

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HEATHFIELD SPECIAL SCHOOL**

Fareham

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116607

Headteacher: Mrs E D Muirhead

Reporting inspector: Mr T Richardson  
16500

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 June 2000

Inspection number: 186563

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oldbury Way Fareham Hampshire
Postcode:	PO14 3BN
Telephone number:	01329 845150
Fax number:	01329 846548
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Parkinson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mr T Richardson	Registered inspector
Mrs S Stock	Lay inspector
Mrs E Barratt	Team inspector
Mr C Lewis	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Associates Ltd  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU  
Tel: 01305 251591

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupils achieve well in their academic, social and personal development as a result of the good teaching they receive. The quality of teaching is enhanced significantly by the very good teamwork between staff and the high quality of the learning support assistants.</li><li>• Helps pupils to develop positive attitudes, good behaviour and good learning habits. There is excellent provision for pupils to learn right from wrong, and very good support is provided for behaviour, particularly through the Rainbow Room.</li><li>• Monitors and promotes the progress of pupils very well, with very good assessment, individual education plans and analysis of assessment data.</li><li>• Has outstanding leadership and management that promotes successfully a very supportive and inclusive community with an ethos of involving everyone in school decision making</li><li>• Makes outstanding provision for parents through a range of relevant support groups</li></ul>	
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>14</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The monitoring of teaching, to provide greater consistency of practice and higher levels of skills</li><li>• The environment of the Early Years Department, and the older classrooms</li></ul>	
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>16</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Heathfield is a special school for boys and girls with moderate learning difficulties aged 2 to 11 years. The school is larger than average size and, at the time of the inspection, there were 141 pupils on roll, with twice as many boys as girls. The school population is predominantly white, with two Chinese pupils having English as an additional language. There are 32 pupils eligible for free school meals, and 137 pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. There are 14 full time equivalent teachers and the pupil to teacher ratio, at 10.1 to one, is higher than in other moderate learning difficulties schools. The school merged with Foxbury special school in September 1998 and a major rebuilding programme has just been completed. As a result, the school now caters for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in addition to moderate learning difficulties, physical disability, sensory impairment and autism. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below the national average due to their special educational needs.

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

The school is very effective and provides good value for money. The merger of two schools into one has been very well managed and the achievements of pupils during this time have improved. The quality of teaching is good and most pupils make good progress. The school has excellent leadership and management and is now in a strong position to sustain improvement.

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

- Pupils achieve well in their academic, social and personal development as a result of the good teaching they receive. The quality of teaching is enhanced significantly by the very good teamwork between staff and the high quality of the learning support assistants.
- Helps pupils to develop positive attitudes, good behaviour and good learning habits. There is excellent provision for pupils to learn right from wrong, and very good support is provided for behaviour, particularly through the Rainbow Room.
- Monitors and promotes the progress of pupils very well, with very good assessment, individual education plans and analysis of assessment data.
- Has outstanding leadership and management that promotes successfully a very supportive and inclusive community with an ethos of involving everyone in school decision making.
- Makes outstanding provision for parents through a range of relevant support groups.

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

- The monitoring of teaching, to provide greater consistency of practice and higher levels of skills.
- The environment of the Early Years Department, and the older classrooms.

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

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

Heathfield school was last inspected in January 1996 and has since merged with Foxbury special school. This school was inspected in November 1996. Direct comparison with the previous inspection reports is not possible as Heathfield is now a new school with significant changes in staff and pupil populations. However, the school has done very well since the last inspection to manage the merger of these schools and the substantial building work. Throughout this time: morale has risen; standards have risen; the quality of assessment has improved significantly; very good analysis and use of performance data now takes place; governors are more actively involved; and the monitoring and evaluation of school plans and policies is now routine. It is a significant achievement to have done this, while creating a new school.

