

INSPECTION REPORT

SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL

Biggleswade, Bedfordshire

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109739

Education Director: Mrs June Mason

Reporting inspector: Mary Last
17171

Dates of inspection: 27 – 31 March 2000

Inspection number: 190842

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Baulk Biggleswade Bedfordshire
Postcode:	SG18 0PT
Telephone number:	01767 222662
Fax number:	01767 222662
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stuart Galloway
Date of previous inspection:	9 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mary Last	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages	What sort of school is it?
		Music	What should the school do to improve further?
		Under fives	How well are pupils or students taught?
		Special educational needs	
		Additional activities on-site	
Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector	Off-site activities	How well does the school care for its pupils or students?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Kathleen Cannon	Team inspector	English	How high are standards? a) the school's results and achievements
		Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		English as an additional language	
		Integration/inclusion	
Anthony Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Religious education	
		Equal opportunities	
Mary Harrison	Team inspector	Science	How high are standards? b) pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Nicholas Smith	Team inspector	Information technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Geography	
		History	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7-10
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11-13
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13-15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	15-19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19-20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21-22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24-26
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27-39

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sunnyside School is overseen by an Education Director who is responsible for the overall management of this and another special school in the authority. The day-to-day running of the school, including the two inclusion classes in mainstream, is managed by the Education Manager and the Deputy Education Manager. Although not formally linked, the two schools benefit from opportunities to work closely together by sharing staff expertise and joint training days. The governing bodies are separate but regularly meet together for training and to discuss matters of joint interest.

Sunnyside School caters for forty six boys and girls aged between 3 and 19 who have severe learning difficulties, autism and/or challenging behaviour. It has introduced innovative opportunities for pupils to study in classes attached to mainstream schools, at one primary and one middle school; these classes are known as 'inclusion classes' and provide opportunities for pupils to be taught by their specialist teachers on a mainstream campus, to share social facilities with the mainstream school and to integrate into some lessons on an individual basis. The school uses a specialist approach to teaching pupils with autism and also those other pupils who benefit from very structured teaching. There is a specialist class within the school for pupils with autism and some such pupils are also on roll in the primary inclusion class. The school also works in partnership with the local nursery which shares the Sunnyside site and is soon to be relocated into new nursery provision within the school. All the pupils at Sunnyside have statements of special educational need; none are from ethnic minorities or have English as an additional language. Pupils are drawn from a wide catchment area and most travel to school by local authority transport. Ten pupils are entitled to free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Sunnyside School is a good school which is effective in its work and enables pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress. Teaching is good overall and is the direct result of staff committed to raising standards and who work well together to support and manage pupils' learning. The innovative work on inclusion provides pupils with very effective opportunities to work alongside mainstream pupils. The governing body, the school management team and the staff have worked hard since the last inspection to raise standards and improve all aspects of the school's provision and is well placed to continue this improvement. The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is a significant strength of the school and enables pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Teachers have very good strategies for teaching literacy skills and therefore improve pupils' reading and writing.
- The opportunities for pupils to study in inclusion classes are very good and promote their maturity and personal development.
- Relationships within the school and with parents are very good.
- The TEACCH approach is very effectively used to focus pupils' learning.
- Provision for children under 5 is very good.
- The leadership and management of the Education Director, senior management team and governing body provide a clear educational direction for the work of the school.
- The school is committed to raising standards of teaching and learning.

