

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL

Reedham Drive, Purley

LEA area: London Borough of Croydon

Unique reference number: 101854

Headteacher: Mrs J Melton

Reporting inspector: Mr I McAllister
2593

Dates of inspection: 3–7 July 2000

Inspection number: 187516

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community Special
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Ghagan

Date of previous inspection: 29 January 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr I McAllister	Registered inspector	English	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
Mr M Lyons	Lay inspector		The school's results and pupils' achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Mr J Edge	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information technology	Partnership with parents and carers
Mr I Tatchell	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
Ms C Humphreys	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
Dr M Megee	Team inspector	English Music Physical education Religious education	Pupils' welfare, health and safety

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Nicholas School is a day special school for boys and girls of primary school age who have moderate learning difficulties. There are 107 pupils on the roll of the school, 71 boys and 36 girls, aged between 5 and 11 years, all of whom are the subjects of statements of special educational need. The school meets a wide range of additional special needs, including pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Most of these pupils are taught in specialist classes. There are eight pupils with English as a second language. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is well below national expectations. The school admits pupils from a wide catchment area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Nicholas School is a good school with a number of strengths. Within the context of a special school, the majority of pupils achieve well in most subjects. Achievements in mathematics, literacy and music are good. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and gives strong direction to the work of the school. She is well supported by the senior management team and by the governors, and there is a strong sense of teamwork. All pupils are valued within the school, and there is a strong positive ethos which supports the pupils in their learning. The school has worked positively since the last inspection to make improvements, and is now well placed to continue in its development. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- There has been a significant improvement in the teaching since the last inspection. Teaching is now good overall with much that is very good and some that is excellent.
- Pupils achieve well across the curriculum but particularly in maths and literacy. Achievement in music is very good.
- Learning support assistants make a significant and positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Relationships with adults and between pupils are very good.
- The school creates a safe and happy environment that supports the pupils' learning well.
- The strategic use of resources is very good.
- The school fosters good relationships with parents through effective communication and close links. The PTA is very active.

What could be improved

- The communication of the values, aims and curriculum policy of the school would enhance the work of the school and lead to greater achievement by the pupils.
- The planning for curriculum delivery in all subjects.
- The development of a whole-school approach to the assessment of what pupils achieve, to fully inform medium-term planning and individual lesson plans.
- The quality of teaching and learning through a more effective monitoring of curriculum delivery across both key stages by the curriculum co-ordinators.
- Provision for ICT across the curriculum to help develop learning, progress and achievement in all subjects of the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1996. Since then it has improved teaching and as a result pupils' achievements are good in relation to their abilities, and they make good progress. The provision for pupils with Autistic spectrum disorder has improved, and now provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils with additional special needs are more effectively integrated with the rest of the school. The expectations of pupils have been raised and the work is more challenging. As a result the achievements of the pupils have been raised. The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is sufficient time allocated to each subject. Whole-school planning has improved but remains inconsistent. Medium-and long-term planning are still developing and monitoring of the teaching of the curriculum needs to improve further. Assessment, recording and reporting have improved and are now good in literacy and music and developing in maths. Individual Learning Programmes now have due regard for the recommendations of the Code of Practice. Teachers meet in key stage groups to share knowledge of pupils. This enables teachers to meet the individual needs of pupils more effectively. All the health and safety issues from the previous report have been met. Overall the school has made good progress since the last inspection, and has demonstrated that it has the capacity to improve further.

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	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C		

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

The school sets appropriately challenging targets for all pupils in English, maths and personal and social development. Pupils make good progress towards them in English and maths, and very good progress towards them in personal and social development. In particular pupils achieve very good standards in music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They work hard and are keen to do their best. Pupils have positive attitudes to the learning support assistants.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	In general, behaviour in and out of classrooms is very good. There are strong support systems in place which ensure that pupils get appropriate guidance from staff on the correct way to behave. The pupils respond well to firm guidance.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships with adults and between pupils are good. Older pupils help and take responsibility for younger ones. When given the opportunity to take a range of responsibilities the pupils respond well.
Attendance	The level of attendance is good, when compared to a school of a similar nature. The level of attendance during the last year remains the same as reported previously. The school continues to obtain the co-operation of parents over attendance and rigorously monitors the situation. The authorised absences of pupils are in most cases for medical reasons. Lessons start on time, although the tutorial time at the start of the day is interrupted by the late arrival of some pupils due to the late arrival at the school of their transport.

The school has a strong positive ethos that encourages very good behaviour and good relationships between all members of the school community. This makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11
Lessons seen overall	n/a	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.

The quality of teaching is good in English, maths, science and personal and social education. There is some excellent teaching in music where the teacher has very good subject knowledge, plans thoroughly and has a clear insight into the needs of the pupils. Literacy and numeracy are well taught and all staff support the development of communication skills in the pupils in the majority of lessons in all subjects. The school meets the needs of the pupils very well. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons, good or better in 66 per cent of lessons, and very good or excellent in 33 per cent of lessons. The occasional poor behaviour in classes did not adversely affect the learning of the majority of pupils. It was dealt with effectively using the agreed behaviour management strategies of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with relevant learning opportunities for the pupils. These include a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, most subjects do not have appropriate schemes of work, and assessment is not used sufficiently to inform medium-term planning. All statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision within the school for pupils with English as a second language is good, and the pupils learn well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, good. The school is a strong moral community. All the pupils know right from wrong, and develop social skills very well. Provision for cultural development is good. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good, and is enhanced by high quality assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community and ensures that the very wide range of needs are met. There are good procedures in place to address welfare issues. The monitoring of the teaching of the planned curriculum is not yet sufficiently developed. The health and other visiting professional staff provide very good support to the pupils.

The school fosters strong links with parents and keeps them well informed about how their children are progressing on a day-to-day basis. The school provides well for the wide range of additional special needs of the pupils. The curriculum offered is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils and meets all statutory requirements. The school has good arrangements for child protection.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and, together with the senior management team, directs the work of the school towards improving the way in which it meets the needs of the pupils. The quality of education provided would be further improved by the development of a curriculum policy that reflects the values and aims of the school. Improvement in ICT provision in all the subjects of the curriculum would enhance the quality of learning of the pupils.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body generally carries out its duties effectively and gives strong support to the headteacher in developing the strategic direction of the school. There is a minor omission in that the governors do not yet fully inform parents of comparative national figures for attainment in SATs.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The governors and senior staff of the school are aware of what the school does well and where they need to make further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The senior management team use all staff well to meet the needs of the pupils. In particular, the learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of the pupils. The newly refurbished accommodation creates a pleasant working environment which has a positive effect on the pupils' achievements.

There are sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff in the school. Staff are generally well qualified. There is a general induction programme in place, but newly qualified teachers would benefit from an additional programme, more specific to the school, which enhances their capacity to fulfil roles within the school more effectively. The provision of health and other specialist support is good. The school is well led and managed and applies the principles of best value to all of the services it uses.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dedicated staff take the trouble to understand the children and this helps progress. • Discipline is good but not harsh. Staff are good role models. • Music provision is outstanding. • The school buildings are particularly well looked after. • Parents are welcomed into the school and any concerns are listened to sympathetically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no significant concerns about the education provided by the school. • Parents are concerned about the level of additional professional support offered to the school by outside agencies.

