

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RICHARD CLOUDESLEY SCHOOL**

Islington

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100467

Headteacher: Ms Anne Corbett

Reporting inspector: Mary Henderson  
19827

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 249289

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	2 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Golden Lane London
Postcode	EC1Y OTJ
Telephone number:	(0207) 251 1161
Fax number:	(0207) 251 4911
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Susannah Shepherd
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19827	Mary Henderson	Registered inspector	Special educational needs Integration	What kind of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils and students taught?
19443	Nancy Walker	Lay inspector		
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics	
22577	Margaret Hart	Team inspector	Science Modern languages Music	Assessment
21899	Gillian Lawson	Team inspector	Education Inclusion Information and communication Technology Physical education Religious education	
12641	Pauline Lyseight-Jones	Team inspector	English Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students?
25437	Andrew Redpath	Team inspector	Design and technology History Geography	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Richard Cloudesley is a maintained special school for pupils from 2 to 19 years. All pupils have a physical disability and most have communication difficulties. Almost two-thirds of pupils have profound and complex learning difficulties and a few have additional hearing or visual impairment. This is a significant increase since the last inspection in 1997. There are a few higher achieving pupils, mainly in older age groups who work at or near age-appropriate levels. A feature of the school is the strong emphasis put on links with the community and access to integrated learning opportunities with mainstream schools and nurseries. The school took in an additional 12 pupils in September from a similar school in a neighbouring borough that was closing. Pupils' backgrounds span the socio-economic spectrum. There are 42 boys and 19 girls grouped largely by key stage and ability. Fifty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; sixty per cent have English as an additional language. A number of refugees have recently entered the school. Almost 50 per cent are from ethnic minority groups. Pupils are prepared for transfer to mainstream schools when appropriate. The headteacher and other senior managers are funded to work with the Local Education Authority (LEA) to provide support to mainstream schools for pupils with complex physical and sensory needs.

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

Richard Cloudesley is a very good school and is liked by parents. Due to the good and often very good teaching, pupils make good progress in learning, in developing independence and in overcoming the obstacles to learning presented by their complex and often profound disabilities. The standard of care and support is very high. The school is very well led, has addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection and gives very good value for money.

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

- The teaching is good, frequently very good and the high expectations of staff ensure that pupils make good progress in learning and in their personal and social skills.
- The school has very good relationships with other schools and nurseries and within the community which extend the access of pupils to a rich range of learning opportunities; pupils are well prepared for integration into mainstream schools, further education and work experience.
- The headteacher is a very good leader and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior managers and the school has a very good atmosphere for learning and development.
- There is a very good partnership for learning between education, health professionals and parents so that physical and communication supports and aids provide the best possible access to learning for all pupils and promote their independence wherever possible.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for and all staff ensure they are safe and treated with a high level of respect and dignity.

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

- Extend the very good planning of some teachers particularly to secondary science but also to those other subjects where curriculum planning needs to be improved
- Accommodation.
- Improve procedures to assess individual progress to ensure regular and consistent use of assessment scales across the school by all teachers.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in 1997 and the school has made a good improvement since then: better planning in most subject areas, more effective co-operation between departments and the development of better assessment systems. The school has made better use of the accommodation to provide a separate room for music and to develop work in technology using resistant materials. The capacity to improve further is very good.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key
speaking and listening	A	A	A	A	very good A
reading	A	B	B	B	good B
writing	A	B	B	B	satisfactory C
mathematics	A	B	B	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	A	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A	A	A	

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

Good use is made of assessment data to set whole school targets for groups of pupils. Particular strengths are in the development of speaking and listening through the use of communication aids and in the use of mobility aids to enable pupils to access all areas of learning.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work very hard, show great perseverance and nearly always do the best work they can.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils are very polite to each other and to visitors, behave very well in classrooms and around the school. As a result there is a calm atmosphere where everyone can work free from disruption.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils are very confident and secure in themselves. Relations with staff and between themselves are excellent. They are extremely understanding of each other's needs and very supportive to each other
Attendance	Satisfactory. Absence is almost always due to illness and a consequence of medical needs including frequent stay in hospital. There was no unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 - 6	Years 7 - 11	Years 12 - 13
Quality of teaching	very good	good	very good	good

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

Teaching in English, which includes the development of communication systems for pupils to develop their learning, is very good across the school. Teaching in mathematics is good. Teaching in science is good in the primary department but there are weaknesses in the teaching of science in the secondary department. Teaching in personal, social and health education is good. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in the early years class and in English, mathematics, science, physical education and art.

Particular strengths common to much of the teaching are: the high quality of the work of support staff that enables pupils to communicate and take part in lessons; the very good knowledge all adults who work in the school have of individual needs; the very good liaison between health professionals and the teaching staff; and the high expectations of teachers that obstacles to learning arising from pupils complex physical, communication and learning difficulties, can be overcome.

Pupils develop very good concentration and show very admirable perseverance in learning. They co-operate well with staff and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils provide a very good ethos for progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall and the statutory curriculum is in place. Provision in the early years class and for pupils at Key Stage 4 is very good. Opportunities for extra-curricular activities are excellent. There are extensive opportunities for working with mainstream children and students.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Provision for social development is excellent and for spiritual, moral and cultural development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are very well cared for. All staff, including education, administrative, medical and therapy personnel have a very good understanding of pupil's personal and emotional needs and they are very thorough in ensuring that pupils are safe at all times. The written guidelines for child protection need to be clearer and training updated for all staff. Informal assessment during the school day is good.

The school and parents work well together in partnership. Parents are pleased with the work of the school but would like more regular information on progress against their individual targets.

The curriculum is good and is very relevant to the needs of pupils. There are substantial opportunities for pupils to develop their own interests and talents through the excellent extra-curricular activities.

Planning in secondary science is poor. There is a need to identify more clearly how teaching in religious education is planned.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a strong leader and is effectively supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. This ensures the school is well managed. This high quality of leadership and management has enabled the school to introduce changes and continue to improve.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body meets statutory responsibilities well and governors have a clear vision for the future development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its work well and has identified appropriate areas for further development.
The strategic use of resources	The school has clearly identified priorities for spending and the budget is well managed. The skills of teachers and support staff are used very well to



	ensure pupils access the curriculum. Accommodation is poor though it is used well.
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Staffing is adequate and very well matched to the needs of pupils. Resources for learning are satisfactory. The school is very well led and managed and well supported by the governors. The principles of 'best value' are used effectively.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• My child makes good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More regular information on how my child is getting on.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agreed with the parents views and they are right to want more regular information about progress against their individual targets.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The achievement and progress of children under five, pupils between the ages of five and 16 and students over 16 are very good. Standards of achievement are mostly below national expectations as a result of their physical and learning disabilities and, in many cases, profound and complex learning difficulties. However, a few pupils attain or come near to national standards. Most pupils have severe communication difficulties. Several pupils have additional visual and/or hearing impairment. Judgements about achievement take account of information in their statements, annual reviews and individual education plans (IEPs) and public examinations and national tests.
2. Overall there has been a considerable raising of standards since the last inspection. Pupils at all key stages make very good progress towards their educational targets. There is no measurable difference between the achievement and progress of boys and girls.
3. Children under five achieve very good progress in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in physical development. The cramped conditions limit access to the full range of learning experiences in this part of the curriculum.

**Table 1 Achievement and progress across the school**

Subject	Very good	Good	Satisfactory
English	All key stages		
Mathematics		All key stages	
Science		Key stages 1 & 2	Key Stages 3 & 4
Information and communication technology (ICT)	All key stages		
History	Key Stage 4		Key Stages 1, 2 & 3
Geography	Key Stages 2 & 4	Key Stages 1 & 5	Key Stage 3
Design & technology (DT)		Key Stages 1, 2, 4 & 5	Key Stage 3
Physical education (PE)	All key stages		
Art	Key Stages 3, 4 & 5		Key Stages 1 & 2
Music	All key stages		
Religious education (RE)			All key stages
MFL (German)		Key Stages 3 & 4	
Citizenship		All key stages	
Personal and social development	All key stages		
Under fives			

4. The above table summarises the progress that pupils make from entry to the post 16 class. This is shown in the table as Key Stage 5. The table indicates where there are variations in achievement and progress for different age groups.
5. Achievement and progress in personal and social development and in English, which includes communication, ICT, music, PE and for the under fives are very good. These are major areas of strength across the school.
6. Overall, there has been a good improvement since the last inspection in the progress pupils make in most areas. Music was the only subject at the last inspection that was said to be very good. By

contrast English, ICT and PE are now also graded as very good in addition to music which has retained its high standard. The school integrates into mainstream schools those pupils who have made significant progress in learning and whose personal and physical needs can be well met in the mainstream setting. There are also opportunities for pupils to study individual subjects in other schools to give access to other courses, for example, in GNVQ<sup>1</sup> ICT.

7. Pupils with physical disabilities and other associated learning difficulties make good progress in small steps in most areas of learning, through the 'P' scales<sup>2</sup> towards the first levels of the National Curriculum.
8. Pupils with the most complex and profound difficulties make good and sometimes very good progress in relation to their attainment on entry to school. Some of these pupils may have additional hearing and/or visual impairments. For many of these pupils progress is best seen in the establishment of communication which enables them to have a degree of choice, self-expression and independence. Many improve mobility or maintain it. A few have regressive medical conditions, which affect development and staff work very hard to maintain their skills, understanding and confidence. Adaptations to communication aids are particularly important to maintaining achievement and progress.
9. Pupils whose first language is other than English make very good progress along with other pupils. The school uses some interpreters for assessment in their mother tongue and pupils benefit from the good standard of support in the school. They also extend their use of communication and language. The most able pupils make very rapid progress once they have sufficient fluency in English and, where appropriate, are helped to integrate into a mainstream school.
10. Children under five and pupils at all key stages and students over the age of 16 make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs). Targets however are frequently not specific enough to be as helpful as they should be in evaluating progress. However, the reports drawn up for the annual review, particularly by the health professionals working at the school, are of a very good quality.
11. Standards of achievement and progress are very good in English. From entry in the school, pupils begin to develop their ability to communicate and progress in expressing themselves and listening to others and as they mature many are able to do this very effectively. This is a major achievement as most pupils require alternative methods of communication to facilitate access to speaking and listening. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 are achieving at levels similar to mainstream peers and use their language to express their views very forcefully and effectively. Progress in reading and writing are also very good, given pupils' prior attainment. Many pupils show a developing understanding of the use and meaning of symbols and this becomes one of the most important skills which enables them to access the different areas of the curriculum. The higher achieving pupils are entered for GCSE<sup>3</sup> English with every chance of success.
12. In mathematics, pupils' achievement and progress is good overall. Some children start to learn to count up to five. Pupils gradually begin to recognise and understand number symbols and simple concepts of sets. By the age of 11 higher achieving pupils begin to recognise different shapes such as ovals, squares and triangles. They begin to sort out the value of different coins and are able to count up to 50 or 60. Pupils with profound learning difficulties work on tasks such as reaching for an object when they have a choice of two or three, or holding onto an object for a count of four. In the secondary department pupils make further progress in understanding the use of money and using simple addition and division, using simple fractions and developing an understanding of concepts such as long and longest and above and below. Pupils learn different measurement scales and higher achieving pupils enter for the GCSE. They make good use of previous learning to order and use decimals, make estimates and solve numerical problems.

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<sup>1</sup> General National Vocational Qualification.

<sup>2</sup> A measurement scale used to recognise the progress pupils make before they reach Level 1 of the National Curriculum, developed by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in 2001.

<sup>3</sup> General Certificate of Secondary Education.

13. In science, pupils' achievements are good between the ages of five and 11 and satisfactory between 11 and 16. Younger pupils begin to explore and react to sound and identify the sources of different sounds. They learn to identify and recognise different parts of their body. They work on light and recognise different sources of light. Between the ages of 11 and 16 pupils build on earlier work to know and understand more about plants and how they grow. Higher achieving pupils develop a more extensive knowledge of topics such as the food chain, genetic inheritance and body systems such as the nervous system. There is insufficient progress in investigative work due to insufficient opportunities. Pupils over the age of 16 know about pollution and the environment and healthy eating standards.
14. The school sets whole school targets. Very good assessment data is kept. It is used to monitor pupils' progress by class in English, science, mathematics and personal and social development. The scores for each subject are then analysed for each key stage. A comparison is also made of the progress of girls and boys and for pupils in each ethnic group. The main value of this information lies in the overview of the progress of each individual and the extent to which the improvement year on year can be measured. This together with other existing good practice will inform governors and senior management and help them to identify the overall progress pupils are making.