What could be improved

- Provision for practical work in science and design and technology is limited at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Information and communications technology is not effectively used to support pupils' work in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils' achievements are not consistently acknowledged in relation to National Curriculum subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very significant improvements since the last inspection in 1996 and has addressed all the key issues very well. As a priority the governing body and senior managers have made every effort to improve the quality of relationships and communication with parents. They provide regular and good quality newsletters about the school and ensure that parents feel welcome either for formal meetings or informal discussions. Governors have supported the parents' wishes to form a support group and have helped by distributing information through the school; parents are now unanimously supportive of the school and its management. The governors are now much more involved with the life of the school. They further their knowledge by regular visits to the school where they talk to staff and pupils and have begun to observe some lessons. Their involvement in school improvement planning is now good. Teaching staff are now well deployed and their skills used to best effect to support and develop pupils' learning. There have been changes in the accommodation since the last inspection and whilst these have resulted in improvements overall, for example in the provision of a better library and a new food technology room, there is still insufficient provision for specialist teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 for design and technology and science. This deficiency is partly addressed by opportunities for pupils to use specialist facilities in inclusion classes and at college. Design and technology now forms part of the curriculum and, despite the drawbacks of accommodation, is developing well. The school has invested heavily in resources for information and communications technology (ICT) and this too is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, the school has yet to gain optimum benefit from the advantages of ICT as a tool to learning throughout the curriculum. Since the last inspection a new Education Director, an Education Manager and a Deputy Education Manager have been appointed. These senior managers work very effectively as a team, and it is a tribute to the very good relationships they have established with all the staff and parents, that they now all share their insight as to the role and purpose of Sunnyside school.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key very good A good B satisfactory C unsatisfactory D poor E
Speaking and listening	A	B	B	B	
Reading	B	B	B	B	
Writing	B	B	B	B	
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	A	
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	B	

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

All pupils, regardless of abilities and needs, achieve well in the targets set for them in the above areas. Children under 5 achieve very well and the use of the TEACCH approach is very effective in improving the learning of pupils who need a structured approach. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in their personal and social development and, by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4 or Post-16, they have acquired very sensible, mature attitudes which help them maintain good standards in their work experience placements.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and come to school with enthusiasm and interest.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in and around the school. They obey the school rules and try hard to do well. Those with challenging behaviour benefit from consistent and well planned strategies to improve their response and to take responsibility for their own actions.
Personal development and relationships	There are good relationships throughout the school. Pupils work and play well together and benefit from good staff role models. They enjoy discussing the plans for the day ahead and are supportive when praising other pupils' work.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and most absences are due to sickness or other authorised reasons.

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and come to lessons happy and ready to work. They behave well in class and, for the minority who have challenging behaviour, management plans are effective in helping them to understand that they must take responsibility for their own actions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is a strength of the school. It was at least satisfactory in nearly all lessons, good or very good in nearly four out of every ten lessons. In eight lessons out of the total of sixty seven observed, teaching was excellent. Only two lessons were less than satisfactory. Teaching is good in all aspects of English, but particularly in the Literacy Hour where it is clearly helping pupils' progress in their reading and writing. It is also good in science, mathematics and music. It is satisfactory in religious education and design and technology. Teaching in ICT is good in lessons but teachers do not always make best use of technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. It is satisfactory overall with some good features. The arrangements for delivering the National Literacy Strategy are a strength and are helping pupils improve their reading and their understanding and use of language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school is good at ensuring that pupils develop their personal skills very well and develop an understanding of right from wrong. Pupils learn to respect other people's beliefs. The school provides an effective range of opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural matters.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is supportive of the pupils and rigorous in ensuring that they are well cared for and comfortable at school.

The curriculum provides good learning opportunities for all pupils who enjoy the interesting lessons planned and the activities, such as horse riding and swimming. The school provides a safe, secure and supportive environment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The substantial improvement in the leadership and management of the school is a direct result of the hard work, vision and commitment of all the staff and the governing body. The Education Director has successfully shared her vision of the future of the school and has established clear and effective lines of communication with parents which are much appreciated.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The regular involvement of the governors in the life of the school is a significant strength. They each have a designated class and visit frequently. The governing body meets all statutory regulations.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring its work. The governing body has a realistic view of the school, recognises its strengths and weaknesses and has made an effective start to establishing targets for improving its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are satisfactory overall and used well to support pupils' learning. However, the use of ICT is still in the early stages of development and is not used effectively by all pupils as an aid to learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

The leadership, commitment and dedication of the Education Director, staff and governors have resulted in significant improvements in standards and relationships within the school. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum and the school makes satisfactory use of its accommodation which is of satisfactory size to meet the needs of the pupils.. All staff and governors share a commitment to the future of the school. The school spends money wisely and provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents welcome the friendliness and openness they experience when approaching the school • the way in which the school has improved its relationships with parents and works closely with them • the leadership and management of the school • the good quality teaching which helps pupils make progress and develop responsible attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistency in the amount and regularity of homework provided by class teachers • the limited amount of activities available outside of lessons • some parents felt that the amount and quality of information about pupils' work varies between teachers •

