

INSPECTION REPORT

PATHWAYS SCHOOL

Townville, Castleford

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 133340

Headteacher: Miss Y Limb

Reporting inspector: Mrs R Eaton
15173

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 249458

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Poplar Avenue Townville Castleford West Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor S Groves
Date of previous inspection:	First inspection

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15173	Mrs R Eaton	Registered inspector	Art and design Design and technology Educational inclusion, including race equality English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13462	Mrs R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14691	Mrs J Hall	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1987	Mr G Davies	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	
20466	Mr A Tattersall	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pathways opened in September 2001, as part of Wakefield's reorganisation of its special educational needs provision. It is a school for boys and girls aged five to eleven with moderate learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorders. Currently, there are 59 pupils, with over two-thirds as many boys as girls. When they join the school, most pupils' attainment is well below average. They all have statements: 31 for moderate learning difficulties, seven for severe learning difficulties and 21 for autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils are drawn from the whole of the Wakefield area, which results in journeys of over an hour for several pupils. The large majority of pupils are white. Three are from Asian and two from mixed backgrounds. Three have English as an additional language, with Urdu and Gujarati being spoken in their homes. The school building houses a unit for pupils permanently excluded from primary schools. Pathways supports pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in mainstream schools, through outreach and staff training programmes.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pathways is already a good school with a number of very good features. It is continuing to develop rapidly. Pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well. The quality of teaching is good and the school is very well led and managed. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership is very strong, enthusiastic and determined.
- All staff are entirely committed to the school and its pupils. The quality of teamwork is very good and supports pupils' learning and personal development.
- Teachers plan lessons very well to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and are one reason why pupils are so keen to come to school.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are looked after very well, so they are able to make the most of their time in school.

What could be improved

- There are not enough planned opportunities in all subjects for pupils to practise the skills of numeracy or use computers.
- There is insufficient planned use of the library by pupils.

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 has not previously been inspected.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school has set targets for groups of Year 6 pupils to achieve in summer 2003. On average, pupils achieve 75 per cent of the targets in their individual education plans, indicating that these are suitably challenging and that pupils are making good progress. They make good progress and achieve well in the majority of subjects, including English and mathematics. Progress and achievement are satisfactory in science, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education and very good in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Boys and girls and pupils with different special educational needs make progress at equivalent rates.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in lessons and activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave very well when on visits. They are often kind to each other and do not think that any bullying occurs in school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take responsibility for tasks in the classrooms. They become increasingly able to manage their own behaviour. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
Attendance	Good. Absences are usually linked to illness or pupils' medical conditions.

Pupils particularly enjoy activities that enable them to learn in practical ways, such as playing games or exploring resources. They take part enthusiastically in lunchtime clubs and activities.

There are occasional outbursts of challenging behaviour as a result of pupils' special educational needs. Other pupils do not allow themselves to be distracted, but carry on with their work. At present, there is no school council to provide a formal opportunity for pupils to take part in making decisions about school life, but the school plans to introduce one shortly.

Pupils are very happy to support charities and help others less fortunate than themselves.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 1 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 is good in English, mathematics, science and personal, social, health and citizenship education. The skills of communication, including literacy are taught well in lessons across the curriculum. Numeracy teaching is good in mathematics lessons, but not enough opportunities are planned for in other subjects. Similarly, computers are not used enough to support learning in lessons across the curriculum. The needs of all pupils are met well through very carefully planned lessons. Activities are interesting and encourage pupils to try hard. The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is highly effective and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. There is not enough planned use of the library to support pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Learning opportunities are well planned overall, with a strong and appropriate emphasis on language, literacy and communication. The curriculum is adapted well to meet pupils' varying special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils benefit from the good quality teaching and curriculum in English. The school calls upon the local education authority's race equality service whenever necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development, especially the spiritual, moral and social aspects. A wide range of activities and daily routines contributes to the provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school looks after pupils very well, making sure that they are safe and happy.

The school works very well in partnership with parents.

The good provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders includes a daily programme of sustained physical activity and a picture exchange system to help pupils to communicate.

Programmes of work are still being completed for science and physical education.

There are very many worthwhile links with the community and other schools. Pupils have very good opportunities to work and play alongside those with other special educational needs or with pupils in mainstream schools.

Pupils' personal development, attendance and behaviour are all encouraged very strongly and tracked carefully.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's very effective leadership is supported strongly by other senior staff, who carry out significant responsibilities.
How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Governors are extremely supportive and bring very relevant experience and expertise. They are making an increasingly important contribution to leading and managing the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. A wide range of methods is used to collect information and set targets for improvement. The school is now comparing its performance with other, similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Finances are managed very well and decisions about spending are very closely linked to plans to help pupils make better progress.

The school applies the principles of best value well, in order to improve the services it provides.

It is well staffed and learning resources are good. The accommodation is very good, with particularly good specialist rooms.

Co-ordinators have worked extremely hard to establish their subjects. Teachers and governors already value their developing links.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • Parents are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school is very approachable and it works closely with parents. • The school has high expectations. • Leadership and management are good. • Their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four parents who responded to the questionnaire are not entirely happy about the activities provided outside lessons. • At the meeting with inspectors, a few parents raised concerns about the reliability of transport to and from school.

The inspectors agree with the parents' very positive views. However, annual reports do not consistently provide sufficient information about pupils' individual progress in every subject. The school offers a good variety of lunchtime activities, visits in the community and residential opportunities. It shares parents' concerns about transport which, from time to time, affects pupils' attendance and punctuality. Disruption is now less frequent. However, the school continues to liaise with the local education authority and keeps a close eye on the situation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well over time. When the school opened in 2001, targets were set for the current Year 6 to achieve when they leave in summer 2003. At that time, the records of pupils' attainment varied, depending on which school they had attended previously. When the pupils' progress was measured in September 2002, at the halfway point, it was discovered that, in most cases, the targets were not challenging enough. Consequently, these targets are likely to be exceeded. The targets for the current Year 5, whose achievement will be reported in 2004, have been arrived at after analysis of Pathways' own assessment data. The school is confident that these predictions of pupils' performance are more accurate and challenging. Currently, across the school, pupils achieve approximately 75 per cent of the targets in their individual education plans. In general, the targets are sufficiently precise to enable gains in learning to be measured and the success rate indicates that pupils and teachers are challenged suitably.
2. Pupils' progress and achievements are good in nearly all subjects, including English and mathematics. This success is owing to high quality teaching combined with programmes of work that are planned carefully so pupils build systematically on their previous learning. In English, pupils get on equally well in speaking, listening and communicating in other ways (such as using a picture exchange system), reading and writing. Their progress is enhanced because the school places a strong emphasis on these skills and pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise and develop them throughout the school day. In mathematics lessons, progress is good, but pupils would benefit from more planned opportunities to develop numeracy during lessons in other subjects. Progress and achievement are satisfactory in science, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. In science and physical education, the planning for the subjects is not yet complete, so there are some areas where pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are less well developed. In information and communication technology, teachers are still developing their own expertise and there is some shortage of computers in classrooms. As a result, pupils are not always taught the skills they need to learn or given enough opportunities to apply them in other subjects. In religious education, a number of teachers miss opportunities to draw out the important messages within, for example, Bible stories.
3. Progress and achievement are very good in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The well taught lessons in the subject are complemented by the efforts the school makes to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and by daily activities and routines, such as lunchtime, snacks and visits in the community. As a result, pupils' learning in this area is constantly reinforced and extended. In turn, because pupils become more independent and active learners, their work in other subjects benefits.
4. A strength of the school is the way in which it caters equally well for all pupils, regardless of their particular special educational needs. As a result, all pupils make progress at equivalent, though differing rates. For example, the pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorders may take longer to make small steps in learning but,

when their particular needs are considered, their achievements are just as impressive as those of pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Teachers know pupils very well and carefully plan the next stage in their development, so their progress is continuous. The curriculum is also tailored to suit each group of pupils – for example the sustained physical activity offered each morning to pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

