

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BEDLESFORD SCHOOL**

Kingston-upon-Thames

LEA area: Kingston-upon-Thames

Unique reference number: 102621

Headteacher: Mr John Murfitt

Reporting inspector: Mr Roger Baker  
19946

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 249302

This inspection was carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996. It was conducted to a Framework for Inspection and included features associated with OFSTED's development of the inspection arrangements from 2003.

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Foundation
School category:	Special
Age range of pupils:	2 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grange Road Kingston-upon-Thames Surrey
Postcode:	KT1 2QZ
Telephone number:	(0208) 546 9838
Fax number:	(0208) 296 9238
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Myers
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19946	Roger Baker	Registered inspector	Science Religious education	How successful is the school? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
9173	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector		How well are pupils' personal qualities developed? How well are pupils guided and supported? How well does the school work with parents and the community?
22577	Margaret Hart	Team inspector	English Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
20622	Ann Sydney	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	How well does the curriculum meet pupils' needs?
16227	Jim Phillips	Team inspector	Mathematics	How effective are teaching and learning?

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

Number of lessons observed

47
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

30
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The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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London WC2B 6SE

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## HOW SUCCESSFUL IS THE SCHOOL?

### The characteristics of the school

1. Bedelsford is a school for pupils aged 2 to 16 with physical disabilities, serving the London Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames and ten other London boroughs and parts of Surrey. A lack of consistent practices between each of these local authorities makes the management of this school extremely complex and time consuming. The school became grant maintained in 1997 and is now a Foundation School. There are 58 pupils on roll, 39 boys and 19 girls. Two pupils have dual placements. There is also a nursery group of five children, which includes the children under assessment in the Greenwood Unit. In Key Stages 2 and 3, pupils are divided into two groups according to ability, but in the other key stages they are taught as a single group. All classes contain pupils of mixed ages and abilities within a key stage. Most pupils come from widely different backgrounds and the intake, on average, is neither advantaged or disadvantaged. Twenty-four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Thirteen pupils have English as an additional language and almost all are in the very early stages of communication in any language. All pupils come to the school with statements of special educational needs. Most pupils have moderate learning difficulties but there are also some able pupils. Many pupils have communication difficulties. A significant group have profound and multiple learning difficulties and challenging behaviour. Pupils increasingly have additional medical problems and many have high dependency needs. Ten pupils are involved in integration with local schools. Attainment on entry is well below national averages. The school is well supported by a range of health professionals, apart from occupational therapists.

### Strengths and areas for development

2. Bedelsford is a good school that provides well for all its pupils in all subject areas, gives very good value for money and is efficient and effective. It has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity for improvement.

#### It has particular strengths in:

- The progress pupils make in all subjects and their very good attitudes and behaviour;
- The exemplary relationship between staff and pupils;
- The very good procedures and care taken by all staff to ensure the welfare of all pupils;
- The contribution of the school's counsellor;
- The very good quality of teaching, supported by the very good contribution of the teaching assistants.

#### Other strengths of the school are:

- The progress pupils make in their spiritual, moral and social development;
- The good provision for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties;
- The very good curriculum in the nursery;
- The good planning and delivery of personal, health and social education;
- The provision for developing communication and literacy skills through sign and symbols;
- The detailed small steps outlined in pupils' targets within their individual educational plans (IEPs) and the assessment of pupils' progress;
- The progress pupils make in personal and educational development when integrated into other schools;
- The good level of support from the school's partners and the good links with the community, other schools and institutions;

- The good leadership by the headteacher, the senior management team and the governors;
- The effective management of the school by the senior management team;
- The system for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and the progress the school has made towards self-evaluation.

There are no major areas of significant weakness. All the issues raised should be read in the context of a good school, overall.

The key areas for development are:

- The development of strategies to assess the suitability of equipment for alternative communication and to teach pupils how to use motorised wheelchairs according to need;
- The better use of assessment data to set whole school targets for improvement;
- The way ideas for development or change are communicated to parents and staff to ensure that these are agreed and implemented smoothly;
- Long-term curriculum planning to ensure that pupils always build on what they have learned, including the development of key skills, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT).

Other areas for development to address are:

- The provision for occupational therapy;
- The lack of staff expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder;
- The inadequate library provision;
- The quality and use of the outside areas of the school;
- The limited provision for extra-curricular activities.

**The progress pupils make in areas of the curriculum**

3. Given their abilities, most pupils in the school make good progress in all subjects.

Progress in subjects reported on:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>
English	Good	Good	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Very good	Very good
Science	Good	Good	Good	Good
Information and communication technology	Good	Good	Good	Good
Religious education	Good	Good	Good	Very good

Strengths in progress are:

- The very good progress children make in the Foundation Stage.
- The very good progress pupils make in Years 7 to 11 in English and mathematics and in religious education in Years 10 and 11;
- The very good progress pupils make in personal development.

Areas for development are:

- The progress of more able pupils in ICT and in key skills across the curriculum for all pupils.

## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	30	51	15	0	0	0

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

- Teaching in the school is very good. Teachers are very well supported by the teaching assistants, who make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, especially as many groups contain pupils of mixed ages and abilities.

## The views of parents and pupils

- Parents and pupils value the school and are supportive. Parents generally agree that teaching is very good but require some reassurance that their views are valued and that their concerns are discussed more readily and acted upon. They consider that the school provides too few extra-curricular experiences. They are concerned that the playground area has been reduced and that the provision for occupational therapy is very limited. Pupils, particularly the older ones, make similar comments. The inspection findings support these views.

## HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

- Given their abilities, most pupils in the school make good progress in all areas of learning. Progress is generally very good in Key Stages 3 and 4, particularly in English and mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

### Strengths in standards and progress are:

- The very good progress children make in the nursery class in personal, social and emotional development;
- The good progress pupils make in English in Years 1 to 6, and the very good progress in Years 7 to 11;
- The very good progress pupils make in Years 10 to 11 in religious education;
- The progress pupils make in personal development.

### Areas for development are:

- The progress of more able pupils in ICT;
- Ensuring that long-term planning builds on what pupils have already learned;
- The progress some pupils make in the development of the use of alternative communication devices and mobility training.

- Pupils' attainments on entry to school into the mixed nursery and reception class are well below national averages. Few children enter the school able to achieve even the first 'stepping stones' of the Foundation Stage and they still score poorly on the baseline tests undertaken at the end of their reception year. Most pupils are unable to reach the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children on entry have very poor language and communication skills, and poor fine and gross movements. This hampers their access into other parts of the curriculum such as creative development. Many find it hard to sit and listen and need constant high quality teaching and support to make progress. This they get regularly and children settle quickly into school and make very good progress in achieving small steps towards the initial 'stepping stones', particularly in personal, social and emotional development, communication, mathematical development and in their development of knowledge and

understanding of the world. Children also make good progress in gross and fine motor control and in developing their creative abilities.