The inspection team agreed with the views of the parents particularly with regard to the commitment and very successful work that the school and governing body has undertaken to improve communication and ensure that everyone feels able to voice their opinions or make suggestions. Inspectors agree that there is inconsistency in setting homework between teachers, in the format by which teachers send information home and that some teachers provide much more written details than others but, nevertheless, in the main the amount of information provided is good. Activities outside of school are inevitably limited by transport arrangements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The characteristics of the pupils at the school make it inappropriate to judge their attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. Judgements about pupils' achievements and progress are therefore made in relation to pupils' statements, annual reviews and targets in their individual education plans. The majority of the pupils are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum, and references to higher and lower attaining pupils and those with additional needs are made within the context of the school's population. Within the school there are a number of pupils who have been diagnosed as autistic and are taught as a single group. The whole school curriculum is based on the SCAA Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning (DLOs) and other Early Learning Goals. Several pupils are working within or at Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
2. Pupils' progress is good overall, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection when most progress was described as 'satisfactory'. The children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1 make very good gains, particularly in their literacy and communication skills. At Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, where the pupils are in inclusion classes in mainstream schools, they make good gains in their learning and very good gains in their personal development. Where TEACCH strategies are used, the pupils make very good progress. Pupils over 16 benefit from college links and attend on a one day a week basis, which promotes their personal development as well as improving their overall learning. Pupils identified as having autism benefit from the TEACCH system, and make as good progress as their peers. At Key Stage 4 and at Post-16, the pupils make good gains, working towards national accreditation in the recently introduced Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and Accreditation for Learning for Life (ALL). Older pupils further benefit from work experience and college links.
3. The pupils' individual education plans are well structured, and help to ensure that the majority of pupils achieve well in relation to their specific needs and abilities. Individual learning plans are good, with clear, achievable and subject specific targets, and these are used as working documents in the classroom by teaching and support staff. However, in some instances a very few older and higher achieving pupils are insufficiently challenged.
4. Children under five make very good gains in literacy, developing a growing vocabulary of words and phrases. Very good use is made of support staff towards increasing the children's speech and language skills. The children develop their numeracy skills through action songs and number games.
5. At all key stages, the standards of achievement in English are good. The Literacy Hour is well established, and the high quality of teaching and the very good use of support assistants, together with well-structured lessons, is reflected in the pupils' good and sometimes very good progress in all aspects of literacy. Additional speech needs are supported through regular visits from speech and language therapists. The introduction of the Numeracy Hour is still in its early stages, nevertheless it ensures that the pupils at all key stages make satisfactory gains in developing their mathematical knowledge. The progress of the pupils with autism is good overall and, where TEACCH strategies are used, the pupils' learning in mathematics and English is further consolidated through the use of computer technology, although this practice is not consistent throughout the school. .
6. At all key stages, the pupils' achievements in speaking and listening skills are good overall, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. They are often keen to express themselves and are encouraged to use their communication skills, particularly in group sessions at the end of lessons. All pupils listen attentively to stories, responding well in question and answer sessions or following simple instructions correctly. The pupils at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 are particularly clear in expressing themselves, and during a public exhibition of their photographic artwork, several pupils were happy to explain the project and acted as hosts, welcoming visitors and guiding them through the exhibition. The progress made by the pupils with additional special needs is good, and where they are autistic or verbally limited, they communicate through eye contact or good use of symbol cards. TEACCH schedules are very well used and the pupils organise their personal timetables with confidence.