## 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 5	by age 11	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
Reading	B	B	good	B
Writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	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 against the targets set in their IEPs and against the needs identified in their Statements of Special Educational Needs. Some pupils make very good progress, particularly in improving their concentration and behaviour. Analysis of school data shows there is a trend of improving attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last three years and particularly in 1999. More pupils each year are attaining Level 2 in English, mathematics and science. This improving trend is also seen in the attainments of pupils as measured by the performance criteria for pupils working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Pupils gain standards in literacy and numeracy that are better than expected for their degree of special needs. Higher attaining pupils have good standards of handwriting. The emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the Early Years Department and in Key Stage 1 gives pupils a good start that is built on successfully in Key Stage 2. Literacy and numeracy skills are also enhanced by the effective use of computers. Pupils' achievements in social development are very good and higher than expected. Achievements in pupils' personal development are good and enhanced by: the responsibilities they are given; the positive encouragement they receive; and by the emphasis on raising their confidence. Relationships are very positive, pupils are valued and this helps to raise their self-esteem. As a result, pupils are given a firm emotional and social base so they are able to make the most of their learning.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to do their work. They concentrate well on their tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are friendly and think of others so that the school is a welcoming and orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work together well and enjoy each other's company. They handle with maturity the responsibilities they are given.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school

The school council is very well run, pupils take their responsibilities seriously and have an active part in improving the school; for example, through helping to set the school rules and in providing playground equipment. Pupils with behaviour difficulties are helped successfully to learn to manage their emotions and reactions through the support provided by the Rainbow Room and the caring attitude of their classmates.

## 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.*

During the inspection, teaching was judged to be excellent in three per cent of lessons; very good in 12 per cent; good in 53 per cent; and satisfactory in the remaining 32 per cent of observations. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching is enhanced significantly by the contribution of the school's highly skilled learning support assistants. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively throughout the school. The good teaching is characterised by: realistic and high expectations of what pupils can do; detailed lesson plans with a clear focus so that pupils know what they are learning; and well managed lessons with an interesting range of activities that hold pupils' interests. The teamwork of teachers and assistants creates a busy working environment where pupils' needs are well known and all adults ensure that pupils are continually learning. Positive encouragement is given so that pupils enjoy learning and want to learn more. Teachers have very good procedures for assessment and the information gained is used well to plan lessons and set relevant targets for pupils to achieve. This promotes good progress. The satisfactory teaching could be improved by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of planning; enhancing teachers' knowledge in subjects such as music and physical education; and improving the skills of teachers in the use of additional communication strategies.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Pupils benefit from: an extensive range of educational visits that are used effectively to support learning; and the special lessons they have to improve their ability to discuss emotions and feelings.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Good provision is made for cultural development. Very good provision is made for social development. Pupils are encouraged successfully to cooperate, share and think of each other. The provision for moral development is excellent. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and the effective support, in particular that given by the Rainbow Room staff, helps them to consider the impact of their behaviour on others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development and exemplary records are kept of pupils' progress against their individual behaviour plans.

Daily schedules are used well so that pupils with autism know what they are meant to be doing. Individual behaviour plans are of very good quality. The monitoring of behaviour is excellent and the data produced is very effective in promoting better behaviour. The school makes very effective use of the support provided by external agencies and pupils benefit from the efficiency of the school nurse. The school makes outstanding provision to help parents learn how to support their children with their school-work. This is, rightly, highly valued by parents, and of positive benefit to the children.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Outstanding. All members of the school community are involved in decision making. There is a commitment to working together to raise standards that promotes in staff, highly professional attitudes to their work.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Governors are very effective. They know the school very well and work hard to help it to develop.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is rigorous monitoring and evaluation of school development, policies and procedures, but this has yet to be sufficiently extended to monitoring the quality of teaching. Very good use is made of information technology for monitoring and analysing the school's performance data and to monitor pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The principles of best value are applied consistently. School improvement plans are based firmly on educational priorities.