8. A number of pupils come into the school during Years 1 to 9 having been taught in a variety of other settings. The attainment on entry of these pupils is varied but nearly always well below national averages, particularly in communication and language skills. There is no significant difference between the performance of the smaller number of girls in the school and that of boys or between pupils who come from ethnic backgrounds, as the majority of these have very limited verbal skills in any language. Overall, pupils enter the school with attainments that are well below national averages and reach standards which are below national averages by the time they leave. This represents good progress overall in Years 1 to 6 and very good progress in Years 7 to 11. At the end of Year 11, pupils undertake an increasing range of public examinations, either in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or the Certificate of Achievement (CoA). Much of the work for these examinations is taught in mainstream schools under the integration programme. Last year, no pupils were entered into GCSE but two pupils successfully obtained grades in CoA as quoted below:

	<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>ICT</b>
Pupil A	Level 2	Level 2	Level 1	Level 1	
Pupil B	Level 2	Level 3	Level 1		Level 1

9. The progress of children in the Foundation Stage is good in communication and this good progress is continued into Years 1 and 2.
10. In Years 1 and 2, the most able pupils extend their language skills, begin to read and develop writing skills through the use of sign symbols and communication aids. By the end of Year 6, more able pupils are beginning to record their work, mainly by using computer software, and learn to use an increasing number of sign and symbols. They benefit greatly from the way the school introduces signs and their equivalent symbols on a weekly basis to support the work in classes. In Years 7 to 9, pupils' progress accelerates and by the end of Year 9 they make good progress in all aspects of English; for example, they have a good idea of a plot in a story and understand the types of characters within it. Less able pupils in Years 3 to 9 increasingly build on their learning and make good progress, particularly in communication and listening. Their speaking and writing skills are less well developed. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall, particularly as most have severe difficulties with communication.
11. In the junior age classes, pupils make good progress in mathematics in relation to their previous attainment and degree of learning difficulty. At the secondary age, pupils make very good progress in mathematics. The most able are working towards entry Level 3 for foundation GCSE thus achieve well from a low starting base.
12. Almost all pupils' attainment in science is well below national averages but, for some more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, their knowledge and understanding are at, or close to, national expectations. In Years 7 to 9, standards against national average are still well below averages but for the more able pupils they improve. This improvement is reflected in the increasing number of pupils who successfully complete the CoA, albeit with significant support from staff in the school. In Years 3 to 6, most pupils make good progress in science. In the secondary years, good progress in science is maintained. However, the use of topics, which are

repeated in a cycle, does not fully ensure that pupils build on what they already know and can do in science.

13. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are variable between classes and individuals but the most able pupils reach National Curriculum Level 1 by the age of seven, Level 2 by the age of 11 and Level 3 between the ages of 14 and 16. For the remainder, standards are well below average, being within the P-Scales (pre-National Curriculum levels). A small number of the highest achieving pupils undertake the CoA examinations. In ICT, all pupils make good progress from nursery until the age of 11. The progress of more able secondary aged pupils slows to satisfactory because individual teachers plan their ICT separately, without the benefit of whole school planning. As a result, the coverage of all the aspects of ICT is not assured.
14. All pupils make good gains in acquiring knowledge and understanding about various world religions and, as far as they are able, in their understanding of the more complex aspects of faith, ritual and symbolism. For example, some less able pupils in Years 3 to 9 find it difficult to understand the nature of religious beliefs and teachings. However, in Years 10 and 11, through some excellent teaching, they are able to place the life of Jesus into an historical context.
15. In history and geography, music, drama and art, all pupils achieve well. Pupils make very good progress in the specialist areas provided, for example, soft play and hydrotherapy. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in French.
16. Pupils in all classes develop their personal skills well and this is a special feature of the school. Through a wide range of additional, but essential, curriculum opportunities for example, work in the soft play area, hydrotherapy, swimming, physiotherapy and counselling, pupils learn to live with their disability and to overcome the barriers to learning. There is, however, a serious lack of provision for occupational therapy and for suitable clubs and other out of school activities. Additionally, for some pupils the essential mobility training and learning to make best use of alternate communication devices are limited by the lack of a suitable range of equipment readily available in the school. In these areas, learning opportunities are missed and, as a consequence, progress in these areas is slower than it should be.
17. Pupils achieve high levels of confidence and independence in their swimming and hydrotherapy activities as a result of the high quality of therapy and instruction they receive. The provision for music and art plays a major role in the development of both social and creative skills. The music therapy is an especially good feature of the school and supports well the personal development of pupils.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS' PERSONAL QUALITIES DEVELOPED?**

18. The development of the pupils' personal qualities is a strength of the school. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

### **Strengths in the development of pupils' personal qualities are:**

- The progress all pupils, including those children in the nursery class, make;
- The very good attitudes and behaviour in the school;
- The exemplary relationships between staff and pupils;
- The very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development.

### **Areas for development are:**

- The provision for cultural development;

- The height of the art displays in the corridors so they can more easily be seen by pupils in wheelchairs.
19. All pupils, including the young children in the nursery, have very good attitudes to school. They are happy when they arrive in the morning and really enjoy their time in lessons and taking part in other activities. Even the most profoundly disabled are keen to participate because the teachers and assistants are enthusiastic, make lessons fun and enable all pupils to be included in the learning. These very positive attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection.
  20. The levels of authorised absence are high in comparison with other schools because many pupils are absent with illness or for medical treatment. However, despite these problems, pupils do not miss school unless absolutely necessary.
  21. Pupils' behaviour is very good, as it was at the last inspection. There have been no exclusions. The school sets high expectations of behaviour. The staff's commitment to, and respect for, all pupils permeate the work of the school and provide pupils with an outstanding model of how people should behave to each other. This results in very good behaviour and excellent relationships. Following the example of all staff, pupils are very patient, tolerant and considerate with each other and are quick to see when another pupil is in difficulties and to offer help quietly and discreetly. Although staff are sensitive to each individual pupil's needs and conditions, they do not excuse anti social actions. All staff are firm, fair and entirely consistent. They explain very carefully why certain behaviour is not acceptable. This helps pupils to know what is right and what is wrong. Staff are particularly patient with the few pupils with challenging behaviour and they have carefully devised plans to deal effectively with dangerous tantrums.
  22. Pupils have exemplary relationships with each other and with the staff. All the staff act as excellent role models because their positive relationships and friendliness with each other are picked up and mirrored by the pupils. Throughout the school day, the staff encourage pupils to be aware of each other's needs and feelings, with particularly strong emphasis in assemblies, registration sessions and citizenship lessons. Many pupils, because of their particular educational needs, tend to get on quietly with activities with little or no interaction with their fellows, but a good many like sharing their experiences with their peers.
  23. In the pupil questionnaires, a substantial number of pupils showed appreciation for the caring relationships in the school. Bullying is extremely rare, but the school has very good systems in place should any harassment occur. There is racial harmony within the school and an absence of racial tension.
  24. The school provides good opportunities for reflection in religious education lessons and in many assemblies, although opportunities are missed in a minority of assemblies that focus only on singing practice.
  25. The school provides many experiences which teach pupils about their own and other cultures, for example, in an assembly which illustrated the celebration of the Jewish festival of Sukkot and the custom of decorating the outdoor awning or 'sukka' under which Jewish families eat during this festival. The pupils' experience of music and art during the inspection was good, however, much of the art displayed in the corridors is at too high a level for pupils to see it, especially those using wheelchairs. Displays throughout the school do not sufficiently reflect the rich cultural diversity of its pupils and their families and this affects pupils' cultural development.