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

15. As a result of what the school does to help pupils to develop as individuals, the very good standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development found when the school was last inspected, have been maintained. Standards in relationships have improved even further and are now excellent, as is behaviour. Parents are very appreciative of these significant strengths of the school. As a result of pupils' attitudes, they are able to take full advantage of the learning opportunities on offer to them and they make at least good progress in all areas.
16. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their work and parents confirm that their children are very happy to attend. Despite their difficulties, they try very hard and nearly always do their best. In lessons and assemblies they listen and join in to the best of their ability. They take care in the presentation of their work and are proud to show it to others. Even when they are tired, they persevere. For example, during a hydro session, one boy with profound and multiple disabilities, fought very hard against his desire to sleep and listened to what was going on around him and showed an appropriate level of awareness. In a GCSE religious education lesson, one boy in particular without any spoken language showed tremendous work effort to produce text using head movements to operate his computer.
17. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils follow routines very well and move around in a very orderly manner and so the school is a calm place where everyone can feel at ease and free from disruption. In lessons, pupils respond very well to what teachers expect of them. Bullying is extremely rare and there is a very high level of racial harmony amongst pupils. There is no evidence of pupils speaking languages at home other than English, being bullied or abused or in any way excluded by any member of the school community; on the contrary, whatever languages pupils have at their disposal are celebrated and used as a way in to further learning and development. The school has never had cause to permanently exclude any pupil in its history. Pupils' behaviour out of school and towards visitors is also very good and the school has received very many letters from the public commending the pupils on their behaviour.
18. Pupils' personal development is very good indeed and relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils and one another are excellent. Pupils show a very high level of understanding of each other's difficulties and they are remarkably tolerant and supportive. For example, when pupils were playing a game of boccia, pupils showed very high levels of competitiveness but were equally appreciative of others' successes. Some even performed a 'high fives' hand gesture in celebration of one individual's achievement. Even when pupils made a hash of it, there were comments of 'good try' and no hint of impatience or ridicule. This level of support and tolerance in pupils with such complex difficulties is a delight to see. Pupils are clearly very confident in themselves and they cope extremely well in new situations and are prepared to have a go. For example, pupils joined in with enthusiasm throughout the Caribbean carnival activities, happy to move to the music wearing colourful head-dresses and decorations to their wheelchairs and walking frames. Pupils demonstrate very high

levels of independence, for example in making their own choices about what they want to eat, or in their determination to search and select the appropriate picture symbols in order to communicate effectively. Pupils behave very responsibly. This is particularly evident in how careful and watchful they are when they manoeuvre their wheelchairs and walking frames so as not to bump anyone.

19. At around 80 per cent, levels of attendance remain satisfactory and similar to other schools of this nature. Pupils are eager to come to school and are only absent when they are ill or, very rarely, when parents take holidays or religious observance in term time. There is no truancy whatsoever. A high proportion of pupils suffer from serious medical conditions and consequently have regular and sometimes long periods of absence. As a result and because each pupil represents almost two per cent of the total, such absences have a very significant effect on the overall attendance figures. Pupils travel from a wide geographical area around London and so traffic congestion sometimes results in delays in getting to school on time.

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

20. Teaching is very good and almost half the lessons seen were very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Eighty-one per cent of lessons were good or better. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when 74 per cent of teaching was said to be good or better. Examples of excellent teaching were seen for children under five and in English, ICT, PE, mathematics, science and art. Teaching was very good for children under five and for pupils up to the age of seven. It was also very good for pupils between the ages of 14 and 16. For other age groups the overall judgement was that it is good. In lessons where the focus is on teaching English and communication, the methods and approaches used, which include sign, symbols, pictures and real objects, are helpful to pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The weakest teaching, although judged overall satisfactory, was seen in secondary science.
21. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils very well. This is a very significant achievement as the style of teaching has changed since the last inspection in order to meet the needs of many more pupils with very complex learning, physical and communication difficulties. The most effective teaching was usually characterised by:
- The very high quality of therapists and support staff working with teachers to enable all pupils to communicate and take part in the lesson, even, for example, when using a respirator.
  - Very good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language; a bilingual classroom assistant helped a Turkish pupil by translating information into Turkish and entering it on a switch<sup>4</sup> to be taken home. Learning support staff who speak the pupils' home languages play a key part in ensuring that lessons are understood by pupils who are not yet confident in English speaking and understanding.
  - The very good atmosphere for learning arising from the excellent relationships between pupils and adults.
  - The very good knowledge all staff have of pupils' individual needs and strengths, which enables them to interpret very well the most fleeting of signs and responses made by pupils with very limited responses.
  - Good subject knowledge of teachers which enables them to select the main points for learning and organise activities to reinforce learning. Staff have very high expectations for all pupils.
  - The excellent use made of information and communication technology, mobility and access aids which helps all pupils overcome barriers to learning and achieve success.
  - Consistency in providing opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills in a range of lessons.
22. Areas for development in teaching were observed in a few lessons. These included, in a minority of cases, the need to plan lessons, not only to ensure that they matched the achievements of all pupils but also that there was adequate reinforcement of concepts and frequent checking to ensure all pupils had understood what was taught. In one lesson pupils were left too long without adult assistance and were unable to get on. In three lessons there was an unusually slow beginning which bored pupils.

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<sup>4</sup> Switches are devices which can be operated by being touched or pressed which can give children access to a recorded word or phrase or sounds such as music.

23. Learning was very good in the majority of lessons. Throughout the school pupils at all ages had a noticeable determination to persevere and succeed and a willingness to accept help when necessary. They were very co-operative with staff and behaved well which meant that in almost all lessons seen there were no interruptions to slow the pace of learning. Most have a very good sense of humour and bring a sense of enjoyment to much of their work. The cross-curricular Caribbean carnival celebration which took place during the inspection also demonstrated the respect that the school gives to the home backgrounds of pupils. Pupils are very willing to use whatever languages they have available to them and there was no reticence in speaking in Turkish in lessons by older pupils and in lunchtime activities pupils used Caribbean patois at times.

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

**The quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall and they are very good in the Foundation Stage and in classes for 15 and 16 year olds.**

24. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught.
- The curriculum is very well adapted to meet the academic, social and developmental needs of the very broad range of pupils in the school.
  - The teaching of numeracy across the curriculum is good and literacy skills are taught very well. There are some dual language texts in school; some of these have been made by school staff and are in Turkish and English. The welcome display in the school foyer has many languages represented and in the secondary department there are signs in Turkish over common school items such as the photocopier. This shows that respect is being given to the language heritage of others and that the school is aware of the main languages spoken in the homes of its pupils.
  - The school is particularly successful in working very well with both partner schools and other organisations.
  - Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
  - The school provides an excellent range of out of class activities which provide both extension and further breadth to the curriculum and further enhance the quality of pupils' personal development.
  - Opportunities for pupils to take a full part in the life of the school are excellent.
  - Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in ensuring that schemes of work are in place and that there are subject co-ordinators in place in both the primary and secondary departments. Some co-ordinators have only recently taken on this role and it is not yet possible to judge the full impact of their work.
  - There are many opportunities for pupils to work with pupils from mainstream schools and colleges.
25. The school provides the full range of National Curriculum subjects and religious education. There are particular strengths in English, information and communication technology, music, physical education, modern foreign languages, in the Foundation Stage curriculum and in the curriculum offered to 15 and 16 year olds. Schemes of work are in place and planning is very good in the Foundation Stage and in secondary art and design and it is good in secondary English and in mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, physical education, music and modern foreign languages. Science planning is unsatisfactory. Staff have identified a very appropriate timetable and staffing for the two classes of 15 and 16 year olds. This results in the more able pupils being in line to take nationally recognised qualifications and being taught by subject specialists. They are able to study German, Turkish and Bengali and to take GCSEs where appropriate. Those pupils with greater needs are also offered a broad curriculum which is taught principally by their class teacher with a high number of learning and support staff. Pupils are offered regular physiotherapy and sensory sessions, which help their physical and creative development needs. In the primary department and, increasingly in the secondary department, considerable adaptations have to be made to ensure that all pupils have full access to learning. The multi-sensory approach which the school has adopted is built on ensuring that pupils develop their most effective ways of communication. This means that information and

communication technology is thoroughly exploited, giving pupils a voice, a means for recording and amending their own work and a method for ensuring that parents are involved in some class activities. The developing use of signing by staff and pupils and the strong use of symbol and picture-based communications systems contributes well to the quality of work in English and other subjects.

26. There are excellent facilities for extra-curricular activities. A very good range of activities are offered every lunchtime. The programme is managed by the lunchtime co-ordinator. The activities are well designed to ensure that the widest range of pupils have the opportunity to take part. They include karaoke, 'Playstation' and beauty therapy. In addition, the school engages qualified sports instructors to provide suitable games of skill, concentration and competition. The sessions observed during the inspection were very impressive. Pupils from different classes got on easily with each other in an atmosphere of friendliness and relaxation. Pupils' attitudes were excellent, they were taking turns without question and there was a real determination to do well. The school's decision to have less than expected formal teaching time and to recognise that it could provide a rich diet for pupils during an extended lunch period is fully vindicated.
27. There were many displays around the school of activities that took place in conjunction with other bodies including arts activities with local schools and computer gaming which provides further opportunities for personal development. The school draws a wide range of interesting and exciting enterprises into its work. Recent joint activities include reading, web-building, riding, music and a cartoon workshop with a newspaper group. Staff from a local school provide language tuition in Turkish and Bengali, there has been an 'artists in residence' and the school provided the overall winner in the 'Hidden Art' competition in 2002. Formal opportunities to work alongside mainstream peers have been developed extensively, particularly in the primary department. Some pupils go to other schools for literacy or to take part in lunchtime activities. Pupils from other primary schools come to this school for art and design lessons each week. Pupils also attend a specialist music therapy centre to help develop communication and understanding.
28. Pupils between the ages of 14 and 16 have suitable, timetabled study support. The school now has sufficient staff to provide a distinct post-16 curriculum offer. The pupils attend a local college for drama sessions. They work alongside students who are studying for formal qualifications in social care. These are successful sessions and the pupils' attendance at the college gives them the opportunity to have their lunch off-site and visit the college library and common room, enhancing the opportunities for their personal development. Pupils have taken part in work experience in two settings. All pupils were able to take part. The placements gave pupils opportunities to use some of their social and life skills in real situations. Pupils receive regular careers education as part of the programme and visit special careers open days. Opportunities for integration are developed as widely as possible and include a whole day in a sports centre. The post-16 co-ordinator is well experienced and is able to give guidance to pupils on their possible next steps. The post-16 programme is a valuable addition to the work of the school. However, the second year offer has yet to be devised and decisions are yet to be made about the offer for the next set of post-16 pupils.
29. The personal, social and health education curriculum is a priority for the school and its quality is good. There are two co-ordinators who work closely with the local education authority advisor. Monitoring of personal, social and health education is largely informal and, given the importance of the subject to pupils' development, this is unsatisfactory. There is a suitable scheme of work in place which includes behaviour expectations, bullying and relationships. The school works with the local police on making pupils appropriately aware of danger from strangers. Sex education lessons begin when pupils are 11 and parents are informed before the lessons take place. A school nurse is in attendance as necessary. Staff in school expect to answer pupils' questions as they are asked as pupils develop at very different rates. Drugs education is also covered as part of personal, social and health education lessons. The school is part of the national Healthy Schools Initiative. Given the changing needs of pupils in the school, the co-ordinators are building up suitable resources and are adapting others.
30. The experiences that the school provides to help pupils to develop as individuals, in spiritual, moral, social and cultural terms, have improved and are now very good overall. As a result, pupils make very good progress in their own personal development. Very many parents recognise this as a strong feature of the school.

