining nationally recognised qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4 has increased steadily as has the number of pupils achieving *merits*.

77. When given the opportunity, pupils use their mathematical skills well in other lessons for example, when weighing and measuring accurately in food technology and when calculating how many minutes to the end of an English lesson. Also in food technology, as part of their work in setting up a café, Year 11 pupils use their mathematical skills in surveying likes and dislikes of particular meals.

78. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall though some unsatisfactory teaching was seen at Key Stage 4. This is a decline since the last inspection when teaching was consistently good. Some good and very good teaching was observed at the end of Key Stage 3. The quality of teaching is reflected in the quality of learning. Pupils at both key stages enjoy the subject and in all lessons the relationships between teachers, assistants and pupils are good. Pupils benefit from the strong support they receive from the assistants who are well prepared for the lessons and work patiently as they reinforce the work of the class teachers. When teaching is good or better the pupils are challenged by the activities which are carefully planned to meet their individual needs. In these lessons teachers know exactly what their pupils are able to achieve and focus their teaching appropriately. When the work is well matched to pupils' needs and the pace is brisk, pupils enjoy themselves and work hard; they persevere with their activities and make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. Teachers throughout the school are introducing more mental and oral work into their lessons and where this is done well, pupils benefit from the lively start to the lesson and their self esteem is raised as they answer questions successfully. Good humour and encouragement are features of the teaching in many lessons. These are used to good effect when pupils find the work difficult or they become restless in the longer lessons.

79. Pupils are well behaved and work well though in longer lessons some lose concentration. On the occasions when pupils lack focus it is because the lessons are not sufficiently structured to meet their needs and the teaching lacks sustained pace and challenge. Teachers' weekly planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. However individual lesson plans are generally brief and learning objectives are frequently too general. Assessment strategies are not used effectively to identify specific targets for individual pupils and to support pupil's individual plans. In the better lessons the work is carefully matched by activity to meet the individual needs of pupils, and this is reflected in the teachers' planning. Overall good use is made of the good resources available, including computer software, and this contributes to the interest and motivation of the pupils. At the end of Key Stage 3 information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in mathematics though this is not so in all classes. Homework is given consistently and in line with the *Homework Policy* and contributes to pupils' progress.

80. The co-ordinator is a *lead teacher* for mathematics and has a clear perception of the future direction of the subject. She advises colleagues about their work but does not have sufficient opportunity to observe others teaching thus the monitoring of mathematics is unsatisfactory and teachers are unable to benefit from her expertise. The proportion of time available for mathematics is satisfactory, however the allocation of double lessons lasting an hour and a half means on two days each week, two classes do not have any mathematics lessons. The governors have set whole suitable school numeracy targets. In line with school development plan, the existing policy and scheme of work for mathematics are being reviewed this term. However the links between assessment, pupils' personal targets and teachers' planning are inconsistent and are areas for further development.

SCIENCE

81. Overall, pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory by the age of fourteen. Pupils taking GCSE make good progress. In lessons where teaching is of high quality pupils are able to make good, and sometimes very good, progress. Pupils achieve less well when teaching has unsatisfactory features, such as an inefficient use of time or activities that are not appropriate to the individual needs of pupils. Overall, suitable activities that meet the needs of a range of pupils, the good contribution made by general assistants and very good specialist support for pupils with English as an additional language all contribute to pupils of all abilities making satisfactory progress throughout the school.

82. By the age of fourteen, pupils use simple laboratory apparatus and have developed skills such as reading a thermometer and recording the temperature. Some pupils are beginning to understand the requirements of a *fair test* and are able to predict and draw simple hypotheses and to communicate their ideas using some scientific vocabulary. As pupils move through Key Stage 3 they extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. As well as examining the properties of different materials, pupils study some aspects of living things and consider a range of physical processes. They have useful opportunities to develop research skills. During Key Stage 4 increasing emphasis is placed on investigations as pupils complete Certificate of Educational Achievement modules. Pupils conduct and record a range of investigations such as the effect of exercise on heartbeat, the factors required for rusting to take place, and the rate of fall of a paper helicopter as its mass increases. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have extended significantly their knowledge and understanding of the living and non-living world. They sort and classify materials into metals and non-metals, and living organisms by vertebrate and invertebrate. Pupils know that substances can exist in different states as solids, liquids and gasses and use specialist vocabulary such as *expand* and *contract* confidently. Most take readings from apparatus such as a voltmeter, measuring cylinder and stop clock and record the information in the form of block graphs and pie charts.