The inspection fully supports all the positive comments made by parents, both within the questionnaire and at the meeting with the registered inspector. The inspection finds that the level of additional professional support offered to the school by outside agencies is generally satisfactory and, when all posts are filled, has a positive effect on the learning of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. It is inappropriate to judge the standards of the pupils for whom the school caters in relation to the National Curriculum. The standards the pupils achieve are below national expectations, but they achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
2. In English, pupils achieve well. In both key stages most pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing as they move through the school.
3. In mathematics, standards on entry into the school at age five are very low. By the end of Key Stage 1 most can count up to ten and they know the days of the week. They can relate numbers to groups of objects and, with the aid of support materials, they can perform simple subtraction up to nine. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can count on using number squares as support. They know odd and even numbers and can perform simple addition accurately. Pupils achieve well in mathematics throughout the school.
4. In science, achievement across the school is good. Standards in relation to national expectations have risen over the past two years. Some pupils are now approaching Level 3 in science in Key Stage 2. The best teaching is based on good subject knowledge which extends the challenge to pupils to work at higher levels.
5. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in personal, social and health education. The school is successful in ensuring that the pupils become increasingly more independent and confident as they move through the school. All staff, including medical and associated professionals, make an important contribution to this aspect of the pupils' education.
6. Pupils' achievements in other subjects are good and in some subjects such as music they are very good.
7. Overall, the pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education programmes. These are monitored and provide appropriate challenges that the majority are able to meet.
8. The academic achievements of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) are in line with the achievements of the rest of the pupils. The attitudes and behaviour of these pupils improve in the course of their time at the school. By the end of Key Stage 2 even quite troubled pupils learn steadily, whilst some pupils are, by then, able to integrate substantially into other classes at the school and beyond. Overall ASD pupils make good progress in terms of their personal development and relationships, again in line with the progress made by the rest of the pupils at the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils are eager to come to school. They have very good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. This has a positive effect on learning. Relationships are good with each other, teachers and other adults that they come into contact with. They are polite and greet visitors and are proud of their school. Whilst behaviour overall is very good

there are occasional episodes of disruptive behaviour, which are dealt with consistently and effectively by the staff.

10. The school has a clear behaviour policy and rules are displayed in all classrooms. Pupils who have particular behaviour problems have individual targets that are regularly reviewed. Pupils know right from wrong and know the rules well. Overall, pupils are polite, pleasant and courteous and care for the feelings of others. Pupils' have a positive attitude to the learning support assistants, and respect and respond well to the guidance they offer.
11. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on individual responsibilities. Year 6 pupils act as 'dinner helpers' at lunchtime, assisting young Key Stage 1 pupils to the dining hall, helping them with their food trays, supplying drinks, clearing their empty trays and assisting them to the playground, particularly if they have a physical disability. All of the pupils take part in school productions, and some participate in Croydon Young Citizens Award Scheme, Croydon Sports Partnership Fun Day and weekly horse riding.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. There is now a greater proportion of teaching that is good or better. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. It is good in 33 per cent of lessons, very good in 25 per cent of lessons and excellent in 8 per cent of lessons.
13. Good learning in lessons reflects the good and very good teaching. These improvements in teaching since the last inspection have had a direct impact on pupils' learning and on the progress they make towards their individual targets. They respond well, listen carefully and are keen to participate.
14. Skilled use of questioning by teachers has resulted in children being able to understand the work and the reasons for it. They enjoy being at school and on the whole make good progress.
15. In English the teaching of the subject has improved and is now good in both key stages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and this helps them to plan lessons where the pupils improve their basic skills in English. The teamwork between teachers and the learning support assistants is impressive and has a very positive effect on the pupils' learning.
16. In mathematics the teaching is good. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and this is enabling pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of number.
17. Teaching in science is good in both key stages. The use of teachers with good subject knowledge raises the expectations of the pupils and they respond well to the challenges set. The teachers are able to re-phrase explanations and provide the right support to enable all pupils to succeed.
18. In music the quality of teaching is very good and often excellent. The teacher is confident and competent in the subject and her enthusiasm communicates itself to the pupils and generates considerable excitement in the lessons. There is detailed planning and careful preparation of lessons, which are extremely well organised, with equipment, materials and tasks flexibly matched to pupil need.

19. In physical education teaching is satisfactory or good in both key stages. Lessons are well planned and the teacher responds well to the needs of individual pupils, and this results in positive results for all the pupils.
20. In general, learning is good because of the effective teaching. Learning is good overall at both key stages. There are no significant differences in learning for girls and boys, nor for pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with English as a second language learn very well. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders learn well in most lessons. In some lessons learning is satisfactory. Unsatisfactory learning is very rare. The satisfactory lessons are when the pace of work is slow, or the progress in understanding is not secure. Sometimes pupils become too distracted, or teachers find the need to contain difficult behaviours, related to specific learning difficulties, hinders academic progress. Overall learning is good enough to enable pupils to make regular, substantial progress in standards of achievement. They make a good effort in lessons and this enables them to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding well. The productivity and pace of their work is usually satisfactory. Teachers make sure pupils find lessons interesting and this helps pupils to concentrate well. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils concentrate very well and some have a capacity for independent learning though, as yet, few of the pupils understand for themselves what they need to do to learn effectively without the considerable guidance and support from teachers.
21. In science, teaching and learning are overall good. Teaching is more effective at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. The best teaching makes sure pupils think hard about the science so that they improve their understanding. The satisfactory teaching improves pupils' knowledge but is less challenging. All teachers effectively promote the pupils' interest and positive attitudes. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to learning. For example teachers use them to support different approaches for different groups. As a result it is usual in science that both high and low attaining pupils learn well.
22. The quality of teaching of information technology is generally at least satisfactory. A key difference amongst teachers is that some promote imaginative and challenging work very expertly, whilst others support learning satisfactorily but at a less productive pace. Teachers do not assess work consistently, and as a result the wide differences in learning are not always detected and the need for improvement is missed. Support staff are always effective and some make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The pupils who are learning especially well enjoy and take pride in the outcomes of their work as well as making good progress in the purposeful use of information technology.
23. The quality of teaching of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) is overall good. It is better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. It ranges from excellent to satisfactory. Overall teachers of the youngest pupils with ASD show them how to learn effectively and this establishes a good basis for academic learning. In Key Stage 2 teachers and support staff have a strong impact on the personal development of the younger pupils. For example, the use of individual tasks - set as pupils work alone - is good and at these moments pupils learn steadily and make good progress in attainment. In the long term a strength of all the teaching of ASD pupils is that their weaknesses in attitudes and in their capacity to learn are largely overcome. By the end of Key Stage 2 most ASD pupils can work reliably in groups and a good proportion gain skills and knowledge effectively. This is because the teaching fosters independence and concentration and supports the pupils well when their learning falters.