## HOW EFFECTIVE ARE TEACHING AND LEARNING?

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	30	51	15	0	0	0

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

26. The teaching in the Foundation Stage and in all other key stages is very effective and very well supported by the teaching assistants, who make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, especially as many groups contain pupils of mixed ages and abilities.

#### **Strengths in teaching are:**

- Teachers plan very well for pupils with different needs;
- Teaching assistants are strategically deployed to support pupils' learning across the very wide range of needs;
- The very good use made of ongoing assessment in teachers' planning;
- The effective support of speech therapists.

#### **The areas for development are:**

- On occasions, opportunities for learning are missed;
- Planning for the involvement of autistic pupils in all lessons;
- More consistent provision of homework.

27. The classroom staff work very well as a team and are skilled in engaging pupils in thoughtful discussions and interaction. They focus particularly on enabling pupils to do things for themselves and are effective in promoting independence and developing pupils' learning skills. As a result, the quality of learning is very good overall.
28. Excellent relationships contribute significantly to developing mature and responsible attitudes to learning and to lessons being conducted in an atmosphere of good humour and purpose so that the pupils confidently interact with adults and enjoy their success.
29. Very good use is made of ongoing assessment in teachers' planning. Lessons are well structured, with clear targets for learning set at the beginning and good plenary sessions used well to check pupils' learning. Staff monitor and record achievements and note difficulties so that subsequent lessons are well matched to learning needs. During the secondary phase, teachers increasingly involve pupils in assessing their own work and this helps them to understand how to improve their work and contributes significantly to them making very good progress.
30. Teachers and their assistants are skilled in the use of Makaton signs and symbols through regular weekly training sessions. Their use of these skills to support their teaching is a particular strong feature throughout the school and enables pupils to learn well. Pupils develop good alternative communication skills and become more positively involved in activities. For example, pupils who cannot speak use consistent gestures such as pointing or arm lifting and those with additional severe physical difficulties become skilled in eye-pointing to objects or symbol cards to answer questions.
31. With very good support from visiting specialist teachers for the hearing or visually impaired, staff have developed effective skills and teaching strategies for ensuring that

pupils with these difficulties have good access to all activities. The support of speech therapists is particularly effective in enabling staff to successfully teach pupils to learn to use their communication aids. Consequently, there is a good level of expertise in the school, resulting in more able pupils achieving competent use of sophisticated communication aids.

32. Teachers use very good strategies to include all pupils. In whole-class sessions they ask questions which are well matched to each pupil's level of understanding. They make good use of counting songs and rhymes with younger pupils and a 'rap' song is effective in motivating older pupils with severe or multiple learning difficulties to respond. In an excellent numeracy lesson with younger pupils, an enthusiastic approach and group matching games resulted in pupils being excited and keen to respond. Very good use is made of real and meaningful learning experiences; for example, when learning about coin values, pupils were 'shopping' with and counting real money; or in a geography lesson, pupils were re-visiting a community location to examine and discuss the photographs they had taken. All these strategies support pupils' learning.
33. The very few pupils with challenging behaviour and/or autistic spectrum disorders benefit from music therapy, which has a positive impact on their skills for social and personal interactions. However, there is insufficient expertise in the school to ensure that they are fully involved in lessons and activities.
34. In the few lessons that were judged to be satisfactory rather than good or very good, the shortcomings included a lack of pace at times, which resulted in pupils losing interest. In some of these lessons, opportunities to develop pupils' key skills in the use of numeracy or literacy in other subjects of the curriculum were missed. Overall, in the less effective lessons, there is insufficient planning for pupils to apply, use and develop the skills of reading, writing and number in subjects other than English and mathematics.
35. Where homework is used regularly, it makes a good contribution to their learning and progress. However, too few teachers provide regular homework and so there is inconsistency in the implementation of the school's policy.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE CURRICULUM MEET PUPILS' NEEDS?**

36. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good. It meets the special educational needs of pupils, apart from the lack of occupational therapy and the management of autistic behaviour. Teaching time is now more appropriate and there is an appropriate balance of experiences on the timetable. Teachers are now more successful in planning for working with groups of pupils of all ages within a key stage and, in some groups, with pupils of wide abilities.

### **Strengths in the curriculum provision are:**

- The very good curriculum provision in the nursery;
- The good provision for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties;
- The good programme of personal, health and social education, including the good arrangements for sex and drugs education;
- The provision for developing communication and literacy skills through sign and symbols;
- The planning for the wide range of needs in each class.

**Areas for development are:**

- The lack of occupational therapy and also of individually tailored programmes for the small number of autistic pupils;
  - The inadequate library provision and the lack of resources for alternative communication and mobility training;
  - The lack of sufficient play areas for senior pupils;
  - The limited provision for extra-curricular activities.
37. The curriculum in the school is complex and includes provision for a wide range of educational needs such as hydrotherapy and music therapy, a wide range of health needs, for example, specialist feeding, and a range of therapies which include speech therapy and physiotherapy. In addition, many pupils need considerable help with their personal needs. The school achieves a good balance in its provision to meet these various needs well.
38. The curriculum provision is very good in the nursery and good in all other year groups. However, the curriculum opportunities for the teaching of pupils to use alternative communication devices and the independent control of motorised wheelchairs are limited and so, for some pupils, skills of independence are developed more slowly. The provision for the development of communication and literacy skills through signs and symbols is a particular feature.
39. There is sufficient teaching time and the timetable gives a good balance of activities for each class.
40. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and includes booster classes in literacy for the more able pupils in the primary phase and French in Years 7 to 11. Arrangements for sex and drugs education are good. There is a daily act of worship and religious education is taught through the school.
41. The school's class organisation for Years 1 to 6 and 7 to 13 effectively supports the delivery of a specialised curriculum for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
42. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and contributes to the very good relationships and behaviour within the school and to the development of pupils' skills in managing their own care themselves.
43. The level of care for pupils' physical needs is high and the staff manage this care well, minimising disruption to pupils' education. Very good use is made of the school's excellent facilities and community facilities, including the hydrotherapy pool, soft-play room, hall, playground and a local leisure centre to challenge, develop and extend pupils' physical and social skills.
44. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are well prepared for the future. Their course focuses on developing independence, self-advocacy and life skills. They benefit from appropriate work experience and have careers advice on college placements.
45. As at the last inspection, there is still a weakness in the monitoring of the curriculum to ensure that every pupil makes as much progress as possible. This is because, within the topics used in Years 1 to 9, there is insufficient planning to ensure that pupils do not repeat the same work.