7. In relation to their individual abilities, the standard of reading is good at all key stages. There has been an improvement since the last inspection through the introduction of the National Literacy Hour, and this is well implemented throughout the school, and is having a positive effect on the pupils' reading skills. Younger children and pupils enjoy listening to stories and looking at the 'big books' used in whole class reading sessions. By the end of Key Stages 2 and 3, the majority of pupils are aware of a range of letter sounds and phonic blends. Higher achieving pupils read simple stories with confidence and fluency, and some demonstrate their comprehension of the text by explaining what has happened so far or by predicting what might happen next. Regular one-to-one reading sessions further improve the pupils' skills, and record their progress through commercial reading schemes. All pupils are encouraged to take an interest in books, borrowing these for home use from the improved school library. Post-16 students are further encouraged to use the college library facilities on a weekly basis.
8. The standards of writing are good at all key stages. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the pupils develop their hand-eye co-ordination skills by producing a controlled line. Higher achieving pupils trace letters, and some copy short sentences into their personal news and activity diaries. The Key Stage 2 pupils at the primary inclusion class occasionally use word-processors and printers independently to type out their news, bringing the printed copy to plenary sessions. Higher achievers at Key Stages 3 and 4, and at Post-16 develop legible letter formations, and some are able to write short unaided accounts of their news.
9. Overall standards in mathematics are satisfactory. The introduction of the Numeracy Hour throughout the school is in the early stages of development but is already having an impact on the use pupils make of their mathematical skills when comparing sizes and numbers in books and stories. The pupils with autism use computers to extend their learning and consolidate their knowledge.
10. Pupils' achievements in science are good for children under 5 and at Key Stages 1 and 2; at Key Stages 3 and 4 they are no better than satisfactory because elements of the curriculum are too narrow and insufficiently linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The absence of a designated science room restricts the pupils' access to experimental and investigative work, which limits the progress of older and higher achieving pupils.
11. Information and communication technology is in the early stages of development, and is not consistently taught as a discrete subject. Nevertheless, the pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress in using computers, watching videos and listening to story-tapes to enhance their learning. Special attachments, such as touch screens and roller-balls, assist those pupils with poor co-ordination skills.
12. The high quality of teaching ensures that the pupils' standards of achievement are good in history and geography, physical education, personal, social and health education and music. They are satisfactory in art, religious education, design and technology, history, geography. However, in design and technology, the lack of on-site facilities restricts the range of learning for older pupils. In the best lessons, the pupils' learning is consolidated through strong cross-curricular links. For example, in the primary inclusion class, the pupils link their religious education, artwork and food technology to their geographical studies of China, which also develops their cultural awareness in making comparisons between their own and the Chinese way of life. Older pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the world of work through careers sessions and work-experience placements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' and students' attitudes values, and personal development are very good and are a strength of the school.
14. Pupils and students enjoy coming to school and they settle to their tasks quickly. They work well and try very hard to concentrate and listen to teachers and members of the support staff, for example, in lower school when working on numeracy. They take care of school property, for example, when handling a keyboard or when they were preparing to sing the Lord's Prayer in a religious education lesson. Students, when attending a mainstream college, work quietly in a very positive atmosphere. They are able to concentrate, are interested in the lesson and are not distracted by other students. Younger pupils, when working in the mainstream situation, are very motivated when learning about Chinese cooking and artwork. They maintain excellent attitudes and behaviour throughout the session. This greatly aids their learning.

15. Pupils' and students' behaviour is very good. In lessons their behaviour is at least good and it is often very good in and around the school. Pupils are polite to each other and adults and will go out of their way, for example, to open doors for visitors, give them directions and make them feel welcome. Pupils, who are included in mainstream classes join in all the activities at break times and behave well. One of the aims of the TEACCH methodology is to enable pupils to manage their own behaviour. This is having a positive effect within the school. The 'Team Teach' strategy used for challenging behaviour is also having a positive effect and all pupils, including those with autism and more complex needs, react positively to the appropriate assistance and direction of adults. Pupils with particularly challenging behaviour have individual behavioural programmes. Because these are followed consistently, these pupils are helped to learn how to behave appropriately. After one incident in the playground, pupils were taken aside by staff and they reflected on the effect that their behaviour had on others. Pupils' and students' behaviour during lunchtime is particularly good. In religious education, assemblies and reflection time, pupils are helped to make progress in respecting other people's beliefs.
16. Relationships are very good. Teachers provide good role models, which help pupils to develop an understanding about how to communicate with other people. Pupils work well together on computers, and in practical situations, when they have to share equipment and materials, for example when making Mother's Day cards. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 praise each other's work when sharing the results of their experiments in science. Pupils who are included in mainstream classes are confident and relate very well to others within the mainstream school.. The calm atmosphere created through TEACCH techniques helps pupils to develop their independence but also their understanding of and relationships with others.
17. Pupils and students show initiative and are willing to take responsibility. In food technology they take turns in tidying up at the ends of the lessons. Some pupils do this independently and others have adult help to complete the tasks. It is policy within the school to encourage independence within lessons as much as possible. For example, pupils have monitoring duties and take registers back to the office. Key Stage 4 and Post-16 students enjoyed the responsibility of helping to set up the photographic exhibition and welcomed guests as they arrived.
18. Pupils' and students' personal development is good. They are gaining in maturity when working in mainstream situations and they enjoy socialising with other pupils. In college situations, Post-16 students like being treated as adults. They show their sense of responsibility and understanding of the safety precautions that they must take when working with glass in science lessons. They choose their own books from the college library each week. They work well independently in the college situation and have formed excellent relationships. Autistic pupils take responsibility for following their timetable by matching signs and symbols. They are learning to relate very well to each other when working in a group, for example, in a dance lesson moving in partnership in pairs and groups.
19. Children under five respond well to school, they are enthusiastic and work very hard. With adult support they are learning appropriate behaviour within the classroom. They are learning to take turns and share equipment. They know that they have to wait quietly with the group until their name is called and then they find their name on the wall and wait beside it, forming an orderly line. These very young children are developing good relationships and in four out of five lessons their behaviour was very good as they followed the teachers' instructions very carefully.
20. Attendance is satisfactory overall. There has been sound improvement in pupil attendance since the last inspection, with a small number of pupils managing to maintain very good and, at times, excellent attendance. However, there are still occasions when daily attendance falls below ninety five per cent. This is almost always due to absence through ill health or hospitalisation. The very small size of the school plays a large part in lowering the absence rates because even one or two absent pupils make a significant difference to the attendance percentages. Teachers are not recording daily absence totals and some required pupil data is not entered in registers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching is good throughout the school and enables all pupils to make good gains in learning. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons but two. It was good or better in eight out of every ten lessons and very good or better in four out of ten. In eight lessons teaching was excellent. This very high quality teaching represents a very significant improvement since the