5. The tiny number of pupils with English as an additional language is provided for well. These pupils have access to the same good quality English teaching and curriculum. Additionally, when necessary, the local education authority's race equality service provides the school with extremely useful support, for example translating or interpreting in order to foster the partnership with parents.
6. A few pupils have severe learning difficulties. Like other less able pupils in the classes for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, they make good progress and achieve well. This is because teachers ensure that the tasks they set are relevant to all pupils. In English and mathematics this is often achieved by varying the work according to the targets in pupils' individual education plans. In other subjects, staff frequently provide enhanced support for pupils with more significant learning difficulties, enabling them to benefit from all opportunities and experiences. Similarly, teachers make good arrangements to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils or those with sensory impairment. For example, the local education authority's support services visit and advise on suitable resources, enabling pupils with visual or hearing impairment to play a full part in lessons, and so make good progress.
7. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed very well and they too make good progress, because they are almost always able to benefit by being included in lessons. At the same time, other pupils are not distracted, contributing to their own good achievement. The relatively small number of girls achieve as well as the boys, because staff give all pupils equal opportunities to learn, for example to answer questions or use resources.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes are very good. All enjoy coming to school and arrive very excited and pleased to see their friends, teachers and all other staff. Overall, different groups and ages of pupils display little variation in their attitudes to learning, and there is generally a supremely happy and positive atmosphere in the school throughout the day. In discussions with a cross-section of pupils, they all said they liked school, one admitting 'I want to give a hug and a kiss to everyone when I come in the morning'. Pupils get pleasure from their successes. When Year 2 pupils in a communication group were singing their song of welcome, they kept trying even harder when they were praised and encouraged by the staff. Visits and practical activities are enjoyed very much. During the inspection, a group of Years 5 and 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties visited the community health care centre to learn how to look after their teeth. They co-operated very well with the dentist and her assistant in the tasks she set them, listened well, followed her instructions carefully and were praised by the dentist for the interest they had shown. Years 3 and 4 pupils on a visit to a neighbouring infant school to participate in an art workshop, were engrossed in their clay models and sculptures, carefully selecting a range of ironmongery to create patterns and shapes in their work. Pupils enjoy class and whole-school assemblies, especially when they have the opportunity to participate in an active way. Making a 'friendship cake' saw Years 5 and 6 pupils enthusiastically stirring in their ingredients of 'caring' and 'sharing'. An enactment of the parable of the friends of a paralysed man

helping him to see Jesus, involved four pupils listening carefully to the deputy headteacher's instructions and performing all the required actions in front of an interested audience. Assemblies reflect the hard work and application of pupils. Their very good attitudes to learning reflect the gains being made in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across all areas of school life.

9. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good, and only two pupils were involved in seven fixed-term exclusions in the previous school year. There are a number of pupils whose difficult behaviour is closely related to their special needs and who can be very challenging, but staff work closely with these pupils to help them to manage their own behaviour well. Parents and staff are proud that examples of very good behaviour are frequently reported to them. When a class of the youngest pupils attended a singing assembly in the neighbouring infant school, their behaviour was impeccable and supported their inclusion in the activity. Pupils are often kind to each other, for example spontaneously holding doors open. They do not think there is any bullying in the school and they tolerate the occasional disruptive behaviour of their friends very well. Behaviour at lunchtime and break-times is very good amongst all groups of pupils, and they make good use of the playground and activities. At times, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and challenging behaviour find it difficult to focus on their work and manage their behaviour well. Then they enjoy time in the sensory room and can often improve their behaviour sufficiently to return to a lesson and participate in learning once more. Many of these pupils have made enormous strides during their time at Pathways and the majority are now able to tolerate working as part of a group and conforming to classroom routines and teachers' requests.
10. Pupils' personal development is very good and is supported strongly by the very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff. At present, pupils can help with specific class-based tasks, for example at snack time, but have little opportunity to hold whole-school responsibilities. In part, this is due to the design of the classroom doors (with two handles and requiring a special opening technique) which are difficult for most pupils to open without adult help. Plans are well advanced for the formation of a school council and older pupils are looking forward to the opportunity to make suggestions and influence school issues. Pupils enjoy the lunchtime clubs in the computer room and adventure playground, and share break-times with the pupils from the unit for permanently excluded mainstream pupils. Opportunities to contribute to charitable causes are seized on enthusiastically by pupils, and they were able to donate sufficient items to fill 70 boxes for a 'Love in a Box' appeal in the local Methodist church. At lunchtime, with the support of their lunchtime supervisors and the kitchen staff, pupils queue, make a choice from the well-presented food available, and then take their plate on a tray to their table. They know that they do not join the queue until they are sitting quietly and properly – a real incentive after a hard morning's work.
11. Pupils are keen to come to school and their attendance is good when compared to pupils in similar schools. When the school first opened, and on several occasions in the previous and current year, problems with transport contractors affected the punctuality and attendance of small groups of pupils. The school acted promptly to liaise with the local education authority, and is satisfied that most of these transport concerns have been overcome and now cause problems less frequently. There are no recorded instances of unauthorised absence, and nearly every absence is due to a hospital appointment or pupils' ill health. Initially, problems with the school's heating system meant that the school occasionally asked for the youngest pupils to be kept at home until the problem was rectified. Lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good. This is in line with the headteacher's own evaluation, reflecting the accuracy of the information the school collects through formal and informal methods. The high quality provision is particularly significant because of recent staff changes; at the time of the inspection, one teacher had only been with the school for one week. Other teachers have previously had limited experience of working with pupils with special educational needs, especially autistic spectrum disorder. The very good procedures for introducing staff and developing their expertise have had a clear and positive impact on equipping teachers to meet the school's demands. A further factor is the excellent team spirit within the whole of the staff, providing mutual support and ensuring that newcomers feel able to acknowledge difficulties and ask for help.
13. Unsurprisingly, highly effective teamwork is a feature of the majority of lessons. In these, teaching assistants are fully aware of their role, because they and the teachers invest time in discussing the purpose of the lesson and the part each adult will play. For example, during a Year 6 personal, social, health and citizenship lesson for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, the assistants each led a small group of pupils as they discussed issues such as recycling and pollution. The teacher had provided written information to help the assistants prompt the pupils. As a result of careful questioning, all pupils were able to make a contribution, leading to good progress in their knowledge of the environment. In lessons for pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorders, the staff are very flexible – their role may need to change, depending on how the pupils react. An art lesson for pupils in Years 2 to 5 took place in the art room, but one assistant remained in the classroom with a pupil who was finding it particularly hard to concentrate and conform. Later, the assistant judged, accurately, that the pupil was calm enough to join the others. He did a small amount of painting, did not disturb the rest of the group, and then went back to the security of the classroom. Staff's sensitive responses are important factors in helping pupils with autistic spectrum disorders to make clear progress in their learning and social development.
14. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which the needs of all pupils are met. For example, the very few pupils from minority ethnic groups are fully included in lessons and teachers make sure that activities appeal to girls as well as boys – designing a vehicle for 'Barbie' or 'Bob the Builder'. In particular, pupils' individual learning difficulties are taken into account, so they are able to make progress at different but equally good rates. This is possible because teachers know pupils and their needs very well indeed and are aware of what they need to learn next in order to build on what they already know, understand and can do. This is particularly evident in lessons in English and mathematics, areas in which pupils have individual targets. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, the main section involved pupils working in three groups, each led by an adult. The activities varied, in line with pupils' own targets, for example the two highest attaining pupils played a shopping game, deciding which toys to buy with five pence and counting their change. Lower attainers sorted plastic shapes and practised counting one or two objects. They all remained motivated, because the staff constantly dived into their boxes of resources, bringing out different attractive games and items and reinforcing pupils' learning in interesting ways. Earlier, during the introductory mental warm-up session involving number songs, the teacher also had varying but equally high expectations for each pupil to achieve. Accordingly, individuals were asked, for instance, to sing particular words, such as 'huge' or 'tiny', or select and display the correct number during 'Five Currant Buns'. This enabled the

teacher to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and kept them on their toes, looking and listening hard, developing their communication skills as well as their numeracy. Like many others, this teacher consistently records the staff's observations of the small steps in pupils' progress. Occasionally, teachers rely too much on their memory to remind them what each pupil has learned, making it more difficult to keep track of their progress over time.