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

24. At the time of the previous inspection the curriculum was considered to be unsatisfactory. There was no school curriculum policy statement, and no policies to support any subject except music.
25. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision of curricular opportunities since the previous inspection. St. Nicholas school now offers a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant with some very good features in mathematics and excellent ones in music. The balance of time favours literacy and numeracy. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught including religious education which follows the Croydon Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school still does not have a curriculum policy which meets the aims and values of the school, and there remains a lack of subject policies except in music, mathematics and art. There are no planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the curriculum.
26. Core subjects are covered well in both key stages. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are adapted successfully to suit the needs and abilities of the pupils. Information communication technology (ICT) is developing well, but is not yet fully included within the planning of many subjects. The promotion of social skills and good communication skills are given a high priority and are well supported, especially at Key Stage 1, by the use of signing. The lack of schemes of work has a detrimental effect on medium-term planning. The role of the key stage co-ordinators in monitoring the curriculum and assessment, to better inform medium-term planning, is not in place but is identified in the school development plan. As a result, medium-term planning and individual lesson plans are not closely linked to the individual needs of pupils, to enable the monitoring of pupils' academic and social improvement.
27. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. They are assisted where necessary by adaptation of the curriculum and the valuable contributions of the speech therapist. The learning support assistants make a significant contribution in enabling pupils with additional special needs to participate in all activities.
28. Provision for personal, social and health education is good, with opportunities for sex education through the 'Wonderful Us' programme in Year 6.
29. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good in enriching the learning opportunities for all pupils. There is a wide range of enrichment activities including, for example, the Croydon Young Citizens Award scheme run by the Metropolitan Police, and the visit to Chessington theme park by the whole school.
30. The school has very good links with other schools. Inclusion is arranged for individual pupils, where appropriate, in local primary schools. Pupils in Year 6 join pupils at a local primary school, and this has a big impact on the development of pupils' social skills and self-confidence.
31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development with good provision for spiritual and cultural development. Spiritual development is promoted through acts of daily worship and in religious education lessons. Pupils are taught the values and beliefs of the Christian faith as well as learning about other major world faiths. Through subjects of the curriculum pupils experience moments of awe and wonder, particularly in art, music and science. However, there is limited

opportunity to engage in quiet reflection during assemblies. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and is supported through religious education lessons and opportunities to study the work of famous artists as well as celebrations of religious festivals of their own and other cultures. Pupils also visit museums and music festivals to further enhance their cultural development.

32. The school clearly teaches pupils right from wrong. The application of the behaviour policy and moral teaching in lessons helps pupils develop a clear set of values. The staff provide good role models and encourage pupils to behave well, show respect for others and develop a sense of what is just.
33. Pupils' social development is seen daily in the interactions between pupils, and in opportunities to work together and help each other. Opportunities to take responsibility also support this and increase as pupils move through the school. Extra-curricular activities, which include recorder club and regular minibuss trips to a variety of places, for example music festivals, provide further opportunities for pupils to work and play together. The school also raises money for various charities.
34. At the last inspection, moral and social development was reported as a strength of the school with spiritual and cultural development needing improvement. The school has improved its provision for pupils' spiritual development, and its provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the richness and diversity of other cultures. It has improved still further its moral and social development of pupils. The school now needs to provide more planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
35. The school makes good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils and for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
36. The quality and range of opportunities provided to pupils in the ASD classes is good, that is in line with curricular provision in the rest of the school.
37. The curricular provision set out in the statements is secure for all pupils. The school is effectively vigilant in maintaining pressure on agencies beyond school when any lapses occur.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school provides a high standard of care for its pupils, and all procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are satisfactory. Almost all pupils make good progress towards gaining the crucial skills of literacy and numeracy and are beginning to communicate well. The ethos of the school is very good.
39. Although individual teachers plan effectively what the pupils will learn, this planning is not supported by whole-school planning, and is not informed by an assessment procedure which is consistent across the school. The school records progress in a number of ways, both formal and informal, which do not readily cross-reference with each other, with the school's curriculum planning or with recent national assessment initiatives. The school's draft assessment policy does not advocate a whole-school approach to assessment in all subjects. Greater coherence in the use of assessment to inform planning would further improve the quality of learning of the pupils. Co-ordinators often work well together to provide good learning opportunities for the pupils, and a common assessment system would allow information about individual

pupils to be smoothly exchanged. This would ensure better continuity of learning. Pupils are insufficiently involved in setting targets or assessing their own progress.

40. Each pupil has an individual assessment record, which includes learning objectives in English, mathematics, science (sometimes) and personal development. The objective-setting is not always sufficiently precise.
41. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. The educational welfare officer has effective systems for monitoring attendance. The level of attendance remains good.
42. The school has a behaviour policy, which is understood by the pupils and is well monitored by the staff. It works extremely well to the extent that there was very little evidence of bad or oppressive behaviour noted during the inspection. The staff also share details of behaviour problems with each other. Procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are good.
43. Child protection procedures are good, and the staff are fully aware of them. The headteacher is the named person and the school has good liaison with the support agencies. The school has a fully qualified first aid officer and two other first aiders, with first aid boxes distributed around the school and in the two mini-buses. Various specialists visit the school on a regular basis, such as speech therapists, speech therapy assistant, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, nurse, doctor and dental nurse. The support offered by these professionals has a positive impact on the learning of the pupils. There are good procedures in place for the storage and administering of pupils' medicines.
44. The school has a health and safety policy. A health and safety audit is carried out once a year by the governor's premises committee. The site manager checks the building daily for health and safety defects. All statutory checks are regularly carried out and there are no outstanding health & safety issues.
45. Fire and evacuation drills are regularly carried out and the results recorded. The fire alarm system and equipment is regularly tested.
46. Procedures for the use of the two school mini-buses for school visits are in place and understood by staff. The buses are clean and well maintained and are both fitted with seat belts.
47. The problem of the long journey times for most pupils travelling to the school remains, but during the inspection it did not appear to affect their learning.
48. The statutory requirements outlined in the statements of special educational need are met. Statements are up-to-date and the school takes good care to consider and act on signs that amendments are appropriate. Annual reviews are held within the time specified. The summaries from these meetings are clear and specific. Suitable care is taken to meet the specific needs of pupils with specific disability-related needs such as hearing and vision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The parents are very well satisfied with the school's provision and the achievements of their children. The most positive views are that children like the school, that teaching is good, and that the school is led and managed well. Parents find the school works closely with them and are comfortable about approaching the school. The main concerns are that

the range of activities are not interesting enough, and that children may not be given appropriate work. These concerns are not supported by the evidence from the inspection. Parents have noted, correctly, that not all teachers organise newsletters about classes and this restricts communication opportunities. Several parents are not aware of the school's policy about homework and this makes it harder for them to assist their child effectively.