46. There is limited provision for extra-curricular clubs and activities. The current arrangements for lunchtime clubs and activities are unsatisfactory. There are some opportunities for residential experiences but these are too few and the curricular links are not sufficiently maintained.
47. The provision for homework is satisfactory overall and at its most effective in Key Stage 4 where it is regularly provided and assessed. In other key stages, homework is inconsistently provided, other than in reading.
48. Most pupils receive the provision specified in their statements but for some pupils with more complex needs, there is a lack of occupational therapy. The small number of autistic pupils do not have sufficiently individually detailed programmes. This affects their progress.
49. All pupils who are able to benefit from integration into mainstream schools do so. Currently, ten pupils are integrated for part of the week into local schools. Integration is suitable, well prepared and of good quality. This provision enhances pupils' experiences and all pupils involved make significant progress. During these sessions, the older and more able pupils are prepared for entry into examinations and can spend considerable amounts of time in mainstream schools, which suits them very well.
50. There are good and improving links with other schools at infant, junior, secondary and college level. Effective partnerships are established to provide a range of integrated experiences that benefit the pupils educationally, personally and socially.
51. The very good provision and use of communication aids and motorised wheelchairs for more able pupils are of particular merit. These pupils are enabled to become increasingly independent and fully involved in the curriculum. However, the school lacks the resources to provide the necessary pre-learning opportunities to pupils who need substantial time and training to develop these skills. As a result, there has been too little development of a curriculum to ensure that all pupils' needs are fully met. The school meets the needs of pupils with English as a second language well, particularly as most of this group have very limited communication and so adapt well to the good systems within the school to develop signs and symbols.
52. The school's resources in all other areas are generally good and they support the curriculum well. However, the library provision is inadequate, poorly situated and under used. This limits its use and so the development of pupils' research skills.
53. Overall, while the accommodation is not purpose built, there is sufficient space within the building for the curriculum and all other specialist activities, such as hydrotherapy and soft play, to take place. The school is still to make good use of the additional space on the first floor that has recently become available.
54. The school is situated in a pleasant position but on a very restricted site. The play areas for the nursery and junior pupils are adequate but, for older pupils, play areas are still unsatisfactory. The school has a major parking problem because of the large numbers of vehicles. The school's efforts to resolve this issue have led to a reduction of the available playground areas, which has not been popular with some staff, parents and pupils.
55. The overall staffing levels within the school are sufficient to meet the needs of the pupils on roll. The very good provision of teacher assistants, designated to work with individual pupils, ensures that pupils make good progress and that their needs are met.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS GUIDED AND SUPPORTED?

56. The very good personal knowledge of all staff and the rigorous monitoring systems lead to a very good level of support for the pupils.

### **Strengths in the provision for pupils' guidance and support are:**

- The very good procedures and care by all staff to ensure the welfare of all children and pupils, and the contribution of the school's counsellor;
- The pupils' targets within their individual education plans (IEPs) and the assessment of pupils' progress;
- The progress pupils make in personal development when integrated into other schools.

### **Areas for development are:**

- Pupils' privacy in some of the toilet areas;
- The attention given to developing pupils' independence in respect of their personal care, wherever possible;
- The increased use of the outside areas of the school.

57. The school has very good procedures for ensuring the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. A knowledgeable team comprising of the headteacher, assistant headteacher and a recently retired doctor as governor all oversee potential child protection issues. The child protection policy and guidelines have recently been revised and are fresh in the minds of all staff. This is a positive improvement since the last inspection.
58. All pupils have targets for English, mathematics, science, ICT and personal, social and health education. These arrangements are very good as they are developed from the pupils' statements and use not only 'P-scales', but also National Curriculum criteria. These targets are incorporated into their IEPs and teaching and support staff review and revise these each half term effectively.
59. All staff work very closely with their allocated pupils and keep careful notes on the smallest step taken in personal or academic development. Consequently, the school is able to write well informed reports and set sensible targets for each pupil. The annual reports are particularly perceptive in summarising each pupil's development. Staff have some knowledge of pupils' interests and achievements out of school. Communication with other schools is good and transitions are smooth.
60. New pupils settle into school life very well. They and their parents are introduced to the routines of school sensitively and positively, promoting confidence and independence. The older pupils and their families are given good advice about transfer arrangements and preparation for life beyond Bedelsford. If at all possible, each pupil has an opportunity to undertake work experience. The school's good links with Kingston College benefit students going to the post-16 education.
61. All pupils build up a Record of Achievement folder with samples of their best work and examples of their sporting and personal achievements as they move through the school. These records are valued both by parents and pupils.
62. The school counsellor makes a particularly effective contribution to the pupils' support and guidance and understands their problems well.

63. The site is safe and secure for all pupils. The site manager is very well organised and works closely with the headteacher to ensure that the pupils' safety is paramount. A few fire doors still need adapting so that they can be opened with speed and ease in the case of an emergency. With the implementation of policies and agreed procedures, the school has remedied issues raised at the last inspection.
64. All staff have been well trained in the best welfare and care techniques for each pupil. They are swift, efficient and unobtrusive in taking pupils out of lessons for essential hygiene needs or equipment checks so that the pupils miss as little learning as possible. Some toilets provide an unsatisfactory level of privacy and do not give the pupils a sufficient opportunity to become independent in looking after their personal needs. This was a concern in the last inspection and still is.
65. The school office has effective procedures for monitoring attendance. However, many pupils are late and miss valuable learning time because of traffic congestion. The senior management team should monitor the registers and transport procedures closely to ensure that the pupils are not having uncomfortably long and arduous journeys.
66. Through the personal, social and health education lessons, the school works well in encouraging the pupils to eat a sensible, balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit. However, the use of the available outside areas is not sufficiently well planned for the pupils' recreation and health needs.
67. The successful integration of pupils into a number of local schools reflects the inclusive nature of this school. The school has a very good set of procedures which are undertaken before a pupil is integrated. These include visits by a senior member of staff to the host school and a separate, supported visit by the pupil. From these discussions, a suitable timetable is drawn up and targets set within the pupils' IEP. These targets relate specifically to the work to be achieved within the host school and are shared by all concerned, including parents. The pupils are sensitively supported by the staff. While being integrated, each pupil is accompanied by a member of the Bedelsford school staff. Dependent upon age, pupils follow a range of subject areas within their host school and some pupils are prepared for external examinations. While being integrated, pupils take part in all the activities of the host school, for example, they are encouraged to mix at playtime and to develop friendships. Teachers in mainstream classes are supported by Bedelsford staff in the differentiation of classroom work, and prepare modified materials where required. This integration provides pupils with very good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK WITH PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY?**

68. The school provides a good range of information and is starting to seek parental views but does not sufficiently appreciate or act on the responses.