15. In lessons across the curriculum, teachers generally provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills, such as using the story of the 'Three Little Pigs' as the starting point for a design and technology activity. They do not yet consistently ensure that pupils' individual literacy targets are taken into account, for example varying written materials in line with pupils' ability to read. In a religious education lesson, pupils in Years 4 to 6 with autistic spectrum disorders could not all read the printed captions to the pictures they drew, illustrating the 'Parable of the Prodigal Son'. Opportunities for pupils to reinforce their skills in numeracy and information and communication technology are provided much less frequently and the school is well aware of the need to develop this aspect of teaching.
16. Teachers' very good planning and organisation have a significant impact on pupils' very positive attitudes and the busy working atmosphere created in the majority of lessons. Activities are chosen carefully, so the work is usually pitched at the right level, pupils have to try hard, but they can manage the tasks. Again, the activities are interesting, so pupils are keen to tackle them. For example, in a music lesson, Years 2 and 3 pupils with moderate learning difficulties very much enjoyed singing 'Old Macdonald had a Farm', moving in the style of animals, slowly like an elephant, playing percussion instruments and listening to extracts from 'The Carnival of the Animals'. As a result, they made good progress in their performing and listening skills.
17. Their very positive relationships with adults encourage pupils to behave well, wanting to please their teachers. In turn, staff are very skilled at motivating pupils through the judicious use of praise. They frequently make this very specific, so pupils understand what they have done well, reinforcing high standards of work, effort and behaviour. For example, during an English lesson, when Years 5 and 6 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders were practising handwriting, the teacher used comments such as 'I like that spacing', successfully encouraging pupils to persevere. Where pupils' communication difficulties are more significant, staff restrict the vocabulary they use: 'Good listening', 'Good cutting', working hard to maintain a supportive and positive atmosphere in the class. The very good quality of relationships has a particular impact on pupils' progress in communicating. Because they know their contributions will be valued and respected, they are willing to make an effort to answer questions or volunteer information. When, because of their special educational needs, individual pupils are unable to reach the school's high expectations of their behaviour, staff follow quietly and efficiently the established procedures. This may involve requesting support from the senior management team in order to manage the pupil in line with his or her own behaviour plan. Consequently, lessons are seldom interrupted for long, which means that other pupils' learning continues. When pupils have calmed down and returned to lessons, they are welcomed back and integrated calmly into the class, enabling them to get down to work. However, learning time is periodically lost in classes for younger pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, because their distractible behaviour is not always managed effectively. The school is aware that newer teachers need further training in working with pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
18. During the inspection, teachers provided good opportunities for pupils (especially those with moderate learning difficulties) to continue learning through well-chosen

homework activities. A strong feature was the way in which the tasks set linked directly to what pupils were learning during lessons. For example, they are often asked to answer a question or do some finding out. The school intends to agree a policy on homework, and there is already lots of good practice on which to base this.

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

19. Teachers plan good quality learning programmes, helping pupils to achieve well in lessons. All the National Curriculum subjects are well established on the timetable, and the great majority of subjects are broadly based and well planned. Very appropriately, the curriculum emphasises language, literacy and communication. Daily literacy lessons are supplemented by communication sessions, during which pupils work in smaller classes, grouped according to their communication needs. Planning for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good. As a result, pupils make very good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. Planning for religious education is also very good, following the locally agreed syllabus. There is a very effective programme of physical activity, performed to rousing music, every morning, followed by a period of relaxation with calming music. This session is attended by approximately half of the pupils and prepares them very well, especially those with autistic spectrum disorders, for the day ahead.
20. A wide range of activities contributes to the very good personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. Lessons, snack times, the morning physical activity, lunchtimes, assemblies, morning registration and visits all play important parts in the learning process. In lessons, older pupils learn, for example, about preserving the environment, the importance of recycling, and controlling pollution. This work is backed up well by a visit to a recycling centre. Lesson plans for all subjects include methods for promoting pupils' personal and social skills. Care is taken to provide pupils with good quality sex and relationships education, and drugs education, at an appropriate level. There are lessons for older pupils led by the school nurse and a sensitive response by staff to questions posed by individual pupils. Drugs-related incidents, such as a pupil finding a syringe close to the school, are managed very well. The school is well supported by the local police.
21. In a few subjects, programmes of work are still being developed, as there has not been time for all the work to be completed. For example, in science, pupils are given plenty of practical activities. However, teachers are not providing enough opportunities for pupils, especially those who are working towards National Curriculum science Levels 1, 2 and 3, to plan their own investigations, make predictions, explain results and think whether they could have done their investigation any better. In physical education, plans for games and gymnastic activities are better than those for dance, athletic and outdoor and adventurous activities.
22. The headteacher has been instrumental in the school's success in creating and sustaining very many links with the community and other schools. As a result, pupils benefit from working alongside pupils in mainstream schools, for art and design and music, for example. There are many sporting links, and good use is made of the local swimming and horse riding facilities. There are links with community sporting organisations. Older pupils participate in a residential visit to the seaside to support their work in science, physical education, and their personal and social development. Pupils take part in regular visits in the locality, for example to museums and local shops. There are links with the local police and fire services and places of worship. The Rotary Club and local businesses support the school very well. There is little time

during the day to provide lunchtime clubs but the school makes good use of the available time to give all pupils choices and access to the adventure playground, playground games, computers, bicycles, football and other ball games. Good links enable a group of ten pupils with autistic spectrum disorders to attend an after-school club off site. Visitors into school add richness to pupils' learning. For example, as part of work on Islam, Muslim visitors showed pupils the music, food and ceremonies of their faith.

23. The school has made good progress in promoting literacy and communication skills across all subjects. Communication for pupils with very limited speech is enhanced by the well-developed use of a picture exchange scheme. Some signing is also used but this aspect of communication is not as well developed as picture exchanging. There is temporary difficulty in providing sufficient speech and language therapy, but this is beyond the control of the school. However, there is good liaison with speech and language therapists to support the special daily lessons in communication. Of the eight classes this year, four are for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and four for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Pupils are, however, successfully re-grouped on a number of occasions each week so those with different learning needs can learn together. The morning physical activity to music, physical education for older pupils, communication lessons, assemblies, the summer residential visit and lunchtime are some good examples. These occasions make a very good contribution to all pupils' personal and social development and help to improve their communication skills. Not enough emphasis is given to planning for the use of number in other subjects. Similarly, not enough use is made of computers to support learning in other subjects.
24. Planning to meet all the pupils' individual learning needs is good. Specific programmes and approaches, for example for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, and the allocation of additional support, contribute to making sure that pupils have equal opportunities to learn and make progress, whatever their special educational needs. Particular care has been given to ensuring that the deployment of teaching and support staff and the size of groups reflect pupils' additional special educational needs. Care has also been given to making sure that the layout of, and equipment used in, classrooms and outdoor areas for autistic pupils make a planned contribution to their learning and the progress that they make.
25. Overall, pupils have access to a very good range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities. For example, the provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies, whether class-based or for the whole school, are very thoughtfully planned to link to topics that pupils can comprehend readily – for example family, friendship, day and night, birth and baptism and the major Christian and world faith festivals, such as Divali. In an assembly with a family theme, pupils were shown photographs and objects linked to the headteacher's parents, helping them to think about people they love and who love them. There are very good opportunities for pupils to think and reflect, for example about sharing, during an assembly for a class of autistic pupils. Very good use is made of music to create different moods within the school. This permeates the whole school and staff as well as pupils can be seen bopping along to a Kylie Minogue song and then later slowing and calming their movements as they respond to a Bach cantata. Staff make the utmost of the small moments of wonder in each pupil's life, for example sharing in the delight of a pupil who found that his string puppet worked or when a class of Years 4 and 5 pupils recognised excitedly photographs of Henry Moore and his work.

26. Moral development is approached very openly and honestly. Pupils are encouraged to consider moral themes in the wider aspect of the environment, for example by recycling unwanted goods and understanding why they should collect items for needy children throughout the world. When studying the work of Andy Goldsworthy, pupils learned that the natural objects he used were replaced in their original settings, and the same thing happened to the stones and shells used in pupils' patterns. Very good behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded by the staff, helping pupils to recognise and understand when they have behaved appropriately in a social situation. The school ensures that there are good opportunities for pupils to eat together at lunchtime and play with other pupils and staff in organised sports and social activities. For example, midday supervisors show pupils how to play games together and use their leisure time positively. Lunch and snack times are civilised social experiences with opportunities for making choices as strong features of these occasions. Pupils are encouraged to observe the 'social niceties' of conversation, not only with staff and visitors but also with each other. Older pupils often accompany younger ones when arriving at and leaving school, and 'Thank-you' and 'How are you?' are frequently heard around the school, from the pupils and staff. Residential visits to Hornsea, allow groups of pupils to spend time as a group away from their family in a different environment. Inclusion and integration opportunities give pupils the opportunity to work in mainstream schools alongside other children of a similar age.
27. Cultural development is good. In art and design, pupils study the work of artists such as Matisse, William Morris and, of course, Henry Moore. They listen to and appreciate a good range of music during lessons. A small group of Years 3 and 4 pupils visited an artist in residence at a neighbouring school to create wire and clay sculptures. Pupils have visited a local mosque and welcomed visitors from a Muslim group who demonstrated dance, food, music and dress to an enraptured audience. Plans are in place to broaden the opportunities for pupils to experience the diversity and richness of other faiths and cultures in the wider community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Care procedures are very thorough and result in a high standard of first aid and medical care and well thought out and consistently implemented health and safety procedures. All visits out of the school have risk assessments and the grounds are checked by the caretaker on a daily basis for any debris or substances that could be injurious to pupils and staff. Morning arrival and home time arrangements are well supervised and secure procedures are in place for transport escorts to bring prescribed medication for pupils into school. There is a very well-equipped medical room and first aid provision, conscientious application of safety checks for fire fighting and electrical equipment, and regular emergency evacuation drills for pupils and staff. Specialist therapy rooms provide visiting professionals with space and facilities for their work. Child protection arrangements are very well known to all classroom staff, and the designated person and the headteacher work closely together where there are any concerns over a pupil's safety. Staff have had training in referring and recognising child protection issues.
29. Personal guidance for pupils is securely integrated into daily routines and through personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons. In addition to the formal monitoring of each pupil's development through their individual behaviour and education plans, staff know pupils very well and appreciate the small steps, variation in moods and attitude, and family developments, that may lie behind their rate of progress. The requirements for achieving the Healthy Schools Award are guiding the formation of a school council for pupils and have established a focus on healthy

eating. This initiative is strongly supported by the staff in the school kitchen who go out of their way to make sure that pupils have access to a healthy range of meals and are encouraged to try new foods.