31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There is a whole school emphasis on raising pupils' self-worth and pupils' belief in their own abilities. Achievement and effort is recognised and celebrated, no matter how small, through individual praise as well as to a wider audience through whole school assemblies, parent newsletters and national newspaper articles. Very good efforts are made to raise pupils' aspirations and they benefit from being taught by physically challenged adults in school. For example, the school employs an expert sports coach with a disability to teach team games such as boccia and wheelchair football and enable pupils to discover new talents and the thrill of using their skills in highly competitive situations. Indeed, the school's boccia team won the league last year.
32. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff throughout the school expect very high standards of behaviour from pupils. They teach right from wrong and they lead by setting very good examples themselves. Pupils show respect towards adults and each other, they are very polite and obliging and many have learnt to be calm and focused. On the occasions when pupils are reprimanded for poor behaviour, this is done well with an emphasis on positive aspects of behaviour. Pupils are taught to have an understanding of our moral duties on a wider scale; for example, themes in assemblies draw attention to the plight of others in different parts of the world, the need for fund raising to help people less fortunate than ourselves and prayers that ask governments to be just and fair.
33. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. The school deliberately provides very many opportunities for pupils to socialise together within school as well as with other people outside school. All the older pupils get together in the hall for break time and so they have the valuable opportunity for engaging in typical teenage banter and humour. Lunchtimes are arranged to provide a family-style experience in the dining hall and a wide selection of team activities are on offer in the main hall. There are very many visits out of school, especially for older pupils and these have included visits abroad. Pupils' writing shows how much they enjoy wider opportunities for meeting other people such as when they are on work experience or engaged in project work with pupils from neighbouring secondary schools. A particular strength of the school is the determination to help pupils to develop their skills of communication either verbal or through the use of communication technology equipment and pupils make very good progress as a result. A very high priority throughout the school is to teach pupils to be as independent as possible. Although staff are very supportive of pupils, they only intervene with tasks such as removing coats, getting in and out of chairs and eating, when it is absolutely necessary.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school recognises and actively celebrates very many religious and cultural festivals as and when they fall throughout the whole year. They use the expertise and knowledge of pupils and parents as well as visitors to teach others about faiths and customs different from their own. For example, events or visitors in school have represented the Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Chinese and Catholic faiths and traditions. During the inspection, an excellent Caribbean carnival was held in school where pupils, staff, parents and visitors experienced steel band music, costumes, food and drink associated with Caribbean culture. Opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate different styles of art particularly through visits to a range of London galleries. Pupils experience a range of music from different countries, although music is not used extensively, for example, in assemblies.

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

35. Pupils continue to be very well cared for and parents appreciate this. Pupils are treated with a very high level of respect and dignity at all times. All staff, including education, administrative, medical and therapy personnel have a very clear understanding of the needs of each pupil and they are very skilled in what they do. For example, all members of staff have been trained in how to carry out tube feeding and in how to lift and handle pupils. A fully qualified nurse is always on site and the administration of medicine is recorded and done expertly and hygienically. Even though pupils are encouraged to be as independent as possible, they are very closely supervised and staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring pupils are safe and comfortable at all times. Site inspections and risk assessments are regularly carried out and action taken where appropriate. Procedures for the safety of pupils on out of school visits are very good. A preliminary visit and risk assessment is required and records confirm that staff have been thorough in this in the past.



36. The school's arrangements for the protection of children are good. The headteacher has responsibility for child protection and has undergone appropriate training. She is very careful to ensure that new or temporary staff are told exactly what to be watchful of and who to report to with any concerns. However, some members of staff have not had any recent training and in the absence of adequate written guidelines, they have to rely on their common sense to identify any symptoms of abuse. Even so, staff are very quick to report any worries about the welfare of pupils and there is no hesitation in involving other professionals including social services. Pupils themselves are taught how to lead a healthy and safe life through lessons on personal hygiene, drug and sex education, safety in the home and 'stranger danger'.
37. The educational and personal support and guidance given to pupils is very good indeed. Routines have been very carefully thought out and well established to create a very orderly and calm environment. Expectations of behaviour are consistently very high and any misbehaviour is dealt with sensitively but firmly. Where appropriate pupils have individual targets to help them to improve. Attendance is celebrated and absences very quickly followed up. Relationships are excellent and all staff are unfailingly patient with their pupils including with those for whom communication is profoundly difficult and slow. As a result of all that the school does, pupils want to come to school, they are happy in each other's company, there is no racial disharmony and pupils play a full part in lessons, safe in the knowledge that they will be listened to without fear of humiliation or embarrassment. Consequently they make good progress in many areas.
38. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory and there has been sound improvement since the last inspection. The relatively new whole school systems for measuring and recording small steps of progress should bring consistency and continuity of assessment, once practice is well established. Because the system has recently been modified and because not all staff are fully familiar with it, there are currently inconsistencies which the school is addressing. At a whole school level there is good analysis of assessment data to identify any differences in progress of girls, boys and different groups of pupils.
39. There is very good assessment of the youngest pupils from the time they enter the school. Within the different subject areas assessment is good in English, maths, art, PE, ICT, German and music. In science it is good for primary aged pupils but unsatisfactory for the more able pupils in secondary classes. There is good informal assessment in music and the teacher is beginning to develop the use of the whole school assessment systems for music. In history and geography assessment is good but is more thorough for pupils with more complex needs. Assessment is satisfactory in design and technology and religious education. There are opportunities for older pupils to gain accredited examination passes at GCSE, bronze or silver awards in the Certificate of Achievement and units in the ASDAN<sup>5</sup> scheme which concentrates on preparation for adult life.
40. A strength of assessment is the close attention that all staff pay to pupils' progress, achievement and difficulties during each lesson. This enables teachers to plan effectively for future learning. The school takes great care to assess the language acquisition, facility and development of pupils. Speech therapists take a lead in doing this. They are aware of the need to ensure that pupils who come from backgrounds where English is not the first language are assessed thoroughly. For some pupils, especially those who are non-vocal, the judgement about whether pupils need special support due to English not being their home language is difficult. This is an area where the school expects to do further work.
41. The quality of targets in pupils' individual education plans, which was judged to be good during the last inspection, has not been maintained. Targets are often too general and so are not as helpful as they should be in charting and promoting pupils' progress and informing teachers' planning

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

42. Parents continue to hold the school in high regard. Most parents are pleased with very much of what the school does. In particular, they are pleased with the expectations of their children to work hard and to do their best, with the quality of teaching and with the progress their children make. However,

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<sup>5</sup> The Award Development and Access Network.

a few parents are not satisfied with how well informed they are of their child's progress, or with how closely the school works with parents. Inspectors agree with parents' positive perceptions of the school but only partially with their concerns.

43. As a result of what the school does to inform and involve parents and the subsequent response of parents in supporting the work of the school, an effective partnership of education has been maintained since the last inspection. A key feature of this partnership is the very regular sharing of information between home and school in order to deploy the most effective methods to support the personal and physical development of pupils. As a result, pupils make good and even very good progress in these areas.
44. Parents show a high level of interest in their child and they support the school where they can. For example, around 80 per cent of parents attend annual review meetings and many parents attend specific events in school. Of particular note is the hard work of several parents in preparing a wonderful array of Caribbean food and drink for pupils and staff at their recent Caribbean carnival in school.
45. The quality of the information provided for parents, overall, continues to be good. There are very regular and detailed newsletters for parents and so they are kept very well informed of the daily life and events of the school. They are particularly effective in communicating achievement, especially in sporting events, as well as the focus of any special events and cultural celebrations. Daily communication systems, such as home-school diaries and especially recorded audio exchanges, are used consistently by parents and teachers to share information. The quality of the information in the prospectus and notably the governors' annual report to parents, is very good. However, information for parents on their child's individual academic progress, although satisfactory, lacks detail and clarity. For example, annual review reports and end of year reports pay too much attention to pupils' attitudes and what topics and activities have been experienced rather than what the child has actually learned. In addition, individual education plans are not always provided for parents. Nevertheless, information on pupils' personal and physical progress is very well detailed and further supplemented by very high quality reports from all specialist therapists who work with the pupils. Parents are invited to their child's annual review meetings as well as to a parents' meeting at the end of the school year but there are no other parents' meetings during the school year. Hence, for some parents there is a long gap between formal opportunities to talk to teachers about their child's progress and this is unsatisfactory.

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

46. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She provides a clear educational direction for the school and has a strong commitment to achieving high standards. This high quality of leadership has enabled the school to successfully introduce significant changes since the last inspection and continue to improve. These changes have included:
  - the reorganisation of classes to admit a greater number of pupils with more complex physical and learning needs following the closure of a special school in a neighbouring borough;
  - the development of opportunities for pupils to work alongside mainstream peers;
  - the introduction of a recognised curriculum for teaching pupils with profound and multiple learning needs;
  - a review of staffing and staff responsibilities;
  - a very good induction and staff development programme which was recognised through the achievement of the Investors in People Award;
  - the reorganisation of the school's financial system drawing on the expertise of a bursarial service; and
  - several improvements to the accommodation to further pupils' access to the curriculum.
47. The headteacher is effectively supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. They ensure the school is well managed. The deputy headteacher is responsible for the early years and there is a head of the primary department and a head of the secondary department. All are experienced staff and fulfil their responsibilities well. They share a commitment to support and develop their respective staff teams which is valued by colleagues. Departmental meetings are used

well for curriculum planning and sharing information. There is good communication across the school and all staff are kept well informed through weekly meetings.

48. The management team is outward looking and shares a strong commitment to promoting educational inclusion. This has produced some very good links with local mainstream nurseries, schools and colleges which have extended pupils' curriculum opportunities and enabled them to work together with their mainstream peers. The headteacher and senior staff have also used their expertise to advise other schools, such as when the deputy headteacher was seconded to the LEA Inclusion Project or when the headteacher has advised on access for pupils with physical difficulties. The appointment of a teacher to develop integration opportunities has improved links with other schools.
49. The school's aims are reflected very well in all areas of its work and there is a shared sense of purpose amongst staff and pupils at all levels in the school. The central aim to 'empower pupils with dignity and self-reliance' is very well displayed both in text and symbols around the school. Staff are very good at promoting independence, such as when they give pupils time to make choices or when they ask them first before giving help. Consequently pupils demonstrate considerable perseverance when coping with difficulties. All staff are valued and feel they have their views considered by senior management.
50. The school is welcoming and both staff and pupils take pride in the school. The attractive displays reflect the pupils' knowledge of a wide range of cultural and religious themes and include community languages. The school works very well with the families of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. A good example of this is the use of an outreach worker to liaise with Bengali families. Parents from a wide range of backgrounds regularly visit the school and spend time in classes.
51. There are good arrangements for delegating key areas of work to staff. Since the last inspection there has been good progress in clarifying job descriptions and responsibilities. Several class teachers have additional responsibility for co-ordinating subjects across the school. However in some subjects, such as history and geography, this role has not yet been fully developed to monitor and support teaching in all classes and share best practice amongst staff. The school is aware of this issue and it is a priority in the school improvement plan.
52. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities well. There have been recent changes in the composition of the governing body and the chair has only been in place for 6 months. However she has established a good working relationship with the headteacher and the governing body generally supports the school well. Several responsibilities are suitably devolved to sub-committees which have clearly defined responsibilities and meet regularly.
53. Governors have a clear vision for the school which embraces the principle of inclusion. They are also concerned that any changes in provision enable pupils to receive the necessary specialist facilities appropriate to their individual needs. Governors recently presented a well-reasoned document for consultation with the local education authority, which considers proposals for the future development of the school.
54. Governors are familiar with the strengths and areas for development in the school. They are aware of the changing needs of pupils being admitted to the school, subject areas for development and the limitations of the accommodation. The headteacher keeps governors well informed through her termly reports. Governors also make visits to the school and report back to fellow members. Recent visits have included observation of maths and PSHE<sup>6</sup> lessons and attendance at assemblies and the Christmas show. The school has acted well to ensure targets for pupils to achieve are met. As information is collected each year this will provide a useful basis for measuring pupil progress over time and keeping governors informed about progress.
55. The school monitors its work well and is committed to raising pupils' achievement through successful teaching. Senior staff make termly lesson observations and each teacher is given feedback with agreed areas for further development. Issues for development across the school are regularly discussed and there is a useful development programme which focuses on different subjects over

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<sup>6</sup> Personal, social and health education.

coming terms. There has also been an emphasis on developing teaching skills to work effectively with pupils who have profound and complex needs. Teacher's planning is reviewed during lesson observations and at least annually by senior staff. However, in some cases, this is not sufficiently frequent to ensure the generally very good planning is consistent in all lessons.