### **Strengths in effectiveness of the school's work with parents and the community are:**

- The good level of support from the school's partners for the work of the school;
- The good links with the community and other schools and institutions.

### **Areas for development are:**

- The lack of sufficient opportunities for parents to find out more about the life of the school and, in some instances, the weight given to their views.

69. The school has good and effective links with parents for the benefit of the pupils. Class teachers and parents communicate well via the 'home-school' books and homework tasks to promote learning. Parents are well included in agreeing the learning targets for their children. The annual report provides a very clear indication of how their child has progressed against these targets for the year and is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Parents are invited to a good range of informative meetings to learn about aspects of care, such as manual handling and feeding. However, there are insufficient opportunities for parents to find out more about the academic curriculum so they can share in supporting learning from home. The newsletter gives useful information from across the school, but is only distributed twice a term, so parents are justified in expecting more frequent contact. The Bedelsford School Association raises valuable funds for the school and involves a good number of supportive parents.
70. The school has made a good start in sending out questionnaires and survey forms to parents to elicit their views on a range of issues, such as the new school brochure, the school improvement plan and the home-school agreement. However, parents justifiably feel that the school does not give sufficient weight to their views and that their contribution is not appreciated. On occasion, the school has not been proactive enough in informing parents quickly and unambiguously of management decisions which will affect their children's learning and recreation at school. The recently formed school council, part of the citizenship programme, is giving the pupils a voice in the school, but is not sufficiently formalised yet to give an effective forum for their views. The results of questionnaires sent out to significant partners, such as mainstream primary schools who share the education of some of the pupils, revealed a good level of support for the school and its work.
71. There is good liaison with the health professionals who work on-site. Physiotherapists and speech therapists work well in liaison with classroom staff and share their skills so that communication, self-help and movement programmes are effectively carried out as part of daily routines. Opportunities for pupils to work in the hydrotherapy pool and the soft-play room play a significant part in developing pupils' self-esteem and improving their physical wellbeing.
72. Visiting specialist teachers for supporting pupils with visual and hearing impairment work well with staff to ensure that these pupils' needs are met and ensure that much needed equipment is provided. However, because this service is based in the Local Authority, expensive equipment such as radio microphones are retained when pupils move to another area served by the school. The lack of effective protocols between the areas served by the school occasionally results in pupils being deprived of vital equipment for significant amounts of time.
73. The school has good links with the community to help the pupils. Many local charities and businesses raise funds for the school and the school reciprocates by taking part in sporting and musical events. The younger pupils often go out into the locality to enrich their learning. For example, nursery aged children learnt about road safety and the practicalities of shopping by going on a trip to a nearby parade of shops. The older pupils benefit positively from the good links made with local businesses for work experience. The school makes very good use of a number of local schools in order to integrate the pupils. These links are strong and well established and all pupils benefit, including those in the host schools. Because of its very specialist nature and funding, this school is not in a position to provide outreach to other schools but, when required, does provide local schools with any advice they may request.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

74. The leadership is good and the headteacher and the governors have a clear vision for the school. On occasions, the means by which this vision is to be implemented is not fully explained to staff and parents. The school has to work with eleven different local authorities and health authorities, each with their different procedures and practices, a task made more difficult because of its Foundation status and the special relationship it therefore has with its own local authority. Much management time is taken up by the range of contacts that have to be maintained. However, the skills of the senior management team complement each other and together result in effective management.

### **Strengths in leadership and management are:**

- The good leadership of the school by the headteacher, the senior management team and the governors;
- The effective management of the school by the senior management team;
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

### **Areas for development are:**

- The way ideas for development or change are communicated to parents, staff and pupils to ensure that they are agreed and implemented smoothly;
- The use of assessment data to inform target setting so that self-evaluation procedures are improved.

75. The key issues identified by the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Significant additional improvements have also been made, particularly in the changing of the roles of welfare assistants into teaching assistants, a change which has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.
76. The leadership of the headteacher is good. He is enthusiastic and committed to meeting the special educational needs of all pupils and raising their attainments and achievements. He has a very good vision for the school but sometimes fails to fully share some of the detail by which this vision is implemented, and so loses the confidence of a small minority of parents and staff. Despite this, the headteacher, together with the governors, the teachers and the teaching assistants, have a strong commitment to school improvement. The quality of teaching is now very good overall. Additionally, the curriculum has improved and there is now a strong emphasis on improving pupils' attainments. The successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, and the whole school approach to signing and the use of symbols, are examples of how this has been achieved. This very clear educational direction is creating an effective teaching team who work hard to improve the pupils' personal, academic and physical development. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. These are very well known by all staff and governors.
77. There is a strong sense of teamwork and this results in a purposeful and supportive ethos that permeates the school and has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The aims and values are very strongly reflected in the school's work at all levels. The headteacher ensures that the standards and progress of those pupils with English as an additional language are equally well provided for as the other groups in the school.
78. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well and is very supportive of both the headteacher and the school as a whole. All statutory requirements are met, apart from the completion of a full audit of access issues. Since the last inspection, the

governing body has introduced working groups instead of sub-committees and this simplified structure has been successful and ensures that the governors fully understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.

79. The headteacher's very good system of monitoring and evaluation has led to an improvement in teaching and learning and this has been a major improvement since the last inspection. The school has also introduced target setting and this has been successful to a certain extent. The current self-evaluation procedures are largely a list of the improvements made and do not include an analysis of the progress pupils make. Currently, the school makes too little use of the assessment data collected to set these targets and the criteria by which pupils are said to have improved are imprecise. The links between the analysis of the targets set and the development of the school improvement plan are very limited. Thus, the priorities within the school improvement plan are not at present developed from target setting. Additionally, the priorities are not fully developed with all members of staff parents and governors to ensure their ownership and this reduces their impact on teaching and learning.
80. Overall, the school manages its resources satisfactorily and all staff are suitably deployed and given clearly defined responsibilities. The newly introduced procedures for performance management are well organised and should provide the senior management team with a suitable method of reviewing the performance by staff of their duties. The school manages its staff supply cover very well and has an effective procedure which allows for leave of absence without pay; this reduces staff absences and is financially efficient. The school has worked through a difficult financial period but the governors have maintained good budget controls and, through careful budgeting, the financial position is now satisfactory. Overall funding, while in the upper quartile of similar schools throughout the country, is too low for the school in view of the wide and complex range of needs it has to meet; the percentage of funding spent on staff at 85 per cent is too high. The local authority is aware of this and is reviewing the school's basic budget. Specific grants are used to the advantage of the pupils and the school uses best value principles to purchase its materials and equipment, taking into account that much specialist equipment for the disabled is highly expensive and available from only a few sources.
81. The arrangements for the professional development of teachers are satisfactory and they attend suitable training. This training is generally linked to the school improvement plan but the plan does not itemise this clearly. The training for teaching assistants is less secure, mainly because of a lack of funding. The school provides for a number of training and work experience places, particularly for sixth formers and for students from colleges of further education.
82. Day-to-day management is very good and the school is well supported by a bursar and a number of clerical and other staff. The school is clean and well maintained as a result of the effectiveness of the site manager.
83. The school has improved since the last inspection and is effective and efficient, giving good value for money because of the consistently good and frequently better teaching, the very good personal development of pupils and the effective progress all of them make.

