

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGFISHER SCHOOL

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 133369

Head Teacher: Mr D Wall

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Potheary
21765

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th January 2003

Inspection number: 249460

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Foxdenton Lane Chadderton Oldham Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor S Jacobs JP
Date of previous inspection:	New school

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21765	Mrs P Potheary	Registered inspector		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?
9619	Mr B Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19996	Mr G Watson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	
32232	Ms S Garland-Grimes	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History Religious education	
32270	Mr P Thomson	Team inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality Special educational needs English as an additional language English	
30142	Mr J T Morris	Team inspector	Science Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingfisher is a day community special school for 150 boys and girls aged two to eleven with a range of severe and complex learning difficulties. There are 111 pupils on roll, 82 boys and 29 girls. Of these 83 are of white British origin, 25 of Asian origin and three from other ethnic groups. Twenty-eight pupils speak English as an additional language at an early stage of acquisition and two of these are refugees. Forty-eight pupils (43%) are eligible for free school meals. Twenty-nine pupils have moderate learning difficulties, 27 severe learning difficulties, 15 profound and multiple learning difficulties, 20 autism, eleven physical difficulties, three speech and communication difficulties, three visual impairment and two serious medical conditions. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below national averages.

Kingfisher is a new school, which opened in September 2001 as a result of the amalgamation of the primary phase of three special schools and a unit for pupils with autism. Substantial re-building and refurbishment has been ongoing during the first year of the school's existence and still continues. In September 2002 one half of all classes had to relocate as a result of this.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kingfisher is a good school with many very good features and a few key areas for development. It is a happy place to be where children are very well cared for and enjoy their school experience. Pupils of all ages and abilities learn well because the overall quality of teaching is high. Leadership is very good providing very clear direction for the work of the school, supported by good management and a strong commitment by all staff to continue improving. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is of a high standard and so the majority of pupils are achieving well or very well and all make evident progress.
- Pupils love coming to school, they are helped very well to behave maturely, develop very good personal and social skills and work hard.
- The quality of education for pupils with significantly different needs, particularly autism, is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' medical and other care needs are addressed to a consistently high standard by all school and associate staff, which ensures that they are ready to learn well.
- The leadership of the headteacher, supported by a strong management team and committed staff, provides very clear, effective direction in steering the development of this new and complex school.

What could be improved

- The setting of focused individual learning goals, in some lessons, to improve the rate at which pupils make progress.
- The quality and consistency of assessment of each pupil's learning, in the subjects, to improve planning for more effective individual learning.
- Whole-school curriculum planning for each subject, to provide clearer guidelines on how subjects may be taught more effectively and to ensure that learning is built upon from year to year.
- The role of managers, especially subject co-ordinators: to include closer monitoring of learning outcomes; to improve subject direction; and to encourage the sharing of best practice.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED

This is the first inspection of a new school, which has been open for four terms. In this time the school has continuously made good improvements as systems have been developed and monitored. The school is now in a strong position to continue further improvement of emerging practice.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age	by age	Key
	5	11	
Speaking and listening	A	B	very good A
Reading	B	B	good B
Writing	B	B	satisfactory C
Mathematics	B	B	unsatisfactory D
Personal, social and health education	A	A	poor E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	

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

Pupils make good progress in the majority of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. In information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and design and technology they make satisfactory progress, and in music the progress they make is very good. Pupils make particularly good progress in their personal and social development where they learn to behave very well and take an active part in the full life of the school community. Pupils' achievements compared to their own previous performance and in achieving their individual targets are also good. Pupils with significantly different needs, such as profound and multiple difficulties or cerebral palsy, also make good progress overall, and the majority of those with autism make very good progress.

Comparisons with similar schools are not reliable due to the very wide range of pupil ability and special educational needs, and the lack of available data at this early stage of the school's development.

The school had not set targets during the first year of operation because there has been no reliable data to use. The school has now set targets for 2002-2003, which show high expectations of future performance in the core subjects and attendance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' very good attitudes to school are seen in the enthusiasm they bring to everything they do and their hard work in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well. In lessons they are keen to listen and so learn well; around the school their increasingly mature actions are a pleasure to watch.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show very good progress in their personal development and the relationships they make with staff and each other. They learn how to become valuable members of the school community very well.
Attendance	Attendance is very good compared to similar schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5 - 11
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

Teaching is at least good in all subjects and is good overall, with a significantly high proportion of very good and excellent teaching and a very small number of unsatisfactory lessons. All teachers in the school teach at least some lessons well, although the quality varies according to the subject. Teaching is good in the core subjects of English and science and in personal, social and health education. Teaching is very good in mathematics as well as art and design and music. However, the impact teaching makes on pupils' progress is often slowed over time through inconsistent curriculum planning within some subjects, which then limits the range of opportunities offered as in art and design and design and technology.

The major strengths in teaching are based upon thorough knowledge of pupils, good team work in lessons, very good behaviour management, exciting and varied activities suited to the different learning needs of pupils and very good planning. In these lessons pupils learn quickly and keep their interest in the work. Teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' good achievements. The weaknesses in teaching relate mainly to a lack of clear planning, in some lessons, for what individual pupils are expected to learn. This results in some pupils, from all ability groups, not making such good progress. In addition, the assessment of pupils' learning is not consistently good enough to ensure that teachers have all the information they need to build learning from one lesson to the next. A few teachers also lack sufficient knowledge of one or two subjects to make learning really effective. In a large majority of lessons, teaching to address pupils' significant additional needs, such as profound and multiple learning difficulties, is good and these pupils love their work and learn enthusiastically. For pupils with autism, teaching is usually very good and leads to some very good progress in their ability to learn. The teaching of communication skills, literacy and numeracy is good overall and supported well in several subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory, with many good opportunities provided for pupils. There is a very good curriculum model, which caters for the wide range of pupils' needs. However, it is not yet fully developed and whole-school schemes are not in place. This results in variations in the quality of planning for different classes in the same subject. In addition it does not yet ensure progressive experiences from year to year for pupils. The school fails to provide a regular act of worship for pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school provides very well for pupils whose English is at an early stage of acquisition. The special funding is used very effectively and pupils are quickly beginning to communicate and follow instructions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good, and very good for social and moral development. Pupils are enabled, through a very wide variety of opportunities, to develop their full part as members of a community. However, there are too few planned opportunities to extend the spiritual and cultural understanding of pupils during lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A good level of overall care for pupils keeps them safe, looks after their day-to-day welfare very well and helps each and every one to do as well as they can personally and educationally. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory but not yet sufficiently developed effectively and consistently to guide future learning. The school works well with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership by the headteacher and good management by key staff in the first year has ensured a high quality education for pupils and a clear appropriate direction for the future. The role of subject co-ordinators is currently underdeveloped resulting in more limited subject monitoring and guidance.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well in understanding the issues concerning the school and in helping to direct its work. They do not yet monitor sufficiently, however, or comply with all statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has taken every possible step to put reliable data into place, which will allow them to evaluate future performance. They have a good view of priorities and main issues.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans well and effectively to manage and use its financial resources efficiently, complying well with the principles of best value. Staffing and resources are good and accommodation is satisfactory, but still being developed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard. • Teaching is good and pupils progress well in personal and social development. • They are kept well informed about how their children are doing. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework provided. • The information provided on pupils' progress. • The range of extra-curricular activities provided.

The majority of parents think highly of the school and how it helps their children. The inspection findings support the views of parents. Pupils do enjoy coming to school, teaching is good and pupils make good progress, especially in their personal and social development. The information given to the majority of parents is good, but, for a few, the daily information via the home-school link book is not always sufficient to help them support their children's progress. The practice of giving homework varies from class to class and is not consistent, although satisfactory overall. The school is approachable and well led and managed. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, although increased opportunities to provide more are not yet in place and a few pupils do not have equal access to them, which is being addressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is no reliable performance data at this early stage of the school's existence. Data from the three previous schools and unit could not be reliably compared one with another and so the school has set about producing well moderated reliable data of its own. This means that no school targets could be set last year and all performance judgements in this report are made using lesson observations and pupils' own records.
2. There is now good data in place to enable the school to monitor performance from July 2002 to July 2003 and to set reliable targets for this school year. These are in place and show high expectations of performance in English, mathematics, science and attendance for all pupils.
3. Pupils make good progress and achieve well overall in the majority of subjects including English, mathematics and science and in their personal targets. This is true for pupils of all ages and abilities as well as for those with additional and complex learning needs. Pupils with autism usually make very good progress in a wide range of subjects and in their personal and social skills. In three subjects, although teaching is good or even very good, progress over time is satisfactory, because the range of experiences provided within the subjects are too few. This is true in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and art and design.
4. Pupils under five make good progress in most of the early learning goals and very good progress in their social, communication and speaking skills. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress due to the very good provision resulting from effective use of special funding.
5. Pupils throughout the school make very good progress in their personal and social development, so that by the time they reach the age of eleven some speak confidently in the school council, show visitors around and relate maturely to each other. Pupils' achievements compared to their own previous performance and in achieving their individual targets are also good in all year groups, with many examples of targets well met and further developed.
6. Good progress is seen in English, especially in the way pupils learn to communicate, speak and listen. Reading skills progress well with all pupils showing an enjoyment of books as well as an understanding of how information comes from books. By the time they are ready to leave, the oldest pupils with the greatest difficulties can join in with fantasy journeys through stories and enjoy listening as well as choosing what they want to say. The most able read with ease and take part in reading well-known plays, poetry and stories. All pupils who are able, make good progress in writing skills, from succeeding to make confident lines on paper to writing diaries and dictating their ideas.
7. In mathematics, pupils make good progress in number, shape, space and measure as well as in applying their skills to practical tasks. The way teachers foster pupils' evident enjoyment of the subject makes them keen to learn consistently well. By the age of eleven, pupils with the most complex difficulties can choose between different items and several can recognise number symbols. The most able pupils are able to work with numbers into the thousands and show a lively interest in time, money and measurement.