83. Teaching in Key Stage 3 ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. This enables pupils to begin to develop ideas about scientific enquiry. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is satisfactory and is characterised by appropriately prepared and presented investigations, with clear learning objectives. This enables pupils to develop an increasing depth of understanding of scientific principles so that they make satisfactory progress during the key stage. When teaching is good or very good pupils are presented with a range of learning opportunities that encourage the development of the skills required in order to carry out investigations. A group of Year 7 pupils were able to make very good progress in increasing their knowledge of heat and electrical conduction through different materials because very good teaching used a variety of carefully chosen activities to promote effective learning for all pupils. This lesson had many very good features. A relatively large, boisterous class was managed skilfully in the laboratory and pupils were able to identify the health and safety issues and risks associated with using a Bunsen burner to boil water. The content of the lesson maintained the interest of all pupils and this meant that the learning needs of a pupil with complex difficulties were also met. When resources are easily accessible, as in a Year 9 lesson, pupils use a variety of texts and slides to extract information to devise questions about the solar system for use in a quiz. In addition to developing the skills of investigation this lesson also required the pupils to co-operate, communicate and organise themselves. However, another group of Year 9 pupils was required to seek information about the planets using CD-ROM, but on this occasion the language of the program could not be easily understood. Therefore little learning took place as pupils could either not read words such as *abundant* or know the meaning of words such as *diameter*.

84. Since the previous inspection the subject has made good improvement in some aspects. The new laboratory provides very good accommodation and there is a very good range and quantity of resources. This is having a positive impact on standards. However, the subject has not made sufficient progress in its assessment procedures. Individual targets are not set and pupils' achievements in terms of what they can do, know and understand are not systematically assessed and recorded. This issue should be addressed in the new subject policy which is due to be written in time for the governors' review of science next year. At the same time new schemes of work are required to take into account recent curriculum changes.

ART

85. Standards in art are above those expected of pupils of this ability by the age of fourteen and well above those expected by the age of sixteen in painting and drawing. There has been good improvement in GCSE results since the last inspection with a good number of pupils attaining higher grades.

86. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils produce a good number of paintings and drawings such as portraits in the style of Paul Klee and Modigliania. Some print using two colours, others produce black and white contrasts, inspired by the work Bridget Riley. They produce attractive multi-media collage using materials such as feathers, wool and discarded crisp packets. Pupils refine their painting skills in Key Stage 4 making good progress in their brushwork and in their use of water colours. They produce landscapes, paintings and drawings of wild life and remarkably accurate interpretations of well-known personalities such as *Posh and Becks*. As part of their celebrations of Black History month a number use chalk effectively to sketch portraits of Nelson Mandela, Mary Seacole, Will Smith and other black celebrities. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows good progress in observational skills for detail for example in detailed drawings of *the eye*. Following a visit to the Tate Modern Gallery, pupils produce interesting representations of the *water front* and discuss their preferences for the work of artists such as Fernand Leger and Rene Magritte. There is no difference in the rate of progress of pupils with more complex needs and those with English as an additional language. One pupil who receives support for English as an additional language has made excellent progress in the use of art to illustrate a book he has written. Not only has he printed a striking cover for his book but has also very successfully *airbrushed* detail to produce the desired effect.