56. The school has good arrangements for performance management and appraisal. There is a suitable policy in place and teachers have agreed annual targets which are reviewed with their head of department. Support staff also take part in an annual appraisal meeting with their head of department.
57. The school has identified very appropriate areas for further development. These are contained in a three year school improvement plan and include: the professional development of support staff; improvements in facilities for design and technology; and the extension of staff skills and curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with more profound and complex learning difficulties. There are additional plans for each subject, with a major focus on the strategy for delivering science, numeracy and literacy at Key Stage 3. The plan has clear objectives, is well costed and has a timetable for implementation. However the plan does not make clear how progress in achieving initiatives will be monitored and this is a weakness.
58. The school has very good arrangements for induction and staff development which are valued by both teachers and support staff. The school recently appointed a graduate trainee teacher and worked closely with a local university to provide the training. These arrangements were extremely well organised and the trainee received a high standard of support. The school has correctly identified training to improve the standards of teaching. The current focus is to train staff in skills to meet the changing needs of pupils. This includes using the skills of the deputy headteacher to provide signed support training for other staff.
59. The school has clearly identified priorities for spending and the budget is well managed. A bursar service is used which provides a high level of up-to-date information for monitoring expenditure. There is currently a healthy carry forward of approximately six per cent of the annual budget. Additional income from the New Opportunities Fund, Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and local charities are all appropriately targeted. This funding has been used particularly well in promoting after school and lunchtime clubs for pupils.
60. There are good systems in place for the payment of invoices and day-to-day management of financial transactions. Recommendations for improvement in the last audit report have all been implemented. Governors monitor the budget well and different staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
61. The school is aware of the principles of best value and implements them well. The premises manager receives several estimates before building work is commissioned and costs are carefully compared. The local authority provides detailed information on comparative unit costs with other special schools and the headteacher uses this information well to review the allocation of resources. The school has compared the cost of its cleaning contract but has not yet compared the cost and efficiency of other services with different providers.
62. Technology is used very well, both in the school's administrative systems and by staff with pupils. The school has a very accessible web site which gives useful information about the school. This was designed with the help of staff from a national newspaper. Most teachers have received training in ICT through the recent national scheme for schools and staff are encouraged to borrow laptops to develop their skills. Teachers design personalised overlays and use software very well to link pictures and symbols with text. This has a very positive impact on pupils' communication. Switches are used very effectively to enable pupils to communicate in school and also to take messages home. The school makes good use of a technician to ensure equipment is serviced and problems are rectified quickly.
63. The numbers and skills of teachers, learning support assistants and therapists are very well matched to the needs of pupils. There are specialist teachers for art, music and PE and a full range of speech and language, physio and occupational therapists to address pupils' multiple needs. Staff generally have a very good understanding of pupils' needs and are familiar with strategies that help them learn.

These include the use of symbols, augmentative communication aids and signed support. Staff have had appropriate training in manual handling, signing, epilepsy and first aid. Staff are very skilled at providing sufficient individual support to pupils without restricting their independence.

64. The school makes very good use of the limited accommodation. Positive features are the hydrotherapy pool, facilities for therapy, specialist science and art and a raised garden area with a pond. Since the last inspection the school has added a computer suite, a small music room and installed toilets with hoists. There is also a food technology room but there is no designated space for pupils to work with resistant materials. The school has plans to develop this area. Generally the building is cramped with limited outside space which restricts pupils' opportunities to play games. The building requires a high level of maintenance, particular problems being rising damp through the floor and a frequently leaking roof. Despite these difficulties, the premises staff work hard to keep the school clean and presentable.
65. Overall learning resources are good and very good for the early years. There have been many improvements since the last inspection, particularly in ICT, music and reading and this has improved pupils' access to these subjects. There is a lack of artefacts for use in history and RE, but the school makes very good use of the community and local environment to extend opportunities. There are good additional aids for pupils with little or no language, such as switches and touch pads. Wheelchair access is good and resources generally are used well to promote independence.

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

66. In order to improve standards further, the school should:

- I. extend the very good planning of some teachers particularly to secondary science but also to those other subjects where curriculum planning needs to be improved;

*(paragraphs 22, 25, 55, 101-105, 110, 116 and 176)*

- II. improve procedures to assess individual progress to ensure regular and consistent use of assessment scales across the school by all teachers; and

*(paragraphs 10, 38, 41, 45 and 87)*

- III. with the local authority, improve accommodation:

- by providing more storage space for equipment;
- by developing outside play space to aid the physical development of all pupils;
- by maintaining the fabric of the school to a higher standard and eliminate rising damp, leaking roofs and breakdowns in heating; and
- by improving provision for music.

*(paragraphs 10, 38, 39, 41, 45, 151 and 163)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

59

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

40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	9	19	20	11	0	0	0
Percentage	16	32	34	18	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

No of pupils

Number of pupils on the school's roll	61
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	30

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	41
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	19.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2	3	2	5

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	6	4	N/a	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	0	3
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	3	0	3
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75	0	75

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	9	1	0	1

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

		11		5		4		9		
Certificate of Achievement		GCSE		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Two pupils Silver Level in science										
Three pupils Bronze Level in science										
One student Silver Level in mathematics								1		
Three students Bronze Level in mathematics										4

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	9
Chinese	0
White	33
Any other minority ethnic group	7

### ***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: YR – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.0
Average class size	5.0

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	28
Total aggregate hours worked per week	689

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	928,973
Total expenditure	870,169
Expenditure per pupil	19,353
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,056
Balance carried forward to next year	58,804

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*





## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	61
Number of questionnaires returned	24

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	8	13	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	46	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	33	4	8	4
The teaching is good.	46	50	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	21	21	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	21	4	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	54	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	21	17	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	58	21	8	4	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	21	4	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	29	4	0	17

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

67. The school has a multi-professional team of education and health service staff to meet the needs of pupils with physical difficulties and associated special educational needs, including medical difficulties and language, communication and learning difficulties. This has a very good effect on learning. The school makes very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage (children who are five years old or younger.) The early years class is an assessment class for very young children. Classroom staff, together with parents, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, communication teachers and occupational therapists work together in a very effective partnership which provides children with a very good education and skilfully assesses their future needs which aim to establish firm foundations for future learning.
68. The early years class provides a structured learning environment in which children build on previous experiences and develop independence through a secure learning environment. The class provides opportunities for inclusion with a wider peer group and fosters inclusion links with other early years settings. For example, one child regularly integrates into a local early years nursery and children from a local primary school integrate into the school on a regular weekly basis. Two pupils' long-term needs to be in a mainstream setting have been identified.
69. The early years class has very good procedures for assessing the needs of very young children. Staff from a wide range of services aim to meet the individual needs of all children through a programme which is detailed to individual needs. The class gives children a sense of security and develops their self-esteem, confidence and positive attitudes to one another.
70. There is very good ongoing assessment and the nursery nurse and classroom assistants play an important part in this. The staff maintain a close and effective communication with parents. Children's individual education plans are well written with appropriate targets. There is a very good policy and scheme of work which allows children to build on their achievements and experiences in a systematic way.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

71. Provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is very good. A key factor in this is the respect with which the staff treat children. Every effort is made to establish relationships however great the barriers to communication. Staff observe children's behaviour very carefully and know when an eye movement and change of expression can be a significant communication; they involve children in routines of care and learning, telling them through word, sign, symbols or special objects what is going to happen next. Teachers take great care to ensure that children relate to each other as well as to staff, positioning them so that they can see each other and actively promoting communication between them. They encourage children to be independent, for example by making choices and co-operating actively in their personal care. Consideration is both implicit in the way staff behave and the way in which they teach the children. Because of barriers to their learning children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals expected of this age group. However they do achieve interest in their work, very high motivation and effort, confidence and friendship. They achieve a measure of independence that is possible for each child. The standards of teaching and care are very high and this leads to very good progress in this area of learning.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

72. Provision for communication, language and literacy is very good. Teachers use a wide variety of approaches including speech, facial expression, gesture, sign symbols and objects with a special meaning for the children. Information and communication technology methods, for example switches are also used where appropriate but more emphasis at this stage is rightly given to finding out how each child communicates. By age six, children listen and attend well and respond to speech, sign or eye pointing. Where children are able to understand and use speech, teachers work hard to extend

their understanding and vocabulary. For example, in a lesson which combined circle time with literacy, children sang the song 'how are you today?' Using appropriate expression, signs and picture communication symbols, children were able to say if they were happy or sad. To enable children to experience early word recognition and phonic skills, teachers read children's name cards to them as they explain what the card says and who it relates to. Children enjoy books and stories because of interesting expression used by teachers, as they read for example 'Dear Zoo' using dramatic expression of voice and face and using a variety of appropriate props, for example soft toy animals. The story was in preparation for a trip to the zoo the following day. The materials were carefully chosen for the story and for children story bags to take with them to the zoo. This enabled all children to take part in a variety of meaningful experiences during their trip. Children used signs and symbols to record what they had seen and using the book 'Brown Bear What Can You See?' as a model, children make their own story book of their favourite animal that they had seen at the zoo. A few children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning and are beginning to write using mark making symbols. Other children use switches or other computerised equipment to record language. Whilst all children will not reach the early learning goals by age six, all make very good progress towards their own targets and the very good and excellent teaching enables them to make a start on communication and enjoy stories and books.

### **Mathematical development**

73. Provision for children's mathematical development is very good. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children will not have achieved the early learning goals. They make very good progress towards their own targets. They gain a very good experience of rhythm through the use of number songs and rhymes to practise their counting skills. They explore shape and size as they use a variety of different materials to make a collage flower to take to the carnival and use counting skills to determine how many pieces of material they have used. Many opportunities are used during the day to enhance number skills for example in circle time at the beginning of each day children sing counting rhymes, listen to number stories of various animals for example 'over in the meadow' and reinforce this learning by making a collage of the story. They count animals they have seen at the zoo and sort animals into sets. The very good teaching leads to very good progress towards individual targets.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. There is very good provision for children's development of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children learn the regular routines of the school day helped by pictures, words, symbols and meaningful objects. They participate in role play in the pet shop in the 'Vets' Surgery' and learn to care for the animals in their care. They take part in trips which gives them a sense of the wider world. During the inspection children visited the zoo. Preparation for the trip was excellent. Teachers, nursery nurse and classroom assistant prepared the children very well. During circle time the teacher introduced 'where are we going today' using symbols on the daily timetable. Children looked at photographs of different animals and fish that they would see. The teacher explained that as they see an animal they put a symbol on their chart or a plastic animal into their bag. On return to school children took home with them pictures of what they had seen to enable parents to discuss their day with them. Information and communication technology is used extensively to develop children's awareness and enable them to communicate with teachers and each other. They learn how to operate switch accessible toys and a tape recorder so that they can listen to animal songs and rhymes. Children are encouraged to develop skills to enable them to become as independent as possible through a wide range of opportunities by using a variety of toys and equipment in a range of settings. To enable them to develop their skills, children experience a range of toys and switches to enable them to become independent learners and make their own choices, for example in a creative art lesson children used a four by four switch to choose colours of papers and felt to create their collage flower. They use a variety of small construction equipment and participate in role play in the vets' surgery. The very good teaching ensures that all children make very good gains in their learning towards their own targets.

### **Physical development**

75. Provision for children's physical development is good overall. The cramped accommodation makes it difficult for children to have the full range of experiences to which they are entitled. There is a very small outdoor space and only one indoor space, the hall, suitable for lessons involving movement. The school makes the best use of its resources to enable children to experience as much of the curriculum as possible. By age six children experience passive movements with the support of an adult and develop their fine and gross motor skills as they roll, grasp and pull. In a very good lesson in the hall, children enjoyed rolling large balls and with adult help passed them to friends. Some children with greater physical difficulties maintain a good sitting position for some minutes. Children use the hydrotherapy pool and take part in a range of activities including riding a tricycle and use the ball pool in the sensory area of the classroom, because the school does not have a range of large equipment of the kind which would allow children, including those in wheelchairs, to experience the adventure of climbing, swinging and sliding apparatus. Teaching is very good, but progress is limited by accommodation and equipment.

## **Creative development**

76. The school makes very good provision for creative development and children make very good progress because of the very good teaching they receive. Children have access to very good and varied musical experiences and join in playing instruments, singing and moving to music. They experience paint and use a range of colourful collage materials to make a flower to take with them to the school carnival. Children's imaginations are stimulated by very good teaching through stories and role play. They have opportunities to dress up and enjoy playing in the pet shop in the vets' surgery. There are many opportunities for free choice of play and for role-play. Children's imaginations are stimulated through the range of displays and experiences provided by the very good teaching they receive.
77. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is excellent. The teacher provides a wide range of stimulating experiences for children to enjoy. She has an excellent knowledge and understanding of her children and how they learn and manages and organises the Foundation Stage to very high standards.