8. Pupils' good achievement as well as good progress is evident in science; their natural enthusiasm is used well by teachers, who introduce them to a wide range of scientific experiences, helping them ask good questions, experiment confidently with different materials and observe closely how things change.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school life. They arrive at school cheerfully and soon settle to the varied routines within classrooms. The warm and caring relationships between all staff and pupils is clearly evident and this means that pupils of all abilities take part willingly and want to work hard. Pupils move around the school very sensibly and with a developing awareness of the needs of others, which they show by opening doors, or helping to push chairs and carry things.
10. Behaviour in the school is very good. There is a calm atmosphere within the school, with several examples of pupils who listen to what they are told and follow the instructions well. Pupils also show great respect towards others especially the staff. Where behaviour is difficult pupils really try hard to change and understand what staff are asking them to do. There are no exclusions.
11. The personal development and relationships pupils make are also very good. Pupils build up trust and a knowledge of routines and systems through the consistent way that they are treated. This is evident at break times, lunch times and at the end of the school day. In one class during the well-rehearsed goodbye routine pupils knew what to expect and took part with very good spirit. Others learn how to wait their turn, help a friend or ask if something needs fetching. Pupils' relationships with each other are very good. They show interest in one another's achievements and really appreciate the success of others.
12. Pupils learn to take very good personal responsibility, showing initiative when possible. They participate in the school council and the Eco committee, tidy up before breaks, take back registers and give out books. In the hydrotherapy pool, at Oldham baths and before physical education lessons, pupils are developing social skills and become confident when changing their own clothes. In a meeting with representatives on the school council and Eco committee it was evident how polite and courteous they are to staff, visitors and each other. All activities clearly show that pupils care for each other and enjoy being at the school.
13. Attendance at around 91 per cent is very good and well above that of all special schools nationally. The main reasons for authorised absence include sickness, medical appointments and family holidays taken during term time. The holidays, which are sometimes for extended periods, adversely affect the progress made by those pupils concerned. The vast majority of pupils arrive punctually and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching at Kingfisher School is good overall. Just under one half of all lessons seen during the inspection were very good or even excellent. The satisfactory lessons and the very occasional unsatisfactory lesson account for roughly one sixth of all lessons observed. Teaching in the core subjects of English and science and the progress pupils make is usually good and in mathematics it is very good. It is also very

good in art and design and music. In all but three other subjects teaching is good, leading to good achievement and progress for pupils. In ICT, art and design and design and technology, pupils' progress is satisfactory over time. The difference between teaching quality and the progress made by pupils in some subjects is due to the inconsistent curriculum opportunities currently offered to pupils in those subjects. There is no discernible difference between the quality of teaching for pupils of different ages, abilities or significantly different needs, they are all taught equally well. Pupils with autism receive a very good quality of overall teaching and they generally make very good progress.

15. In the majority of lessons, strong teamwork between all staff, well-organised routines and unobtrusive care procedures usually mean that lessons run smoothly and learning is rarely interrupted. Planning by individual teachers is usually good and they provide a wide variety of interesting, lively and exciting activities, which pupils love to join in with and find out more about. Other strengths in teaching are based upon thorough knowledge of pupils and very good management of behaviour. In these lessons pupils learn quickly and behave sociably. Most teachers and teaching assistants have a very skilled knowledge of the different techniques needed to help pupils with significant difficulties make progress. This is particularly evident for pupils with autism where specialist techniques enable most of them to begin to make very good strides in their social skills and ability to learn. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are helped well, through the use of skilled strategies, to relate to the world around them, recognise familiar things and reach out to touch, join in or communicate. The teaching approaches for pupils with visual impairment are usually of a high standard, but specialist advice is not always followed accurately and so these pupils do not consistently make the progress they are capable of.
16. In the minority of lessons where teaching has evident weaknesses it is mainly due to a lack of clearly focused learning objectives for individual pupils. This occurs, in some lessons, across all age groups, for pupils of all abilities and different needs and in almost all subjects. In these lessons pupils and the teaching assistants supporting them are unclear as to what is expected and there are too few opportunities built in for pupils to respond, practise or develop what they know. Where lessons are very good or excellent, this sharp planning for individual needs is taking place, which is why pupils do make good overall progress. Another common weakness in teaching is due to the lack of well-established, consistently used assessment of learning in several subjects. This leads to a more limited knowledge of what pupils have learned and should be learning next; so contributing to this lack of planning for individual pupils in some lessons. It can best be described as too strong a focus in some lessons on what is being taught rather than what is being learned.
17. Some teachers also lack information about lesson content or which strategies to use for the greatest effectiveness in some subjects. This results in variations of teaching quality within subjects and is mainly due to limited monitoring and guidance from subject co-ordinators and this is unsatisfactory.
18. The work of teaching assistants throughout the school contributes significantly to the good quality of teaching seen and the good progress made by pupils. They are highly skilled when teaching groups of pupils or when working with individuals. In a few lessons their work is not well planned by teachers and their skills not used effectively to support faster progress for individual pupils or groups. Skilled signing support is a particular strength of several teaching assistants and this contributes well to the development of pupils' ability to communicate.

19. Literacy is well taught using the National Literacy Strategy and is supported very well through most subjects, especially in helping pupils to communicate well. Numeracy is very well taught, but planned opportunities to support numeracy in other subjects are too few. This restricts even further the progress made by pupils in applying their mathematical knowledge.

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

20. The school has developed curriculum provision in a very imaginative and well researched way to meet the very wide range of learning needs within the school. This fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures that the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is well implemented. By using the National Curriculum, with small steps included at the earliest stages, it has laid down a curriculum that is common to all pupils at Kingfisher. The innovative work of many senior staff has ensured that pupils have different ways in which to access this curriculum. The school has sensibly moved away from labelling pupils and looks instead at each pupil's learning skills and needs. Pupils are grouped in a way that respects their preferred ways of learning rather than any difficulties they might experience. This curriculum is taught within two faculties, sensory/functional and modified/mainstream, with good leadership in each. The fact that this development is at an early stage means that staff practice varies across the school, although curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school wisely chose to use the curriculum models used in the previous schools to ensure continuity for pupils during transition. They are now successfully and smoothly moving from these inherited models, designed for the widely different pupil groups, towards this unified model.
21. All pupils follow a curriculum that is well balanced and has the breadth of the full range of subjects. In most subjects, curriculum planning is not yet detailed enough to provide staff with a clear map of what they should be teaching and so lesson content varies from teacher to teacher. This lack of a fully developed curriculum policies and schemes of work means that teachers find it more difficult to set the most sharply focused lesson objectives, and develop more detailed assessment. Pupils working at the early levels of the National Curriculum are still not fully planned for and therefore not always challenged appropriately. For example, within the sensory/functional timetable, personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a large element. However, planning and assessment in some of the PSHE sessions is not detailed enough to provide good learning objectives for pupils or a regular monitoring of progress. This is a less effective use of valuable curriculum time. Provision for collective worship does not meet statutory requirements and time is not provided for pupils to reflect in either whole-school or class-based assemblies.
22. The development of a good communication policy and the high priority given to developing effective teaching and learning styles has meant that there is good and often very good provision for pupils with complex difficulties. In particular, the work being carried out to implement a total communication environment, including the excellent 'Signalong' programme, is of a high quality. Many adaptations made for pupils with autistic tendencies and those requiring a sensory curriculum are very impressive, enabling pupils to work in a way that suits them.
23. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well and appropriate resources purchased to support the good and very good teaching in these areas. This has contributed significantly to the good progress that pupils make in these subjects.