87. During the week of the inspection lessons were taught by a supply teacher covering long-term illness. Nevertheless the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good and was good overall. Though not an art specialist the teacher is sufficiently confident to enable pupils to make good progress in many aspects of art. The work she has planned for her time in school is of interest to pupils and has enabled them to make progress in their skills. Good links have been made to other subjects for example, in the making of masks linked to a study of Macbeth. All lessons begin with a good recap of work to date with good use of questions to ensure pupils reason their answers and thus extend their speaking skills. For example, "*Why did we use cling film when plaster casting?*" elicits a detailed response. The teacher gives clear instructions about new techniques such as *papier-mâché*; this enables pupils to understand what is expected of them and to understand the problems they might encounter. Though only in school for a short time the teacher knows the work of the pupils well and gives good support and advice as to which medium suits a particular style. For example, through discussion a pupil decided to use acrylic paint in order to make his cartoon style work more vibrant and eye-catching. However, staff are not aware of targets in pupil's individual education plans. On occasions this causes difficulties in the management of pupils with more challenging behaviours. The considerable skills of the general assistant are used effectively to help pupils improve their technique. Pupils are encouraged to assess their work and say how it could be improved. For example, when producing decorative lettering a pupil recognised that the initial letter would be more effective if it was outlined in black. Whilst both teacher and general assistant assess pupils work well in lessons, there is

no recording of the skills pupils have acquired. Most pupils persevere with their work and are proud to discuss the displays with visitors.

88. The subject is well managed. The permanent teacher has succeeded in raising standards. Whilst of necessity much of the Key Stage 4 work is based on course work for drawing and painting, younger pupils also spend a large amount of time working with these media. Although this ensures good progress in these areas and in pupils' use of their observational skills, they have little time to develop other skills for example in three-dimensional work. Sketch-books have been introduced recently and have yet to be used as a form of assessment. The policy and scheme of work have not been revised since the school became a secondary school and makes reference to primary age pupils. Other than for research, very little use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject. Though there is a specialist art room, the room is small and has very little natural light. The room is used as a thoroughfare and consequently there are many disruptions to lessons. The teaching of art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development through the study of a number of artists. However there are limited opportunities to study art beyond Europe.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Pupils in Key Stage 3 study both resistant materials and food technology each for one term at a time. Pupils in Key Stage 4 choose between the two and follow a course leading to Certificate of Educational Achievement.

90. Pupils' achievements and progress in resistant materials are satisfactory at both key stages. By the age of fourteen pupils have designed and made a number of items such as a key ring and puppet. They produce design sketches and develop these towards a final design. Many are beginning to evaluate these choices in their own way, as was illustrated when pupils were making personalised wooden name plaques using computer generated names. One pupil simply said that she liked her preferred choice of name design because of its colour, whereas another was able to explain her decision by explaining that the design was the most creative as it had the most patterns and more texture. As pupils move through Key Stage 4, they extend their design and making skills through projects such as producing a toy that uses mechanical principles to work. During this activity they are introduced to a selection of mechanics including linkages, cams, bearings, ratchets and gears. A class of Year 10 pupils was able to develop an understanding of cams and their use in converting one form of motion into another as they examined and sketched the cam mechanisms used in a number of wooden toys. Following this task pupils are able to design and make a mechanical system that incorporates a cam. By the age of sixteen, pupils complete a flow chart showing the different stages of design and construction involved in such an activity and maintain a diary of the tasks.

91. The teaching of resistant materials ranges from satisfactory to good at Key Stage 3 and is good overall. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 4. When the quality of teaching is good pupils achieve well. A class of Year 8 pupils was well challenged by a problem solving activity as they were designing a lever linkage toy. A well planned lesson and good use of different strategies, including instructional teaching and skilful questioning, encouraged pupils to consider how a small amount of effort might be used to move a heavy load. Pupils responded well to the problem and were able to suggest improvements. As the teacher constantly reviewed and reinforced these new concepts pupils made good progress in their understanding of mechanisms and they know that those such as levers make life easier.

However, on other occasions time is not always used well so that more able do not make as much progress as they could.

92. Overall pupils make good progress and achieve well, in food technology. Through a range of activities they improve their skills of chopping, peeling and dicing. Pupils make good progress in making pastry and bread and use terms such as *rubbing in* confidently. They have good knowledge of a number of methods of cooking such as baking and boiling and as they progress through the school they become increasingly aware of the need to eat healthily. When producing food, in addition to improving their practical skills, pupils also improve their sequencing, for example when making a sandwich. At the end of each activity, pupils assess the quality of the food they have produced and how it might be improved.