50. The school's links with parents are effective and overall satisfactory. The weaknesses are gaps in the information with which parents are provided. Some of these gaps are statutory. For example, the reports sent annually to parents describe the child's achievements in good detail and parents are told what level their child attains for mathematics, English and science, as required. However, the school does not tell parents the percentages attained nationally for the various levels. Omissions occur in other documents, such as the Prospectus and the school's Policy for Special Educational Needs. Despite these problems parents are well informed about the achievements of their children and about most aspects of provision. Important details are handled well, such as access to translation services for a few parents.
51. Parents make a valuable contribution to the work of the school. The Parent Teacher Association is very active. A good proportion of parents attend the parents' evenings and annual review meetings. Parents respond regularly to contacts initiated by the school, such as using the response sheet sent with the yearly report about their child. Many parents live far from the school, but even so parents help with the library, swimming and school visits.
52. The systems set up by the school successfully help parents to contribute well to the learning of their children, at school and home. The home-school contact book is read thoroughly by staff every day. Daily messages are sent from the school and the response rate is very good. The points offered to parents by staff are of high quality because they have a strong focus on how well the child is progressing and about factors which impinge on the quality of learning. Messages also cover personal matters, some are very perceptive and sensitive, as well as there being an impressive range of mundane but essential detail. Parents respond well, in part because they are aware that their ideas are valued. For example, co-operative parents benefit from a dialogue, and others find staff insisting that they become involved. Where a teacher chooses to send newsletters these are interesting and informative. Parents new to the school are given suitable opportunities to learn about the school by visits, attended by all, and information packs. Class homework is set at most, weekly and parents are told. Also individual parents are advised about strategies they can use on specific aspects of learning. Some parents borrow resources, such as a specialised keyboard for a visually impaired pupil. Parents have signed up to the home-school agreement which commits both school and parents to regular communication. Parents have been consulted about recent changes, such as the introduction of the new approaches to literacy and numeracy, and the school's new behaviour policy.
53. The annual reviews of the statutory provision in pupils' statements of special educational need are held as required. The outcomes are clear and specific and parents are suitably informed both by the usual variety of reports before the review and by the judgements summarised at the review about the provisions and targets for the coming year. Individual education plans are reviewed termly and this on going planning is discussed at the termly parents' evenings. The quality of the individual education plans is useful but not sufficiently specific. The use made of them by the school to inform and help parents is sound.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The dynamic leadership provided by the headteacher has been very effective in creating a distinctive ethos in the school, where effective teaching enables the individual needs of pupils to be met and all pupils' efforts are celebrated. This ethos has a positive impact on learning and achievement.
55. The quality of teamwork within the senior management team is good, and has helped the rest of the staff to achieve a shared commitment to meeting the needs of the pupils at the school.
56. The management of the school has responded well to the last inspection and a number of significant improvements have been made which have led to the creation of a learning environment where relationships are very good and in which the pupils feel valued and that staff care about them. This makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved.
57. The recent appointment of a deputy head whose responsibilities include development of the curriculum has improved further the quality of the pupils' curricular experiences. The addition of the head of Key Stage 1 to the senior management team has improved the overall co-ordination of the curriculum and helps to ensure continuity across the key stages.
58. The governing body is active in its support of the school, which includes regular visits to monitor the day-to-day work of the school. The chairman is very knowledgeable about the working of the school and this has ensured firm strategic guidance being offered to the school during the recent rebuilding and development of the school following the disruption caused by the discovery of asbestos in the fabric of the old school building. The school has recovered well from this traumatic event and the strong leadership given by the governors and the headteacher have contributed greatly to the success of this process. The school currently makes good use of financial resources and has good procedures to ensure that best value is obtained by school development planning. The previous inspection noted the governing body was not sufficiently involved in strategic planning or monitoring the school's effectiveness. Since then the role of the governing body in determining financial targets and effectively monitoring expenditure has been strengthened. Governors now visit classrooms, monitor the school's provision and quality of education provided, and play a fully strategic role.
59. The school is aware of its strengths and areas for development. It is now in a strong position to develop further the quality of education offered to the pupils and to build on the work of the last two years.
60. The school has sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The teaching staff is well deployed and, in the main, appropriate responsibilities are delegated in line with their interests and expertise. The learning support assistants are very committed and work in harmony with the class teachers in the best interests of the pupils. They make a substantial contribution to the learning experiences of the pupils. The kitchen staff make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school and the lunchtime arrangements for the pupils make a valuable addition to the educational experience within school. The school is clean and well maintained, and this reflects the school's attitude to the pupils and makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development.

61. The number of teachers and support staff is in line with that which is nationally recommended, and the overall deployment of staff is satisfactory. The number of administrative staff is slightly less than the average, although this does not appear to affect the efficiency of this side of the school's operation. Learning support staff are fully involved in each class and make a considerable contribution to the progress which pupils make.
62. The staffing of the classes for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is sufficient. The staff are following good practice even though the school has not defined policy guidelines for their work. This investment and the effective way staff work together are key reasons for the good outcomes for pupils.
63. The school takes due regard for the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs, as it is statutorily required to do. Even so the policy for special educational needs omits much detail and whole sections from the information prescribed by the regulations.
64. The school's management team is aware of the need to provide induction programmes for new staff. Although in some cases the match between teachers' qualifications and their subject specialism appears to be insufficiently close, the teachers involved have broadened their skills and knowledge through attendance at in-service training programmes. There is an appraisal scheme in place, and the school is preparing itself appropriately for the introduction of performance management next term. Staff training is a priority within the school development plan.
65. The accommodation is more than adequate for the needs of the current school population. Displays of pupils' work are used to effectively celebrate achievement and this raises pupils' self-esteem and supports their personal development. The library has adequate stocks to enable the senior classes to undertake research and develop topic work. There is insufficient space in the classroom for the reception class and this limits the provision that can be made for those pupils. The reception class teacher makes good use of the area outside the classroom and this contributes to the quality of experiences offered to the pupils.
66. The school becomes very hot inside when the summer sun is shining, and even with the fans on, the hall is very hot for pupils' taking part in physical education. This detracts from the quality of their educational experience.
67. The grounds of the school are well used, with secure soft play areas for the under-fives and a large tarmac playground. At the lower part of the site, a 'Trail-blazer' activity course has been constructed and is well used by the pupils of the school and visiting link schools.
68. The school has adequate learning resources to deliver the full National Curriculum together with religious education. These are used effectively. There is a very good range of resources for mathematics, English, art, music, physical education and religious education. With an adequate to good range of resources for science, information and communication technology, design and technology and geography. History has good quality resources, but few artefacts.
69. The school uses its resources well, including the grounds, which include play areas and a quiet shady area. A wildlife area has become neglected during the year long period whilst the school was being re-built, and the school has plans to re-new it.

70. The day-to-day running of the school accounts is good and there is secure financial control and effective procedures for informing the headteacher and governors of the current financial situation. A recent local authority audit found procedures to be satisfactory and the school fund accounts have been appropriately audited and found to be satisfactory. The school office works well and good use is made of information technology to handle and improve routine communication and essential office tasks. Clerical and administrative staff have good relationships with pupils, staff and parents providing a welcoming interface between the school and the community. Specific grants made to the school for professional development are used and administered appropriately.
71. This year the school has effectively produced a number of action plans linked to the school development plan and the school budget, in order to improve the quality of education provided. The finance committee have good regard to strategic planning and ensure school development priorities match the budget available. The school has made good improvement in its strategic management of financial resources since the last inspection.
72. The school now gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. In order to raise standards further and improve the education of the pupils, the governors and the senior management of the school should:
- develop a curriculum policy which reflects clearly stated values and aims;
 - develop appropriate whole-school planning, in all areas of the curriculum, in order to support teachers' individual plans to ensure that pupils build successfully on earlier learning;
 - improve the monitoring of the teaching of the planned curriculum in both key stages, and ensure that co-ordinators fulfil their responsibilities to monitor the development of their subject;
 - improve the provision of ICT in all the subjects of the curriculum in order to provide adequate opportunity for all pupils;
 - improve the school's approach to assessment in order to more fully inform medium-term planning and individual lesson plans.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	78

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	25	33	34	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

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	107
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.9	School data	0.9

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

Attainment

Attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 :

It is inappropriate to report on attainment as measured against national standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 because of the nature of the pupils' special educational needs.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	77
Any other minority ethnic group	