English and mathematics lessons make very good use of the three-part format and provide a range of opportunities for pupils to work on and evaluate their own learning.

24. A minority of parents feel that the number of extra-curricular activities is too few, although these are satisfactory overall. The school provides most pupils with good opportunities to become involved with the choir, line dancing and physical education. There has been very good work carried out to provide athletics activities for pupils with autism and the holiday play schemes are well received by pupils and parents alike. Some recent problems regarding access to trips out for pupils with complex medical needs have now been resolved.
25. Pupils have good equal opportunities and are included in the widest and most relevant educational experiences possible. Opportunities for enabling groups from different classes to work together, for example when singing, are seized with enthusiasm. The school has taken steps to provide good opportunities for inclusion in mainstream schools for a significant number of pupils and is currently working with the local education authority to further develop this provision. A number of pupils visit local primary schools for subjects such as music, allowing them to join in the classroom activities and make new friends. The high levels of staff expertise in areas such as lifting and handling, signing and providing for pupils with autism enables all pupils to take a full and effective part in the whole life of the school.
26. The use of homework is satisfactory but practice varies very much from class to class. Many opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to bring things in, take books home to read and follow up work from lessons. In addition home-school link books for pupils who cannot communicate easily are well used. However these efforts are not of a sufficiently consistent quality to enable all parents to support the work of their children at home and this is a weakness.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory, although lessons are generally good. The PSHE curriculum is at an early stage, although it is steadily improving and is overseen well by a co-ordinator. The school is developing good sex and drugs education and care is taken to ensure that individual pupils are helped well to manage their own medical and health needs. The school has recently joined the West Pennines Healthy Schools scheme, and a Healthy Action Team, which involves two pupils and six staff, has been started, and the intention is to also involve parents. Associate staff have recently started extra-curricular work with small groups of pupils to develop personal hygiene, making choices in eating and developing relationships. This aspect of health education is not yet being followed within the PSHE curriculum, although the co-ordinator is keen to develop a cross- curricular approach. It is evident that PSHE has the teacher enthusiasm and basis to make very good progress
28. The early development of citizenship activities within the school is outstanding. During the inspection week the team was impressed with the very good school council meeting, where pupils expressed views, ideas and concerns clearly and enthusiastically. These, in turn, were well followed up, making the activity a very relevant one. The last day of the inspection saw a meeting of the Eco committee, where pupils were joined by those from a partner secondary school, a council official, the site manager, headteacher and the chair of governors. The meeting was conducted very professionally and involved everyone present. Pupils decided to reduce paper at future meetings by using a computer, to negotiate loaning their 'weed' picture back from the local gallery and to continue checking pollution from buses and taxis in the school's

car park. This was an excellent example of how pupils can improve their surroundings by full and free involvement, whilst developing good decision-making skills.

29. The school has good links with the community. The choir is well regarded and performs outside the school. The local minister works closely with the school. There are close links with some local firms, and a local superstore provides food for the Eco committee party for taxi drivers and escorts. The local golf club has recently given the school a large sum of money. All of these activities provide good social opportunities for pupils. Each class has a regular programme of visits to local places of interest, such as the art gallery, shops and local recycling facilities. Close links with the very good visual impairment service adds to the school's expertise and the links with the local health authority have helped in the development of the PSHE curriculum. The school is beginning to move forward jointly with the health authority and social services in discussion and planning. The school carefully seeks links with national and local groups to develop innovative practice, such as Durham University, the Learning Difficulties Partnership Board and 'Autism, the Way Forward' group.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has developed links with the vicar of an adjoining parish and he gives support at special assemblies to celebrate festivals such as Eid and Christmas. He also took part in a commemorative assembly for a pupil who recently died and a tree has been planted in a new area of remembrance. Pupils are helped to appreciate each other, and the high number of excellent and very good lessons fosters such appreciation. This makes provision for spiritual development good overall. However, there are few planned opportunities for spiritual reflection within lessons and in particular there is no regular act of worship or time for reflection within the school day, and this limits the spiritual nature of the school's work.
31. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff work hard to promote a good sense of right and wrong in pupils. This results in the very good behaviour in lessons and around the school and in the lack of anti-social behaviour and general consideration shown for each other. Staff work very closely to support pupils in changing their behaviour and are very good role models, resulting in a clear improvement in the behaviour of pupils with challenging behaviours.
32. Social development is very good with positive play and social gatherings in the dining hall, at break times and during lessons. Teachers frequently encourage pupils to work together on activities and this develops social skills, in particular, co-operation. Pupils are encouraged to make choices and develop levels of independence. Pupils of all ages are enabled to develop high self-esteem and awareness within this positive caring community. The weekly praise assembly, the school council, the caring attitude of staff and positive role models all help to develop personal and social qualities. Because development of pupils' communication is given such a high priority, they are encouraged successfully to have a voice and to make choices.
33. Cultural development is good. Opportunities are taken to develop awareness of other cultures and celebrations. One class with a Chinese pupil had started a display on the beginning of the Chinese Year of the Sheep (KUNG-HSIFA-TS'AI). The pupils have also welcomed Hungarian visitors to the school. The school has successfully bid for £3000 to develop staff skills in promoting African Caribbean Education Culture. Art and music are also a particular strength of the school and pupils are developing a love of literature. Performing arts are in their early stages but pupils are beginning to dance, sing and act with others. The one weakness is that each subject does not yet map where it will

support pupils' cultural development, and this means that several opportunities to develop an even better understanding of the culture around them are missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Kingfisher School provides a high level of care for all pupils. Staff know the pupils well, enjoy very good relationships with them and ensure they are in a safe and secure environment. The vast majority of parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature individuals.
35. There are sound arrangements in place for pupils' and staff members' health, safety and welfare. Regular risk assessments of the premises are carried out by the site manager and the local education authority. Effective procedures are in place to ensure staff lift and handle large or heavy equipment or pupils with physical disabilities in the correct manner.
36. Child protection is the subject of an appropriate school policy and staff guidelines. There is a designated senior member of staff with responsibility for co-ordinating arrangements and ensuring all adults in the school are aware of procedures. There is good, regular in-service training for staff and new staff are informed about what to do as part of their induction. The school has effective links with the resident school health advisers and outside agencies such as social services.
37. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and improving attendance. Any unexplained absences are quickly followed up. There is effective communication between school and drivers and escorts of local education authority provided transport. There are close links with the education welfare service and registers meet statutory requirements. The school endeavours to dissuade parents from taking family holidays during term time but has not been as successful as it would wish.
38. There are very effective procedures in place to monitor and promote discipline and good behaviour. A system of rewards and sanctions is in place and praise is used consistently by most staff. All adults in the school act as good role models to the pupils and any inappropriate behaviour is recorded in an incident book kept for that purpose. In one class of pupils with more challenging behaviours, pupils are taught in a jogging warm-up session not to run or overtake in corridors in case they hurt others. Pupils who are members of the school council have been consulted and their views have been included in the draft policy that has yet to be a subject of consultation with parents. Incidents of anti-social behaviour, racism or sexism are rare and when they do occur they are dealt with quickly, effectively and consistently by staff. A number of staff have been trained in a technique known as 'Team Teach', to develop positive and proactive strategies for managing pupils with more challenging behaviour. For this reason, isolated incidents of difficult behaviour are very well managed.
39. There is very good support given to pupils with a wide range of needs. The caring relationships that all adults develop with pupils create a learning environment that enables pupils to feel secure, valued and supported. This was evident in the swimming lesson at Oldham baths when one pupil completed a width of the pool without support for the first time. He punched the air in delight and his teaching assistant at the side of the pool echoed his excitement saying, "You treat them as you would your own". Associate staff, such as physiotherapists and nurses, contribute very well to meeting the medical and additional care needs of pupils, often integrating into normal lessons so that learning is interrupted as little as possible. The quality of speech therapy is

equally good, but some pupils are unable to receive their entitlement due to the way the service is organised, which is of some concern. This means that the provision set out in some pupils' statements of special educational need are not fully met. The school is seeking to address this anomaly.