93. The teaching of food technology is good at both key stages. Clear instructions that are readily understood by the pupils, good pupil management and the pace of lessons mean that pupils concentrate and maintain interest at all times, thus making good progress. The teacher uses the subject well to enable pupils to make progress in other subjects for example pupils improve their mathematical skills by weighing and measuring accurately. However, there are occasions when opportunities are missed. For example when pupils were reporting the results of a survey they had carried out on pupils' preferences for a café the teacher co-ordinated the results, missing the opportunity for pupils to use tally charts to record responses themselves. Good links are made to other subjects such as religious education by reference to the *feeding of the five thousand* when making bread. Pupils make good progress in their cultural development when producing dishes from other countries. Good attention is paid to health and safety enabling pupils to be careful with sharp utensils and cautious when carrying hot food. Very good relationships with pupils and good support gives pupils the confidence to attempt new skills and to complete tasks successfully.

94. The subject now has very good specialist accommodation for resistant materials and very good resources, although in some areas improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Long term planning not been implemented and schemes of work have not been updated. Although some use is made of pupils' self-assessment of their work, overall assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and records do not show in any detail what pupils have achieved. Assessment and recording in food technology is better. The provision of an after school *food tech club* contributes well to standards in this aspect. Whilst some use is made of information and communication technology this is underdeveloped in both aspects of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

95. Geography is taught only in Key Stage 3. Since the last inspection, there has been a good level of improvement. Pupils' learning is now good. Worksheets, when they are used, now fully meet the needs of all pupils including the least and the most able.

96. Pupils make very good progress. In a Year 8 lesson, pupils learned that water evaporates from sources on earth, forms clouds and falls again on the earth. They understand that not all things float in water, and that floods are strong enough to cause death and disaster. Pupils read, spell and understand key words to describe this water cycle. They locate the River Amazon on a map. Most know the words that describe the course of a river such as a *watershed*, *source* and *estuary*, and explain these features in very simple terms. They understand the term *erosion* and apply it to the physical features of the River Amazon. Through their study of volcanoes, pupils in Year 9 understand and use

terms such as *magma*, *crust*, *plates* and *eruption* to describe volcanic activity, and have some understanding of earthquakes and why they occur.

97. Pupils make very good progress because they are very well taught. The teacher matches the tasks and explanations to the pupils' needs very closely. Lessons have clear learning objectives, and there is very good emphasis on technical vocabulary and numeracy. Learning is enhanced by practical demonstrations. Pupils are motivated as they imagine themselves giants moving the earth. As giants, they learn about earthquakes by moving pieces of concrete covered with model houses against each other, and seeing for themselves the damage that occurs. The very high standard of questioning and excellent relationships between teacher and pupils allows pupils to say what they know and understand and participate fully in the lesson. Pupils listen very closely because they are interested, and this helps them to learn. Attractive and very well produced worksheets, simple maps, well-chosen text-books and pictures sustain pupils' interest and consolidate their knowledge. All the lessons seen had a practical element that further enhanced learning. Pupils were totally absorbed as they made models to illustrate the water cycle. Very well chosen videos helped them to fully appreciate the forces of nature. Pupils are carefully grouped in the lessons to allow learning activities to take place at different levels and so maximise progress. In some lessons the teacher does not have enough additional help in the classroom to sustain these activities, especially when the complex needs of some pupils have to be met.

98. Further resources are being developed to continue to fully extend the wide range of pupils' abilities. The stock of books is being upgraded. Co-ordination of the subject is now very good.

HISTORY

99. Achievement in History is satisfactory throughout the school, and this shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 11 produce some exciting work for nationally recognised courses and the results for summer 2000 show an increase in the number of pupils achieving *merits* in this subject.

100. By the age of fourteen, pupils at Key Stage 3 have a satisfactory knowledge of the Inca civilisation. They increase their understanding of the passage of time as they trace the development of the local area and identify changes in Brixton between 1750 and 1900. Pupils at Key Stage 4 noticeably increase the amount of work they produce as they complete their examined coursework. They increase their knowledge of the local area as they trace the development of local transport. Through their study of the American West they gain a useful insight into the beliefs of the Plains Indians. Pupils have a good awareness of changes in the lives of women in the last one hundred years and produce imaginative work on life as a *child worker* in Edwardian Times. As part of their celebration of Black History Month pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the contribution of black people such as Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King to world history. Most pupils used the provided *quiz book* to find out information, though some pupils needed help to read and record their findings.