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

84. In order to improve standards and the provision, the governors and the school should:

- develop resources and opportunities for teaching pupils to use alternative communication devices and the independent control of motorised wheelchairs according to needs;
- use the available assessment data to evaluate the quality of provision to improve self-evaluation and so to identify priorities for improvements more clearly;
- make sure that priorities for improvement and major changes are communicated effectively to staff, parents and pupils after appropriate consultation;
- improve whole school curriculum planning to ensure pupils across the whole age range build progressively on previous learning and extend their use of key skills, particularly in ICT.

## WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES?

### ENGLISH

85. Provision for English is good throughout the school and there is a very strong and appropriate emphasis on the development of communication. Much of this work is achieved through the use of ICT, sign and symbols and the use of alternative communication devices.

#### **Strengths of the subject are:**

- Pupils' good progress in listening, communication and reading;
- Excellent relationships which promote confidence, active learning and very good attitudes and behaviour;
- Very good use of communication aids (e.g. computers, switches, signing and symbols);
- High expectations of what pupils can achieve, whatever the barriers to learning.

#### **The areas for improvement are:**

- Further training for all staff in methods appropriate for the pupils with the most complex and challenging special needs;
- Improvement of the library to encourage the development of independent study skills;
- Continued work with examination bodies to ensure that all pupils can gain recognition of the standards they have reached;
- Improve standards of writing.

86. Pupils make good progress in listening, communicating, reading and recording in the primary classes and very good progress in the secondary classes, where older pupils show the benefits of the work on language development and communication done lower down the school.
87. The standards attained by pupils, including those with English as a second language, are generally well below the national average because of the physical difficulties which create barriers to learning. However, in Years 7 and 11, some more able pupils reach standards close to national expectations and all pupils achieve well in the light of their special needs, making good and very good progress towards their personal targets. Some of the oldest pupils gain certificates of achievement (CoA) but many still have difficulty in fulfilling the demands of examination course work.
88. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made a good start on establishing communication by speech supported by Makaton signing or the use of symbols and communication aids which speak for them. By the end of Year 6, they can handle books appropriately and identify pictures, symbols and sometimes words. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 9, they enjoy stories, and the more able can analyse the plot and suggest interesting adjectives to describe characters. By the end of Year 11, pupils can read and discuss the text of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' and the more able pupils can support their opinions by reference to the text. Few pupils can write at an adequate speed but all who can are encouraged to do so. For many pupils, written work is wholly completed by the use of a word processor, often using symbols. Spelling skills are suitably developed by those pupils who are able to write or type. Overall, throughout the school, more attention is required to the basic skills of writing and spelling.

89. The standards of teaching have improved since the last inspection. Teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons, through adaptation of tasks and equipment and through allocation of support. The methods used in the subject, particularly the use of picture, sign, symbols and real objects, are particularly useful for those pupils who are learning English as a second language. The use of ICT in the subject is very good. The focus on developing communication is beneficial for learning across the whole curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Provision for mathematics throughout the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is now good in the primary years and very good in the secondary phase. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall with more than half the lessons observed being of at least a very good quality.

### **Strengths of the subject are:**

- The very good ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment in lessons;
- The very good teamwork evident in all classes;
- The many real and meaningful experiences and contexts for pupils to help them understand and apply their developing numeracy skills.

### **The areas for improvement are:**

- The involvement of a very few pupils with more challenging difficulties who are reluctant to engage in some lessons;
- The further development of the monitoring role of the mathematics co-ordinator to include the quality of teaching and learning across the classes.

91. In the junior age classes, pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment and degree of learning difficulty. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can count up and back to ten and can recognise amounts of two and three without counting. Some pupils can add on one to a given number up to 20 and are beginning to understand the value of coins through good use of the class shop and 'money-box' activities.
92. At the end of the junior stage, lower attaining pupils rote count to ten and some recognise numerals to five and know the days of the week. They have a good grasp of two-dimensional shape such as square, triangle and circle. More able pupils add by counting on from a given number and apply this to giving change in a simulated shopping activity. They use coins to solve shopping problems posed by teacher.
93. At the secondary age, pupils make very good progress and some, through being involved in their own assessment, become increasingly independent in their learning.
94. At the secondary age, pupils make very good progress in mathematics. By Year 9, pupils are learning basic addition or subtraction facts to 20. More able pupils understand place value above 10,000. By Year 9, some pupils know how many there will be when one more is added to groups of up to five items. Others, by using their fingers or a number line for counting on or back, are learning basic addition or subtraction facts to 20. More able pupils add and multiply mentally to 50 and subtract, without decomposition, from numbers above 100. Most able pupils understand place value above 10,000, including the use of zero as a place holder, and multiply by 10, 100 and 1,000.

95. By the age of 16, lower attaining pupils have made good progress in understanding the value of tens and recording amounts up to 50 by systematically making groups of ten and counting the remaining units. Others show their understanding of place value by putting three numerals together to make the highest and lowest numbers and explaining their reasons, for example 852 and 258. The most able are working towards entry Level 3 for foundation GCSE and making very good progress in learning about rounding to the nearest 1,000 or 10,000, multiples and prime numbers. They can interpret data that is recorded in graphs.
96. In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent and in the secondary phase it is consistently very good. Lessons are very well planned and prepared and well matched to the pupils' needs. The teaching is excellent where an enthusiastic approach results in pupils being excited and keen to respond, for example, to a questions such as "who has got the red circle" and requiring them to place their shape onto the matching large cut-out shape. It is less good where a slower pace results in some loss of interest. Very good strategies are used to capture and maintain interest, for example a lively introduction using a 'rap' counting song was effective in motivating pupils with profound and multiple difficulties to respond enthusiastically. Good use of computer programs challenges or practices pupils' emerging skills. Teaching assistants support individuals and groups effectively in developing their learning skills, helping them to discuss their work.
97. The co-ordination of mathematics provision has been allocated to a recently appointed teacher and with good support from the LEA adviser, an appropriate plan of action for development has been drawn up which includes most of the 'areas for improvement' listed above. Thus the school is well placed to continue to improve provision for mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

98. The provision for science is good. Pupils make good progress because of generally good teaching and the very good level of support from teaching assistants. The standards of more able pupils in Year 11 are improving.