last inspection when no lessons were judged to be very good or excellent. Teaching is particularly effective, and often excellent, when using the TEACCH approach because, for these pupils, the structured and well-defined routine best suits their learning needs. As a result, they make very good and often excellent gains in learning, particularly in terms of managing their own tasks, understanding what is required of them and settling quickly to their work in an independent and mature fashion. Teaching is also frequently outstanding for children under five where excellent organisation and planning to meet their individual needs ensures that their preparation for more formal education, at the age of five, is of the highest quality.

22. Teachers are all trained very well in how to teach literacy and numeracy and use this knowledge very effectively to deliver the Literacy and Numeracy Hours. This daily focus upon basic skills helps pupils to improve their reading, writing and use of numbers not just within the lessons themselves but also effectively within other subjects where they need to read, write or calculate. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils were concentrating on using the initial sounds to help them identify a word, and they were then able to use this skill to help them read unfamiliar words on display cards. In a lesson with children under five, the teacher made an excellent link to artwork with children who had been modeling with balloons and she concluded the day by telling a story about a blue balloon. Having handled and experienced the feel of real balloons during their art lesson the story became more meaningful and lower attaining pupils, particularly, were able to relate the picture of the balloon to their own work. Staff make good links between the Numeracy Hour and numeracy references in other lessons; for example they encourage pupils to count characters in pictures and stories, or count items in songs.
23. All teachers are secure in their subject knowledge of religious education and the contents of the curriculum as it now stands. This is particularly true of teachers' and support staff's knowledge and understanding of the 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning' (DLOs). Although much teaching in the school provides a secure preparation for National Curriculum attainment targets, teachers are less secure in identifying these in their planning and recording. In the very best planning and recording teachers use the language of the National Curriculum and show the progression from one scheme to another particularly where the steps overlap so that there is no doubt about pupils' progress. In less effective planning and recording, learning outcomes are not clearly expressed, in terms relevant to pupils' chronological ages. In these cases, although teaching and learning may be good, the teachers' records, with descriptions of pupils' achievements, do not consistently give due credit to attainment within the National Curriculum.
24. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and music. It is satisfactory in religious education and design and technology. Very few lessons were seen in art, geography and history; however, the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and examination of planning and record keeping shows good teaching in geography and history and satisfactory teaching in art. The teaching of ICT is good within lessons where it is a major focus of work but its use is not regularly emphasised to support other subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy.
25. Five out of the eight outstanding lessons were in English and mathematics, the two subjects most important in developing pupils' basic skills. In these and other outstanding lessons, each step of the teaching was planned in detail to meet the needs of individual pupils. For example in an outstanding English lesson with Key Stage 2 pupils, the teacher used the TEACCH methodology very effectively to address their individual needs by focusing pupils' thoughts upon the use of letter sounds, first within a group situation before setting them to work independently on their own specific tasks which were directly related to targets in literacy on their individual educational plans (IEPs). Other outstanding lessons were observed in design and technology, music and religious education. In each of these lessons the pace, challenge and range of clearly planned and stimulating activities ensured that pupils were making maximum progress. For example, in the religious education lesson, the teacher included a wide range of activities to ensure understanding and interest in the story of Jesus going into the desert. The lesson included expectations that pupils would recall work leading up to the topic from the previous lesson and the teacher made very good links to other subjects, such as asking pupils to recall the characteristics of a desert. She also used a keyboard to reinforce the pupils' understanding and recall of a musical version of the Lord's Prayer. Throughout the lesson, expectations of work and behaviour were very high and the teacher ensured that the specific vocabulary of the lesson - such words as 'strange', 'concerned' and 'worried' - were used and understood. This very stimulating approach resulted in confident pupils and one, for example, who succeeded in defining one meaning of 'trespass' as 'not going anywhere near someone's land', a significant achievement in language acquisition.