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	1
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.5
Average class size	9.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	380.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	797964
Total expenditure	841733
Expenditure per pupil	7867
Balance brought forward from previous year	102695
Balance carried forward to next year	58926

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	107
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	21	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	40	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	36	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	40	19	2	2
The teaching is good.	69	31	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	33	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	26	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	40	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	24	5	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	24	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	33	0	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	17	10	12	17

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

ENGLISH

74. Pupils achieve well in English in both Key Stages 1 and 2 in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
75. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen well to their teachers and carry out simple instructions. They listen to stories, point to words in big books, and join in with repeated phrases. Pupils communicate well with each other while engaging in play activities, through signing, speaking and the use of symbols. Higher achieving pupils can sustain a pleasant conversation about things they know. While most pupils enjoy looking at books, only the most able pupils are reading words. Many more pupils understand symbols and signs, and the least able recognise their family and friends in photographs. In writing, pupils are developing pencil control through colouring activities, and some pupils are copying over patterns and lines. The most able pupils copy under words.
76. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are describing pictures using simple but correct words, and playing language games like picture lotto. Higher attaining pupils define correctly the meaning of words like 'adjective', and hold a sustained conversation with adults they know. Pupils' attainment in reading varies widely. Higher achieving pupils are fluent, enthusiastic and independent readers of books like Roald Dahl's 'The Minipins' and reach a level of attainment close to the national average. These pupils read with expression, accuracy and a good understanding of the text. They find the missing word in a sentence and know about silent letters when spelling. They write their news in diaries and a few pupils word-process their work. Lower achieving pupils lack confidence in reading and rely on pictures and informed guesses to make sense of the text. Most pupils are able to write a few words.
77. Since the last inspection, the improvement has been good. Teaching in the subject has improved, and standards of speaking, listening and reading are now good. Pupils' writing has improved and Programmes of Study have taken on board fully the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. The level of resources continues to improve.
78. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and is occasionally excellent. Teachers manage difficult behaviours well and give good encouragement to the pupils. They accurately interpret the literacy strategy for the pupils and match tasks and activities to their needs and interests. The teamwork between teachers and support assistants is impressive and often of very high quality.
79. The progress of some pupils, especially those with autism, is enhanced by the use of the very structured strategies which offers a well structured environment with clear visual timetables in which pupils feel secure and are able to learn. Most pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, although they are sometimes unable to keep concentrating if the tasks are insufficiently stimulating. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing as they move through the school.
80. Pupils are generally well behaved and are proud of getting the answer right to questions. They move from task to task without fuss and know how to ask for help when it is necessary. Pupils' use of information and communication technology needs

to be further promoted, and the quality of marking is variable from teacher to teacher. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory.

81. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated at present by members of the senior management team pending the appointment of a specialist teacher next term. The curriculum provided is good, and the school has made a good response to the National Literacy Strategy. There is no English policy, or subject development plan, and monitoring by the subject co-ordinator has yet to be put in place. Curriculum planning and assessment are not well linked together. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in setting their own targets in their individual assessment record.
82. Resources for the subject are very good, with books available in all classrooms. There is a well-equipped and well-organised library with a very good range of fiction, non-fiction and reference books. Another specialist room contains a good range of big books, appropriate reading schemes and computers.
83. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. Many pupils' speaking and listening skills support learning across the curriculum. In religious education, for example, pupils are determined to answer questions and make their views known. In science, pupils write descriptions of experiments, and in information technology, older pupils produce newsletters, drafting and re-drafting their own work.

MATHEMATICS

84. Pupils' achievements in mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. In two thirds of the lessons observed, learning is good or very good and is never less than satisfactory. Learning has improved since the last inspection, as has the quality of the curriculum.
85. Standards on entry into the school at age five are very low. By age seven standards are improving as teachers become more confident with the National Numeracy Strategy. In the better lessons where teachers are using the strategy effectively, pupils are beginning to recognise numbers and place them in order to complete a number line. The higher attaining pupils can recognise two-digit numbers and know what number comes next. Most of the class have an awareness of the passing of time. Group work is used effectively as when, for example, a class is divided into two groups according to ability. Pupils at the end of the Key Stage 1 make paper funnel timers. By the end of Key Stage 1 most can count up to 10 and know the days of the week. Higher attaining pupils discover the relationship between the size of the hole in a timer and the time it takes for the sand to pass through, and most pupils can recognise basic shapes such as square and triangle. On entry to Key Stage 1 pupils have little or no knowledge of number names or shapes. By the end of the key stage they can relate numbers to groups of objects such as four blocks or three fishes. With the aid of support materials such as unifix blocks they can perform simple subtraction up to nine.
86. In the numeracy lessons in Key Stage 2 the pupils learn to tell the time and to use money. They relate their learning to the life in school and associate times to playtimes, lunchtime, physical education lessons and English lessons etc. By the end of the key stage pupils can count on using number squares as support. They know odd and even numbers and can perform simple addition accurately including money and simple subtraction of number. The more able pupils are working on converting vulgar fractions to decimals using calculators to check their results. Symmetry is introduced

in Key Stage 2, as are simple angles such as a right angle. Good progress is made by all pupils using their mathematical skills in games and solving problems. A Year 6 group enjoys estimating aspects of 'Johnny Giants' lifestyle, for example he might drink 150 litres of lemonade and be 200 metres tall. Less able pupils and those with additional special needs need a great deal of help with mathematics, and individual support is given using learning support assistants.

87. Since the last inspection pupils' learning has improved and the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is improving their learning opportunities. Baseline assessment has been introduced at Key Stage 1 and numeracy targets have recently been set for each key stage.
88. Teaching in mathematics is good overall, sometimes very good, and never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is at its best lessons are well planned and the needs of all pupils are known and planned for. There is a good balance of class, group and individual work, providing good opportunities for pupils to progress. The main factors that contribute to pupils' good progress is their good attitude to work and their very good behaviour. When working on tasks, for example, pupils with autism working at their work stations remain focused on their work and try to complete it as well as possible. Teachers keep a good pace to the lessons and support staff are well deployed to support the less able pupils.
89. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and this is reflected in the efficient way the National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented. However, there is no policy for mathematics to guide and support development across the school. The co-ordinators have begun to monitor the subject by analysing and tracking pupils' learning through the results of tests. If all of the tests used are standardised then it would positively supplement the teacher assessment used to assess the progress of pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The quality and variety of resources is very good and used appropriately, although little use of information technology was seen in lessons and more use could be made of appropriate software to support the teaching of mathematics.

SCIENCE

90. Standards of achievement are appropriate in the context of a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The progress made in pupils' achievements is overall good. For example, teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 last year measured levels up to Level 2. Current standards are at the same levels, with some pupils approaching Level 3. For example, pupils in Year 6 had enough understanding of how diet affects health to classify foods as always safe to eat, or as foods which you should stop and think about before eating. They used scientific terms, such as protein, correctly though most needed help to do so.
91. Achievements at the end of Key Stage 1 are good though progress is satisfactory. Pupils have a sound range of experiences such as touching, applying force by pulling and pushing, and observing pictures and objects. However, progress to attain Level 1 securely is slow and erratic. For example, not all pupils can name body parts by the end of the key stage. Achievements are equally secure for all required elements of science, broadly life processes, materials, physical processes and scientific investigation. The amount of work undertaken is adequate and what is covered leads effectively to appropriate achievement. The school needs to improve achievement in the cases where a mechanical approach is taken, such as completing worksheets, including references to gravity, without making sure pupils understand the concepts. Better approaches ensure pupils achieve well because

they realistically promote thinking and understanding. An example is a study of forces which included measuring and testing outcomes as well as learning about everyday instances of how forces act.