40. The school catering service provides a good range of food for the luncheon period, which promotes healthy living. The kitchen, serving and dining areas are clean and well organised. Teaching assistants help pupils eat using special programmes in a professional yet sensitive manner. There is a high quality of supervision of pupils during play times and before and after school.
41. The school's formal procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. In addition, the good knowledge of pupils' individual needs held by all members of school and associate staff, are used to ensure high standards of care and a wide range of opportunities for personal development and independence. All pupils, for example, are encouraged to take their turn in returning class registers as independently as possible. Annual reports to parents show how well teachers know their pupils. These reports comment on personal development, subject progress and, particularly, improvements in communication.
42. Formal procedures for assessing and monitoring academic progress are satisfactory overall. Teachers are required to identify the knowledge, skills and understanding pupils gain from lessons, which is effective where lesson plans are clear. Where assessment is less effective, there is a greater focus on the activities which the pupils take part in rather than what they are trying to learn. In addition, the lack of consistent subject schemes of work means that the school does not yet have effective ways of tracking progress in all subjects. This currently makes planning the future curriculum more difficult. The school is aware of this and is developing improved whole-school approaches to subject schemes. Pupils' progress on their individual attainment targets is recorded effectively and future targets set during the annual review. These are all well linked to pupils' statements of special educational need and individual education plans. The use of 'P'¹ scales and other National Curriculum levels is now well moderated, so that the school has a clear view of where each pupil is placed in English, mathematics, science and personal and social development. This in turn enables staff to guide pupils and their parents well in the major areas for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents consider Kingfisher to be a good school.
44. All parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. The vast majority are happy with what the school does and the standards it achieves. A significant minority, however, do not think the school provides sufficient lunch time, after-school or holiday activities and a similar number are unsure of homework arrangements. This is recognised by the school and further development of extra-curricular activities is underway.
45. The school is beginning to forge effective links with parents. They have recently carried out a survey of parents' views and are in the process of forming a parents' fund-raising association and a focus group. The school does not actively encourage parents to help

¹ A nationally recognised, 8 level scale, to measure the progress of pupils working towards National Curriculum Level 1

in the school and this, together with other comments and suggestions raised in the recent survey, are being addressed. The partnership with parents has been identified by the school as an important area for development and is prioritised in their school improvement plan.

46. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a comprehensive newsletter and there is regular communication by telephone between staff and parents. In the case of pupils from ethnic minority groups there are home-school liaison officers who also act as translators into Cantonese, Punjabi and Bangla, for example, and a women's group who meet at the school. The school prospectus and annual governors' report to parents is a single document in draft form. However, it does not yet meet requirements because it lacks certain legally required detail such as the policy on racial equality. The end-of-year academic reports are informative and point out pupils' strengths and weaknesses and the annual parents' evening is used to discuss this report.
47. The home-school link book provides parents with a high quality dialogue about their children's education and progress, although in a few instances this is too focused on health issues rather than education. Where advice, guidance and information are provided by individual staff members to parents, this is making a significant contribution to pupils' learning at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The headteacher provides very good leadership because he has a very clear view of how to develop the school from complex beginnings. He has successfully secured a stable staff, respected the variety of skills which teachers from different schools have brought to Kingfisher and is successfully developing a unified team spirit from which the new school can grow. This has ensured a high quality of education during this initial phase, which already provides well for this diverse group of pupil needs and reflects well the aims and values of the school.
49. The headteacher delegates effectively to the deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and bursar, using each of their strengths to greatest effectiveness. They in turn are well supported by team leaders and middle managers. These roles are still in their early stages of development. During the first year there was so many physical changes and essential focus areas that much middle management was reactive. This has led to some confusion amongst staff and parents as to the nature of each of the management roles and to some difficulties with communication. However, the senior team has an accurate view of what needs to be done now and has a shared commitment and very good capacity to improve and develop the priorities, such as curriculum development and assessment of learning.
50. The governing body fulfils its duties in helping to shape the direction of the school and understand its strengths and weaknesses well. The governors have overseen a smooth transition, from three schools and one unit into one, very effectively. They have not yet been able to perform their monitoring role in any depth, although they do receive staff reports. However, they are highly committed, able and ready to develop this part of the role along with the school. Governors have addressed most statutory requirements appropriately, but have not yet ensured that a collective act of worship takes place or that all the required policies and reporting requirements to parents are in place. This is not unexpected in such a new school undergoing refurbishment and they are well placed to fulfil all of their statutory duties in the future.

51. The school has embarked upon a careful programme to develop the quality of teaching through monitoring. Senior management's lesson observation skills have been developed well, using a consultant during the first year. Results were analysed and areas for development identified. The successful results of this work can be seen in the high overall quality of lessons observed during the inspection. A mentoring link with a similar, well-respected school, has led to some excellent support for developing Kingfisher successfully. The sound beginnings of school performance management linked to future staff objectives and development are also in place.
52. The role of subject co-ordinators is not yet fully impacting on the quality of teaching and learning. They do not monitor the quality of teaching or pupils' progress sufficiently within their subject, or provide sufficient guidance for curriculum planning. The school has initially focused on provision rather than outcomes and accountability for pupil progress is not yet well established within management. This has resulted in inconsistent teaching and learning within subjects. However, the school is very well placed to develop the co-ordinator's role further and to develop a stronger culture of accountability and has put many of the necessary steps into place. The priorities set by the school improvement plan and the action taken to meet these targets are therefore very appropriate.
53. The headteacher, bursar and governing body have established an effective, pragmatic approach to financial planning which pays due regard to the principles of best value. The school has acted promptly and appropriately on the local authority auditor's report which focused on rationalising the budget, establishing transparency, and ensuring accountability. Procedures for monitoring expenditure over the course of a year are effective in identifying potential anomalies and the bursar provides up-to-date, accurate information on request. Once fully established, these various systems have the potential to provide the information that the school needs in order to assess the effectiveness of its provision. Day-to-day administration is very efficient. The school makes good use of information technology and is currently upgrading its capability in this respect. Staff interests and expertise are both encouraged and exploited, whilst levels of resources are good.
54. The number, qualifications and experience of both teachers and teaching assistants are good and match the demands of the curriculum. The varying and diverse special needs of the pupils have been met by the appointment of key staff and a rigorous professional development programme. The qualifications of teaching assistants include maintaining lunch time programmes, toileting, the use of sign language and recognising and managing autism. They provide high quality, complementary support for the work of teachers. All staff understand their role as well as those of others and work as an effective team. The very good ratio of staff to pupils ensures a high level of care and attention by which pupils are able to progress.
55. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively.
56. A great deal of attractive refurbishment has taken place and is ongoing. The site is large and provides a very large outside play area. Some of the play areas are modernised but other parts are not well maintained, lack large play equipment and do not provide a stimulating environment for the full range of learning, especially in the Foundation Stage. The building itself is kept clean and is well maintained by the site manager who takes a keen interest in the school and sits on the governing body. The rooms and corridors are well decorated with pupils' work and there is a welcoming

entrance. Most classroom areas are spacious, airy and easily accessible; they provide plenty of good opportunities for imaginative use. Although most toilet areas are suitably private and equipped some do not provide the dignity that is usually expected and are not entirely satisfactory. The library area, although satisfactory is not well located and so is not used very much by classes or individual pupils. This is particularly limiting in the development of library skills. The hydrotherapy pool is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' learning and development. The way the site is spread out, however, does have several disadvantages for ease of communication between staff and management, which have not yet been resolved.

57. Learning resources are good overall. The school is very efficient in using inherited resources and planning for essential new ones. The Foundation Stage, however, lacks sufficient equipment and suitable surfaces for the full range of outdoor experiences and this limits the skills pupils are able to develop in this area.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to raise the quality of education even further the headteacher and governors should:
- (1) ensure that all teachers set individual, focused learning goals in lessons to improve the rate at which pupils make progress; (Paragraph: 16)
 - (2) develop further the quality and consistency of assessment of each pupil's learning, in the subjects, to improve planning for more effective individual learning; (Paragraph: 42)
 - (3) develop whole-school curriculum planning for each subject to provide clearer guidelines on how subjects may be taught more effectively and to ensure that learning is built upon from year to year; (Paragraph: 21)
 - (4) develop the role of managers, especially subject co-ordinators, to include closer monitoring of learning outcomes, to improve subject direction and to encourage the sharing of best practice. (Paragraphs: 49, 52)

In addition, the governors should seek to comply with all statutory requirements.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	36	35	13	2	0	0
Percentage	9	38	37	14	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	111
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	28

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	8.97	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	83	0	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	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	15	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	8	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	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: YN – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.2:1
Average class size	7.4

Education teaching assistants: YN – Y6

Total number of education support staff	51
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1179

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	1,055,315
Total expenditure	994,777
Expenditure per pupil	7,772
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	60,538

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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	111
Number of questionnaires returned	51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	31	4	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	31	2	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	31	4	6	29
The teaching is good.	73	22	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	25	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	14	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	57	29	4	6	4
The school is well led and managed.	65	25	2	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	33	0	0	18