## **ENGLISH**

78. Achievement and progress in English are very good overall. It is very good for most pupils and good at Key Stage 3. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Pupils are given very good support in developing ways of communicating efficiently with others. The combined high skills of teaching staff, speech therapists and support staff result in teaching being very good overall with some excellent teaching of 15 and 16 year old pupils. Pupils learn very well, they work hard and have very positive attitudes to their lessons. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. There is a good range of learning opportunities and information and communication technology is very well used. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils are included in lessons. The subject is well led and the subject leaders have accurately identified the main areas for continued subject development and are taking suitable action.
79. The recent, major and continuing changes in the pupil population have led to considerable changes being made to the English curriculum. This is because many pupils when they are admitted are not yet able to communicate readily with each other and with staff. Eighty per cent of pupils require alternative methods of communication to facilitate access to the speaking and listening component of the National Curriculum and a further group of pupils have home languages other than English. Some pupils are using just one or two words of English in their exchanges with others. Some pupils in school learn at a level which is in line with their ages and are to be entered for GCSE English. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are taught in line with their capabilities and needs. As a result pupils make good progress in their learning.
80. The emphasis on pupils' speaking, communicating and listening is very good and pupils make very good progress, given their particular needs. This is strength of the school. Teachers and speech and language therapists work together well. For example, they provide communication groups and assessment settings for five to 11 year old pupils. In a communication group pupils were learning to use the pictures in their communication folders. Two pupils in this group of five understood simple

words and three could say a few words or link particular sounds to words. During this good lesson, which was led by a speech and language therapist, some pupils made good eye contact with staff. The lesson gave pupils many opportunities to make choices, for example, one pupil used electronic equipment to 'speak' four choices about the activities they wanted to do; the pupil showed that they understood what was being asked and then made a choice to play with musical instruments. Although this group has only been running since January 2003 several pupils have made very good progress in their communication with others. The lessons also provide good opportunities for pupils to develop feelings and relationships with others.

81. This emphasis on developing effective communication continues across the school. It is closely linked to the building of pupils' independence; of pupils having views, priorities and opinions and being able to express these whether by their own speech, speech reproduction equipment, eye-pointing or hand/body/head movements. Through this emphasis pupils' speaking and listening improves. By the time pupils are 11 some are able to use their communication books well. They can devise simple sentences with linked pictures or symbols on subjects such as their likes and dislikes. By the time that pupils are 14 they are willing to read to their classmates and to give their views on what they have read. In a good lesson where pupils were to demonstrate their understanding of a passage from "Oliver Twist" pupils were giving relevant answers and were coping with their reading. This was due to the skill with which the teacher read the text to the class and then drew each pupil into the magic of the writing. This enthusiasm for language and personal expression continues as pupils move through the school. A GCSE class of 15 and 16 year old pupils used language flexibly and appropriately. Their vocabularies were broad. They enjoyed drawing conclusions from suppositions and inferences which arose from the poem they heard. They had good discussions with staff in a very friendly atmosphere. There is a wide range of abilities amongst the oldest pupils in the school. There are pupils who can use a word processor to create a simple text. The group used 'Power Point' as a tool to present a quiz on knowledge of Caribbean culture during the carnival activity. There are others who can use their communication books to create a story about their trip abroad or recognise pictures that represent important functions or ideas for the pupil. This group of pupils was able to take part in a good drama lesson at a local college where the more able pupils used their own words to describe their feelings expressively. Other pupils used gestures and electronic communicators to let others know what they felt. School staff who speak the home language of some of the pupils give good support to them and help pupils to have full access to the curriculum.
82. Overall, reading and writing development are very good. For many pupils reading and writing are at early stages and are linked to using significant pictures with accompanying text to compose phrases or sentences or to convey a single idea. Pupils, assisted by staff, are using a range of technological aids very well to ensure that they set down their own accounts. They do common exercises about meanings of words and put together suitable phrases and sentences. Seven year olds use symbols to write about sounds in the school environment and explore the use of prepositions. Where pupils are visually impaired they use raised symbols to convey what they want to say, and accompany the writing with pictures. In a very good lesson for ten and 11 year olds, a learning support assistant had to make a new symbol for a pupil. She had communicated well enough with the pupil to draw out a new idea, one which had not previously formed part of the communication book. The assistant checked the letter size that the pupil usually used and then went to the computer, selected and printed off the appropriate symbol. A more independent pupil in the class was using the computer-linked controls to match halves of sentences about his likes and dislikes. At the end of the lesson he had several sentences which staff printed for him and his work was read to the class. In a communication group seven to ten year old pupils were learning new symbols and were revising ones which they had used before. The pupils were highly responsive, using eye-pointing and being still to show that they understood. Pupils showed real pleasure in being in this group. This lesson was successful because of the very high quality of teaching from both the speech therapist and the teacher. The work was very well matched to the pupils' needs, the resources to support the lesson were interesting and caught the eye of pupils and the speech therapist and the teacher used signing alongside speech to draw in all pupils.
83. As pupils get older the work they do continues to be carefully planned to sustain their good progress rates. Some 11 to 14 year olds are able to write their own brief notes about work which they are doing. One pupil used his least mobile arm to anchor his work to the table while he wrote, another used a writing wedge, while several pupils had their words written for them by staff. At the end of the lesson, all pupils had made good progress due to their own efforts and enthusiasm and because of

the skilled work of learning support staff and the teacher's high expectations of what pupils could do. Fifteen and 16 year olds in a GCSE class were very good at extracting the main ideas from texts and were well able to explain which key words were being used and their significance to the meaning of the writing. They talked readily about their enthusiasm for reading, enjoying thrillers, detective fiction and horror stories. They were also aware that they will have to put aside some of their reading for pleasure while they are revising for their GCSEs. In another class of 15 and 16 year olds pupils' very successfully connected print with images of class activities taken with digital cameras and then worked together to compile an instant class book on the computer. Very good use was made of the language skills of the Turkish speaking learning support assistant whose constant commentary, interpreting and questioning, very effectively drew one Turkish-speaking pupil into the lesson. This was an excellent lesson combining a very high level of teacher skill, excellent use of information and communication technology and the promotion of pupils' social development and self-esteem. Previous class work has been made into vibrant, relevant and accessible class books.

84. Handwriting development is satisfactory. Where pupils are able to write using pencils or pens, the quality of their work is largely dependent on the physical freedom or flexibility they have. Pupils are able to recognise and read back their own writing, regardless of its legibility to others. Some of the older pupils' handwriting shows increasing control of letter size and suitable use of capital letters, full stops and other basic punctuation. Pupils do some suitable work on learning how to spell. However, a lot of their work is scribed or is produced using technology in which the pupil's spelling capabilities are not of central importance.
85. Teaching and learning are very good across the school. The main strengths are:
- Teachers' knowledge of their subject.
  - The very good working partnerships between teaching and support staff.
  - The warm friendly and respectful relationships between staff and pupils.
  - Close observation of pupils and the progress they make leading to good planning for pupils' next steps and inclusion of all pupils.
  - The high expectations of all pupils by staff.
  - The constant emphasis on pupils making their own choices, using their own words and coming to their own conclusions.
  - The very good use of information and communication technology to promote effective communication and to improve the rate of pupils' learning.
  - Choice and use of resources and teaching methods to help pupils to learn.
  - Teachers' ability to emphasise literacy lessons across the curriculum.
  - The involvement of speech and language therapists in specialist work on improving pupils' communication and therefore access to broader learning opportunities.
  - The use of staff who can use the home language of pupils to assist their understanding of their work.
  - Pupils work very hard, they concentrate as well as they can and show clear enjoyment in their work.
  - Pupils respond very well to the opportunities given to them to communicate and talk about the work that they do.
  - Pupils are keen to take home accounts of their work, using technological aids to record what they have done for playback at home.
  - Pupils enjoy working with each other and respectfully listen or stay calm and still at the ends of lessons when work done is being shared.
  - Relationships between pupils in lessons are excellent.
86. The areas that need attention tend to be linked to individual lessons. There were occasions where, even with the high level of adult support in class some pupils were left for too long without direct attention. While there is a very good range of resources the selection of materials to support the more complex needs of pupils needs to be expanded and the school is aware of this. At times, the contrast between the animation and interest in the teacher's voice when reading, is not matched by other staff who take over the task.
87. The leadership and management of English is well led by three experienced teachers. The priorities for further development are correctly identified as the acquisition of core books for each class, expanding the range of resources for pupils with more profound and complex needs and the range of

suitable accreditation for courses for the oldest pupils. The areas identified for improvement in the last inspection have been addressed fully. The curriculum is in place. Checking the quality of work in English is good. Pupils' work is checked regularly according to the school's work sampling programme. Co-ordinators observe secondary teachers teaching English once a term, and in primary, once a year. There are weekly meetings where the curriculum is discussed and co-ordinators review their colleagues' teaching plans. Assessment is good and teachers regularly note on pupils' work what they have done and what kind of support they received but tend to write little about the next steps pupil could take.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Pupils achievements in mathematics are good in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans. They make good progress in numeracy, in relation to their level of special educational needs and this standard has been maintained since the last inspection. Behaviour is very good and the consistent and persevering effort that pupils make to overcome obstacles to learning contributes greatly to their success.
89. At all ages pupils achieve well and make good progress in mathematics. This is because teaching is constantly good and sometimes very good and because of the teachers' good subject knowledge and very good relationships with the pupils, it promotes effective learning. In addition, the work of committed learning support assistants makes a consistent and notable contribution to the good achievement of pupils. An important development that has led to the good teaching is the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The planning provides an appropriate range to the curriculum, including the P scales. This is supported by very good assessment procedures. Teachers set pupils clear and largely appropriate numeracy targets to achieve.
90. By the age of seven, pupils have been given many opportunities to experience mathematics. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties look and listen as the teacher reads a story 'I like animals'. With help they count the number of animals, for example two dogs. They experience counting through songs and stories and examining plastic animals that were in the story. The combination of mathematics with this physical activity helps them to experience the vocabulary of early number.
91. By age of 11, pupils have experienced early number skills of counting and have explored clock faces. Through telling the story of 'What's the time Mr Wolf', the teacher introduced the concept of time to pupils. With help they were able to find 'o'clock' and give appropriate answers to simple questions. Pupils who are not able to use spoken English worked with appropriate aids such as a talker and symbol aids including 'Moon'<sup>7</sup>. Younger pupils explored the sensory qualities of a cube, as they were encouraged to pass the cube to a given person, count the number of cubes used to build a tower and roll the cube and identify a favourite picture. Teaching was very good and encouraged pupils to understand that a cube has a proper name and began to develop an awareness of three-dimensional shape. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties look and listen to numbers. Many pupils at different levels of ability enjoy taking part in games that help them improve their understanding of number.
92. By the age of 14, higher attaining pupils learn to change simple fractions into decimals. In a very good lesson pupils were given opportunities to practise identifying decimal tenths. The teacher skilfully introduced one tenth of a metre to give pupils a wider understanding. Very good use was made of resources and this developed pupils understanding well. Other pupils learned about two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and with help they made a square based pyramid. Teaching focused on discussion and this helped pupils to understand the link with ancient Egypt. To further reinforce pupils knowledge and understanding the teacher introduced them to a game on number and shape which most were able to play successfully.

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<sup>7</sup> Moon is intended for visually impaired or deaf/blind children. It is a system of 36 raised shapes based on the standard alphabet, similar to Braille but easier to learn.



93. By the age of 16, some pupils are entered for GCSE or the Certificate of Achievement. In one lesson they revised drawing pie charts using given data and worked out the number of items represented by each sector of the pie chart. The teacher explained very well what would be required of pupils when they gave instructions to their amanuensis during an examination. Pupils demonstrated that they understood how to draw charts using the method of drawing from left to right and how to calculate the number of items represented by the pie chart. Good teaching supports pupils well and they are achieving in line with average national standards. All these pupils are working towards entering GCSE at the foundation level. Pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties use a variety of communication aids such as switches and eye and head movement to take part in an excellent lesson in matching corresponding items and colours. Very good bilingual assistance for a Turkish pupil and the generally high standard of support assistants made this a very rich and exciting lesson.
94. For pupils over the age of 16 there are good examples of problem solving in mathematics applied to real life situations in the ASDAN modules through which pupils have their achievements accredited. All study basic mathematics and have opportunities to enter for examinations. Pupils learn to communicate appropriately using mathematical language and work together as they learn to transfer their skills into real life situations, for example using money when shopping. All pupils work towards a Certificate of Achievement in mathematics and there have been silver and bronze awards.
95. A good standard in mathematics has been maintained from the last inspection. Developments have included the training in National Numeracy Strategy and the planning that takes account of that. The school has an increased number of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and the school uses the 'P' scales to assess pupils levels of attainment.
96. The quality of teaching, including the teaching of numeracy is good and sometimes very good for pupils of all ages. In a small number of lessons teaching was satisfactory. The successful qualities of the very good teaching included well-organised lessons and clear aims for tasks. Planning was very thorough and tasks met the learning needs of all pupils. In the most successful teaching, there are different expectations for individual pupils and tasks are modified for their level and capacity to learn. At Key Stage 4, this results in excellent looking and listening, as pupils strive to complete tasks. Mathematical vocabulary is clearly defined and reinforced during the excellent lesson. Creative activities help to motivate younger pupils, for example pupils enjoyed discovering the qualities of different kinds of cubes and used their senses well.
97. In most lessons the pace and level of support are appropriate for the individual pupil, without losing the pace of the lesson generally. Pupils are given time to respond. Songs are used well to support counting. Signs, symbols and communication aids help pupils' understanding. Teachers and assistants are very encouraging. Pupils' responses are noted and praised. They are encouraged to do as much on their own as they can. Assistants have a clear understanding of the lessons and their instructions and questioning are often skilful. There is very good, co-operative teamwork between all staff working together in lessons. Lessons often end with a task that draws understanding together. Assessment is ongoing and is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.
98. Resources for mathematics are very good. Some commercial schemes are used to support teachers' own ideas. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils' numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding are regularly reinforced across the curriculum, in assemblies and during other lessons, for example in history where pupils had constructed a time line. A particular positive feature of the subject is the high level of involvement of non-verbal pupils and those with complex needs in mathematics in activities. The subject and the manner in which it is taught, through the appropriate use of signing, symbols and sensory experiences make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
100. Mathematics is well managed and co-ordinators work very hard. The curriculum is well planned and there are detailed records which identify the progress pupils are making. A key to the effectiveness of the curriculum is the way it is planned to meet the needs of pupils of all ages, using appropriate practical activities to match their maturity.