92. Achievements in science are secure equally well across the range of pupils in the school. For instance, pupils with needs on the autistic spectrum progress, in their science, equally with the majority who have moderate learning difficulties.
93. The achievements are better than those reported in the previous inspection. Curriculum provision is now well balanced. As a result the opportunities for pupils to undertake scientific investigation are significantly better. Some inconsistencies of approach remain, but now provision varies from satisfactory to very good, whereas previously it was just sound.
94. The quality of teaching and learning are predominantly good, and never less than satisfactory. There is no less than satisfactory teaching. Examples of both satisfactory and excellent teaching were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Some teaching is very expert and in these classes pupils are set hard tasks, such as being required to make many detailed observations linked to probing questions as they looked at how plants grow. Less expert teachers sometimes miss opportunities to promote harder science. Teachers regularly link science lessons to the ongoing literacy work of the class. Teachers make sure learning is good for both high to low attaining pupils. This is because teachers are very good at setting up well-chosen groups in the class, and finding different approaches to suit different pupils. Behaviour and motivation are handled well so that the pace of learning is usually productive and pupils concentrate well. A key strength is that the very good skills of support staff are used to the full. Much of the successful outcomes from group work relies on this especially good feature of the learning environment. Most assessment is satisfactory in that it is regular and structured though some use of individual education plans is repetitive and lacks specific links to the needs of individuals. Some assessment is excellent because individual education plans are specific about science, and the assessments of pupils plus evaluations of lesson outcomes are the basis of the next term's planning.
95. Science is satisfactorily led. An assessment system is in place, and there is some monitoring of science, mostly by senior staff. Staff lack a full and detailed scheme of work, and this links directly to the inconsistencies in outcomes for the less expert staff. The current monitoring is unsatisfactory and has not been able to ensure fully effective use of individual education plans, nor has it detected how some satisfactory teaching could be improved in order to do more to improve pupils' understanding of science.

ART

96. In Key Stage 1 pupils use a range of techniques, materials and processes, and achievements are good. Pupils use the characters from the big book to explore colour, texture, shape and form. In one lesson the standards are excellent and pupils can use the work of Van Gogh to develop their skills of colour matching, controlled use of paint and pastel and recognise features and expressions. In another lesson the music of Handel is very successfully used to set the mood for pupils to produce swirling patterns, with increased control, to represent water.
97. Achievements at Key Stage 2 are satisfactory, but do not consistently build on pupils' achievements in the previous key stage, so limiting their progress over time. Pupils can use different materials including clay for three-dimensional work, and print using

vegetable shapes to make patterns. Colour mixing, use of colour and basic skills are not developed steadily to increase competencies. In one lesson, when the activities are matched closely to pupils' individual abilities and they are given the opportunities, the standards achieved are very good. The control of tools and techniques for painting and drawing are much better developed as pupils experiment with colour and line to make their pictures.

98. Since the previous inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in art.
99. The behaviour at both key stages is good, and owes a great deal to the excellent work of the learning support assistants who also make a significant contribution to relationships within the classrooms and to pupils' personal development. The behaviour of all pupils in both key stages is good with some very good features and this has a positive impact on their learning. Relationships are very good and pupils respond positively to adult help. They work well in small groups and often, with degrees of help, more independently. They take turns and share equipment when working practically. Above all they are enthusiastic about the subject, especially at Key Stage 1, due to very good teamwork. They volunteer to do tasks, are eager to take responsibility, and respond well to selective praise for their achievements. At the end of lessons they enjoy clearing away. They accept when they have done something wrong and listen carefully to instructions even when they are eager to get started. When given responsibility they respond well, especially when their opinion is valued and they are given opportunities to make independent decisions.
100. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. Tasks are planned to build on pupils' abilities. Group work is well planned and resourced and pupils' work is valued. Styles arrest and hold pupils' attention. In one very good lesson the teacher whispers to set the mood and pupils whisper back their comments. The learning support assistant, aware of a pupil's visual impairment, prepared all the resources to a large scale. The teacher set challenging activities and the response was very good. One pupil spoke of 'feeling things with his heart' as he drew in time to the music.
101. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to develop their own style of drawing and painting, to use art vocabulary correctly in the context of what they are doing, and to make independent choices. However, opportunities are missed in lessons to correct pupils' drawing skills and to demonstrate colour mixing. The activities do not progressively build to extend the pupils' learning and skills through the lesson. Sometimes the good standards set at the beginning are not maintained by careful monitoring of the pupils' progress and the finished work does not reflect the promised improvement in colouring skills. Learning support assistants are very good at monitoring pupils' progress and encouraging them to improve their work and refine their ideas. Classroom organisation can place pupils who are easily distracted by other pupils doing different work and this adversely affects progress. When the teaching is very good high expectations are made clear to the pupils, activities are matched to ability and as the lesson progresses pupils' work is monitored. If concentration lapses then the teacher moves pupils to different groups to re-engage interest and motivation. Pupils have much more responsibility for the way they work and for the outcome.
102. The subject co-ordinator helps other teachers with ideas when asked. Teachers are responsible for their own planning and it is not monitored by the co-ordinator. There is no medium-term planning, but individual lesson plans are detailed and long-term planning ensures coverage of the Programmes of Study for art. There needs to be

closer links between assessments and planning to provide information in small steps to inform pupils of their progress.

103. Teachers and support staff work very well together sharing ideas and expertise, of which there is a great deal. Portfolios of pupils' work are kept but they are not used either to inform teachers of the progress pupils are making, or the teachers' planning in order to raise standards. There is curriculum time for art meetings but no programme of when they take place. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped in relation to monitoring the art curriculum through and across each key stage.
104. The subject is well resourced but the use of information communication technology to inform and support pupils' learning is underdeveloped. The curriculum is well supported by artists visiting the school and workshops for pupils at the Clock Tower. Works of Klimt, Georgia O'Keefe, Monet and Pollock are successfully used to develop pupils' understanding of other artists, as is the art of other cultures including Africa and Egypt, and religions such as Buddhism.
105. Pupils' quality work displayed around the school and in classrooms is much appreciated, especially by the pupils, and provides positive encouragement to the pupils to produce high quality work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Pupils achieve good results at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils of all abilities make good progress over time in both key stages. Pupils' work is linked to themes, such as transport.
107. At Key Stage 1 they can make boats from second hand materials following a picture plan that sequences the making processes. They are yet to develop the skill of independent design. They work with a good degree of independence with clear ideas of the finished result as they cut and join the materials, folding to strengthen the card and to make the sails. When using food they can name the ingredients and tools they are using and know that food changes when cooked. They know that different tools can do the same task and that an electric whisk works faster. Handy measures are used with a fair degree of accuracy and pupils link the changes they see to what they have learned in science.
108. At Key Stage 2, pupils making their puppets from paper and card work with clear direction through the different processes with greater independence. They use their knowledge of mathematics to measure, mark, cut and shape the different parts with increased accuracy. They can use construction kits to make trains that resemble the pictures they choose. When using food they have a greater understanding of health and safety and use tools for cutting, shredding and grating with increased accuracy. They understand the difference between basic processes and take more responsibility for their own work. Their knowledge of food and its use to the body is increased and they know which foods are better eaten in moderation, and why.
109. Levels of progress have been maintained since the previous inspection.
110. The behaviour of all pupils in both key stages is good with some very good features. Pupils respond positively to adult help. They work well in small groups and often, with degrees of help, more independently. They take turns and share equipment when working practically. Above all they are enthusiastic about the subject. They volunteer to do tasks, are eager to take responsibility and respond well to selective praise for

their achievements. At the end of food lessons they enjoy the social activities and relate well to other pupils and staff. They accept when they have done something wrong and listen carefully to instructions even when these take a long time.

111. Teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is generally good. Some very good teaching is seen in both key stages when constructive questions are used to extend pupils' understanding and time is given for them to reflect before answering. Learning support assistants make a considerable contribution to all aspects of pupils' learning and personal development, especially in the practical room where they set high standards for pupils' social skills. Teachers' planning is detailed for all pupil abilities and linked to a very good range of resources and materials. This has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. In a Key Stage 1 lesson the tasks closely matched the pupil's individual abilities and enabled one pupil to achieve standards near the national expectation of Level 1. However, when the wrong type of material is chosen for a textiles lesson, the pupils have difficulties cutting out the shapes and progress is slow. Teachers encourage choice and decision making and maximise on learning opportunities linked to personal and social development as well as subject links. For example, good observation is encouraged as pupils select tissue paper to match their original colour, and the teacher shows each pupil in turn how to fold card accurately to meet at the corners. Time is well used and instructions are suitably paced according to the range of abilities in the groups. The emphasis on learning through doing makes tasks more meaningful for the pupils and encourages them to use subject based language, and so develop their speaking and listening skills. For example they can explain and understand the difference between creasing and folding, grating and slicing.
112. The design and technology curriculum is well suited to the needs of the pupils in the school. The subject does not have a co-ordinator at present, and this has had a negative effect on the delivery of the subject. Long-term planning follows the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, but there are no schemes of work for medium-term planning. Lesson plans have clear objectives, but they are not sufficiently detailed to match individual pupil's needs and abilities, and provide an inadequate basis for recording individual progress. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are not always sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time limited, and this has an adverse impact on planning. All pupils have equality of access to the subject.
113. Resources for teaching the subject are very good and the accommodation provided by the practical room is ideal.

GEOGRAPHY

114. Improvement in geography since the last inspection has been good. The teachers have higher expectations of the pupils and follow-up activities to the taught part of lessons are varied and demanding. Good use is made of practical teaching aids, and field trips are used to generate interest in the subject.
115. Achievements overall are satisfactory in relation to the ability of the pupils. The pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and they behave well which enhances their learning.
116. The quality of teaching is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Where geography is taught as a discrete subject in Key Stage 2 the teaching is more focused, and the pupils learn more effectively. Where the subject is developed as a

cross-curricular topic it is unsatisfactory, particularly in relation to more able pupils, who are sometimes presented with tasks that are not challenging enough. Insufficient use is made of assessment to inform planning and this limits learning.

117. In Key Stage 1 the pupils use the local community effectively as a resource. They travel by train on field trips, visit the local Police Station and go to an educational farm. These trips greatly enrich the pupils' learning experience and effective follow-up using, for example, video diaries reinforces the geographical knowledge gained during the trips. Pupils make good progress due to the good use of resources by the teachers and appropriate teaching strategies that ensure the inclusion of all pupils in the learning activities.
118. In Key Stage 2, pupils use geographical language correctly to describe weather and climate in different environments around the world. They make direct observations of the local weather using a rain gauge and a thermometer. Pupils are able to relate temperature to the degree of exposure of a site, and they can accurately describe and contrast desert, rainforest and polar weather. Good cross-curricular links are established, as when pupils can use the Celsius temperature scale, and use clapping rhymes to remember numerical sequences for temperatures to describe the seasons. Teachers' constructive comments and sensitive questioning help pupils focus on areas for improvement.
119. Resources are good and well used in the classrooms where they have a positive impact on learning. Field trips are used to good effect, as when a visit to the Crystal Palace led to exciting work on maps, scales and co-ordinates.
120. Learning support assistants are knowledgeable in the subject, and frequently give one-to-one attention to pupils' which has a very positive effect on learning.
121. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed to the school. There is no policy for the subject in place as yet, and the scheme of work is insufficiently developed. The co-ordinator does not yet monitor the development of the subject across the school.

HISTORY

122. During the inspection only two lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. Evidence was gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school, looking at teachers' plans and discussion with teachers and pupils.
123. On the basis of all the evidence available the achievements in relation to pupils' prior attainment was judged to be satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The learning of the pupils is enhanced by their good behaviour in lessons and the positive relationships in class.
124. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are learning a sense of the past, and can use terms such as 'then' and 'now' appropriately. They are developing a sense of chronology and can remember earlier events in appropriate detail. In Key Stage 2 pupils look at old and new toys and have an appreciation of how toys now are different from those in the past.
125. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. The pupils are well behaved and attentive and they are able to maintain concentration well. By careful questioning the teachers are able to draw out from the pupils' accounts of previous events. The pupils are able to use their memories in order to build up a picture of

activities in sequence over time. One boy with autism was able to use ideas of sequencing to turn pages in a book and predict what might be on the next page. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 was very good. There was good planning and good use made of resources to enliven the lesson and enhance the learning of the pupils. The pupils responded well and were eager to answer the teacher's questions. Pupils were able to estimate the relative age of different toys quite accurately.

126. The co-ordinator is only recently in post and has yet to produce an appropriate subject policy and scheme of work, both of which are not available at the present time. The role of the co-ordinator is, as yet, not fully developed in that she does not monitor teaching across the curriculum. Resources are adequate, but there is a need for more artefacts.
127. There has been little change in the level of pupils' achievements in history since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning remains uneven across the school. The role of the co-ordinator remains unsatisfactory and standards are not rigorously monitored.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

128. Pupils' achievements in information technology are inconsistent, being good with some teachers and unsatisfactory with others.
129. Achievement by the end of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. For example, displays show how pupils from the last years of Key Stage 2 used information technology to present charts and graphs of their findings about the new tramway system in their town. Years 5 and 6 each make and illustrate books with several chapters, spell-checked and using well-designed layouts for the text and the pictures. These pupils know and understand how to use information technology to present well-finished products. Some of the pupils in Years 3 and 4 spend too little time using information technology and even then only use simple skills to support learning in other subjects rather than beginning to understand the purposes for which information technology can be used.
130. Achievement by the end of Key Stage 1 is overall satisfactory though weakened by inconsistencies. For example, the approaches taken with the youngest pupils vary from giving adequate time for practising skills to more structured approaches which provide a better range of experiences with clear progress over time. Overall, at both key stages, no groups of pupils achieve better or worse than any other. For example, the significant proportion of pupils with learning difficulties related to autism make satisfactory and sometimes better progress with information technology. The best standards attained are at a level appropriate for the pupils at the school. The school should do more to ensure progress is consistent from class to class. Pupils' capability in using information and communications technology is insufficiently promoted by the approaches taken in other subjects. For example, the work undertaken in the core subjects of mathematics, English and science is useful but not sufficiently applied in all classes.
131. Current achievements are better than those reported in the previous inspection because there are fewer unsatisfactory elements. Improvements are still required so it is appropriate to find that information and communications technology is still a high priority and that a new co-ordinator has been appointed.
132. Teaching is overall satisfactory so that pupils of all ages learn at least satisfactorily. Some teaching is good because the effective planning and expertise of staff ensures pupils work confidently and progress is good. This is especially so for Key Stage 2. At these times high

attaining pupils are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their own work so they can work independently and low attaining pupils are encouraged effectively so that they concentrate well and complete tasks. The quality of the work completed is good enough for all these pupils to feel justifiable pride about the products of their work with information technology. The satisfactory teaching provides a calm and orderly environment, and suitable software for the age and ability of the pupils. However, not enough is done to challenge high attaining pupils, or to manage the work rate of some other pupils, such as those with volatile behaviour or those lacking experience in information technology. The weakest element in teaching overall is the lack of assessment of how much pupils have understood. Too often this undermines the efforts of some teachers to plan the next phase of work. An important strength of teaching is that the considerable skills of the learning support staff are used very well.