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

37	20	14	12	18
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PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Children in the Foundation Stage make good and sometimes very good progress in each of the six areas of learning. The quality of teaching is good and often very good, staff know the children well and work as an enthusiastic and committed team in developing each child as an individual. They build effectively on children's prior skills. Good individual education plans have specific targets, which enable progress to be monitored. There are close links with parents through home-school diaries, newsletters, parents/carers handbook and annual review meetings. Detailed records of achievement, containing samples of work and photographs, demonstrate good progress over time. Management and planning by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is good and ensures successful learning overall. The co-ordinator's role, however, is not yet sufficiently developed in formally monitoring what and how children learn. This limits planning for individual children and so leads to slower progress in some lessons. The curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the early learning goals well. However, the quality of the outdoor curriculum and resources, although satisfactory, lacks variety and a wider range of opportunities to help children extend their physical and social skills in the fresh air.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The teacher sets clear targets and has high expectations in developing independence. This means that the atmosphere in the Foundation Stage class is warm, purposeful and happy. In the morning, for example, children voluntarily greet each other. Children show very good social development when they take responsibility for tidying away toys at the end of the session, often without being asked. Children are helped very well to develop self-confidence and a sense of belonging. For example, during everyday routines such as 'snack time', they take an active part in lively discussion, communication and choice making. Staff know the children very well and sensitively help them to be confident when giving a symbol in exchange for a biscuit. There are many examples of how children with autism have improved very well in relating to others, joining in with the group and following instructions.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Children make very good progress in developing communication skills, in speaking and listening and good progress in the early stages of learning to read and write. Different communication systems are used very effectively and some children learn to ask for what they want by giving a picture to staff. One child is helped to ask for a biscuit independently by pressing his head switch. The communication between staff and children is intensive during all the activities of the day, although very occasionally some staff miss opportunities to support greater progress by encouraging children to respond in more detail. Children are usually helped very well to understand and reply because teachers and teaching assistants use simple target language supported by signing to put the message across. Very good progress was made during one story time, when

children could join in by switching on a message saying 'that's what I see', and were able to select symbols to answer a simple question. The high quality of children's listening skills is evident in many lessons and one child with autism who was apart from the group carefully followed what was happening and joined in when he could. Early writing skills are helped to develop well through drawing, painting and copying lines, shapes and letters and some children can copy and recognise their names.

Mathematical development

62. Children are making good progress in the early stages of understanding numbers, shapes and groups. Well-prepared materials, based on prior knowledge of the children's skills results in good progress, for example one child was able to match four shapes successfully. In one session, children were introduced to the concept of big and small through a familiar story and so quickly grasped the idea. They enjoyed the idea of shapes on a bear's middle and joined in enthusiastically. During singing lessons children show some very good counting skills, which are fostered carefully during a range of activities. They work with enthusiasm on practical activities such as handling shapes and objects, so developing key concepts. Some opportunities to plan more sharply for developing the mathematical skills of individual children are missed during general activities such as sand and water play. This results in good rather than very good progress overall.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. During the Foundation Stage, children also make good progress in learning about the world around them. The teacher provides a good range of activities for exploratory play, for example dinosaurs, sand and 'slime' water which encourages curiosity and motivates children in their efforts. One child concentrated for several minutes on exploring the bubbles and blowing the 'slime' water. Another child was able to explore bricks independently and build a tower of three. The range of resources and activities includes pictures of other people, visits to local places and work on growing things and the natural world. All of this helps the children well to know that some people are different and that the world is full of wonders. Children also are given good opportunities to find out how to use the computer, which they enjoy, and some could control the mouse with accuracy.

Physical development

64. Children's physical skills develop well. The wide range of opportunities, through hydrotherapy, indoor climbing frames, games and activities to help hand-eye co-ordination, means that children show good improvement in fine and gross motor skills. Outdoor equipment is used with confidence and children are able to ride a variety of toys. This demonstrates very good progress in playing skills since the beginning of term, when many of the children did not know how to play. However, the range of outdoor equipment and activities is too few to develop a wider range of jumping and climbing skills. In addition, staff do not always interact sufficiently with children to extend further their physical skills during outdoor activities. Good quality teaching of fine physical skills resulted in children being able to hold crayons, chalks and paintbrushes to make marks, colour within outlines, under write their names and begin to cut with scissors. One child was easily able to make a complex jigsaw.

Creative development

65. Provision for creative development is good overall, and very good in music. The teacher sets clear targets when planning, which enables individual children to progress at a pace suited to their needs. Where teaching was very good the teacher was sensitive to the needs of the children and provided a lively and enjoyable environment where they made very good progress in playing musical instruments in time to the music. Staff support the children well in their creative development, for example in a singing session the staff helped children with the words and actions so that they could join in with enthusiasm. Good progress in art and design was shown when one child worked with interest and concentration for a sustained period of time, as he was given clear and simple directions to choose a mouth and nose for his teddy bear. Children are able to develop their skills through practising the different techniques of painting, printing and collage activities.

ENGLISH

66. Progress for the majority of pupils in all age groups is usually good and often very good in English. This is due to the good teaching which they receive supported by appropriate support for those pupils who experience difficulties in communication. Where this support is best, pupils are able to communicate their views effectively and thus to make good progress. Good examples of this are the use of 'Alpha Smart' communicators to assist older higher attaining pupils and 'Picture Exchange Communication Symbols' and 'Signalong' for pupils with greater degrees of difficulty. The very good levels of signing amongst all staff are significant in enabling all pupils to make good progress by thoroughly understanding and enjoying stories, songs and rhymes. Supported communication is a strong element in the very good progress made by pupils with autism. Pupils with the most severe and complex difficulties also make good progress in communication due to the skilled teaching which they receive. One pupil remarked "Had a good day!" at the end of their session.
67. By age seven, progress in reading is good for all groups. Many pupils can read familiar words by sight and match them with corresponding pictures. Some pupils learn to read unknown words and sentences very well due to the carefully planned programmes used. These pupils delight in using the actions and sounds associated with letter names to read and produce their own sentences and to thoroughly enjoy the stories they read. Pupils were delighted to share the adventure of their 'Magic Key' stories in which they could accurately predict how the adventure would turn out whilst others achieved the same end by placing the parts of the story in the right order. Progress in writing is also good; some pupils write their names independently and discuss exciting things they have done.
68. Pupils with the most difficulties make good progress in the use of switches and symbols to make increasingly more difficult choices and to clearly communicate their understanding of stories. Pupils often take great delight in joining in the sensory opportunities offered to them, for example by joining in the shaking of sheets of material which help them to identify parts of the story.
69. By age eleven progress in reading and writing continues to be good with some pupils re-enacting Shakespearian plays such as Macbeth from their own scripts. One particularly fierce 'Lady Macbeth' was entirely convincing in his portrayal and understanding of the reasons why his character behaved as she did. More able pupils have reached beyond the early levels of the Oxford Reading Tree. They have learned to read the meaning beyond the words and are able to explain why they have enjoyed the story. Other pupils have begun to be able to read their names and to recognise

important everyday vocabulary on sight. Pupils with more complex difficulties make good progress, greeting each other through communication aids and taking a delighted role in stories which take them to different worlds such as 'Under the Sea'. Where staff teamwork is strong these pupils make very good progress in understanding the world around them through English and have learned to listen to each other and to respond appropriately in turn.

70. Pupils make good use of their communication skills in their other lessons. They are able to take turns and to listen to relatively complex sets of instructions and carry these out effectively. One group was able to identify the complex properties of three-dimensional shapes and to explain why they could work out which shape was which. Very young children and those pupils with the most complex difficulties are able to use their developing skills to join in greeting songs and in role-play songs such as 'Miss Polly had a dolly' with tremendous enthusiasm and understanding. Pupils with autism were able to use their developing communication skills to join in group singing and to make their own choices about the songs they preferred to sing.
71. The quality of teaching in English is good throughout the school and often very good, particularly in providing highly motivating activities, which enable pupils to make progress. The best lessons are carefully planned, identifying what pupils will know, be able to do and understand by the end of the lesson, and then linked to exciting activities. The use of sensory stories using sounds, smells and touch sensations, on themes such as 'Under the Sea' and 'We're going on a Bear Hunt', provide pupils with carefully structured opportunities to develop their skills in communication. Where teachers are not sufficiently clear about what these objectives for learning should be, pupils take part in the planned activities but make less progress than they should. Without identifying what should be learned in a lesson, teachers cannot easily assess progress or decide what should be taught next. The use of assessment is most effective in those lessons where teachers set short-term targets, which they can evaluate.
72. The use of ICT in English ranges from very good to poor in all key stages. Where it is most effective, pupils work independently using ICT to support and record their own developing ideas and then to refine these. Where it is least effective, software is not used effectively to match learning outcomes and individual pupil needs.
73. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been well managed and modified to enable all pupils to make good progress. The use of the structure of the strategy in the best lessons, in splitting English lessons into three parts, has enabled pupils to reflect on their own learning against their own short-term targets. This reflection and review has enabled many pupils to make good or very good progress. However, it is not yet a part of the practice of all teachers, which means that pupils in those lessons do not have the opportunity to progress as quickly as others. The limited use of the library also means that pupils do not develop library skills and independent study skills as effectively as they should and this is recognised as an important area for development in all subjects.
74. Leadership and management by the subject co-ordinators are good. They have established useful policies to guide teachers and have recommended appropriate resources for particular groups of pupils. A communication group has also been established to support the teaching of these skills to all pupils. The role of the co-ordinator is not fully established however. They do not yet monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching, the rates of pupil progress, or help teachers to share best practice. There is, however, a useful co-ordinator's file for literacy and improvement of the role is planned as the next step for subject development.