### **Strengths of the subject are:**

- The way teaching relates learning to pupils' prior knowledge in other subject areas;
- The support provided by teaching assistants that greatly assists pupils' learning;
- The good quality of colourful work sheets that helps pupils to attend to written tasks.

### **The areas for improvement are:**

- The need to plan to ensure that pupils build on what they already know in science.

99. In all the primary school years, most pupils make good progress in science. In Years 1 and 2 they learn about change and know that change can be reversible or irreversible. They name the parts of the body accurately. They know that plants are living things and investigate the conditions needed for growth. They are introduced to forces and forms of energy such as electricity and are developing an understanding of electric circuits.
100. In Years 3 to 6, pupils readily recall that foods are different and the most able know that foods can contain starch, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals. Most pupils are aware that a balanced diet is required for healthy living. They investigate light and shadow and understand that certain animals use colour and camouflage to

aid survival. They know that animals see by light travelling into the eye. This work is further extended by pupils exploring how day and night come about.

101. In the secondary years, good progress in science is maintained. In Years 7 to 9, pupils test for starches, fats and protein in food by using various chemicals. They begin to understand what is meant by a fair test and develop skills of prediction. Pupils explore the various senses and investigate how to produce a healthy sandwich. More able pupils extend their knowledge about sounds, the atmosphere, air pollution and the environmental effects of using fertilisers. They know the conditions which make a seed germinate. By the end of Year 9, the most able pupils understand the importance of the process of photosynthesis. In Years 10 and 11, the most able pupils reach national standards when they are successful in gaining certification in the Certificate of Achievement examination. They know that a healthy diet is made up of a number of important elements and are able to design a meal that includes all of these. They recall types of minerals, for example, potassium, and can list various materials. They understand the water cycle and know what colours make up light. They know such terms as opaque, transparent and translucent. Most able pupil research independently, set up a fair test and with help predict the likely result. Less able pupils explore the use of their sense of smell and discover that light travels in straight lines.
102. Teaching is always satisfactory and, more often than not, good. On some occasions, lesson planning take too little account of what pupils have learnt in science before and too much time is spent during some lessons in covering previous learning. However, in most lessons, staff are particularly skilled in relating the work being undertaken to pupils' knowledge and experiences in other subject areas, promoting understanding and progress. When undertaking investigations, the teaching assistants work very well with pupils to ensure successful learning.
103. The co-ordination of science has improved since the last inspection. The subject is well monitored and a development plan has been written as a consequence. The curriculum is good but the use of topics which are repeated in a cycle, particularly in Years 7 to 9, does not fully ensure that pupils build on what they have learnt previously. This is particularly apparent, for example, where further work is undertaken on healthy living and in materials and their uses. Resources are good and the specialist room enhances provision. The very good use of a theatre group to consolidate pupils' learning was a special feature during the inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

104. The provision for ICT is good and it is taught both separately and within other subjects. Pupils' progress is good overall. The lack of adequate planning for tracking of progress in ICT persists from the previous inspection.

### **The strengths of the subject are:**

- Good use of specialist software and access devices to extend the range of pupils' experiences;
- The use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning in other subjects.

### **The areas for improvement are:**

- Planning to ensure key skills are extended;
- The placement of computers in school does not always allow for whole class teaching.

105. There is a wide range of ability between and within each class. Pupils make good progress from nursery until the age of 11. Secondary pupils' with severe learning

difficulties make good progress. The progress of more able secondary aged pupils' is satisfactory. Overall, the use of information and communication technology to extend the learning experiences of pupils by their constant use is too limited, particularly in the use of E-mail, the Internet and to produce writing on a regular basis. This is partially due to the current siting of the computer suite.

106. By the age of seven, some pupils have learned to use a mouse to control the computer and use simple programmable toys. Higher achieving pupils can compose short sentences using banks of words provided within a computer program. They can use a spreadsheet to turn a tally chart from a traffic survey into graphs. Lower achieving pupils enjoy using the microphone in the sensory room or using switches to control toys. In all their work, they achieve as much as can be expected given their abilities.
107. The most able 11-year-old pupils can use an on-screen keyboard to write but do not know how to use the spell checking facility. Some pupils are using a laptop effectively when they integrate into mainstream school. The least able pupils can use a mouse but need help to 'drag' work across the screen. They use software that provides symbols and photographs to support their understanding and writing. In this work the pupils do well and show they are achieving to their capacity, However, too little use of ICT across the curriculum is planned to extend pupils opportunities for learning.
108. In the secondary class for pupils with severe learning difficulties, some pupils showing emerging awareness of light sources are beginning to track the movement of lights in the sensory room. Others in the same group are able to use a concept keyboard to write their news or use two switches to scan and respond to simple computer programs.
109. By the age of 14, higher achieving pupils are writing stories using a grid of symbols. They understand what a database might be used for and can put data in if they are given a model, but cannot interrogate the database. They know how to use a search engine to find web sites on the Internet. In this work the pupils do well and show they are achieving to capacity. However, in subjects across the curriculum, teachers' planning fails to make good use of the skills learnt.
110. The pupils in Year 10 and 11 can put data into a spreadsheet but not work out the formulae. Higher achieving pupils can produce bar graphs from tally charts. They can produce formal letters to support their Business Enterprise work. Lower achieving pupils have difficulty following instructions because of their disabilities but can communicate preferences.
111. The teaching in ICT is good throughout the school. The best teaching is characterised by imaginative preparation suited to each individual, and by careful record keeping to base planning on. Teachers and assistants work well as a team. One teaching assistant supports ICT specifically and her work is effective.
112. The ICT co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve provision. However, there is no systematic sampling of evidence to show how pupils' skills and knowledge develop through the school. This has an adverse impact on pupils' progress, especially at the secondary stage.
113. Since the last inspection, the provision for the subject has made good improvement. The gaps in provision for the lower secondary pupils have been addressed. Teachers have had more training and are more confident, and their expertise means that pupils use computers, access devices and specialist software much more. Pupils now have

better access to literacy and other areas of the curriculum through using ICT. However, there is still room for improvement.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. The provision for religious education is very good overall. Pupils make very good progress because of very good and sometimes excellent teaching, and very good levels of support.

### **Strengths of the subject are:**

- The way the teachers plan carefully to ensure that all pupils have access into this subject;
- The inspirational teaching methods to deliver religious education in Years 10 to 11;
- The support provided by teaching assistants that greatly assists pupils' learning.

### **The areas for improvement are:**

- There are no major areas for improvement.

115. Pupils make very good progress in their understanding of different religions despite the limitations in writing for some pupils. They demonstrate good understanding of bible stories.

116. In the primary years, pupils know about the feeding of the five thousand and the miracle of the five loaves and two fish. They understand that there are religious festivals such as Christmas and Harvest Festival and learn about a number of bible characters such as Noah. As they get older they relate this previous learning to the Jewish faith and know about the customs, practices and rituals of this religion, for example, the celebration of Sukhot. Pupils know the Qur'an exists and about prayer mats and Islamic patterns. They are helped in this learning by direct contact with persons of the Muslim faith.