133. The new co-ordinator is yet to make a significant impact. The priorities set are clear, sensibly paced and realistic about how much time and finance is needed to improve provision. At present the teachers lack a scheme of work and assessment systems. The work of staff and the curriculum provided are not monitored. These deficiencies are holding back pupils' progress in some classes. The school has already obtained adequate software and almost every teaching room is reasonably equipped with suitable hardware.

MUSIC

134. The music provision in the school is a real strength, led by an energetic and inspiring co-ordinator who greatly enhances the learning experiences of the pupils by her approach to the subject.
135. Pupils achieve very well in the music lessons and make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils play three-note accompaniments to simple tunes like 'Old MacDonald', and use a range of dynamics on pitched and unpitched percussion instruments. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils play instruments on cue, and accompany a story by accurately matching sounds. They play claves to imitate a clock, and perform the actions of musicians in songs like 'I am the music-man'. Pupils follow picture, word and traditional notation.
136. Pupils clearly enjoy musical activities and most of them are highly motivated during lessons. They maintain concentration over a long period and treat the instruments with respect. They follow closely the teacher's instructions, take turns well and are often appreciative of other's performances.
137. Pupils make very good gains in musical knowledge and understanding, because of the very good, often excellent teaching from the specialist teacher. Expectations of the pupils are high and they respond positively. Lessons move at a brisk pace, there are very high expectations of behaviour and performance, and the support assistants often give excellent support. The teacher has a very good specialist knowledge of her subject, and she is a very skilful instrumentalist. Lessons are very well organised and the teacher takes every opportunity to support pupils in their basic skills. She often makes use of big books and number songs, for example. Curriculum planning is well differentiated to match each individual pupil's ability and lessons are regularly evaluated. There is a good regular assessment of each pupil's progress. Pupils are not yet involved in their own assessment.
138. The pupils' achievements in the subject have continued to improve since the last inspection. The subject's contribution to pupils' cultural, spiritual and social

development is very good. Many lessons end with an opportunity for reflection. Displays in the music room emphasise music from other cultures, and the pupils regularly play on instruments from all around the world. These include Latin, Chinese, Indian, Burmese, Spanish, Mexican and African percussion instruments. The co-ordinator's records show that the school receives visits from classical ensembles, jazz groups, multi-ethnic groups and virtuoso percussionists. The co-ordinator organises a choir, percussion group and recorder ensemble during lunchtimes.

139. The school has a very good specialist teaching room, with an excellent array of instruments. The co-ordinator has developed her own subject policy and scheme of work which are good. The subject lacks its own development plan.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. Pupils' achievements in relation to their learning difficulties are never less than satisfactory and mostly good. During the inspection no lessons in Key Stage 1 were observed. Evidence from lesson plans, teacher records and displays around the school indicate that achievement at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.
141. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils dress appropriately for their lessons and know the benefits of warming up before beginning sustained exercise. They follow the clear demonstrations and instructions provided by staff. They know the rules and conventions of rounders, and the higher attaining pupils throw the ball accurately underarm and skilfully strike the ball. They practise using over-arm throws and some throw a sponge javelin the length of the school hall. Pupils with additional special needs use the school's 'trim trail' to develop their agility and ability to balance. Some perform the routines only with a great deal of encouragement from the staff.
142. Since the last inspection, the level of achievements of pupils in physical education continue to improve. An appropriate range of activities is offered to pupils at the school. Most pupils respond satisfactorily to the teaching, and there are many examples where pupils behave considerately and co-operate well with each other and with the staff. In some classes, however, one or two pupils have considerable difficulty maintaining self-control.
143. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, and overall it is good. Teachers demand high expectations in behaviour and dress, and there is very good management of the pupils as they move between the changing areas and the sports hall. Pupils are given good feedback on their progress and how to improve, and the learning support assistants play an excellent part in carrying out individual behaviour plans.
144. The subject is well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The school has a policy and scheme of work which recognises all areas of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, but does not have the detail that would help teachers to plan and deliver activities in ways that ensure that all pupils build on their previous learning as they mature and progress through the school. The co-ordinator has her own assessment system, which is not yet aligned with a whole-school system. Individual lesson plans reflect the progress made by pupils in the previous lesson, but the medium-term planning system does not specify learning outcomes for individual pupils.
145. The resources available to the subject are good. The hall is spacious and well lit, but the inadequate ventilation system does mean that pupils become too warm during the

summer. There is only one very small changing room. Outside there is a playground, a 'trim-trail', a grass bank, and a playing field. The field is not sufficiently used, because of the staffing arrangements that the school makes for physical education. These arrangements also mean that older pupils may have too little time made available to them. The school is considering the introduction of a 'games afternoon', which could help to solve the problem. The subject does not yet have a development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. Although the school teaches religious education at both key stages, it was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons at Key Stage 1, and judgements are made about teaching in Key Stage 1 from the scrutiny of work, displays around the school, lesson plans and talking to pupils. Curriculum planning satisfactorily takes into account the locally agreed syllabus.
147. Achievements by the pupils in religious education are good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about the meaning of weddings, and have learned how they are different in Christian, Greek, Hindu and Moslem cultures. They look at pictures of their own families' wedding celebrations, and talk enthusiastically about their own relatives. Pupils make wedding scenes using cut-out pictures, and discuss wedding cakes and flowers. They smell incense and make wedding garlands appropriate to a Hindu wedding. They discuss long-lasting love. Pupils with additional special needs learn about sharing and act out parts in which they have to remember and say key phrases relating to the roles.
148. Since the last inspection, there has been substantial improvement in the subject, especially in teaching, learning and the quality of the curriculum provided.
149. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers make very good use of resources in their lessons, give good feedback to pupils on how well they are doing, and learning support assistants give excellent support to pupils.
150. Pupils make good progress in lessons and there are very few behaviour problems. Pupils respond well to questions and prompts, and take turns well.
151. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has put in place an appropriate policy and scheme of work. She has been given the opportunity this term to monitor teaching in the subject across the school, and the school plans for this to become a regular practice. There is no development plan for the subject, and medium-term planning needs to be further improved. An assessment scheme is being developed, but is not yet informing planning or teaching.
152. The number and quality of books to support the subject are good. There is a good range of artefacts and costumes. The subject provides good planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development.