MATHEMATICS

75. Pupils progress well in mathematics throughout the school and all pupils enjoy the subject. Progress is assisted by very good, occasionally excellent, teaching and skilled support by classroom assistants. The National Numeracy Strategy has been established well and staff are using and adapting the numeracy hour format very well to make it relevant to the wide range of pupils.
76. All mathematics lessons assist pupils well in practising and consolidating basic number skills. Good staff training has ensured that lessons are normally planned and taught well, with a sharp pace and a good matching of group work tasks to individual abilities. The three-part lesson format is used very well by all teachers to encourage pupils to participate, work on individual targets and assess how well they have done. There is also good progress for most pupils in the aspect of space and shape, where they gain a good understanding of the characteristics of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils' progress in using and applying the mathematics they learn is good, because many opportunities are given to learn and reinforce skills in a variety of contexts. For example, the meeting of the Eco committee included a careful following of the numbered agenda, while a lunch time line-dancing session built on pupils' knowledge of counting. In two very good registration sessions with younger pupils experiencing complex difficulties, the teacher ensured that every pupil had the opportunity to respond to the register and took part in counting up who was at school. Teaching assistants worked closely with the teacher to make sure that pupils with the greatest mobility and communication problems understood what was going on. Number and sequence was well reinforced by music, the use of toys, sign, symbol and touch.
77. The needs of pupils with significant additional difficulties are also well met and for those who have autistic tendencies, mathematical teaching is often very good indeed. A short lesson dealing with 'larger' and 'smaller' saw these pupils rolling dough strips to see who could make the longest. The teacher and assistant used jokes, competitions and very good questions to challenge pupils. The response of pupils was very good. The techniques specifically designed for autism, together with very good mainstream practice, ensured that pupils remained focused, knew how they should behave, but could also share a joke and celebrate success. However, there are occasions when tasks set require too long a period of concentration and the pace of the lesson slows and pupil involvement with it. In addition, pupils with profound and multiple difficulties who work within the earliest stages of mathematical development are not always challenged sufficiently or enabled to show what they can do. This is mainly due to a lack of clear objectives for learning in their lessons.
78. By the age of eleven, pupils are at very different stages of mathematical development. All have shown good progress in terms of mathematical and social skills. Those with the most complex difficulties have developed their fine motor skills and visual awareness through the exploration of a range of resources and toys and from regular and skilled interaction with adults. They have begun to choose between 'small' and 'large' objects, pick one favourite toy or picture from two or three and are beginning to recognise the symbols for the numbers one to three. Those who have progressed really well are beginning to tally objects up to five and are developing over-writing skills for numerals.
79. Their peers who have difficulties within the autistic spectrum have already developed a clear knowledge of a wide range of number bonds, often up to hundreds and thousands. They understand that time can be measured in many ways, using a Roman

water clock for instance, and they effectively compare the speed of water to the size of the hole made. They show a lively interest in using number, time and money skills and are comfortable using words such as 'multiply', 'subtract' and 'more' and 'less'.

80. A lesson involving older pupils within the modified and mainstream² faculty saw the excellent use of pace, humour and individual planning assist in a high level of pupil progress. Pupils included two with significant physical difficulties and one with a severe visual impairment. All were included well. Both teacher and support assistant had very good relationships with pupils and this ensured good behaviour and enthusiasm that made the best use of time. Good resources allowed all pupils to sort and group coins, play bingo with them and complete addition sums in one and two pence's up to twenty-four. The very businesslike and focused way in which language was used meant that pupils felt secure to answer and, overall, they demonstrated a high level of involvement.
81. Pupil progress is measured on a regular basis, but not all teachers use this information effectively. Where it is used well, it contributes positively to monitoring success in meeting individual targets and planning the next lesson. Thus, young pupils in a class following the sensory curriculum learned to choose from two different objects and sang a range of songs to reinforce counting skills to five. At the end of the lesson, the teacher added notes to pupils' individual education targets which indicated progress, or lack of it. These notes would be used to plan the next lesson, having seen where each pupil had reached. In some other lessons where less attention was given to the establishment of clear learning objectives, teachers did not record accurately the progress of pupils. Consequently, their records were not as useful in helping the teachers to plan or for pupils to build on their earlier learning.
82. Leadership is good in mathematics and this has had a positive impact on pupils' progress. There are two co-ordinators who combine good practice with a clear vision of what the school is seeking to achieve for individual pupils. They have already established numeracy in a sound and effective way and made sure that adequate resources are available. There has not been the opportunity to monitor teaching across the school, which limits opportunity for sharing of good teaching and assessment practices. There are too few ICT resources to further support the development of numeracy, particularly in using, recording and displaying information.

SCIENCE

83. Progress in science is good throughout the school. There are examples of good and very good progress for pupils of all ages. Planning is at a developmental stage in order to provide appropriate learning experiences for pupils.
84. Up to the age of seven, pupils have made good progress as they completed activities on body parts, the senses, sorting materials and seasons of the year. Work in the sensory group linked activities on touching materials such as felt and sand paper to like and dislike. In one class including pupils with sensory needs, the teacher used feeling and smelling for pupils to recognise flour and sugar and encouraged them to successfully sign/say 'batter'.
85. By the age of eleven, pupils are studying light, shadows, transparent and opaque materials, solids and liquids. In one lesson Year 6 pupils were examining various substances which behave like liquids but are really made up of very small pieces. At the end of the lesson one pupil said, "Last week I thought sand was a liquid because it

² The curriculum system devised to best suit the needs of the highest attaining pupils in the school.

ran out, but now, after looking through the microscope I know it is made up of little pieces, although it acts like a liquid". The well-planned and organised experiments stimulate the pupils' interest in learning about science.

86. Overall teaching is good and this promotes good quality learning. In the more effective lessons teachers plan well and work with teaching assistants to effectively include all pupils. In one science lesson a partially sighted pupil was helped by using a higher powered magnifying glass. Teaching assistants record progress well. This is linked to targets which are collated by the teacher and used to plan the next lesson, which help pupils to make good progress. On occasions the challenge for pupils is not well matched to their ability and expectations are too high leaving pupils unable to work easily and hindering progress. Sometimes work is not always marked to indicate progress made, or short steps in progress are not recorded. Occasionally, targets in lesson plans or how pupils' learning can best be supported are not always clear. This all leads to less effective planning and learning and some pupils even become restless or frustrated.
87. There are good displays around the school to encourage and stimulate an interest in science. One display on winter encourages pupils to become involved with illustrations on icicles melting, and snowfall, with a sign 'lift the cloud and let it snow'. The illustrations are supported by a switch which the pupils are encouraged to press and hear the music 'let it snow, let it snow ...'.
88. The co-ordination of science is currently satisfactory. Curriculum programmes based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) science scheme have been introduced. However, the co-ordinator is aware that medium-term planning of science teaching does not fully meet the learning needs of all pupils. To date there has been no planned observation of teaching or staff training to improve teaching and subject direction. The science week in June illustrated well the benefits of cross-curricular planning and the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator. Activities included a visit from the local fire brigade, a nature trail to look at wild life, and a science teacher from a local secondary school doing experiments and bringing science alive by making a water cannon in the school grounds. Curriculum links between science and other subjects are present, as with ICT. However, these are not currently planned for which limits opportunities for pupils to strengthen their understanding of science in other ways.