26. In lessons where teaching was less than satisfactory such broad-ranging and relevant learning opportunities were not provided and pupils were not challenged to do their very best. For example, in a mathematics lesson on shapes the pupils were required to create a picture using squares and rectangles, but the teacher missed opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding by varying the task in relation to each pupils' abilities and accepted all pieces of work as 'good', even though the pupils had made little effort in their design and construction. Similarly in a poor design and technology lesson, the teacher provided written worksheets which were too difficult for some pupils to read and instead of maintaining the focus upon evaluating their practical work of making a mobile, the lesson was mostly spent copying words from the whiteboard in order to complete the worksheet. As a result, the pupils were not provided with sufficient opportunities to evaluate their practical work and think about how to improve it in the future.
27. In satisfactory lessons pupils are well managed and make appropriate gains in learning. Nevertheless some opportunities for meeting individual needs are lost, even though targets in IEPs are well addressed. In a very few instances, opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their skills are not explored, such as in a music lesson where two higher attaining pupils can clearly apply a simple crotchet beat on percussion instruments. Although this is a good achievement and serves to accompany the rest of the group effectively, on this occasion the pupils could have been challenged to create their own syncopated accompaniment which would have extended both their skills and enjoyment.
28. Support staff make a significant and highly valued contribution to the quality of teaching in lessons and around the school in less formal situations. A significant part of pupils' personal development is the opportunity afforded by the school for them to take responsibility by undertaking tasks around the school. Teachers manage these well by alternating jobs and matching them well to pupils' abilities. For example, a pupil with a target for directly communicating with other adults will be given the task of taking messages to the school office whilst others, less well developed in language skills, will undertake a more structured and sheltered task of taking a turn as monitor within the classroom. Teachers send work home regularly, such as reading books, so that parents can be involved in supporting their children's study. However, parents express concern over the consistency of setting homework and, it is clear that some teachers set homework more frequently than others with no real justification for the differences.
29. Where pupils exhibit challenging behaviour staff manage it well and very few instances of disruptive or un-cooperative behaviour were seen during the inspection. Such pupils benefit from behaviour management plans which identify clearly for teachers and parents the strategies to be employed in order to improve the pupils' behaviour. Staff are rigorous in using these plans consistently and record in detail the implementation of the strategies and the results of their interventions, so that the pupils might be appropriately managed in the next phase of planning. The school and classroom rules are displayed in classrooms, sometimes using symbols to aid better understanding, and staff ensure that they are reinforced when necessary.
30. Staff make good use of resources ranging from simple items, such as cards with symbols or words, to more sophisticated equipment, such as digital cameras. However, despite a major investment by the school, the use of computers to support and reinforce pupils' learning across the curriculum was limited during inspection week. Although classrooms are appropriately equipped with computers, staff do not maximize opportunities for pupils to use them regularly and effectively to support learning in literacy and numeracy. Teachers make good use of the accommodation; this is particularly so in the use of the TEACCH methodology where classrooms have been converted with the use of screens to provide individual learning bays, thus maximizing pupils opportunities to study independently. Colourful and informative displays in classrooms and social areas are used very well to promote pupils' interest and learning and it is a tribute to staff that these displays enhance the environment so effectively and capture pupils' interest as they pass by.