The school encourages successfully governors, parents, staff and pupils to play a part in determining its future and achieves its aims in full. The recent merger has rightly taken priority and caused the school to divert its energies away from routine planned improvement and professional development. However, it is now in a strong position to move forward. The new accommodation is very good and creates a very positive learning atmosphere. This highlights the inferior quality of the older classrooms, in particular the accommodation of the Early Years room which does not provide a sufficiently welcoming and stimulating first impression for parents and children new to the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school. There is a happy and friendly atmosphere and staff are approachable</li> <li>• Staff have high expectations and the good teaching leads to good progress</li> <li>• Emotional difficulties are supported well and the school teaches children to care for one another</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• Children make good personal development and their confidence and concentration improves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers having sufficient skill in additional communication strategies</li> <li>• More consistent information between school and home</li> <li>• The headteacher and school to have a more flexible attitude to parents' suggestions</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse all the positive views expressed by parents. There is a need for teachers to improve their skills in additional communication strategies and the school has appropriate plans for relevant training to be provided. Good use is made of home-school books; and the information between home and school is sufficiently consistent. Inspectors judge that the headteacher and school are open to suggestions and are very approachable and sensitive to the needs of parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

## WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**Pupils achieve well in their academic, social and personal development as a result of the good teaching they receive. The quality of teaching is enhanced significantly by the very good teamwork between staff and the high quality of the learning support assistants.**

1. By the time they leave school, pupils achieve standards in English, mathematics and science that are better than expected for their degree of special educational needs. Each year, more pupils in Year 6 are entered for National Curriculum assessments and there is a steady increase in the numbers of pupils who successfully attain Level 2 in these subjects. The school uses nationally recognised performance criteria (P Levels) to assess the achievements of pupils who are working towards National Curriculum Level 1. The results of these assessments show that the majority of pupils are progressing by one or two P Levels each year. This good progress is confirmed by inspectors' observations of pupils in lessons and examination of the work they have done. For example, one pupil in September 1999 was free-writing key words only, such as, *buy toy shop elephant ride*. Nine months later, this same pupil was writing coherent sentences such as, *on Saturday, I went out with my friend*. In mathematics, another Year 6 pupil has progressed in one year from adding tens and units up to twenty to using the two times table correctly. One higher attaining pupil has improved his handwriting and now uses a very legible joined script. Most pupils in Year 6 also show knowledge of history and geography that is almost at the level expected for their age in mainstream schools. Throughout the school, standards in literacy and numeracy are better than expected. For example, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are reading names, words around the classroom, and following the text of stories; and children in the Early Years Department are taking numbers away from ten.
2. Pupils make good progress against the targets set in their IEPs and show good levels of achievement in communication and personal and social development. One pupil with autism has progressed in four years from having a significant language delay to communicating sufficiently well to consider transferring to mainstream school. A pupil with behaviour difficulties came to the school with a history of constant classroom disruption. Records show that this pupil has made good progress and that incidents of classroom disruption have now decreased significantly. Another pupil has made marked progress in gaining confidence and, as a result, is now motivated to learn more. These examples are typical of the progress most pupils make and the detailed records kept by teachers show that the targets set in IEPs are met routinely and that the majority of pupils make good progress, particularly in their basic skills. The emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the Early Years Department and Key Stage 1 gives pupils a good start. Literacy and numeracy skills are also enhanced by the effective use of computers. For example, pupils work independently on programs that test and mark their application of number. This also motivates them to read the questions with increasing accuracy and to work hard to improve their score. Achievements in social development are very good and higher than expected. Achievements in pupils' personal development are good and enhanced by the responsibilities they are given, the positive encouragement they receive, and by the emphasis on raising their self-esteem and confidence. Relationships are very positive and pupils are valued and this helps to raise their self-esteem. Pupils are given a firm emotional and social base so they are able to make the most of their learning.
3. The standards of achievement, and the progress pupils make are the result of the good teaching throughout the school. Teachers place a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills and take every opportunity to encourage pupils to read, write and be numerate. For example, in an English lesson, the teacher took an opportunity for children to practise counting the sand-castles in the illustration in their book, as well as helping them to read the text. Children in the Early Years Department benefit from the daily routines set by teachers to recognise each other's names, count how many children are present, sequence the days of the week and read symbols to show which lessons they will have today. Teachers develop speaking and listening skills well and avoid giving complicated instructions so that they are more clearly understood by pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and plan to use a good range of activities that keeps pupils interest high so that they concentrate for longer periods. For example, in a physical education lesson, the teacher expected the pupils to be able to pass the ball accurately to their

partner and built the level of difficulty step by step so that they achieved standards comparable to those expected nationally for their age. In a most successful food technology lesson, the teacher had planned the series of lessons very carefully so that pupils had designed the loaves they wanted to make and knew that the practical lesson was their opportunity to produce bread that matched their design. The pupils concentrated for prolonged periods of time and achieved work of a high standard.