ART AND DESIGN

89. The school makes satisfactory provision for art and design, particularly in respect of practical activities. The difference between the very good quality of teaching and the satisfactory progress made over time by pupils is directly connected to the satisfactory but limited range of curriculum experiences provided. The subject endorses the aims of the school well, and makes a positive contribution both to the pupils' learning in other subjects, and to their spiritual, cultural and personal development.
90. Throughout the school, pupils' levels of achievement in art and design are satisfactory within the limited curriculum range. They have excellent attitudes towards the subject, are interested in the practical activities and rapidly become absorbed in their work. Pupils handle a good range of simple media such as crayon and pastel effectively and produce bright, vibrant, individual pieces of work. They employ simple techniques such as collage and printing to produce cold, hard images as part of the theme of 'Winter'. They use pencil very effectively to suggest the shape and form of polar bears, paint recognisable portraits of Henry VIII, and use bold colours in ways reminiscent of artists such as Suerat and Caulfield. More able pupils evoke the work of Lowry in painting

scenes of industrial life, while pupils who have more profound and complex needs access the activity through a sensory approach, sponge-printing the buildings and creating the figures from twisted pipe-cleaners. Pupils use equipment, including ICT, with care and precision, co-operate well and are interested in each other's efforts; in these respects, the subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development.

91. The teaching of art and design is very good, particularly for pupils aged seven to eleven. Lessons are purposeful and under-pinned by very positive relationships between all concerned, with the result that pupils take a pride in their own work, have an interest in their classmates' achievements and develop their own ideas to good effect. Simple resources and media are used very well and teaching assistants play a very positive part, with the result that pupils are actively engaged. Where teaching is most successful as in, for example, a very effective collage lesson for younger pupils with profound and complex needs, activities are used successfully to address pupils' individual targets in communication; all staff know the pupils extremely well, with the result that the pupils are helped to participate in purposeful, meaningful ways. Where teaching is less successful, practical activities are not organised and used in ways that help pupils develop their understanding of art while they practise their skills. This is particularly the case in those lessons where art is used to illustrate pupils' work in other subjects.
92. Art and design has a high profile in the school as the high quality displays testify, but, although satisfactory, there are weaknesses in the range of learning opportunities provided. The framework that guides teachers' planning has insufficient detail to help them make sure that pupils build upon what they have already learned. In addition, insufficient consideration is given to promoting pupils' understanding of art as opposed to developing their practical skills, and the way assessment is used does not help to identify and address these shortcomings. However, the co-ordinator is aware of these weaknesses, and her ideas and enthusiasm mean that the school is well placed to take the subject forward.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. The school's provision for design and technology is satisfactory, and the subject endorses the aims of the school well. As with art and design, the difference between the very good quality of teaching and the satisfactory progress made over time by pupils is directly connected to limits within the curriculum range, which, although satisfactory, is not sufficiently rich to provide high quality learning.
94. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory gains in learning particularly in the practical skills of making and assembling, although their levels of achievement in planning and evaluating their work are less marked. Younger pupils with more profound and complex learning difficulties work hard with adult support to make a variety of muffins and buns, sometimes from packet-mixes, while older ones enjoy using cartons and other junk materials to create large-scale, tactile collages. More able pupils mix ingredients, both by hand and using food-mixers, and have a high regard for health and safety issues. Pupils use a wide range of construction toys, although the planning stage is sometimes restricted to such criteria as the choice of materials, and does not ensure that the pupils are clear as to whether or not the designs have succeeded. However, more able, older pupils use materials such as card and straws to make simple machines such as axles and wheels, and gain some insight as to why some designs are more effective than others when seeing which one rolls the furthest.

95. Teaching in design and technology is very good. All staff know the pupils and their individual learning difficulties very well, and excellent relationships between all concerned means that all pupils are very keen to learn and are successfully helped to do so. Activities are well organised, and resources are used to very good effect with the result that no time is wasted. In one particularly successful lesson for pupils aged nine and ten, on what makes an effective axle, the teacher's lively, encouraging style, and her careful use of technical terms, was effective in enabling all pupils to participate, including those with physical disabilities. Consequently, the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and took great delight in seeing how well their designs worked.
96. There is a satisfactory scheme of work that reflects guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and design and technology makes a positive contribution to other subjects such as science and art and design. These links, though, are not always fully developed, and the framework that guides teachers' planning is thin on the detail that would help teachers make sure that lessons build upon what pupils already know, understand and can do. In addition, assessment in the subject tends to reflect pupils' participation in activities, rather than what they have actually learned. As a result, the school is not particularly well informed as to the success of its provision. However, the co-ordinator is beginning to address these shortcomings, and the subject is well placed to make further development.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Achievement and progress in geography across the whole school is good, with some very good features. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to make progress. Where pupils make very good progress between the ages of seven to eleven years, they learn fast as they interpret and describe parts of the world map, such as sea and land. Very good progress is demonstrated by pupils aged nine to eleven years when they match pictures of shops to goods sold, with a high degree of accuracy. By the age of eleven, pupils were able to answer questions and express their views about the environment as to whether they liked or disliked the school playgrounds and they used photographs as a secondary source of information.
98. Teaching and learning in geography across the whole school is usually good and often very good. Well-focused planning and good organisation engages and sustains pupils' interest, which extends and consolidates their knowledge of where they live. The very good teaching develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of places; they could, for example, identify shops by matching pictures and this was well supported by signing. Good teamwork between teachers and therapists results in younger pupils learning about the role of the physiotherapist. They are encouraged to think carefully by a good quality of questioning, for example "Do you think that you have muscles in your face?" Pupils responded to high expectations and clarified their understanding by asking the physiotherapist "Do you have a stethoscope?"
99. Subject management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has produced a suitable draft policy. The co-ordinator is aware, however, that planning and assessment opportunities are inadequate and do not ensure that pupils' learning is systematically built from one year to the next. The co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of planning, teaching or what pupils are learning, which prevents a faster improvement in the subject. However, it is an early stage of school development and this is fully recognised by management. Resources are generally good, although the school has identified that there are insufficient resources for developing geographical skills through fieldwork techniques.

HISTORY

100. No history lessons were observed with younger pupils during the inspection week. However, examples of work from all age groups and lessons with older pupils indicate that pupils make good progress overall and teaching is good.
101. In the younger groups pupils show good progress in understanding chronology by using timelines. One group, for example, had taken a photograph of their timeline of birthdates during a typical day at the seaside. Older pupils make good progress in understanding events and different peoples. For example, skillful questioning by the teacher enabled one group to describe the pictures on Greek vases and learn about the lives of ancient Greek people. By the age of eleven, some pupils knew that World War Two took place between 1939 and 1945 and could name the main countries involved and ask relevant questions. Pupils were also able to put pictures of pot making into chronological order.
102. The quality of teaching is good overall. Where teaching is good, teachers take care to remind pupils what they have learned earlier. One well-planned and well-structured lesson built effectively on pupils' knowledge and extended their thinking about the Ancient Greeks living a 'long time ago'. Well-directed skillful questioning encourages pupils in these lessons to take part and show what they have learned. In one lesson on World War Two, good photographic resources inspired pupils to ask searching questions and learn quickly.
103. Good supportive relationships between staff and pupils result in pupils behaving well, staying on task and being able to concentrate for a long time. Assessment, however, is limited and does not help teachers to plan lessons easily to build upon individual learning.
104. Subject management is satisfactory, and developing well. The co-ordinator has identified that planning is not satisfactory for the long term, as it does not provide a framework to ensure that learning is built upon from year to year. This has little impact on learning in these early stages of the school's development but management recognises that this has to be addressed swiftly and plans are already in progress. In addition the subject co-ordinator does not yet monitor the quality of teaching, or the progress pupils make, which further limits the speed at which the subject is developed. Resources for the teaching of history are good and offer a wide range of opportunities to understand about life in the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. The school makes satisfactory provision for ICT and the subject endorses the aims of the school well, particularly in the contribution it makes to the pupils' communication skills and personal development.
106. Pupils throughout the school enjoy computers and associated switches and are very keen to use them. They make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with more profound and complex needs make a considerable effort to use them well in order to develop manual skills and make choices, turning on and off such stimuli as music, fans and lights. They also use simple programs to build shapes and match pictures well by means of such devices as a 'jelly-bean' switch. More able pupils make satisfactory gains in learning, and can wordprocess simple text to support their learning in a wide variety of other subjects, although this is often achieved with help. However, the most able pupils aged eight, nine and ten can type with increasing accuracy, handle the mouse skilfully to access menus, and use toolbars to change fonts or colours. They

make steady progress as they use digital cameras to take photographs of each other in character as part of their work on Macbeth, and learn to view the results on a laptop. They show sound progress as they operate paint and draw programs as part of their work in art and design. Some pupils work quite slowly but all concentrate well; they are very careful with equipment as diverse as roamers and food-mixers, and are sometimes able to control and steer their own electric wheelchairs.