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

31. The curriculum is broadly balanced and relevant across all key stages, and is satisfactory overall, with some good features, which is an improvement since the last inspection when planning was still in the early stages of development. For children under five the curriculum is

good, with a varied range of learning opportunities. It is good where TEACCH strategies are used, and effective cross-curricular links enhance and consolidate the pupils' learning. However, for some pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 it is limited in its breadth. This is partly due to limited specialist facilities for practical work in science and design and technology, and partly because the curriculum is built upon the SCAA Desirable Learning Outcomes (DLOs), which do not always express the pupils' learning in words that reflect the ages and achievements of older and higher achieving pupils. Nevertheless, the school has worked hard to establish a secure curriculum and meets its stated aims in providing a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for its pupils.

32. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact across the whole curriculum. It is now well established and is having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The very effective way in which it is being used to promote standards in reading and writing is a strength of the school curriculum. The recently introduced National Numeracy Hour is developing well. The school has also identified the need to address curricular issues by standardising subjects across all key stages to match the levels and targets of the new National Curriculum and programmes of study in the autumn term.
33. The time available for lessons is above that recommended, and the balance of subject allocation within that time is satisfactory. The time allocation for literacy and numeracy skills is well planned and effective in developing the pupils' skills in these areas. The time allocation for science at Key Stages 3 and 4, and at Post-16, is slightly below national recommendations, but is partly compensated for by the science content of the accredited award schemes. All pupils are disapplied from National Curriculum Tests and older pupils have been disapplied from modern foreign languages. The school therefore meets its statutory obligations. At Key Stages 3 and 4 and at Post-16, the pupils receive satisfactory guidance in careers, and Post-16 pupils complete work experience placements. The curriculum for these older pupils is further enhanced through their day's attendance at a local college. Sex education and drugs awareness programmes are built into personal, social and health education. The school has adopted the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and this is satisfactory. Information and communication technology is not consistently taught as a discrete subject, being used as a tool to support learning within the classroom. While this is satisfactory overall, the use of modern technology to support learning is not consistently identified in teachers' planning.
34. The school has a secure system for monitoring the curriculum so that the senior management team is satisfied that the curriculum is being covered effectively and that the focus of lessons follows the agreed scheme of work. The long-term schemes of work are good, and, with the exception of ICT, are used well to inform teachers' planning and to ensure work is matched to the pupils' individual education plans. This carefully developed strategy helps pupils make good progress and provides them with a suitable pathway to cover relevant parts of the National Curriculum.
35. The curriculum for the pupils under five is good. The curriculum encompasses the key areas of learning as identified in the DLO's. Time tabling takes into account the needs of full and part-time pupils, and ensures that they all have equal access to a range of suitably adapted activities.
36. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the school has good systems in place for annual reviews. The school meets all statutory requirements regarding pupils' statements and the Code of Practice. It rigorously ensures that individual educational plans are regularly reviewed when necessary to reflect pupils' current needs. The senior management team also ensures that pupils in the inclusion classes are still regarded as full members of Sunnyside School and not disadvantaged in any way by being on another school site.
37. The personal social and health education programme is very good and promoted well throughout the school. It is also well incorporated into lessons such as when changing for physical education, where the pupils are encouraged to dress and undress themselves or tie their own shoe-laces. Sex education and drugs awareness programmes are handled with care and sensitivity, developing from body and self-awareness in younger children to older pupils learning about growing up and personal safety issues. The pupils are given a range of experiences to promote healthy living and personal safety. They are encouraged towards independence through taking responsibility for small tasks throughout the school day. Where TEACCH strategies are used, the pupils are encouraged to check their schedules at regular intervals and take some responsibility for organising their learning. Additionally, older pupils

are encouraged towards greater independence through the recently introduced nationally accredited award schemes, such as the ASDAN and ALL schemes.