101. All lessons, other than those taught to Year 7 are taught by a history specialist. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good and is satisfactory overall. All lessons begin with effective questioning to enable pupils to recall previous work. Where teaching is good, expectations are high as when pupils preparing for examination are told to *aim high* and work provided is matched to the ability of each pupil. The teacher and general assistants work effectively together to ensure pupils of all abilities make progress. Activities are designed to maintain pupils' interest for example when the teacher took the role of a *voting canvasser* for the Labour Party. However, despite a variety of activities some pupils find it

hard to concentrate for one and a half hours. In lessons where teaching is less effective, the pace is slow and reading activities are not matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils progress well in their learning when they use a range of methods to record their work. For example, following a local history walk around the neighbourhood they photographed buildings and areas of interest. A second group of pupils visited Lambeth Archives and recorded their research for historic maps of the Brixton area using a video camera and were able to share their findings with the rest of the school. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are enthusiasts and respond confidently to discussions about *imagery* and *symbolism* contained within historic portraits of the Tudors and Stuarts. For example, pupils were able to observe the rich clothing and powerful image that the painter had given to Elizabeth I and recognise the significance this had as propaganda.

102. The co-ordinator has been in post for four terms and has completed a draft policy statement, a new scheme of work and a full audit of resources; she has identified key areas that require additional materials and artefacts. All lessons are from a newly designed scheme of work that is both interesting and lively. Whilst there is on-going assessment for pupils in Years 10 and 11 undertaking national qualifications, there is no structured assessment for the younger pupils other than the use of the common marking policy. The marking policy is not used to support the pupils' individual targets; there is little evidence that the results of assessment are taken into account when planning further work. The teaching of history makes a very good contribution to pupils understanding of their cultural heritage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Information and communication technology is taught as a separate subject at Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, it is taught as part of other subjects. Progress in word processing is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 it is unsatisfactory in other aspects of the subject. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory because of poor curriculum planning, a lack of confidence in teaching the subject and, until recently, inadequate equipment.

104. Since the last inspection, there has been a satisfactory level of improvement in the very recent update of resources. However, pupils still do not make enough progress in control, monitoring or modelling their environment, because the school does not have the right equipment. This has now been ordered and plans are well advanced for its introduction. Data handling is now addressed in science. The simple method of Key Stage 3 assessment is still not well enough known to all teachers. The school has invested heavily in staff training since the last inspection, and teachers' awareness and skills have improved though not all are confident in its use.

105. By the end of Key Stage 3, nearly all pupils are able to type in work produced in their English lessons. They are able to save it, retrieve it when required and make some attempt at redrafting. Pupils print their work, though some need help for this. About half the pupils are able to reformat text using other program utilities. In one lesson in Year 8, pupils were able to find information from a CD-ROM and print it. In another Year 8 lesson, the class was unable to use a search engine to access the Internet to find information on holiday resorts. In this key stage, some pupils embellish their work with interesting graphics, using *clip art*. They incorporate photographs into their work, and, with help, print them.

106. In Key Stage 4, not all pupils have enough opportunity to use new technology in the subjects they study. Little was seen in Year 10, for example. In Year 11, pupils redraft their work onto the computer. They prepare carefully redrafted and well word-processed personal statements for their National Record of Achievement. Pupils display their work using a range of graphical techniques. Exceptionally good use of new technology was seen in the range of excellent storybooks and newspapers produced by those who speak English as an additional language and are receiving specialist linguistic help. Pupils in Year 11 attending college have made good use of technology in their study of science.

107. Teaching in the subject was not always satisfactory because of lack of careful planning and preparation. Not all teachers are confident when teaching the subject. When pupils made satisfactory gains in learning, the teacher had a good practical knowledge of the software involved and prepared the lesson carefully.