30. Daily scrutinies of attendance registers form part of the very good procedures in place to monitor and improve attendance. At the start of the day, transport escorts provide accurate information from their own attendance files. For example, they pass on messages from pupils' homes or report if a pupil was not at a pick-up point. Targets have been set to improve the overall rate of authorised absence and maintain the unauthorised absences of pupils. Teachers reward pupils when their attendance improves, where this is part of their individual education plan, and the education welfare officer also rewards individual pupils for improved attendance. The school has tried with some success to solve the difficulties of providing emergency cover for transport escorts, as this affects the reliability of the transport.
31. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. For example, all staff have taken part in behaviour management training so that the school's approach to discipline is consistent at all times. Transport escorts record any challenging behaviour by pupils, and teachers ensure that they in turn are told what measures have been taken to deal with these occurrences. All incidents are recorded and are overseen by the school's senior management team. A few parents were concerned that the school appears to have differing expectations of pupils' behaviour, depending on their special educational needs. However, the very different needs of each group of pupils have required specialist approaches to behaviour management, and the most effective procedures and strategies are proved to be based on each pupil's specific behaviour. 'We have a hundred different approaches to behaviour management' said the headteacher, 'and we are always prepared to adapt and change them if we think it will work'.
32. The school has effective systems for measuring pupils' progress and achievement, including how well they meet the targets in their individual education plans. Usefully, samples of each pupil's work across the curriculum are collected, in order to judge their progress year on year. Teachers assess the work and add information to indicate, for instance, if the pupil received help. There has not yet been time for teachers to compare their assessments and agree standards in all subjects. The school has already made a good start to using a nationally recognised scale for measuring attainment below National Curriculum levels. The results are beginning to provide useful data for setting further targets for pupils' learning and to enable the school to compare their achievements with those of pupils in similar schools. Teachers use a wide variety of systems to collect day-to-day information about what pupils are learning. However, the quality of information recorded is inconsistent and varies in usefulness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. Parents are very pleased with the new school. At the meeting with inspectors, they stated that they are very impressed with the quality of teaching, teamwork of staff, and the whole ethos of success and pride that the school has created.
34. Parents of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are especially happy with the impact that the school has had on their domestic lives by the improvements in their children's behaviour and social development. One parent said 'It translates into an outstanding difference when we take our child out into the community'. They see the school as having been painstaking in every step of its development, for example not

taking pupils out on trips until they were sure that they knew exactly what to expect of a group or individual. Parents commented that they feel their children's self-esteem and confidence have improved. They have also noted great progress in their children's willingness to come to school, and in their behaviour overall. One parent commented, 'The children look happy even when they are cross'. The school considers parents, carers and families as active partners in caring for pupils.

35. This partnership is vigorously pursued by the school. Parents are encouraged to give the school feedback on their children's progress at home, to support homework, give their views on, for example, what is required from a home-school book, and help to carry out their children's individual education and behaviour plans. Parent governors are very active and supportive. The recent formation of a friends' association is driving fundraising and social events. Plans for a parents' room, to provide a base for workshops, are well advanced and the room already houses a substantial library and range of information for parents on specific learning disabilities, communication systems and teaching strategies.
36. The information provided to parents is good and includes a wide range of newsletters, class letters and home-school books. Parents said they found the administrative staff very welcoming and helpful and that they appreciate informal contacts with the school, such as when the headteacher or staff telephone home to celebrate a pupil's achievement or to discuss a problem or concern. Other than in English, mathematics and personal development, annual written reports to parents do not always accurately relate what each pupil knows, understands and can do. They often describe what has been taught, not what the particular child has learned. However, reports are improving as teachers build up their knowledge of each pupil, and most parents feel well informed about their children's progress. Annual reviews of statements are supported by a comprehensive range of documents, including reports provided by the school and external services, such as the speech and language therapists and other health professionals.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The headteacher's very strong, enthusiastic and determined leadership has been a key factor in the rapid establishment of Pathways as a successful school, moving forward with energy. In this work, she has the full support of the deputy headteacher and senior teacher, who complete the senior management team and fulfil significant responsibilities. All the senior staff set high standards of professionalism. The members of the team offer different strengths and have confidence in, and respect for, each other.
38. One of the headteacher's most striking accomplishments has been the creation of a whole staff team, entirely committed to the school and demonstrating consistently the first sentence of the school's mission statement – 'Pupils are our priority'. This sense of accord is a product of the headteacher's ability to communicate her own clear goals for the school and enthuse others, but has also been achieved through planned strategies. For example, before the school opened, staff meetings were dedicated to developing common values and approaches. The mission statement was produced from the ideas of staff, parents and governors and has a direct influence on the school's work, because new initiatives are tested against these core values. Whatever their role, staff know that their contributions are important and that the headteacher listens to their views and tries to respond to their needs. In turn, she is happy to receive criticism from staff, provided they are able to put forward ideas for improvement, supporting her intention to build a reflective, self-evaluating and

forward-thinking community. Where there are inconsistencies in practice, for example in recording pupils' day-to-day progress, these are because there simply has not been time for staff to agree a common policy.

39. Governors too feel very much that they are players in the team. In addition to being passionate about the school, they bring very relevant experience and expertise and a readiness to give practical support. Several of the teachers have already found that the links between individual governors and subject co-ordinators are valuable, providing a sounding-board for ideas and enabling governors to appreciate, for example, the implications of spending decisions. As well as gaining information through such first-hand means, governors receive very full reports each term from the headteacher. These clearly encourage the governing body to be actively involved in the school, by setting out specific tasks for which help is requested, for example producing a list of areas for governors to discuss with subject co-ordinators. Alternate reports describe progress towards the targets in the school development plan, helping governors to check that planned actions are on schedule. Their role in making sure the school moves forward is developing well. For example, future discussions with co-ordinators are expected to focus on producing the next round of subject action plans and then reviewing these.
40. A good range of strategies has been put in place to enable the school to keep track of how well it is performing. For example, through formal performance management procedures, each teacher has been observed twice by members of the senior management team, with a further visit by a local education authority adviser. As a result of the feedback they have received, individual teachers have improved their practice and one or two areas for whole-school development have been identified. For instance, the need to develop teachers' skills in information and communication technology has become a particular focus of the current development plan. As the school moves forward, the headteacher is delegating more responsibilities to others, whilst putting in place systems to enable her to maintain an overview of the performance of each aspect. Subject co-ordinators are mostly leading and managing their subjects well. Diaries kept by these teachers, describing the tasks they have undertaken since the school opened, show how extremely hard they have worked in order to establish their subjects. However, newer recruits with responsibility for science and physical education, are naturally not as well placed to support their colleagues or be accountable for standards.
41. The school very clearly values each pupil equally. This commitment is spelled out in its mission statement and is tangible in the way all staff put the pupils' needs first. The senior management team ensures pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, moderate or severe learning difficulties are all provided with a curriculum that meets their needs. Additionally, the school looks increasingly for opportunities for pupils with different needs to work alongside each other, for example in physical education lessons, and for Pathways pupils to have experiences in mainstream schools. The school reaches out into the community, especially through the work of the senior teacher, enhancing the provision for mainstream pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
42. The headteacher and bursar manage the school's finances very well in partnership with the local education authority. Governors receive good quality information to enable them to keep a check on expenditure. The headteacher and governors plan ahead very effectively and make very sound strategic decisions about how to spend the money available, in order to promote pupils' progress. The school development plan shows clearly how much will be spent on each priority. The emphasis placed on providing a high staffing level in classes is repaid by the good progress that pupils

make. The planning to use specific grants is effective – for instance, in order to improve staff expertise in using computers.