117. In the secondary phase, pupils further develop their learning and extend their understanding of all religions. In Years 7 to 9, more able pupils show that they know the importance of religious beliefs and that throughout the world there are a number of important religions. For example, they know how and why Hindus worship at home and in the Mandir and they know the importance of the Qur'an to Muslims. In Years 10 and 11, pupils show that they also have an historical perspective on the life of Jesus. They understand how the beliefs of Christians influence their actions and what it means to be a Christian. The school sets very good role models for pupils to follow and they benefit from this.

118. The teaching of religious education is always at least very good and teachers use a wide variety of methods to ensure that the pupils' attention is maintained. Teaching assistants make a major contribution to the successful delivery of lessons. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is sometimes inspirational and results in very good learning, for example, in a drama lesson on the life of Jesus.

119. The subject is well led and monitored. Resources are very good. The scheme of work is well modified to meet the needs of the pupils in the school whilst still reflecting well the local agreed syllabus. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection in all aspects of the provision for religious education. The assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of faith and so to their spiritual development.

## **OTHER AREAS OF LEARNING OBSERVED**

### **FOUNDATION STAGE**

120. Children under five make very good progress in most areas of learning. The job share works well.

**The strengths are:**

- The way the teachers plan carefully to ensure that all children have access into all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum;
- The very good quality assessment which uses a combination of a 'small steps' approach, the P-Scales and the Early Learning Goals to plan for children's needs;
- The very good progress made by children in personal, social and emotional development, communication and language through signs and symbols.

**The areas for improvement are:**

- The progress made by children in creative and physical development.

### **HUMANITIES**

121. History and geography are taught at all key stages, apart from at Key Stage 4. The provision for history and geography is good and pupils make good progress.

**Strengths of the subject are:**

- The good quality of discussion between staff and pupils;
- The focused questioning by the teacher in order for pupils to recall their learning.

**The areas for improvement are:**

- There are no major areas for improvement noted.

### **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FRENCH)**

122. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in learning simple phrases in French and are well taught by a specialist teacher.

**Strengths of the subject are:**

- The good use of target language and the excellent subject knowledge of the teacher;
- The good range of teaching techniques;
- The support provided by teaching assistants that greatly assists pupils' learning.

**The areas for improvement are:**

- Further curriculum planning to ensure the work builds on what the pupils already know.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC AND PRACTICAL SUBJECTS**

123. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy music in their music lessons and make good progress. In Years 7 to 11, music and drama are taught together. The provision is good and pupils make at least good progress. No lessons were observed in design and technology but the provision for art is good and pupils make good progress. In physical education, the provision is very specialised and includes for example, soft play, hydrotherapy, swimming, physiotherapy and horse riding. All pupils make very good progress.

**Strengths of the subject are:**

- The very good range of specialised provision for physical education;
- The very good resources for music and the use made of outside drama groups to improve curriculum provision;
- The development of fine motor skills through art;
- The support provided by teaching assistants that greatly assists pupils' learning.

**The areas for improvement are:**

- The lowering of the display for art so that it can be seen by pupils in wheelchairs;
- Greater opportunities for extra-curricular activities in these areas and for further residential experiences;
- Better use of the facilities for outdoor activities;
- Providing more opportunities for design and technology, in particular, the design process.

**PERSONAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

124. In Years 1 to 9 personal, pupils make very good progress in personal, health and social education. The provision for the teaching of citizenship is developing and the team enterprise programme makes a good contribution to this.

**Strengths of the subject are:**

- The good teaching of citizenship, helping pupils to make key decisions about their lives;
- The very good progress made by pupils in personal, health and social education and the contribution of all professionals working in the school to these areas;
- The support provided by school counsellor that greatly assists pupils' self-esteem.

**The areas for improvement are:**

- The development of clearer targets in pupils' IEPs for citizenship and team enterprise.

## APPENDIX

### *The views of parents*

The number of questionnaires returned: 41

	<i>Please tick</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
1	My child likes this school.	63	32	5	0	3
2	My child is making good progress at school.	18	74	4	0	0
3	Pupils behave well in school.	25	66	0	0	9
4	Teaching is good.	35	65	0	0	0
5	I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	68	16	0	0
6	I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	27	59	9	0	0
7	Staff expect my child to work hard and do his or her best.	20	65	6	5	5
8	The school is well run.	30	52	5	5	8
9	Staff treat all children fairly.	22	64	0	0	14
10	The school seeks the views of parents and takes account of their suggestions and concerns.	18	48	22	4	8
11	Staff help me to support my child's learning.	32	59	9	0	0
12	The school helps my child to become mature and take on responsibility.	42	38	12	0	0
13	There is a good range of activities, like trips or visits outside lessons.	30	35	15	15	6
14	The arrangements for my child to start school were good.	22	70	0	0	8

## AUDIT OF STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The inspection team has checked all the areas below to see whether the laws on education that apply to the school are being followed. Where statutory requirements are not fully met, the governing body has provided an explanation to the inspection team.

Are statutory requirements in place?	Fully in place	Partly in place	Not in place
Every pupil receives the full curriculum that the school must provide.	<b>X</b>		
The school provides teaching of religious education for all pupils and has told parents of the right to withdraw their children.	<b>X</b>		
The school provides a daily act of collective worship for all pupils (in <i>special schools</i> as far as is practicable) and has told parents of the right to withdraw their children.	<b>X</b>		
<i>(Schools with pupils of primary age)</i> The school has decided whether or not to provide sex and relationships education to pupils of primary age and, if doing so, has told parents about the content and organisation of the programme and their right to withdraw their children.	<b>X</b>		
<i>(Schools with pupils of secondary age)</i> The school has told parents about the content and organisation of its programme of sex and relationships education for pupils of secondary age and their right to withdraw their children.	<b>X</b>		
The school does not discriminate against pupils, job applicants or staff on the grounds of sex, race, disability or marital status.	<b>X</b>		
The school has a written policy on race equality and has told parents how it is working and what impact it has had.		<b>X</b>	
The school meets general and specific duties in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice.	<b>X</b>		
The school follows the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when meeting pupils' special educational needs and makes its policy known to parents.	<b>X</b>		
The school follows the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. It has told parents about its SEN policy and arrangements and reports annually on the success of its SEN policy and the progress made in improving accessibility.		<b>X</b>	
The school meets all relevant health and safety legislation.	<b>X</b>		
The school follows the procedures for child protection set out by the local Area Child Protection Committee.	<b>X</b>		
The responsibilities of the governing body, its committees, the headteacher and staff in respect of finances are clearly defined and limits of delegated authority are clearly set out.	<b>X</b>		
The school has a performance management policy and ensures that all teachers, including the headteacher, are appraised.	<b>X</b>		
The school has set up and operates all relevant complaints and appeals procedures.	<b>X</b>		