108. Although standards in the subject could be higher, the department has exceeded the targets set by the governors for Key Stage 3. Progress at Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory because the subject is not addressed systematically in all subjects, and opportunities are missed. The school is aware of that the curriculum is not properly mapped or co-ordinated at Key Stage 4 and plans are in hand to improve this.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

109. Standards in French have improved since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 3 so that by the age of fourteen their achievement is satisfactory. Progress through Key Stage 4 is good, by the age of sixteen pupils achieve well, with all who entered the Certificate of Educational Achievement in 2000 attaining *distinction*. Progress could be even better if pupils were taught French more than once a week.

110. By the age of fourteen, pupils answer simple personal questions such as their age, where they live and information about their family. Some pupils recognise and count numbers to ten, more able pupils use numbers to twenty with the most able recognising and using numbers to fifty. When studying the unit *en ville*, some recognise French words for the tourist office and campsite. Pupils improve their skills in all aspects of the subject in Key Stage 4. By the age of sixteen they write a letter to a friend giving personal details. They produce their timetable in French and indicate which is their favourite lesson. When studying tourist areas they produce attractive leaflets in French giving details of facilities such as the cinema and swimming pool. Work produced by pupils in Year 11 on saving water, comparing the amount of water used by baths and showers, makes a useful contribution to pupils' moral development.

111. French is taught by a language specialist who is new to the school and who is employed on a temporary contract. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, being good overall. This is reflected in the quality of learning. Lessons are carefully planned and structured taking careful account of individual abilities with additional work planned for pupils who complete their work early. There is a good mix of activities giving pupils opportunity to make progress in reading, speaking, listening and writing. Useful opportunities are provided for pupils to work in pairs and to take part in role play, for example *au café*. However, in the longer lessons that last for one and a half hours, despite the range of activities, pupils find it hard to maintain their concentration. The teacher has a good accent, whilst he gives some instructions in French, opportunities are missed to use instructions such as *écoutez, regardez* to improve pupils' listening. The teacher ensures all pupils take part in question and answer sessions and rehearses new vocabulary well to ensure pupils'

understanding and to improve their accent. He takes particular care to ensure those who have English as an additional language understand their work. Whilst general assistants are usefully occupied some of the time, there are occasions when it would be sensible for them to record pupils' responses and achievements. Pupils are interested in learning French and though some need support they are proud when they contribute a correct response.

112. Pupils' work is assessed during the lesson and a record of their oral work is maintained using individual tapes. Whilst resources have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory, there is a heavy dependence on the use of a overhead projector and flashcards where some pupils would benefit more from working with real objects and playing games. Nationally recognised courses have been introduced since the last inspection and this has contributed to improved standards. The recent visit to Paris enabled pupils to use their French for example when visiting the *boulangerie*. A comprehensive display of Parisian landmarks and French history supports learning and makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of the heritage and culture of France.

MUSIC

113. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and music continues to be a significant feature in the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress in performing and composing music as well as listening to and appraising music.

114. All pupils at Key Stage 3 have a weekly music lesson lasting one and a half hours. Younger pupils enjoy using the percussion instruments and are able to hold a beat. They use the keyboards and are learning to add a beat to basic keyboarding and play a recognisable tune. Older pupils learn to play two and three finger chords. They define a chord as more than one note and use the keyboard to combine chords and simple repeating patterns. Pupils at Key Stage 4 choose to take either art or music within the creative arts module. In the one lesson observed, pupils listen attentively to recorded music, responding to the mood and identifying the contrasts of pitch, tempo and duration. They consolidate their knowledge of the types of orchestral instruments and identify these instruments as they listen to *In the Hall of the Mountain King* by Grieg. When singing, pupils join in with familiar songs and sing in unison.

115. At the time of the inspection a temporary teacher, who has only been at the school for two weeks, was teaching music. All teaching is satisfactory. The teacher has clear expectations of behaviour and good classroom management strategies. Pupils enjoy the lessons and respond with enthusiasm to the opportunity to make music. The teacher has good subject knowledge and is thus able to increase pupils' confidence in their own abilities by providing opportunities for them to experiment with sound and ensuring that they concentrate and make satisfactory progress in the lessons. There is no system for assessing and recording the musical skills pupils have acquired.