4. In all classes, the school employs learning support assistants of high calibre. All the assistants show a dedication to their work and commitment to the children that is far above that usually seen in other schools. Assistants are involved in planning lessons and routinely lead groups of pupils in the activities planned, showing a high level of professional competence and skill. They also help teachers with their assessment of pupils' achievements and recording the progress they make. As a result, all assistants know their children very well indeed and use this knowledge routinely to help pupils meet the targets set in their IEPs. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, a pupil copied writing with much greater accuracy than before. His assistant knew the significance of this and sent the pupil to other adults for their praise. Each adult knew the pupil well enough to give realistic praise for his achievement with the result that he returned to his seat with a confident smile and said, 'I'm going to do some more'. Assistants use their initiative very well indeed and can sense when pupils may be experiencing difficulty. At these times, they intervene skillfully and, as a result, pupils are enabled to keep learning throughout the lesson. Together with their teacher, the learning support assistants work as a coherent team in each class. This team approach is fundamental to the progress pupils make and the achievements they gain as well as enhancing significantly the overall quality of teaching in the school.

**Helps pupils to develop positive attitudes, good behaviour and good learning habits. There is excellent provision for pupils to learn right from wrong, and very good support is provided for behaviour, particularly through the Rainbow Room.**

5. Pupils like their school and there is a happy and friendly atmosphere. In the Early Years Department, the daily routines give children confidence in knowing what they are doing. Teachers and assistants give good praise and encouragement and this helps pupils to feel valued and proud of what they do. This work is built on successfully throughout the school and pupils develop positive attitudes to their work. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils concentrate well and are motivated to do more by the interesting work set. For example, in an art lesson, pupils enjoyed recounting their previous knowledge of fossils and sustained a high level of concentration, through this interest, to make successfully moulds of shell imprints. Teachers also find interesting ways of helping pupils to reflect on what they have learnt. For example, one teacher uses a hand puppet that motivates pupils to tell the puppet their new knowledge and this in turn helps them to remember it better.
6. Throughout the school, pupils behave well. They think of others and try hard to follow the school rules. The school is orderly and the good behaviour extends into the playground, as well as in class. Since the last inspection, the school has included successfully pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Very good provision is made to meet the needs of these pupils. A classroom has been set aside as a base for behaviour support. This is known as the Rainbow Room and is staffed by highly skilled assistants and one of the assistant headteachers. The support provided is very flexible and pupils with behaviour difficulties are helped to control their reactions in class, or in the rainbow room, with staff also operating an 'on call' system should difficulties arise in a lesson. The outcome of this provision is that all pupils benefit from very few interruptions to their learning through their own behaviour, or the behaviour of others. Another benefit of this provision is that a major focus has been given in school to helping all pupils learn how to express and handle their emotions, and consider how best to behave. The school council has helped to compile very clear and beneficial school rules, anti-bullying procedures are known to all pupils and the whole school community has a very clear view of what is right and wrong. This is an outstanding feature of the school. The staff in the Rainbow Room keep meticulous records of pupils' behaviours and analyse them very effectively to monitor progress made and determine reasons for emotional outbursts. They also teach the school's emotional literacy curriculum to all children and this enables them successfully to appreciate each other's feelings. This work is exemplary.

7. The positive attitudes of pupils, and the good behaviour in school, are successful in helping pupils to gain good working habits which, in turn, lead them to higher achievements. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher's clear explanation resulted in pupils settling quickly to their tasks and being very keen to 'get on'. As a result, they increased the accuracy of their weighing, concentrated for much longer than expected for their degree of special needs and learnt to improve their predictions for which items were heavier than others. Pupils then extended their skills into solving problems about how to find out the weight of other objects and wanted to find out more for themselves.