43. The school makes good efforts to ensure that it obtains the best value for its pupils. It achieves this by using information about the quality and cost of its work in order to compare its performance with that of other schools who cater for similar pupils. Its involvement in advising, guiding and supporting local schools that admit pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders enables the school to respond successfully to fluctuations in the numbers of pupils attending it. For instance, if the number on roll increases, staff will spend less time supporting other schools. The school endeavours to gain good value from its resources and the services that it purchases. It constantly challenges the quality of the education provided for pupils and seeks to identify areas that need improving. However, there is an acknowledgement that the school should make more use of the library. There are good examples of staff using computers to manage their day-to-day work and to support pupils' learning, but this is also an area for further development.
44. There are sufficient teachers to meet the requirements of the curriculum and the special educational needs of the pupils. Their experience is well matched to the duties that they perform. The ratio of teaching assistants to pupils is very good and they make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Newly appointed staff receive very relevant guidance through a carefully considered formal induction process and in addition are very well supported by colleagues. The wide and very relevant range of training undertaken by staff is explicitly linked to the school development plan and the well considered appraisal and performance management programme. For example, training has been undertaken in the areas of autistic spectrum disorders and structured teaching as well as for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and information and communication technology. However, there is a need for more specialist training for newly appointed teachers who work with pupils who have severe autistic spectrum disorders.
45. Overall, the accommodation is very good and the school makes very good use of the space available. The soft play area and very well equipped sensory room make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils with more complex learning difficulties. Specialist rooms for teaching information and communication technology, art and design, music, resistant materials technology and food technology have a positive impact upon pupils' learning in these subjects. The centrally located hall is of sufficient size for physical education activities. However, its location means that it is a major through route and this leads to distraction for pupils being taught there. Secure and carefully planned outdoor spaces for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are very well used to support their specialist needs while the well maintained main outdoor playgrounds provide a pleasant and secure environment for all pupils. Certain areas on the extreme periphery of the grounds are underused because some of the school's neighbours allow their dogs onto the site when the school is closed.
46. The school's very lively living and learning environment is enhanced by the very attractive displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school and the very great care that pupils, staff, caretaker and cleaners take of the building and site.
47. The overall level and quality of resources is good. Although the resources available for information and communication technology are good overall, the school has already identified the need for more computers in classrooms.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Ensure that, in all subjects, teachers make full use of opportunities for pupils to develop and apply the skills of numeracy and information and communication technology. This will involve providing any necessary training to develop teachers' expertise in information and communication technology. (Paragraphs 2, 23, 59, 86)
- (2) Make arrangements for pupils to have regular planned opportunities to use the library in order to choose and use books for pleasure and to develop the skills needed for independent learning. (Paragraphs 43,52)

In addition, the following issues should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Complete the programmes of work for science and physical education. (Paragraphs 2, 21, 63, 96)
- Ensure that annual written reports indicate clearly to parents the gains in knowledge, skills and understanding their children have made in each subject. This will require all teachers to maintain records of how well pupils are learning. (Paragraphs 14, 32, 36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	32	12	0	0	0
Percentage	2	20	57	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	59
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	71
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	54	7	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.8
Average class size	7.3

Education support staff: Y1 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	389

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	538,960
Total expenditure	489,942
Expenditure per pupil	6,900
Balance brought forward from previous year	-
Balance carried forward to next year	49,018

A significant proportion of the funds carried forward was earmarked for items that had not been paid for by the year-end. When taking account of the funds spent on outstanding budget items, the carry forward was £26,000.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	59
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	42	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	50	4	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	38	8	0	15
The teaching is good.	81	12	0	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	35	4	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	62	38	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	12	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	35	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	23	12	4	19

OTHER ISSUES RAISED BY PARENTS

At the parents' meeting, several concerns were raised about the transport of pupils between home and school.

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

ENGLISH

49. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and make good progress. They get on equally well in communication, reading and writing. The quality of teaching is good overall, often very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers plan their lessons well to ensure that those pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders make the same progress as others. There is no difference between the achievement and progress of boys and girls.

Key strengths

- Teachers plan lessons well to make effective use of the time available and to utilise the valuable support provided by classroom staff.
- Plenty of time is allowed for pupils to learn English.
- Interesting books and resources are provided to support pupils' learning.
- Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' progress.

Areas for improvement

- Computers are not used often enough to help pupils to learn.
- At the time of the inspection, pupils were not using the library to choose books for pleasure or to find information.
- Staff do not provide consistent signing support for pupils who require it.

50. The school places a strong emphasis upon developing pupils' speaking and listening and communication skills. In all subjects, most lessons and activities involve speaking and listening and pupils are provided with good opportunities to practise as they move up through the school. In a communication lesson, pupils in Years 2 to 4 with moderate learning difficulties made good progress as they gave their names and said 'hello', during a greeting song. They responded particularly well to the staff's praise and encouragement, which prompted them to speak out confidently and try harder. Later in the session, they concentrated well when writing their names. Most can write independently and lower attaining pupils enjoyed making their attempts because of the recognition their efforts were given. On several occasions, staff used signing effectively, enabling pupils who have difficulty communicating to participate fully in all the activities. As in this instance, lessons frequently combine opportunities for pupils to practise communication, reading and writing. These activities are linked naturally to each other, reinforcing pupils' learning and making full use of the time available for learning.
51. Pupils read regularly throughout the week. They make consistently good progress in literacy lessons, following the story in the 'big book' and then receiving individual support to read to an adult. For example, the teacher ensured that pupils in Years 2 and 3 with autistic spectrum disorders attended well and developed an interest in 'Raft and Ride', a story about animals, by selecting toys and models of jungle animals from a box. They made good efforts to repeat words such as 'tiger' and 'elephant' and began to anticipate the next animal to appear. Pupils build effectively on their reading skills during the special lessons to improve their communication skills. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties confidently read books aloud as a group and took part in a discussion about making a kite without instructions. Through skilled questions, the teacher enabled each pupil to understand what they had read and to predict what would happen next. This encouraged them to attempt to

read new words and develop a lively interest in books. Pupils throughout the school regularly complete work at home. This contributes well to the good progress that they make.

52. Although there is a very good library, arrangements have not yet been made for pupils to use it. This restricts their progress in developing important skills such as choosing books and looking for information. The school is aware of this missed opportunity for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning, and has plans in place for making more use of the library.
53. Throughout the school, pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders receive effective support to enable them to achieve well in English. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieved exceptionally well in a lesson to greet each other, plan the day's lessons and prepare for snack time. Teachers and classroom staff supported pupils extremely well by responding to information from parents contained in their home-school books, for example to celebrate one pupil's birthday. Progress was excellent as each pupil took turns to say 'hello' and identify the date and day. Planning was exemplary and epitomised by pupils making their choice of snack by speech, sign and picture. The teacher's detailed knowledge of each pupil's stage of development was illustrated by the different expectations for them to make requests by choosing and arranging pictures to ask, for example, 'Can I have sultanas?' or 'I want ...' depending on their confidence in using language. This teacher's frequent recording of pupils' responses and her use of this information in planning the next lesson make a significant contribution to ensuring pupils' exceptional progress.
54. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader examines the plans for what pupils will learn in each class, to ensure that pupils build on their learning as they move up through the school. The school has adapted the National Literacy Strategy well to meet the needs of each class. This has had a positive effect on ensuring that pupils receive enjoyable English lessons which lead to good progress in writing, reading and communication. Usually, pupils who need to use signs and symbols to help them to participate in lessons make the same progress as others. However, the school acknowledges the need to provide more training for staff to ensure that all pupils receive support to make consistently good progress in communication. Resources for learning are good, particularly the range of interesting 'big books' and the growing range of toys, puppets and other visual aids that teachers use to accompany these books to bring lessons to life. There are some good examples where teachers use computers to help pupils to learn. This happened, for instance, when Year 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties selected words and phrases displayed on the computer screen to make a story about an old man. Through this, they were developing a good awareness of punctuation, suggesting where they might place a full stop in their story. However, the school is well aware that, overall, teachers do not make enough use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in English lessons.

MATHEMATICS

55. Overall, achievement and progress in mathematics are good throughout the school, in line with the quality of teaching.

Key strengths

- Teachers ensure that pupils' work matches their individual targets and learning styles.
- Shared planning and the very good relationships that exist between teachers and support staff have a positive effect upon pupils' learning in general and in particular when they are working in groups.