## SCIENCE

101. Progress and achievement in science are good overall. Between age seven and 11 progress is good for all groups of pupils, including those who have many barriers to their learning and those who are learning English as an additional language. For these pupils, the use of a wide variety of aids to communication ensures successful participation. Progress between the age of 11 and 16 is usually satisfactory. In one class, taught by a non specialist to pupils with the most complex needs, teaching was excellent and progress outstandingly good. Students over 16 make good progress in the science content of their life skills courses. Differences in the quality of planning and preparation for lessons largely account for the different rates of progress, in particular the planning for how each individual pupil will be given access to the lesson. The pattern of achievement is broadly similar to that seen during the last inspection. Because of their physical and communication difficulties pupils do not usually attain at the levels expected nationally at their age; however, a few pupils do attain grades in GCSE examinations close to these levels, while others gain units of accreditation in Certificates of Achievement.
102. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are generally good and sometimes excellent. Behaviour is generally very good. Pupils all make great efforts to learn and take part in lessons, work very well together and show each other patience and respect.
103. By age seven pupils recognise a range of sounds made by musical instruments when they are plucked, shaken or banged. All the pupils make a response to the sounds by gesture or vocalising, or by becoming still as they listen carefully. Some pupils can take part in the lesson by making sounds on the instruments themselves. Higher achieving pupils identify the instruments from the sound, selecting the correct answer when given a choice by the teacher. By age 11, pupils are familiar with a number of sources of light and are able to classify them by entering a symbol into a prepared chart. By age 14 pupils begin to understand how plants are kept healthy. The pupils who experience most difficulty with learning, name simple parts of plants and understand that water is drawn up into the plant. Higher achieving pupils look at leaves through the microscope and know that the sun helps plants make food in its leaves; they begin to understand more difficult terms such as "stomata" when naming parts of plants. All pupils appreciate the wonders of the natural world and show this by the enjoyment of the activities. By age 16 pupils know that gravity pulls the moon towards the earth, have knowledge about their own galaxy and know some conditions needed for a planet to support life. They are beginning to be able to review evidence to decide on the probability of life existing on a particular planet. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates a relative weakness in their understanding of investigative work. Pupils over 16 know about pollution and the environment. They know what foods to eat to keep healthy and they know how to take care of themselves when they injure themselves.
104. Teaching in science in the infant and junior classes is good. Subject knowledge is good. Teachers are aware of each individual pupil and plan well to give them access to the lesson. They recognise the need to repeat work to consolidate knowledge and to build on what pupils already know. They ensure that no pupil is left out of activities and that all feel able to contribute. Pupils are thus given confidence in their ability to learn. There is good informal assessment at this stage. Most of the teaching in the secondary classes is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge of science is good and progress has been made on extending the bank of symbols available, to cover all the science topics. Good use is made of "mind map" diagrams. However, planning is insufficiently detailed to ensure that every pupil is engaged and progressing at all times and there are moments when more able pupils are not fully extended, while pupils with greater difficulties are being well supported by learning support assistants. Sometimes the teacher moves on too quickly when pupils have not really grasped the concept being taught and this makes progress insecure. Materials needed are not always prepared in advance and diagrams and symbols are drawn while the class waits. Marking is not particularly helpful and this is a weakness. However, one excellent lesson was seen in which two pupils took part in an investigation into how far cars would roll on differently textured ramps. Meticulous preparation, use of sign, symbol, demonstration and digital photographs all ensured that the pupils understood the principles involved and knew how results should be measured and recorded. There was excellent support for an English language learner both from the teacher and from a bilingual assistant. There was very good focus on techniques of investigation and pupils both learned during the lesson and thoroughly enjoyed it. No lessons were observed of science specifically for pupils over 16 but from examination of pupils' work, teaching is at least satisfactory.

105. The primary science department is well co-ordinated. Topics are very well planned and include different planning for pupils with different needs. They also include details of how information technology will be used, what skills are to be learned and what assessment criteria are to be used. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and recorded. Co-ordination of secondary science is poor. Planning is insufficiently detailed. The long-term planning is poor and while the subject leader is aware of the changing population of the school, long-term plans do not adequately provide for the very varied needs of the pupils. Lesson plans also lack sufficient detail and, in some lessons observed, this clearly affected the progress of some pupils. There is insufficient analysis of pupils' assessed work to see where there are gaps and where revision is needed. Too little emphasis appears to be given, in practice, to investigative methods and skills. The department has good resources. Accommodation for secondary classes is satisfactory.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. Provision in art and design is good and good progress has been made since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are good overall with some excellent work in the secondary department. Pupils' behave well in lessons and evidence of the range of art-based projects in which pupils have taken part demonstrate highly positive attitudes to their work. The curriculum is in place and provides greater emphasis on skills development than previously. The art and design curriculum is interwoven with the design and technology curriculum in the primary department. Leadership and management are satisfactory.
107. As few art and design lessons were seen during the inspection judgements about the quality of the subject are mainly based on pupils' work, discussions with key staff and the examination of resources and school documents.
108. Between the ages of five and 11 pupils make satisfactory progress; older pupils make very good progress. The differences between the rates of progress are due to the differing priorities for pupils' development in each stage and the firm lead the secondary co-ordinator has taken to expand the art and design curriculum to include a greater emphasis on art skills development. In the primary years many pupils are working hard to establish effective means of communication and control over specific hand and body movements. Their art and design curriculum is planned alongside design and technology. Teachers are good at linking art and design work to other subjects. For example, pupils make satisfactory apple prints to accompany work on the Jewish New Year in religious education. They have done simple, outline pencil drawings of buildings from first-hand observations. There is some particularly striking and well displayed work on 'Raindance' which is linked to poetry, dance and movement; pupils' paintings are done using a limited range of colours – blues, greys, whites and blacks – and pupils have applied the paint in ways that are most accessible to them, so there is much use of hand and fingers. Pupils' work tends to be sent home with them and sketchbooks are not used in the primary classes. This makes it difficult to ensure that pupils' development in art skills is being checked regularly enough. Art and design is not yet given a high enough priority in the primary department timetable. As an example, in one satisfactory lesson seen, the time given to art was planned properly. Pupils were taking part in suitable activities about the work of the artist, Gustav Klimt. These tasks closely met pupils' levels of capability. Learning support staff worked very closely with individual pupils to ensure that they were making as many choices as possible about the composition of their work. However, there was little time to concentrate on art and design due to the restlessness of pupils after a very hardworking academic day. The teacher recognised this possibility in advance and planned for some pupils to ride big bikes in flowing curved shapes, reflecting a feature of the painting being studied. Work on display around the school shows that pupils use powder and ready mixed paints regularly and use a variety of methods to apply the paint including hand printing and dribbling or blowing paint. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own work and to suggest improvements.
109. Eleven to sixteen year old pupils are taught by a specialist art teacher. Pupils are doing interesting work which also emphasises the need to build their art and design skills. As in the younger age groups, the work is planned through topics and links well with other subjects. There is good work by older pupils on display which supports the visit to the National Portrait Gallery. Along with written accounts of the experience, pupils have also done some creditable collages. There are strong links with outside organisations and the resulting work is of high quality. The results of a citizenship

project with a local secondary school are shown to the whole school community in a well-balanced and lively display of fabric painting and printing with photographs of work in progress. There is some extremely skilled teaching in the secondary department and there are high expectations of pupils. In an excellent lesson, 15 and 16 year olds, who were doing a block of work on the Surrealists, described very well to the class the detail of the work that had happened in previous weeks. They spoke fluently and knowledgeably about Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte and their signatures – the symbols which were important in their work. They were very well able to identify fantasy in the work and contrasted this appropriately with the photographic style of painting. In a particularly strong exchange, which emphasised the very high quality of pupils' art history work, when one pupil observed that Dali was a strange person, another pupil said there were similarities between Dali's life and that of Sigmund Freud, the psychoanalyst. The teacher was particularly good in drawing in to the lesson a non-vocal pupil, keeping strong eye contact with him while she was explaining the work to be done. The teacher used homework well and, as a result, pupils' art notebooks were a good record of work covered or considered.

110. Leadership and management in art and design are shared between two specialist teachers who are enthusiasts for their subject. They have both taken up their roles recently and are taking satisfactory steps to further develop the subject. Their approaches to the art and design curriculum are very different and the move to more skills-based work needs to be planned closely to give greater coherence to the subject across the school. The range of the curriculum is suitable and the organisation of the work into topics enhances the opportunities for cultural development. The way in which the subject is taught promotes social development well. The greater formality of work in the secondary department, with practice being led by a teacher with considerable experience of examination classes, leads to assessment being very good. Across the school information and communication technology is used well to ensure that all pupils have access to the art and design curriculum. There are very good resources available for teaching art and design. Learning support staff work very well to ensure that pupils have access to the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. Provision for design and technology is satisfactory. During the week of the inspection it was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons in design and technology. The scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and models on display provided evidence that most pupils are making good progress throughout the school.
112. By the age of seven, with help, pupils can make puppets from card and use pictures and symbols to describe how they have made them. Some can make simple buildings using Lego bricks and make drawings which reflect what they have made. By the age of 11 older primary aged pupils can stir a mixture and cut it into shapes to make biscuits. With help they can sequence symbols to show how the product was made. Pupils are developing greater control when making models. They can make simple helicopters with help and test if they fly.
113. By the age of 14, higher achieving pupils can make a model car from card and describe how it was made. They expand and vary their ideas on a design sheet, some using symbols whilst others are able to write independently. Pupils can also use a plastic material to design and make masks, some of which were used to striking effect in the carnival parade. By the age of 16 pupils are able to design a gadget to pass a baton between two moving vehicles and evaluate their work. One pupil stated "I learned simple designs are often the best". This 'Technogames' project was completed by working with students from the local university. Pupils use wood to make book cases at school or simple stringed instruments when they visit a local college. Pupils with more profound and multiple learning needs can cut out pictures and use symbols to describe the making of cakes in a food technology lesson. Pupils' and students' work at Key Stage 4 and post 16 is linked well to the development of independence through a City and Guilds 'Cooking for Myself' programme and the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme. Pupils and students are able to shop for ingredients and use them to cook a simple meal in school.
114. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Where there is good teaching pupils are encouraged to make choices and evaluate their work. Staff use symbols and pictures well to help pupils describe their work and support staff are effectively deployed to prompt pupils and

engage them in the lesson. In less successful lessons learning objectives are not clear and tasks are not well matched to the individual needs of all pupils. Staff use photographs well to record pupils' progress and there are some good examples of assessment after pupils have completed projects and in work related to the Youth Award Scheme.

115. Pupils have very positive attitudes to design and technology. Older pupils talk with enthusiasm about their work, such as when describing the 'Technogames' project. Pupils pay attention well and those with little language try extremely hard to report on their work by using symbols and switches.
116. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Management of the subject has been complicated recently due to the secondment of the co-ordinator. At Key Stage 3 the subject is currently taught by temporary staff and the specialist subject teacher is due to return at the beginning of next term. A sound scheme of work has been introduced which follows the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. At Key Stage 1 and in lower junior classes design and technology skills are taught through art and design topics. Links between primary and secondary teaching have been limited due to the recent staffing changes. Breadth has recently been added at Key Stage 4 by establishing good connections with a local college and university. These links have not been secured for the future and longer-term provision for the subject at Key Stage 4 has not been sufficiently considered.
117. There are good resources for food technology and rise and fall tables have been installed to improve pupils' access in food preparation. ICT is used well for presenting work although the use of control technology is unsatisfactory. Pupils work with a wide variety of materials, including wood, but there is no designated area for pupils to work with resistant materials which limits the range of topics pupils can study in school. The school has identified provision for design and technology as a priority for development.
118. There is some very good work on display both in classrooms and around the school which includes puppets, model cars and stringed instruments. Pupils also use their designing and making skills well in other subjects, such as when they prepare food for the school carnival, or make a model village in geography.