**Monitors and promotes the progress of pupils very well, with very good assessment, individual education plans and analysis of assessment data.**

8. IEPs are of high quality. Teachers and assistants assess the development of their pupils very well and keep accurate and detailed records that show clearly what each pupil has learnt. These records are then used very effectively to set targets for what pupils should learn next. Targets are written clearly, and are designed very effectively to promote progress in logical small steps. Teachers and assistants know from this what each pupil is working on and they make sure that these learning goals are emphasised in lessons throughout the day. As a result, the majority of targets set are met by the children within the time allowed and demonstrate clearly the good progress that pupils make. The targets set have an appropriate emphasis on promoting literacy and numeracy. They also include specific learning goals for improving social and personal development and this leads to pupils making good progress in these areas, as well as in their academic learning. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties also have specific plans for improving their behaviour. These are also of high quality and are very effective because all staff know what to do, should an 'incident' take place.
9. Teachers assess the attainment of pupils using the National Curriculum Levels for English, mathematics and science as used in mainstream schools. However, a significant number of pupils are working towards Level 1 in these subjects. As a result, the school has introduced nationally recommended performance criteria for language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. These are referred to in school as 'P Levels' and are very effective in showing the progress pupils make towards the National Curriculum. Very good use is made of the data provided from the assessment of each pupil. The school keeps detailed records, and these are analysed rigorously to show how much progress pupils make in each class, each year. This information is then used very well to set targets for school improvement and to raise standards. Heathfield is leading many other special schools in this very effective use of assessment data, and the impact is clearly seen in the trend of improving standards.

**Has outstanding leadership and management that promotes successfully a very supportive and inclusive community with an ethos of involving everyone in school decision making.**

10. The school has outstanding leadership and management. The merger of the two schools has been managed very well so that morale is high and standards have continued to improve. The successful leadership style encourages the involvement of all members of the school community in decision making and in sharing improvement. This generates a commitment to working together to raise standards. For example, parents are consulted about their views of the school, pupils are encouraged to say what they would like to improve, and these views are taken into account in school development. One result of this was the involvement of the school council in monitoring health and safety issues in the playground during the building work, and reporting on matters arising, which were then put right. The leadership style also promotes very good relationships with an ethos of every individual being valued. As a result, pupils work hard to give of their best and staff gain confidence that promotes highly professional attitudes to their work.
11. School improvement plans are well considered, clearly focused and firmly based on educational priorities. Governors, are very effective, appropriate provision is made for staff development and learning support assistants are enabled to extend their skills and gain relevant qualifications to a sufficiently high level. The school encourages successfully governors, parents, staff and pupils to play a part in the running of the school and in determining its future. During major rebuilding and

reorganisation, the headteacher and senior staff have kept a firm vision of continuing to meet the aims of the school. This has been very successful and, whilst the school's attention has been diverted, it has kept its direction and continues to achieve its aims in full. There is rigorous monitoring and evaluation of school development, policies and procedures, but this has yet to be sufficiently extended to monitoring the quality of teaching. Very good use is made of information technology for monitoring and analysing performance data and to monitor pupils' progress. There is now an atmosphere of a new school developing which is already in a strong position to move forwards. Also, there is very effective delegation of roles and responsibilities and the school functions smoothly as a result.