56. The school has effectively incorporated the guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy into its planning for mathematics. Pupils' achievements, particularly in mental arithmetic, confirm that this is having a positive effect upon their learning.
57. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in their development of early number skills. They enjoy activities that help them count, such as identifying and counting body parts, and join in number songs with enthusiasm. Simple number rhymes, including numbers up to ten, are also used very well to consolidate their learning. In one lesson, for example, the teacher clapped each number and this was effective in helping pupils with moderate learning difficulties to concentrate on the task of counting. Resources are often chosen well to motivate pupils. For instance, as pupils with autistic spectrum disorders listened to a song about frogs, they were encouraged to place toy frogs in a bowl of water, prompting one pupil to say 'Again, again'. Later, they used computer programs to sort colours and build up a simple jigsaw to extend their understanding of patterns, shape and space. This interested pupils, but did not provide enough challenge for the highest attainer. Number lines are imaginatively used to help pupils with their mental arithmetic. Higher attaining pupils confidently count forwards and backwards to ten, while others work with numbers to five.
58. During Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress. For instance, they improve their counting skills as they count forwards and backwards to 20, with higher attaining pupils showing that they are more confident and accurate when predicting what number comes next. One teacher's use of a parrot puppet with Year 5 pupils with moderate learning difficulties effectively maintained their attention and effort as they practised counting to 20. Higher attaining pupils responded equally well to the teaching assistant as she led them in a challenging activity that taught them how to use two numbers to make up ten. Teachers cater for the pupils' different styles and rate of learning through very good grouping and allocation of additional support. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, two lower attaining pupils enjoyed the individual attention and praise they received when tracing and making numbers with clay. Meanwhile, higher attainers responded with enthusiasm to the help and guidance provided by their teaching assistant as they extended their knowledge of number by using words such as 'first' and 'second'. In addition, early work on shapes and measurement is effectively built upon, so higher attaining pupils not only recognise basic two-dimensional geometric shapes but also more complex shapes such as pentagons, octagons and semicircles. Older pupils continue to enjoy mental arithmetic activities, demonstrating enthusiastically that they can add two or three numbers together and subtract one number from another. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders also develop well, as teachers' well-planned and highly structured lessons build on their

previous learning. Teachers make effective use of the time at the end of the lesson in order to remind pupils what they have learned, check their understanding and praise their efforts. For example, during a lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, teaching assistants reported back on what each pupil had achieved, such as distinguishing between objects when their characteristics are very obvious (huge and small). This enabled the teacher to plan future work, matched very closely to pupils' needs.

59. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject well. He has a clear vision about how he wishes the subject to develop, for example, ensuring that teachers plan consistently for pupils to practise using numeracy skills in lessons across the curriculum. Resources are good throughout the school and are particularly well organised and accessible.

SCIENCE

60. Pupils throughout the school make good progress when learning about plants and animals because they are taught well. Their achievement in science overall is satisfactory, because opportunities to learn a wide range of scientific enquiry skills are not planned thoroughly enough. In individual lessons, progress is often good, in line with the quality of teaching.

Key strengths

- Pupils are currently learning well about plants and animals, because teachers are providing an interesting range of activities.
- The great majority of pupils behave well in lessons and concentrate on their work because teachers and learning support assistants manage occasional very challenging behaviour very effectively.
- Pupils learn good personal and social skills in science lessons and on educational visits for science because the development of these skills forms part of teachers' lesson plans.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils are not developing the full range of scientific enquiry skills well enough because teachers do not provide enough planned opportunities, especially for higher attaining pupils who are achieving National Curriculum science Levels 1, 2 and 3.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their number and computer skills in science lessons.
- It is difficult to check how well the higher attaining pupils are learning, because the school's assessment criteria for National Curriculum science Levels 1, 2 and 3 are incomplete.

61. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are all given a wide range of interesting activities to support their learning in science. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Year 1 and Year 2 are learning well how to recognise the features of the face. Through their observations and practical activities they can identify their classmates by hair and eye colour. A Year 2 boy can, without support, investigate floating and sinking objects. A pupil with autistic spectrum disorders in Year 2 is also making good progress experiencing the properties of porridge, observing signs of the seasons in the school grounds, knowing the location of the skull and ribs and matching pictures of animals to pictures of their homes. He knows that objects move by pushing and pulling, and has observed grass seed growing.

62. During their study of the seasons, pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Year 4 and Year 5 learned to value living things by making bird feeders to help birds survive in winter. For pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Year 5 and Year 6, a visit to a local health centre to learn about the work of a dentist was very well planned. It led to very good learning about care of the teeth. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in Year 5 and Year 6 learned that adults start life as babies and grow. The teacher had planned their lesson very well, links with parents (to provide photographs of pupils as babies) are well established, resources were very well organised, and the methods were very closely matched to the individual learning needs of pupils. By Year 6, pupils with moderate learning difficulties enjoy investigating the effect of exercise on their pulse rates. They have a good understanding that the heart pumps blood. They find out that the heart beats faster after exercise. They persevere to find their pulses and most can count their pulse beats independently. Their skills in predicting, explaining results, and suggesting how they could have improved their methods are less well developed because the promotion of these skills is given less emphasis when teachers plan lessons. Pupils have learned to concentrate well and not be distracted by very disruptive and challenging behaviour, which is managed very well by the staff.
63. The quality of learning about fruits and seeds in a class of Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders was simply satisfactory, because not enough science work and resources were planned to hold pupils' interest for the length of the lesson. Generally, however, teachers plan plenty of practical activities for pupils to learn through. There is not enough planning, especially for those who are working in National Curriculum science Levels 1, 2 and 3, to give pupils regular access to the full range of scientific enquiry and investigative skills. They do not have enough opportunities to plan their own investigations, predict what might happen, explain why things have happened, and think if they could have done their investigation any better. Teachers are also not providing sufficient activities that enable pupils to practise their computer and number skills in science lessons. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are not always receiving as much science teaching as is indicated on the timetable. This is because lessons are occasionally cut short.
64. There are weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' progress in science. It is difficult, for example, to track the progress of higher attaining pupils, because the school's assessment criteria for science have not all been agreed. For higher attaining pupils, this means there is an incomplete record of their separate achievements in each of the four main areas of National Curriculum science. The usefulness of having science targets in pupils' individual education plans has not been evaluated. These targets are not always precise enough for measuring small steps in progress. The science co-ordinator has only been in post for four months and is leading and managing the subject satisfactorily.

ART AND DESIGN

65. The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils of all ages make good progress in lessons and achieve well over time.

Key strengths

- Teachers make sure that lessons meet pupils' particular needs.
- Pupils take part in a good range of art and design activities.
- The very good accommodation and learning resources are organised and used very effectively.

Areas for improvement

66. The art and design curriculum is well organised, so pupils have plenty of varied opportunities, for example, to express themselves, learn skills and find out about the work of other artists. During the inspection, most classes were beginning to investigate sculpture, with teachers making full use of Castleford's links with Henry Moore. Pupils have visited exhibitions, including the Sculpture Park, and looked at reproductions of Moore's work, developing a lively interest in the topic. In two classes, as a result of this groundwork, Years 4 to 6 pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties examined very carefully chosen sculptures displayed in the art room. Prompted very well by teachers and assistants, they considered the appearance and texture of the objects and suggested which materials had been used. The two teachers approached the activity slightly differently, responding to the learning needs of each class. For example, in the class for older pupils, the discussions were more structured and pupils selected word cards to describe their opinions and observations. In this lesson, a digital camera was used to very good effect in order to record what each group had achieved. Pupils in the other class had shorter spans of attention, so they explored more sculptures, in less detail, thus retaining their interest. Both lessons also provided pupils with good opportunities to handle and experiment with clay, making smooth shapes, which the teachers linked back to Moore's sculptures. A lesson for younger pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorders focused on pupils' own investigations. Three of the five pupils handled the clay with interest, manipulating it and using objects such as shells and sticks to make holes or impressions, showing high degrees of self-motivation and concentration. The staff responded flexibly to the remaining pupils, following their inclinations. As a result, one boy, initially reluctant, copied the teacher's example and pressed a model elephant into his piece of clay.
67. Art and design is well taught throughout the school. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which learning resources are employed to stimulate pupils into thinking about the world around them and recording what they have experienced. For example, Year 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties, several having challenging behaviour, derived huge pleasure from using magnifying glasses to examine a wide selection of interesting natural objects: broccoli, mushrooms, Christmas cacti etc. They responded to their shape, texture and colour and described what they had observed. As a result, the pencil drawings they produced were detailed, showing, for example, the patterns of the outside of a pineapple or inside a grapefruit. However, pupils do not have sketchbooks in which to record their investigations.
68. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator leads the subject well, setting high standards for other teachers to achieve. The curriculum is well planned to provide opportunities for pupils to use a wide range of media and work in different scales and dimensions, individually and in groups. The very good art room and quality resources are very well organised, so staff are aware of what is available. There is no computer in the art room and not enough software, especially for pupils to search for ideas and information and develop their individual learning skills. The subject makes a good

contribution to pupils' cultural development and an artist is to visit the school later in the year to work with pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

69. The quality of teaching is good. Consequently, pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well and make good progress in lessons.

Key strengths

- The curriculum is well planned, so pupils learn to work with a wide range of materials.
- Teachers adapt the curriculum carefully to meet the needs of different pupils.
- The accommodation is excellent and it is used very effectively to help pupils to learn.