## **GEOGRAPHY / HISTORY**

119. Provision for geography is good and the local environment is used particularly well to support learning. Provision for history is satisfactory with very good opportunities for the higher achieving pupils at Key Stage 4.
120. Due to timetabling constraints history teaching was only observed in Key Stage 3 and geography was observed at Key Stages 2 and 4 during the inspection. Analysis of work suggests pupils make at least satisfactory progress in both subjects across the school. Progress is very good in geography at Key Stages 2 and 4 and in history at Key Stage 4. It is good in geography for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 5.
121. By the age of seven, pupils are developing an understanding of how time passes and that there are different events in the school day. They are becoming increasingly aware of their immediate environment and can link pictures and symbols to familiar objects; such as when identifying a car, bus or plane. By the age of 11, pupils describe past events with the help of photographs showing a school visit to the Isle of Wight. They are becoming increasingly familiar with the home and school environment. Pupils are able to match household furniture with the appropriate rooms and with the help of photographs they recognise key sites near the school, such as the library, shop and a post box.
122. By the age of 14, pupils have a growing sense of chronology and can construct a personal time line showing important events in their lives. They list some key words that describe the invasion of William the Conqueror in 1066. Some are able to understand that events can be interpreted differently, such as when discussing the Holy Wars and the different perspectives of Muslims and Christians. In geography they make model houses and describe some features of a hamlet following a field trip to Devon. They locate key features on a map and relate them to a photograph.

123. By age 16, pupils make very good progress according to their individual ability. Higher achieving pupils are entered for GCSE history and are working at levels E to B. They are able to write independently to describe the impact of the industrial revolution and changes in towns, transport and population distribution. Pupils with profound and multiple needs are gaining greater knowledge of their neighbourhood. They can identify different road signs and have some understanding of the function of traffic lights at a pelican crossing.
124. Post 16 students make good progress towards becoming independent citizens through their study of environmental topics. They are able to conduct a survey on waste and know that materials such as glass and paper can be recycled. Students have visited a bottle bank and some are able to write independently about the visit. They are also able to collect and discuss newspaper articles on wider environmental incidents, such as the recent oil spillage near the Spanish coast. Students are also able to use their initiative, such as when writing to the local council to ask for recycling bins to be modified so wheelchair users are able to put cans in them.
125. Teaching is very good in geography and at least satisfactory in history. Where teaching is very good the purpose of the lesson is clear and pupils make very good progress because the level of work is well matched to their ability. There is good questioning to ensure pupils understand the task and praise is used well to reinforce pupils' sense of achievement. Support staff and teachers work well together and switches, pictures, symbols and signing are used very effectively to support pupils' learning. Where teaching is less successful, learning objectives are not sufficiently focused or linked to the level of ability of all pupils in the class. This results in some lower achieving pupils making slower progress. All staff show particular care when taking pupils out and help to develop their independence through routinely giving them choices, such as "shall we take a pen?" or "what colour shall we use?" Staff use ICT very well to support learning, for example when photographs taken on a trip are processed back at school and used to review the lesson. Teachers also use assemblies well to reinforce themes, such as water around the world or the history of carnival.
126. Pupils enjoy studying both geography and history. They stay on task and participate very well in lessons, particularly when working on topics in the local neighbourhood. Post 16 pupils work extremely well, both independently and together with their peers when discussing the use of technology in the environment.
127. The curriculum offers good and sometimes very good arrangements for learning in both subjects. This enables the extremes of the ability range to be met. Geography and history are satisfactorily taught to primary and secondary aged pupils with profound and complex learning needs through a range of topics. Higher achieving pupils at Key Stage 3 are taught history and geography separately whilst those in Key Stage 4 study a GCSE course in history, which is a very positive feature. Post 16 students study environmental themes linked to the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme.
128. Very good use is made of the local neighbourhood for teaching geography and staff from a local museum have visited the school to enable pupils to handle artefacts showing life in the Victorian home. Learning in both subjects has been reinforced through a variety of well-planned residential trips to Germany, the Isle of Wight and Devon. There are attractive and informative displays of pupils' work around the school on a range of topics, such as a recycling project, the residential trips and plans of the school, identifying key features. The teaching of geography and history makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The study of carnival and different foods also improves pupils' cultural awareness.
129. Co-ordination of the subject is sound. The impact of a recent increase in the number of pupils with profound and multiple needs is still being absorbed and staff are currently modifying the curriculum and extending their skills. The role of the co-ordinator needs to be further developed to monitor and support teaching across all key stages and share best practice amongst staff.
130. There has been good progress in history and geography since the last inspection. Pupils achieve higher standards, helped by the new curriculum for pupils with more profound and multiple needs and the GCSE course in history at Key Stage 4. A job description for the co-ordinator and new schemes of work have been introduced and additional books, videos and globes have been obtained. There is

still a need to improve further the range of resources, particularly artefacts to support the teaching of history, ICT software and sensory resources for pupils with more complex learning difficulties. These issues are appropriately identified in the school improvement plan.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

131. Information and communication technology (ICT) makes a very good contribution to the progress of the pupils in the school. The high level of teaching and technical support enables those pupils with the most severe learning difficulties to gain access to all subjects and make very good progress. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. ICT is effectively incorporated into all subjects. There is also a discrete timetabled lesson for pupils in Years 7-9 together with individually timetabled lessons for pupils using switches to access the curriculum.
132. There is no significant difference between the learning of girls and boys. Pupils with English as additional language (EAL) also make very good progress in the subject because the teaching is designed to develop communication and give access to the whole curriculum. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because of the good management and co-ordination of the subject, improved teaching, detailed planning and particularly good links with outside agencies. This has made a positive impact on pupils' progress.
133. At seven pupils use the roller ball and switches to make choices and decisions and to communicate in lessons. They use ICT in literacy to record their work using simple roller ball, grid or concept keyboards. In numeracy, they use various counting, matching and shaping program. They have developing control when using paint programs. Pupils make very good progress because teachers plan thoroughly and choose appropriate teaching methods. Adults support pupils very well with successful results. They use computers and various communication aids with developing skill and confidence in all subjects.
134. By the age of 11 pupils are developing good communication through switching. Pupils with complex learning difficulties anticipate turn taking, match objects to pictures and develop effective looking and listening skills. They use switches to access word processing programs and record their news and topic work with minimal support. Higher attaining pupils are able to open, save and run many programs with growing confidence and proficiency. They carry out basic word processing and know how to print out their finished work with minimal support from staff. Pupils with severe learning difficulties show pleasure and excitement when experiencing the effects of paint programs and when running storybook sequences.
135. At 14 pupils manipulate text, alter images and combine images with text. Pupils use communication aids such as touch screens, recording devices and switches that activate communication between pupils and staff. This enables the pupils to make good contributions to all their lessons. As a result, their personal and social development is enhanced because they have greater control over their environment. Higher attaining pupils use CD ROMs and the Internet, very effectively, to find information for a range of topics. They use a robot to program routes and recognise the need for a planned sequence of instructions in programming the computer.
136. By the age of 16 pupils are skilled and confident in using computers. Pupils with complex needs use concept keyboards, tracker balls and switches. They read stories, complete texts on the computer and develop their comprehension skills. Higher attaining pupils in their GCSE support option use ICT to research topics and complete coursework. They work quickly and are highly competent ICT users, needing only technical support from the teacher, if programs or computers throw up problems. They use digital cameras carefully adapted for their physical needs and transfer the pictures into documents and then add text. This group worked with 'The Guardian' newspaper's technicians to set up the very attractive and user-friendly school website. They are able to open, save, transfer data and run many programs with growing confidence and proficiency. They access the Internet to find specific sites and download information and images. Pupils with severe learning difficulties follow, with growing independence, programs that manipulate images. With help, they write simple text and choose symbols to tell stories. They use communication aids to express their choices to staff who guide them through the programs. They continue to respond well to the images, colours and sounds of basic programs.

137. Post 16 students, who follow a vocational course, use ICT very well to support their learning. For example, in geography, the teachers' good questioning enables students to develop a good understanding of where ICT is used both within and outside of the home to improve their environmental awareness. With well-judged support, they made mixed media presentations for the whole school during the carnival. Students with complex and severe physical needs continue to improve their skills when using communication aids. They use simple design programs and support other work using word processing and spreadsheets appropriately. They access the Internet for specific searches.
138. Teaching is very good. Teachers are meticulous in their planning and recording of pupils' needs and progress. The ICT co-ordinator supports lessons in the primary department. She teaches ICT skills and gives support in the secondary department. She also heads the team for technical assessment and support for pupils. The school is a centre for the Communication Aids Project (CAP). Switch assessments are now formalised and information is shared with parents and the multi-disciplinary team within the school. This assessment is regular and very detailed so that pupils are given the best possible equipment for the stage they are at and for their needs. Teachers consider carefully the individual requirements of pupils. Adults support pupils sensitively and effectively so that they do things for themselves and are successful. Teachers and learning support assistants are skilled in adjusting the levels of support given to the pupils during the lessons by good questioning. The high level of mutual respect in the classroom helps pupils to grow in confidence. They enjoy ICT and their behaviour in lessons is very good. They work hard at their tasks and are delighted with their own efforts and the successes of others
139. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. Planning is thorough and effective and all subject planning includes a large ICT element. Staff are confident in using ICT through regular training sessions and working alongside the co-ordinator in the classroom. The subject is well resourced with a good ratio of computers to pupils and a wide range of hardware, including whiteboards, laptops and software. All subjects have access to writing with symbols programs, which convert text into symbols.
140. A permanent technician supports the department for two days a week and teachers are able to ask for support from basic levels up to running sophisticated set-ups. The co-ordinator makes very good use of links with outside agencies, which support the development of ICT for pupils with special educational needs. As well as giving teachers technical support, this enables them to access many sources of information including a bank of programs for teaching.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **German**

141. Achievement and progress in German at age 14 and at age 16 are good. Because of the communication difficulties of many pupils, attainment is generally below that expected for pupils of the same age; nevertheless, at 16 some pupils achieve GCSE examination grades close to nationally expected levels. Good standards of achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. Those pupils with the greatest needs make very good progress, as do those who are learning English as an additional language.
142. By age 14 pupils understand when the teacher speaks at normal conversational speed about shopping for food and role-play buying fruit and vegetables, often speaking with good accents despite the enormous effort many have to use to pronounce the words. They know how to make everyday greetings and are familiar with numbers, days and dates. They are becoming familiar with German in its written form. By age 16 pupils are able to use and understand vocabulary relating to everyday life including homes, families, school and leisure activities and getting around town both in England and abroad. They understand passages of German presented as listening or reading comprehension. In their recorded work they show understanding of the use of different tenses. Recording work remains a difficulty for most pupils but good use is made of information technology and of support staff, who act as "scribes", especially during examinations.



143. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject; their effort to overcome the difficulties of learning to speak another language is truly impressive. They concentrate very well throughout lessons, listen to each other patiently and respectfully and show enormous pride and pleasure in their achievements. The teacher's approach is very inclusive and all pupils, including those who do not usually use speech, are able to benefit from German lessons.
144. Teaching in German is consistently very good. The teacher, a specialist and a native German speaker, has excellent subject knowledge and she judges very well when she can use German and when she needs to explain in English. She accustoms pupils to hearing the language spoken fast and fluently and they respond very well to the challenge to follow her meaning and meet her high expectations. Lessons are lively and varied with a good balance of speaking, listening and more formal work. There is very good use of learning support assistants who join in the role-play and conversations in German. Material to be learned is presented in a number of different ways, giving pupils a series of linked learning opportunities which reinforce each other without boring the pupils. The teacher's methods and approaches, which include use of pictures, symbols, gesture and real objects, are appropriate and helpful for those pupils with multiple difficulties and also for those who are learning English as an additional language. These groups of pupils achieve particularly well.
145. The scheme of work for German is brief but effective in the hands of a very competent subject specialist teacher. It ensures that all aspects of the language are covered and units of vocabulary learnt and revised systematically. Planning includes different approaches for pupils of different abilities and this represents a good development since the last inspection. There is good ongoing informal assessment of oral work and detailed notes of pupils' progress and skills in the teacher's assessment file, together with records of the National Curriculum levels they have reached. There are individual targets for German and these are appropriate. For pupils taking examinations, there is good assessment of the development of the skills they will need. This is a well-run department in which resources and staff are well used.
146. There is a regular residential trip to Germany and photographic records make it very clear how much pupils enjoy and benefit from this experience. While resources are generally satisfactory, the fact that there is not a dedicated language classroom makes it difficult to create an environment in which materials and prompt cards are readily to hand and this restricts learning opportunities and achievement. Learning German is a great source of pride for pupils and the study of German makes an outstanding contribution to their spiritual, social and cultural development.