116. There is a recently written policy and scheme of work for music and the school shows its commitment to the subject by heavy investment in resources including a new music room. The school hopes to pursue plans to develop a nationally recognised course for pupils at Key Stage 4. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate music from other cultures with visiting musicians such as a drummer to celebrate Black History Month. Recently pupils worked with the Philharmonia Orchestra Education Programme. Working with a musical director and two choreographers, pupils improved their performing skills as they participated in a live performance at the Royal Festival Hall attended by parents, staff and other *concert-goers*. All pupils use their musical skills when taking part in annual whole-school productions such as *Oliver*.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils continue to make good progress in swimming. Progress in games is good at both key stages. Progress in other aspects of physical education is at least satisfactory. Nationally recognised qualifications have been introduced since the last inspection. This has improved standards at the end of Key Stage 4 with over half the pupils entered passing with distinction. One pupil, new to the school, was able to successfully complete her GCSE dance course. Teams from the school have competed at the London Heathrow Games and represented Lambeth in athletics and football. Members of one team went on to represent Lambeth at the Millennium Games in Southampton where they were awarded the *Fair Play Award*. The school has been awarded the *Sportsmark* standard since the last inspection.

118. By the end of Key Stage 3, most pupils are confident in the water. They swim on their backs and fronts and underneath the water. Most achieve *Water Safety Certificates*. In gymnastics, pupils run, jump and roll with increasing skill, using a trampet and their arms to successfully gain height. When playing games they are aware of the need to pass accurately and how to receive the ball, though not all use the space as well as they could. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 4 and by the age of sixteen, pupils have acquired skills to enable them to take part in a range of sports. A good number of pupils play games such as football to a high standard. As part of outdoor and adventurous activities, pupils take part in orienteering at Battersea Park and Wimbledon Common, making their own maps to devise courses.

119. Though the senior physical education teacher was absent due to long term illness during the inspection and some lessons were taught by non-specialist staff, the quality of teaching remains good overall at both key stages. Although lesson planning is scant, teachers provide a good range of activities including *warm up*, skills based tasks, group work and *cool down* to enable pupils to make good progress. Whilst teachers have a suitable knowledge of teaching specific skills insufficient attention is paid to health and safety. For example, pupils wear jewellery, including large earrings, girls are not required to tie long hair out of the way and obstacles such as tables with sharp corners are left in the hall. Good attention is paid to extending pupils' listening skills by giving increasingly complex instructions and by emphasising key vocabulary such as *dribbling* and *heading*. However, more attention should be given to pupils' mathematical development by using positional vocabulary and by giving pupils opportunities to develop their numeracy. For example, a general assistant kept the score in *stop rounders* when pupils who were *out* could have been asked to keep a tally and work out differences in scores. During lessons pupils are kept active for the whole lesson. Helpful instructions enable pupils to make better progress. For example, *keep the ball close to your foot*. Good use is made of demonstration by teachers and pupils to indicate how improvements might be made. Overall resources are used well though on occasions general assistants have little to do. Careful explanation of the rules encourages pupils to understand the need to play fair.

120. The co-ordinator provides helpful support for other members of staff. However, she has not been able to observe lessons in order to gauge the impact of teaching on learning. Whilst some assessment procedures and skills checklists are in place, these were not available during the inspection and were not being used by staff. The policy and scheme of work is out of date, referring to when the school was for primary and secondary age pupils. After school clubs such as karate and links with Fulham Football Club enable pupils to experience a wider range of sports and makes a good contribution to their progress. The teaching of physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Pupils make good progress in the subject and achieve standards commensurate with their ability.

122. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have an awareness of a number of the major world faiths. Through their study of Christianity they know the story of the crucifixion and understand the significance of some of the basic symbols of Christianity such as the star, crown and cross. They know the Old Testament story of the creation. When studying other faiths, they understand some features of Hindu belief. They have an awareness of the gods Ganesha, Krishna and Brahman and know they look like animals and understand that this religion is older than Christianity. Pupils have some knowledge of the specialised terms used to describe religions, and have discussed such ideas as sharing, temptation and beauty in a religious context. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of religious beliefs and values. They have some knowledge of their lives of the early Christians and some idea of the Trinity. They know some of the parables of Jesus such as the Prodigal Son, and can draw a moral from them. In a Year 11 lesson where pupils study *faith in action*, they are aware of the names of significant black people such as Martin Luther King and of their fight for freedom. Pupils of all races discuss the commitment of these people and their actions in some detail. All show great interest in the black heroes and heroines.

123. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress because they are well taught. Teachers make lessons interesting. Explanations are lively, and activities appropriate. Books and pictures are well supplemented by music and artefacts. A lesson on the Old Testament story of the creation was enriched by a recording of *Morning has broken*, and *Imagine*, for example. A lesson on Christianity gained added interest as each pupil was given a different style of crucifix, which fascinated them and helped them to learn about symbols. Photographs of faces from around the world were used well in a discussion on beauty, which showed pupils that beauty comes in many guises. Learning is good because lessons are brisk, with pupils made aware of the time they spend on each activity. Insistence on the correct vocabulary allows pupils full oral participation in the lessons, and this maintains their interest. Pupils listen carefully to the poems and prayers which are chosen to be part of the lessons, and these add depth to their learning.

124. The curriculum in Key Stage 4 is externally validated as part of a well-structured programme of study on beliefs and values. Learning is enhanced for pupils by visits to a variety of places of worship. School assemblies add to pupils' religious experience. In order to improve standards, the school is aware that the Key Stage 3 curriculum must now change to reflect the new Locally Agreed Syllabus. Since the last inspection assessment of pupils' attainment has not improved enough. It still does not sufficiently inform the setting of targets

or the planning of future learning. Co-ordination of the subject in all other areas is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

125. Pupils make at very good progress in personal, social and health education. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well throughout the school and is implicit in all its work. The number of sixteen-year-olds gaining nationally recognised qualifications is increasing.

126. By the age of fourteen, pupils are aware of basic first aid procedures and explain the action they would take in situations such as *electric shock*. Pupils of this age make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the physical and emotional changes that take place in puberty. By the age of sixteen, pupils have acquired a good range of skills to enable them to cope with life after school. Pupils speak confidently about their strengths such as *a good sense of humour* and are realistic when making choices of courses or work. Most complete application forms and many write a letter of application for employment. All are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of the environment and of the habitat of a number of British animals. Many recognise that areas of Britain are overcrowded. A good number of pupils use public transport to attend school and most have a good awareness of leisure opportunities available to them. Pupils in Year 11 make very good progress in their social skills when undertaking work experience and when studying for a day each week at Lambeth College.

127. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall in personal social and health education lessons. However, because all staff constantly provide opportunities for pupils to reinforce and extend their personal development in other lessons, for example in food technology, pupils of all abilities make very good progress in this area of their learning. All staff encourage pupils to consider the feelings of others. This was evident when Year 11 boys were particularly sensitive in discussion with one of the girls who was concerned about her weight; they were supportive and encouraging. In lessons where teaching is particularly effective, teachers use every opportunity to extend pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. They pace their lessons well giving pupils *deadlines* by which to complete their work. As a result pupils maintain concentration and strive hard. In the lesson where teaching was excellent the teacher dealt with the subject in a particularly sensitive way. For example, pupils who were embarrassed to ask questions regarding changes in puberty were encouraged to *post* their questions or comments in a specially provided *post box*. Where teaching is less effective, pupils copy work, this activity lacks challenge for many pupils and reduces their progress in writing independently. Good use is made of video material and role-play to ensure pupils' understanding as when discussing the action to be taken following electric shock.

128. From Year 9 onwards, careers education and guidance supplement personal and social education and at the end of Year 11 the majority of pupils go into employment or further education. Pupils from Year 9 onwards work towards nationally recognised qualifications. Attainment in personal and social education is suitably recorded photographically and as part of each pupil's *Record of Achievement*. Good links with the careers' education officer ensures pupils from Year 9 onwards have a good understanding of choices available to them on completing their time at school. Useful links have been established with the Oval House Fringe Theatre Company where pupils enjoy a day of role-play in preparation for work experience. Courses such as the *Build It* course enable pupils to work co-operatively.