**Makes outstanding provision for parents through a range of relevant support groups.**

12. Parents are encouraged to attend a range of support groups, each taking place for different year groups on different days of the week. These sessions are organised and led very well by learning support assistants. The activities followed by parents are based on what their children are doing in class and are very effective in helping parents to apply at home the strategies used by the school. In the session observed by inspectors, eight parents attended, with their children. They helped their children to follow the story of *The Gingerbread Man* and worked with them to model, cut and stick characters from the tale. Parents reported that they value these sessions highly and see a benefit in using the strategies they learn at home with their children. In addition, parents report improved communication and relationships with their children as well as understanding better what they do in school. The extent and quality of this provision is outstanding and also demonstrates the very good partnership the school maintains with its parents.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The monitoring of teaching, to provide greater consistency of practice and higher levels of skills.**

13. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant change to the teaching staff and ten out of the fifteen teachers are relatively new to the school. They have received good induction into the school, but senior managers are not yet monitoring the work of teachers in class sufficiently often. Also, there are no clearly defined criteria that enable teachers to see what exactly is expected of them in their work and for senior managers to refer to consistently in their monitoring. As a result, within the good teaching already provided, there are inconsistencies between classes and good practice is not always sufficiently shared. The merger of schools has meant that the school has had to divert some of its energies away from routine planned improvement and professional development. As a result, not all teachers have been regularly updated on developments in their subjects, and in specific communication strategies such as the *Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)*. The impact of this was seen, for example, in a music lesson where the teacher planned a listening activity that was effective, but insufficiently focused on improving musical skills. Also, PECS was used appropriately in children's snack time, but not used enough for communication at other times in the day.

### **The environment of the Early Years Department, and the older classrooms.**

14. The new accommodation is very good and creates a very positive learning atmosphere. This highlights the inferior quality of the older classrooms, in particular the Early Years room, which does not provide a sufficiently welcoming and stimulating first impression for parents and children new to the school. The school has planned a rolling programme of improvement for the older classrooms and has prioritised the rooms currently used by Years 3 and 4 as most in need of refurbishment. However, inspectors judged that the somewhat 'institutional' atmosphere provided by the hard flooring and muted décor of the Early Year Department ought to be the priority for improvement as this is where children are laying the foundations for their development, and parents are gaining their first views of the school.

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

15. To further improve the quality of education, and build upon its considerable strengths, the school should now:

**Improve the monitoring of teaching, to provide greater consistency of practice and higher levels of skills (paragraph 13) by:**

- agreeing with staff the criteria to be used for evaluating effective teaching;
- senior managers trialling classroom observations to establish consistent evaluations of teachers' work; and
- establishing routine monitoring of teaching to:
  - a) show what teachers do well;
  - b) share good practice between all staff;
  - c) identify what could be improved;
  - d) support teachers in the further development of their skills.

**Improve the environment of the Early Years Department, and the older classrooms (paragraph 14).**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	12	18	11	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	141
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	32

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.82	School data	0.76

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year			Total
	1999			23

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Level W</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>
Numbers of pupils at each NC level	Reading	22	1	0
	Writing	23	0	0
	Mathematics	19	4	0

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year			Total
--	------	--	--	-------



Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999			14
--	------	--	--	----

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Level W	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Numbers of pupils at each NC level	English	6	2	6	0	0
	Mathematics	5	4	5	0	0
	Science	1	5	1	7	0

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	
Any other minority ethnic group	

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	6	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10
Average class size	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	34
Total aggregate hours worked per week	913

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	1,007,155
Total expenditure	1,028,980
Expenditure per pupil	7,457
Balance brought forward from previous year	69,966
Balance carried forward to next year	48,141

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	141
Number of questionnaires returned	81

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	5	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	31	1	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	51	5	4	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	43	14	5	7
The teaching is good.	56	37	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	26	11	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	23	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	35	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	36	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	44	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	26	7	4	17

More than 90 per cent of parents agree that their children like school; there is good teaching and children make good progress; children are expected to work hard; the school is well led and managed; and children are helped to become mature and responsible. There is some disagreement about homework, the information provided and the activities outside of lessons, but insufficient to be statistically representative. Parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection were satisfied with the way they are enabled to work with their children at home.

Additional comments and letters were included with eight replies. Comments made by more than one parent praised the school for the education provided, the progress their children make, the happy and friendly atmosphere and the improvements in their children's confidence and concentration. A very small number of parents are disappointed that teachers are not more skilled in the use of PECS, TEACCH and in meeting highly specialised needs. Two parents feel the school and headteacher are somewhat inflexible to their requests.