## **MUSIC**

147. Progress in music throughout the school is very good. Good standards have been maintained and improved since the last inspection. Attainment is not at the levels expected nationally of pupils of similar age, because of pupils' physical and communication difficulties, but their achievement is very good. Pupils with multiple barriers to learning make very good progress because the lesson is made accessible to them through careful choice of instrument – for example, a visually impaired pupil uses a keyboard which transmits strong vibrations to his body. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language also make very good progress and have full access to activities through demonstration and very good support.
148. Pupils' attitudes to music lessons throughout the school are very good and often excellent. They make heroic efforts to achieve enough control to play the instruments and their success gives them great pride and satisfaction. They listen to each other and take turns very well. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
149. By the age of seven pupils participate in making music with percussion and keyboard instruments, using their fingers to make sounds while the teacher accompanies with an improvised song about what they are playing. They listen carefully to the sounds and they show good concentration. They are gradually extending the range of instruments that they are comfortable in using. By the age of 11 pupils recognise and name Gamelan music and name a number of instruments available in the classroom. They play on cue and on request and understand about playing fast and slow, loud and softly. Some are able to keep to a beat. By age 14 pupils recognise different kinds of world music and know that reggae comes from the Caribbean. They are becoming familiar with the sounds and

names of different musical forms – calypso, blues and jazz. They achieve simple improvisations on keyboards. They also use percussion instruments to improvise – bells, guiro, conga drum and bongos. They manage to sing, despite the difficulty of this for many pupils. By age 16 pupils use a computer program to compose by mixing loops of music, adding different instruments and changing the rhythm and balance.

150. Teaching is consistently of a very good standard throughout the school. The specialist music teacher has excellent subject knowledge and works very hard to give all pupils a positive experience and to help them develop both skills and knowledge. His expectations are high and he makes pupils work hard and extend their abilities, while using humour and praise to maintain an enjoyable lesson. This approach helps all pupils develop confidence and the ambition to improve their skills and control. Careful building on what they have done before, using photographs and recording devices, helps them develop their knowledge and remember facts and ideas. There is very good use of information technology to support musical skills and knowledge.
151. The department is well organised and has a good policy and good planning. Assessment is developing in line with the school's general approach. Pupils have access to a wide range of live and recorded music, from such diverse sources as the London Symphony Orchestra, the Gamelan Orchestra and steel bands from a neighbouring borough. There is very good attention to music from many cultures, all of which are studied seriously and respectfully. The school organises regular opportunities for pupils to participate in performance experiences. Since the last inspection the accommodation has been improved by the creation of a dedicated music room. This has had beneficial effects on teaching and learning. However, the room is not sufficiently large to allow pupils in wheelchairs to move easily between instruments, so the accommodation remains unsatisfactory. Resources, including musical instruments, are sufficient in number and of good quality and variety.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

152. Pupils' achieve very well and make very good progress in physical education. This is due to the very effective teaching and the high quality of support in lessons. In addition to the progress observed in lessons there are examples of very good achievement and progress in extra-curricular activities in the subject, for example, the work related to dance and sport. Pupils and students from across the year groups including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and the more physically able join together in sessions led by representatives of the community and pupils from local schools to perform for the school and take part in sports matches and events and achieve well. The sense of freedom and pleasure as pupils learn to dance, move and turn to music and work with mainstream peers is echoed in the lunchtime sessions where they learn to develop skills at team games such as boccia, wheelchair football, volley ball and basketball.
153. These sessions make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because they are carefully planned and very well staffed and led. For example, older pupils were seen at a lunchtime practice perfecting their boccia skills and their enthusiasm, concentration and pleasure at each other's scores, together with the challenge and skilled coaching provided by the adults working with them, made this an outstanding session.
154. There is no significant difference between the learning of girls and boys. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) make very good progress in the subject because the teaching is designed to develop movement and communication and methods used are particularly appropriate for these pupils.
155. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because of the good management and co-ordination of the subject, improved teaching, detailed planning and good opportunities for outside activities. This has made a positive impact on pupils' progress.
156. By the age of seven, pupils with the most movement begin to develop hand and eye co-ordination and simple ball skills. Pupils with very limited movement and those with PMLD learn to roll and move to music. They experience a variety of different positions in which they grasp and pull objects, balls or balloons. Pupils learn very effectively because teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) know the needs of their pupils very well. They work closely with them aiming specifically to develop

mobility, confidence and social skills such as listening, following instructions and taking turns. Physiotherapists work with pupils, of all ages, in the classroom and in the hydrotherapy pool with a high degree of success. Through hydrotherapy, pupils are able to control their movements and stretch their bodies into the best possible alignment and this enables them to reach and move more easily and use their energy for learning. Higher attaining pupils become more independent in dressing and undressing and they take increasing control of their bodies when moving to music.

157. At 11 pupils understand the need for a 'warm-up'. They follow simple commands, show different body shapes and use different parts of the body to travel across apparatus. They build on prepared movements and higher attaining pupils show imaginative 'stop' and 'start' positions for their displays. All pupils manage a series of movements, including a balance movement and show a real determination to succeed in the movement. Much of their success is due to the very good relationships displayed in lessons and the dedication of the staff who support them. Some pupils show dexterity in negotiating obstacles involving climbing, balancing and crawling. They successfully complete a sequence of activities remembering what they have to do next.
158. By the age of 14 pupils know their individual warm up routines and those of others and immediately begin the lessons with them. They continue to improve their co-ordination and balance and ball skills. They use specific movements, for example, a 'spike' pass in volleyball. They begin to trap and return a pass accurately in wheelchair football. Teaching encourages teamwork and pupils are quickly called to task if they become over competitive and do not pass the ball sufficiently. They begin to understand the basic rules of the games. They practise skills of volleyball and at the end of the lesson know their positions, know the rules and how to score. They show thought and effort in their moves.
159. By 16 pupils are adept at moving their wheelchairs, stopping, starting and pivoting on instructions in their preparation for basketball practice. The very effective teaching ensures that pupils become skilled at reflecting on their tactics and moves and improving their skills. They enjoy the competitive element of sports and take part in several outside events. They are the proud winners of the inter-school boccia league and they take part in the inter schools Panathlon Challenge. One pupil was named as young sportsman of the year through the London Sports Forum.
160. Post 16 students continue to make very good progress in refining strategies and teamwork and developing independence. They extend their skills at games and athletics at the local sports centre. They have an increased understanding of the rules of the games they choose and a clear focus on speed, defence and shooting skills. All participate well in spite of the difficulties posed by the restrictions on mobility.
161. All pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) well to communicate through switches or alternative communication aids, to produce posters to publicise matches or sporting events, to make presentations or to research sports topics on the Internet.
162. Teaching is very good with some examples of outstanding teaching. The bulk of the teaching is done by the two co-ordinators for the subject, who are well qualified and experienced. The best lessons are characterised by a fast pace and a high level of challenge combined with a very detailed knowledge of pupils' needs. Very good working relationships and a high level of staffing ensure that support is given effectively while promoting a high level of independence. Pupils react with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They flourish in the atmosphere of mutual respect and admiration with their teachers and support workers. Lessons are very well planned and balanced. Teachers use the end of lessons very effectively for detailed evaluation and enabling pupils to comment on their own and each other's performance. All staff follow safety procedures very carefully and are well trained in handling pupils and using hoists.
163. The subject is very well managed by two co-ordinators who have worked very successfully to improve the provision since the last inspection, both in lessons and in activities and events, which take place out of school. Resources are much improved and are now good. However, the accommodation is cramped with very little room for storage and very limited outside play area. The school makes great efforts to minimise the impact of this on pupils' learning. It makes the best possible use of the space it has, together with good use of community and local facilities.

164. A good policy and detailed planning ensure pupils are learning the right things at appropriate ages. Assessment is good, detailed and well linked to the National Curriculum. Relationships with outside agencies and the community are very good. Some pupils have worked with a dance company at a local college. One boy, writing about it afterwards, said that it had been very helpful in developing the range of movement in his arms. Therapists work closely and very effectively with teachers and pupils, regarding problems with mobility.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

165. Throughout the school, pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily in religious education. There has been steady improvement since the last inspection. There is now a policy and new planning based on the locally agreed syllabus and a sensitively adapted commercial scheme of work, which is being further developed by the two co-ordinators and which provides a useful framework for teaching. The main strengths of the subject are the good teamwork between teachers and non-teaching staff, the knowledge that all staff have of the pupils and the pupils' positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Teachers ensure very effective equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to the work in religious education. Lessons, visits and visitors from the local community make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because they are carefully organised and staff use music and a range of sensory resources well. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) also make satisfactory progress.
166. By the age of seven, pupils have listened to stories from the Bible such as those about the life of Jesus and know that the Bible is a special book. They have many opportunities to share in special times, and they enjoy birthdays, Muslim feasts and Christmas and Easter celebrations. They experience times of quiet and reflection in the classroom. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to see and touch Christian symbols and help pupils understand that these are special. Teachers use role-play particularly well with pupils with more severe learning difficulties to enable them to experience important events in both Christian and Muslim calendars.
167. By the age of 11, pupils increasingly take part in the celebration of religious festivals. They learn about the traditions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Most pupils know the significance of Lent and Easter and some higher attaining pupils understand the connections with the celebration of Passover. Staff help all pupils to touch and look at artefacts, hear stories and explore the sights and sounds of different faiths.
168. By the age of 14, pupils study a wider range of religions. They hear stories about some of the important religious figures and have experience of festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas and Easter. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) experience through drama and feeling sensory artefacts stories from the Old Testament. Higher attaining pupils and students in Years 11 and 12 complete a detailed study of Islam in their GCSE religious studies course. In one lesson, these pupils were researching and producing text on the importance and value of the Qur'an in Muslim life. The lesson was effective because the teacher used the expertise of one Muslim pupil who gave a clear explanation on the meaning of the Qur'an to followers of Islam.
169. By the age of 16, pupils learn about the importance of rules in society. Almost all pupils are aware of the difference between good and bad behaviour and develop strategies to keep safe in the community. They continue to study different world faiths. Higher attaining students study in more detail and greater depth the lives and values of present day eminent world figures such as Nelson Mandela.
170. Overall teaching is never less than satisfactory and often good. This is because teachers have good understanding of what they are going to teach and of the specific needs and abilities of the pupils. Questioning promotes the use of communication skills and teachers encourage the pupils to engage in discussion. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to enable all pupils to have access to lessons and to enhance pupils' learning. For example, pupils use switches and other technological devices to make choices and communicate in discussion; they use digital cameras to record role-play of Bible stories and word processing to record their written responses to

lessons. The use of multi-sensory resources is imaginative and usually lessons are well organised, with special needs assistants playing a positive role in the pupils' learning and ensuring that pupils enjoy their work. Pupils respond well with attitudes and behaviour that are consistently good.

171. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The two co-ordinators work well together, although the secondary co-ordinator is on secondment. Even though as much time as possible is spent, both during and after school hours, fulfilling the co-ordinators' role this absence has had the effect of slowing down some of the developments planned for the department. The co-ordinators have managed to meet formally and informally on a regular basis to try to ensure the smooth running of the department and to monitor pupils' progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is increased in relevance to the present multi-ethnic school population.
172. There are good links with the community through the work of a local priest and visitors, many of whom are parents. Visits to churches and places of religious significance in the local area greatly enhance the taught curriculum.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

173. Because the school has always had a strong focus on many aspects of citizenship prior to its introduction as a required subject for secondary aged pupils, it has not yet completed the transition from teaching citizenship within the personal, social and health education curriculum and the life skills units for older pupils, to teaching it as a discrete subject. Nevertheless it is clear that pupils' progress and achievement are good.
174. Primary aged pupils know that their parents need to know where they are at all times and keep them safe and take part in role-play which helps them understand the worries of parents. Pupils aged 14 consider habits, both good and bad and what the social consequences of them may be. Older pupils and students know about the facilities provided by local authorities, represent their classmates at the student council and investigate the purpose and organisation of major charities. Links with the Guardian newspaper help them understand the media, as do visits to the BBC to see how television programmes are made.
175. Only two teaching sessions could be observed during the inspection and both were well taught, with material at the appropriate level for the age and understanding of the pupils and in an atmosphere that promoted confident expression of views and good listening. Teachers were sensitive to the progress pupils were making in the lesson.
176. Many activities are organised to develop pupils' and students' knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the school now needs to link these clearly to the new National Curriculum programmes of study for the subject.