Areas for improvement

- None of the teachers has a food hygiene qualification.
- Not enough use is made of computers to help pupils to learn.

70. Through careful planning, the school ensures that all pupils have good opportunities to develop their designing and making skills, working with resistant materials, food and textiles. Teachers interpret the overall curricular plan to meet the needs of the pupils in their particular class, so their learning builds effectively on what they already know, understand and can do. For example, during the inspection, several classes were finding out about simple mechanisms and how these can create movement. For a class of pupils in Years 5 and 6 with severe autistic spectrum disorders, this involved practising the skills of colouring, cutting with scissors and gluing, to produce a paper butterfly that could be slid back and forth to reveal or cover an egg on a leaf. The teacher and assistants were very skilled at adjusting the degree of challenge posed by the task, according to pupils' needs. For example, half of them were required to cut out independently and glue their paper shapes into position. The others, not yet able to tackle the butterfly, attempted to cut in a straight line, whilst an adult dealt with the tricky shape. The staff were quite clear about the next stage in each pupil's learning. For instance, through patient encouragement, one moved from applying glue to paper held down by the teacher, to managing both parts of the task for himself. In this lesson, all the adults used signing very effectively to help pupils to understand what they had to do and to communicate.
71. The school benefits from having a workshop and a food technology room. During the inspection, a group of Years 4 and 5 pupils with moderate learning difficulties designed and made a fruit salad. The teacher provided an excellent, but not overwhelming, selection of fruit for them to taste. These ranged from familiar ones, like apple and banana, to the more exotic mango. After a well organised tasting session, pupils designed their own fruit salad by choosing the five fruits they liked best. With close supervision and help when required, pupils cut up their fruit, making good progress in learning to handle knives safely. The food room is kept very clean and in the lesson seen the teacher showed a good awareness of food hygiene. However, none of the staff has had up-to-date training, to help to ensure that correct procedures are always carried out.
72. The co-ordinator, a subject specialist, provides effective leadership. As a result, she is able to offer good advice and guidance to teachers. For example, pupils have opportunities to learn from existing products – such as musical instruments – before designing their own. From time to time, links with the community support pupils'

learning – as when a baker came into school to lead workshop sessions. Information and communication technology resources are used occasionally, but not sufficiently. The co-ordinator intends to borrow resources to enable pupils to experience computer-aided design and manufacture, and this will be a step in the right direction.

GEOGRAPHY

73. Overall, pupils achieve well in geography, because teaching is good and the curriculum is well organised. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe one lesson of geography.

Key strengths

- Geography is planned carefully as part of a course in humanities.
- The use of well-organised and relevant visits contributes very positively to pupils' learning.
- Teachers make very good use of digital cameras, for example, to record visits, helping pupils learn and make progress.

Areas for improvement

- In addition to describing what pupils have done, annual reports to parents also need to identify clearly what progress they have made since the last report.
- Computers are not used enough to support pupils' learning in geography

74. Programmes of work for geography and history have been carefully developed with the aim of helping pupils to gain an understanding of how their world has developed over time as a result of human influences and physical changes. Each subject is taught in separate half-termly units that are linked to each other through long-term plans. For example, work in geography about coastal features is linked to 'holidays during past times' and the study of a village in India is paralleled by work in history on 'what people wore in the past'.
75. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good progress as they begin to develop a knowledge and understanding of the world, through following 'Barnaby Bear' as he visits various parts of the British Isles. They help him pack when he goes on holiday and in doing so begin to make decisions about suitable clothes for different types of weather. Early map work, involving identifying his holiday venues, begins to make pupils aware of the difference between land and sea and introduces them to the fact that the British Isles are made up of islands.
76. Work on maps and directions is further developed when older pupils with autistic spectrum disorders learn to take routes around the school. During a visit to a local park, they begin to use appropriate geographical terms, such as 'road', 'path' and 'hill' and continue to use them when studying their photographic record of the visit. Digital cameras are effectively and extensively used to help pupils' learning both in and out of school. In Year 4, local studies enable pupils to build on previous work as they consider the role of different buildings, old and new, thus linking to work in history. Additional historical links are made as pupils develop their understanding of the importance of local canals and railways. Simple symbols, identifying different physical and human features, are added to maps – churches, shopping centres and mountains. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties made comprehensive lists of the uses of water and showed they understood the need for pure water. This work effectively supplemented their previous work on the

environment in general and sustainable resources in particular. The photographic record of their work on recycling, involving sorting materials before taking them to local recycling containers, confirms that pupils are very aware of the need to take care of their world.

77. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator for humanities. Resources for geography are good. They are very well organised and are very effectively supplemented by carefully planned visits to a wide range of relevant venues. Insufficient planned use is made of computers to help pupils to learn.

HISTORY

78. History is taught well. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Key strengths

- Teachers match work well to pupils' individual learning styles and rates of learning.
- Visits to help pupils learn and make progress are very well planned.
- Well-planned links between history and geography contribute significantly to pupils' learning in both subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- Annual reports do not show consistently what pupils have learned.
- Computers are not used sufficiently to help pupils to learn.

79. During Years 1 and 2, pupils make progress as they begin to understand that the past is different to the present and that events take place in sequence. They take part in celebrations, such as birthdays, and this helps pupils to develop an understanding of the not too distant past, last year, while looking at photographs from babyhood to old age extends the sequence over a longer period of time. Pupils study the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes, and this encourages them to appreciate that people from long ago have an effect on their own lives. In one lesson, pupils with moderate learning difficulties responded well to the opportunity to dress up as modern nurses in order to understand why Florence Nightingale needed to go to the Crimea, a country far away. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make good progress as they visit their immediate locality to look at old and new buildings. Their understanding of events taking place one after another is carefully extended as staff stress the sequences involved in crossing the road and looking at different buildings in order. The teachers' use of a digital camera to provide records of their experiences enables pupils to learn how to interpret photographic evidence, contributing significantly to their progress in history and geography.
80. During Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress. Teachers make sure that current work is related to previous experiences with pupils showing pleasure when praised for remembering what they had done before. Carefully planned visits continue to be effective in helping pupils make progress. Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders used their photographs of a visit to Henry Moore Square to help them recall where the sculptor was born – in Castleford. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Years 5 and 6 interpret different types of photographic evidence. This was demonstrated well when, with effective prompting by the teacher, they used monochrome photographs to deduce what Henry Moore did, identifying the tools and materials that he worked with. Visits, such as one that resulted in photographs of war memorials, are effectively used by teachers to help pupils develop a feeling of empathy for events and people from the past.

81. The history element of the humanities programme is well co-ordinated. The programme of work for the subject ensures that pupils make progress in a systematic manner, with logical links between their learning in history and geography. Resources for the subject are of good quality and are very well organised and accessible. Computers are under-used, for example when pupils present their work or look for information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

82. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching varies between satisfactory and good and is satisfactory overall. Pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders make the same progress as other pupils in the school because they receive suitable additional support.

Key strengths

- The school has provided a very good suite of computers in a specialist room.
- Teachers have a growing enthusiasm for using computers to support pupils' learning.
- A small number of pupils use computers at lunchtime.

Areas for improvement

- Computers are not used often enough to help pupils to learn during lessons in other subjects.
- Teachers require more training in using computers.
- There are not enough suitable computers available in classrooms around the school.

83. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Most lessons take place in the good computer suite although there are occasional lessons provided in the light and sound room and classrooms. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and occasionally good. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 made satisfactory progress in a lesson to use the mouse and keyboard to make choices of images and create pictures on the computer screen. Pupils received a small amount of suitable guidance, helping them to type their name. A strength in the teaching was the way that staff recorded how much help each pupil had received in the lesson, in order to guide planning for the next lesson. However, this lesson illustrated the need for more training for teachers, to enable pupils to make more rapid progress and systematically build up skills in using the computer.
84. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make similar satisfactory progress over time. However, a group in Years 2 to 5 made particularly good progress in a lesson to assemble the parts of a flower. A strength in this lesson was the way that the teacher had used the computer in the classroom to prepare pupils to work in the computer suite. This made a good contribution to ensuring that pupils knew what to do to succeed well when they used the computers in the suite.
85. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory by the time they leave school. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 with moderate learning difficulties made good progress in using the computer to create stories. They selected words to complete phrases to say, for instance, what pet a person might have. Pupils show growing confidence in using the mouse to 'assemble' a short extract of creative writing about a chef. In this lesson, strong support from the deputy headteacher helped to ensure that pupils received effective guidance and improved their skills. The program was well chosen

and pupils were very interested in their tasks. However, pupils have only started this work recently and pupils of all attainments are completing similar work.