107. The teaching of ICT is good, and all staff have received National Opportunities Fund training. Lessons are well organised and staff knowledge of the pupils, together with very positive relationships, means that pupils are eager to be involved, stay on task and complete their work. Teaching assistants play a particularly valuable role in conducting one-to-one sessions with individual pupils with the result that the pupil can concentrate away from the distraction of other pupils. On occasion, though, ICT is used in situations where there is so much going on that pupils with more profound and complex needs have difficulty relating what they are doing to a particular effect. Where ICT is used to support other subjects, such as English and art and design, the teaching is very good; ICT often features in teachers' planning and opportunities to use it naturally in lessons are both created and exploited.
108. There is a simple, but effective, framework to guide teachers' planning, although the assessment system tends to record pupils' participation rather than what they have actually learned. As a result, the school is not particularly well informed about the effectiveness of its provision. Wider staffing issues have, understandably, meant that plans to employ an ICT technician have had to be deferred. This is a matter of regret, but plans to upgrade equipment and access for pupils are well under way, and mean that the school is very well placed to develop the subject, particularly in respect of pupils using the Internet.

MUSIC

109. Music is a subject that is very well taught, contributes significantly to the spiritual and artistic life of the school and, above all, is greatly enjoyed by every pupil. Pupils progress well, but some opportunities to extend learning are missed because there is not a detailed programme to which class teachers can refer.
110. A significant amount of the music at the school is planned and taught by the co-ordinator and a specialist music teacher-therapist, often in large, three or four class, groups. Pupils also receive music teaching within their class and as part of subjects such as mathematics, number songs and literacy. Over and above this, class teachers often use songs as 'markers' for the end of the day or changes in the day's routine. In all of these activities teaching assistants work well with teachers to encourage pupils to sing, play and respond to questions. In these sessions good use is made of low-level technological aids to ensure that pupils with communication difficulties are fully involved.
111. Three lessons highlight the way in which music contributes so well to pupil progress. In one excellent lesson with younger pupils with complex difficulties, the co-ordinator worked with seven pupils in a lesson that could not have been bettered. The welcome song elicited a response from each pupil, often at a more sophisticated level than the pupils demonstrated elsewhere. Everyone used basic signing to convey meaning in questions, answers and in songs. Clapping to a nursery rhyme saw pupils with quite severe physical difficulties clapping in time, often calling out "rock!" or "dance!". Wherever possible adults reinforced the technical vocabulary, 'march', 'drum' and 'clap'. The pace and enthusiasm of the teacher immediately transferred itself to the

pupils. Songs were re-sung loud, then soft, fast, then slow, without pupils noticing they were learning beat, dynamics and speed. Quite dramatic progress took place towards the end of the lesson when pupils were asked to say whether the music is soft, using a baby picture, or loud, using a picture of guards marching. Despite the fact that some pupils had had difficulty developing the concepts during the lesson, every one made the correct choice. Progress over a short space of time had been exceptional, a reflection of outstanding teaching.

112. In a good choir lesson with 30 older pupils, pupils joined in familiar songs with great enthusiasm and tunefulness. The teacher and assistants' good knowledge of the subject and the pupils ensured that every pupil was involved and really enjoyed the experience. All pupils were involved, the pupil with sight difficulties reading from a large script song sheet, pupils with physical and communication difficulties were well supported by teaching assistants and those with reading difficulties well assisted by repetition and reinforcement. Once again, musical knowledge of concepts such as pitch, beat, unison, starting and stopping were developed unobtrusively. To complete this lesson two pupils agreed to sing a duet. This was accomplished with all pupils listening intently and when they finished they were greeted by spontaneous applause. The contribution of music to self-confidence and performance skills throughout the school is of a high order.
113. A small class of pupils within the autistic spectrum accomplished very good progress within a short lesson. Their original difficulties included attention, co-operation, accuracy and expressing emotion. However, after a term within the class they were able to play in unison, listen carefully and comment on other pupils' performances. They showed real enjoyment in their own and others' achievements. The carefully structured lesson meant that pupils felt secure enough to express themselves. There was very real progress in terms of both self-control and the understanding of musical terminology and skills.
114. There has been good, highly skilled leadership in music and pupils benefit from the imaginative use of resources. The effect of this on pupils' social and academic progress is good. Currently, not enough opportunities are taken to observe and assess the individual progress that takes place during the large group sessions. ICT is not used adequately within music and this means that the full potential of some pupils is not being realised.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Achievement in physical education is good. Pupils are developing self-confidence, social skills and enjoyment from participating at a range of levels. An important part of the programme offered is access to swimming either at Oldham baths or the specialist support at the hydrotherapy pool on the school site. Swimming enhances social development and sessions at the hydrotherapy pool allow pupils to explore and extend movement with specialist support and encouragement. In one lesson in the hydrotherapy pool with the physiotherapist, one pupil with restricted mobility smiled with joy as he happily splashed the water and kicked his legs.
116. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good. They are enthusiastic and try hard to improve. The very good support and care from all staff enables pupils to gain enjoyment from taking part.
117. By the age of seven, pupils' good progress is evident as they enjoy experiencing gymnastics, dance and games as well as swimming. There is very good support to

enable pupils of all ability levels to participate effectively, and safely practise skills of balance, changes of direction and pace. Pupils are made to feel good about themselves by demonstrating progress. In one group, a boy was helped from his wheelchair onto a mat to demonstrate his improving mobility in turning. There was a real smile of achievement on his face as he showed what he could do; with great determination he quietly said "I can do it".

118. By the age of eleven, pupils continue to progress well in games, dance, gymnastics, and swimming. Pupils within the modified mainstream groups have had limited access to outdoor pursuits, which include canoeing and mountain scrambling, which prevents progress being good in this one area.
119. The quality of teaching overall is good. When teaching is good or better teachers plan well, are enthusiastic, use music to stimulate involvement, make effective use of vocabulary such as forwards and backwards, and link words to movements such as 'bend your elbows'. When teaching is less effective, planning does not take account of individual mobility needs or possible behaviour problems. Teachers do not always highlight good points of a demonstration to support teaching points to enable other pupils to perform more effectively which is a weakness.
120. Assessment of progress is satisfactory in this early stage of subject development, as teachers know their pupils very well and keep a record of pupils' experiences. This enables them to plan in a way which helps pupils to make good progress over time. However, short-term records often do not indicate what pupils have achieved or where additional support is needed. In particular, small step improvements are not clearly being identified. The co-ordinator does not keep a central record of progress or achievement of certificated accreditation to ensure development of learning from year to year. Opportunities to be involved in accreditation are limited to the Oldham swimming scheme and an internal gymnastics award. The limitations in the award schemes on offer reduce opportunities for personal achievements. The current curriculum options for older pupils are satisfactory, but will improve when the school's plans to extend the outdoor pursuits programme are developed. The school has recently received a donation from Oldham Athletic Football Club to purchase bikes, tricycles, basketball equipment for use at lunch times. Together with the introduction of line dancing these activities will extend the social aspects of physical education and broaden the experiences available.
121. Co-ordination of physical education is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is currently developing a new policy. She does not meet with staff or observe lessons to encourage the sharing of best practice. There is no planning to develop cross-curricular links with guidelines to improve sharing of ideas. There is currently no noticeboard to celebrate success in physical education or to inform parents of activities within the community, which limits the opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's development and achievement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Achievement and progress in religious education is good in all age groups. Teaching is also good with some very good teaching. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
123. Where progress is good or better younger pupils are inspired to concentrate with sustained effort by the high quality of resources for the different religions such as Hinduism. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties were able to engage in eye contact and anticipate the movement of a vibrating toy. The good and sometimes very good progress of pupils aged nine to eleven years is made possible by the excellent sensitivity and support. In all lessons, the way behaviour is managed and the behaviour of pupils are a strength and the very good respectful relationships between pupils and staff are instrumental in pupils reaching their potential.
124. Teaching and learning in religious education is good overall across the full age range with some very good features. Where teaching and learning was very good there was a clear focus to the lesson, which outlined learning goals, for example where pupils were to learn keywords such as 'Ganesha' and 'shrine'. In a lesson about the Chinese New Year pupils were engaged in learning by the pace, the high expectations, and the purposeful, well-organised environment. In this lesson pupils made sweets, which enabled them to experience first hand the excitement of the new year celebration. Where teaching was less successful there was insufficient long- and medium-term planning to enable effective learning for individual pupils to take place.
125. The management and leadership of religious education is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and committed and is aware of how the subject can be developed. Long-, medium- and short-term planning, however, is insufficient in detail to assess pupil progress and ensure that there is progression in learning.
126. Resources for religious education are very good in providing first-hand, sensory experiences for all pupils. The role of the subject co-ordinator is as yet underdeveloped in monitoring curriculum planning, teaching and learning outcomes.