86. The subject is managed well by the subject leader, supported effectively by the deputy headteacher. The school has high expectations to improve pupils' learning in the subject, with an acknowledged need for most teachers to receive further training. Teachers show a growing enthusiasm for using information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The computer suite is very good but there is not enough equipment available around the school to enable pupils to use computers more effectively in supporting their learning in most subjects. There are good arrangements at lunchtime for a small number of pupils to develop independence by using computers for a short period. The school has suitable measures to determine how much each pupil has learned by the end of the year. However, teachers do not all check systematically the skills that pupils are learning, in order to plan to build on these.

MUSIC

87. Achievement and progress in music are good throughout the school. Pupils make equally good progress in singing and making music, composing and enjoying music. This is because of the overall good quality of teaching and high expectations for pupils to participate and achieve.

Key strengths

- The expertise of the music specialist is used to good effect to help pupils to make progress.
- The good range of activities in music lessons prompts pupils to be very keen to take part and learn.
- The school benefits from a very good music room and good range of instruments.

Areas for improvement

- Non-specialist teachers who teach music in their classes need more support in planning lessons that promote good progress.

88. Pupils make good progress overall. The teaching by the part-time specialist music teacher is good and often very good. Other teachers have similarly high expectations for pupils to learn. However, in a lesson for pupils in Years 2 to 4, the teaching and learning was simply satisfactory. This was because the main activity, listening to noises in the playground and creating a composition, needed to be more tightly planned and structured.
89. Lessons in the specialist music room are planned effectively to provide interesting tasks that pupils enjoy. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make the same progress as other pupils in the school. In a lesson for Years 2 and 3 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, they were at first hesitant to sing action songs such as 'I have a body'. However, through skilled encouragement, pupils gradually copied the teacher's actions, tapping and touching parts of the body in time to music. They made very good progress, for instance playing simple percussion instruments in the way that they were shown.
90. The teacher plans lessons well to meet pupils' different ages and attainments. For instance, lessons for pupils in Year 6 follow a similar pattern to those for younger pupils but pupils are given tasks that are more challenging. A strength of music lessons is the high expectations of the teacher for pupils to learn to read and

compose music. Through imaginative and well-designed teaching aids, pupils are beginning to read simple music notation to match notes to words. Year 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties made good progress as they beat time on a drum, following a series of pictures of one and two syllable words, such as 'dog' (one beat) and 'puppy' (two beats). Pupils confidently read symbols representing ascending and descending notes when they sing 'hello.' They play instruments such as drums quietly and loudly following verbal instructions and the conductor's gestures. Through skilled guidance they are beginning to compose, for example, using instruments to represent creatures such as snakes.

91. The subject leader ensures that music is led and managed well overall. However, other teachers who lead music lessons require further support and guidance to prepare lessons. Participating in whole-school performances such as the Christmas concert enriches pupils' learning well. The video of their performance demonstrates how well they work together and the enjoyment they receive from music. The concert, music lessons and visiting musicians make an important contribution to pupils' cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

92. Most pupils make good progress in gymnastics skills because they are well taught. Progress in physical education is satisfactory overall because athletic, dance, outdoor and adventurous activities are not yet as well developed as games, gymnastic activities and swimming.

Key strengths

- Pupils with moderate learning difficulties, and older pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, make good progress in gymnastic skills because they are enthusiastic, and well taught.
- Many pupils prepare very well for the day ahead because they participate in 15 minutes of sustained physical activity to music followed by a period of relaxation and calm. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders respond especially well to this programme.
- Pupils develop their confidence in water, and the highest attainers achieve 50 metres.
- A small number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in Years 2 to 5 build their self-confidence, skills and knowledge through a programme of horse-riding and stable management.
- Planning for games and gymnastic activities is very thorough.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils in Years 2,3 and 4 with autistic spectrum disorders are not managed well enough, nor given enough instruction, for them to make good progress in gymnastic activities.
- Teachers and assistants do not have enough time to change into suitable clothing and footwear for physical education. This hampers the quality of their demonstrations and support for pupils.
- Planning for athletic activities, dance, and outdoor and adventurous activities is not as rigorous as it is for games and gymnastic activities.
- Lessons in the hall are inevitably disrupted because it is the school's main thoroughfare.

93. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties in all years make good progress in their gymnastic skills. They are consistently well taught. The gymnastic coaching skills of a learning support assistant are used very effectively in one class of Years 4 and 5 pupils. In Years 5 and 6, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, who are taught with pupils with moderate learning difficulties, also make good progress in gymnastic skills. They are taught well, have a very positive attitude, persevere when tasks are hard, and grow in self-esteem. They improve their skills of jumping off a bench, travelling across the floor, and rolling in different shapes. However, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in Years 2, 3 and 4 make little progress in gymnastic skills because they have not yet learned to respond to instructions, and they are not firmly managed. Lessons in the ball pool are not taught rigorously enough and become an extension of playtime.
94. There is a very effective programme of physical activity, performed to rousing music every morning, followed by a few minutes of relaxation with calming music. Pupils enjoy this activity very much, developing very well their personal and social as well as their physical skills. The senior teacher has evaluated very thoroughly the success of these sessions in preparing pupils, especially those with autistic spectrum disorders, for the day ahead. The school makes good use of the swimming award scheme produced by the local education authority. Pupils make good progress, they develop their confidence in water, and a few pupils can now swim up to 50 metres. Plans for horse-riding and stable management, provided by the Riding for the Disabled Association, are adapted well to meet the needs of a small number of pupils in Years 2 to 5 with autistic spectrum disorders. Assessments and photographic evidence show pupils making good progress and enjoying themselves. Pupils benefit from very good links with a local rugby clubs.
95. Teachers and assistants rarely have time to change into suitable clothes and footwear. This hampers the quality of demonstrations and the support they can provide. Lessons in the hall are disrupted because it is a main thoroughfare of the school. In spite of the best efforts of the staff to resolve this difficulty, the problem remains.
96. The subject has been without a co-ordinator for several months. At the time of the inspection, the new post holder had been with the school for only a few days. Plans for learning dance and outdoor and adventurous activities are not yet written. Plans are also not yet in place to integrate outdoor and adventurous activities during the residential week in Hornsea into the physical education programme. Athletic activities are on the timetable in the summer term but planning is not yet as thorough as for games and gymnastics. These gaps in planning areas of physical education explain why progress in physical education is currently satisfactory overall but good in gymnastics, for example.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

97. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching both of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

Key strengths

- Teaching is best when there is a good balance of learning about religions and learning from religious studies.
- Teachers have access to a very good curriculum linked to the locally agreed syllabus, and to good and improving resources.
- Links with local places of worship promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, as well as improving their knowledge about religions.
- The co-ordinator sets a very high standard of planning, teaching and assessment. She has a very strong commitment to the value of religious education on the school timetable.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers do not always explain the underlying meaning of Bible stories so pupils can learn from religious education as well as about religions.
- There is not enough use of computers to support learning in religious education lessons.
- Assessment records are not complete because teachers do not consistently include achievement levels in their annotations of pupils' work.

98. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Year 6 develop a good knowledge of Christian, Islamic and Jewish faiths because teachers plan well and make good use of artefacts. Muslim visitors to school bring examples of traditional music, clothes and food for pupils to experience, and pupils visit a mosque. All pupils visit church and participate in Harvest and Christmas festivals. They learn the value of giving by making 'Love in a Box' presents at Christmas for needy children. They share the joy of participating in a Christingle festival. Years 5 and 6 pupils with moderate learning difficulties learn that Jesus' stories can have underlying meaning. In one lesson, full of good fun and humour, they created their own story about children helping a boy who is bullied at school. Most pupils in this lesson made good progress, but signing was not used enough to help a very small number of pupils with communication difficulties to contribute.
99. In a class of Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, they became aware of the story of the Prodigal Son, but not of its underlying meaning, because of their learning and behavioural difficulties. Younger pupils with moderate learning difficulties learned about the parable of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, because they were given interesting activities, and could choose to taste bread and fish. There was an important missed opportunity, however, to explain the human values that emanate from this story.
100. The youngest pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, in Years 2 to 4, are taught to be tolerant, to communicate what makes people happy, and to become aware of other people by looking at photographs of their family members. They learn to sit in a group and listen to calming music. In this way religious education lessons also contribute to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. Autistic pupils in Years 2 to 4 are, however, easily distracted, and learning time is lost when lessons have to be abandoned before the scheduled end.
101. The quality of subject co-ordination is good, and it is helping teachers to gain confidence in teaching religious education. There is still a balance to be struck between learning about religions and learning from the study of religions. Not enough use is made of computers to support learning. Teachers are not consistent in recording achievement levels when they mark individual work, making it difficult to track progress effectively prior to the end-of-year assessments.