38. The school's provision for careers education is satisfactory overall. The pupils receive guidance from careers advisers, and at Post-16, they participate in work placements, keeping diaries of their experiences. There is a small but adequately stocked careers area within the library, and the pupils have the opportunity to use the internet for further advice. College attendance for older pupils provides further opportunities for careers investigation.
39. Curriculum planning is satisfactory overall, with well-considered long and short-term schemes of work to aid teachers' lesson planning. Where there is a thematic approach, there are good cross-curricular links with other subject areas, such as the theme of China. However, because the curriculum is based on DLOs, activities are not always identified as subjects within the National Curriculum. This sometimes results in lesson planning, recording and assessment being expressed in terms which do not acknowledge pupils' achievements in National Curriculum levels.
40. Currently the school has no co-ordinator for physical education. Nevertheless, it makes the best possible provision for physical activities both on and off-site and trained support staff make a positive contribution to the subject. Although the pupils' progress is well monitored through IEPs, there are inconsistencies in matching this to National Curriculum levels.
41. The curriculum is extended by good opportunities for pupils to work in two inclusion classes. These pupils successfully follow the same basic curriculum as the other Sunnyside pupils but with good opportunities to integrate into some carefully selected mainstream lessons. The arrangement is working well and pupils are fully integrated with their mainstream peers at break and lunchtimes.
42. The provision for pupils with autism is good. Staff use TEACCH strategies effectively to develop and extend the pupils' learning and personal development in a separate designated classroom. The pupils enjoy full access to the curriculum, participating in off-site activities such as swimming and horse riding.
43. The school's very good links with the community make a positive contribution to the pupils' overall development through regular visits to and from other schools, shopping and leisure centres. Local residents give good support to the school's invitations to coffee mornings, exhibitions of pupils' work and festive activities. There is a satisfactory range of off-site activities, such as day and occasional residential visits, plus a suitable range of sporting opportunities.
44. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. It is planned as part of their personal and social education, and they are given times for reflection and appreciation of their surroundings or the topic they are working on. For example, they are encouraged to express their wonder, joy or sadness. They are taught to show concern for others and to be aware of the reactions they may cause in others. Music provides the stimulus for some reflection and calming. Pupils are taught to appreciate the natural world and they paint pictures and do work about the seasons, the growing of plants and animals, and their observation of natural wonders, such as the rainbow painting in the school hall. In religious education they are encouraged to think about how others feel or believe and they visit places of worship. They are given the chance to experience some of the symbolism associated with religious festivals, such as Holi, Christingle, and the lights of Hanukkah and Divali.
45. Pupils have contributed to the decision about rules and expectations in their own classrooms, such as the charter where they agree not to fight, to share, and to ask before borrowing. They are taught right from wrong, and the adults who work with them provide good role models for the respect expected to be shown to all. Pupils are expected to share well and to have consideration for others. They are taught that some actions are not acceptable to other people, and that they should treat living things and the environment carefully. Older pupils consider the laws of the land and what will be expected of them when they have left school. There is good overall provision for pupils' moral development, and the school has clear values that inform its everyday life.
46. The school also makes good provision for the social development of its pupils. Their achievements are publicly recognised in the 'bring, sing and celebrate' assemblies. Their self-esteem is enhanced by the frequent praise and encouragement they receive from the adults in

the school. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility by carrying out classroom duties such as organising the chairs, taking registers or helping with the milk. The school provides an abundance of opportunities for pupils to learn to act within a social group as they are taken to visit farms, local shops and cafes. Very often teaching involves and emphasises social development and many pupils have their own work space which they are encouraged to organise themselves from the daily timetable. Within the everyday curriculum pupils have the chance to sing together in music, to share equipment in mathematics or to play alongside one another in free time. Social development is given considerable priority in the school's planning.

47. There is good provision for cultural development and pupils are taken to museums, experience a Caribbean day, and engage in sports and outdoor activities. They experience art, music and drama in the school's curriculum, and in particular, religious education provides opportunities to celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year or Hanukkah in Judaism. They keep the regular Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, and they celebrate harvest festival. They have visited a mosque and heritage sites and there are displays of religious artefacts around the school such as those on Buddhism.

Inclusion, Integration and Wider Opportunities

48. The programme for the education of some pupils from Sunnyside School at local mainstream schools is good. The school works closely with and receives good levels of support from a primary school and middle school. Two inclusion classes have been established within these mainstream schools. Five pupils at secondary level attend a class at the middle school, and thirteen Sunnyside pupils attend the lower school. All the pupils remain on roll at Sunnyside, but attend the other school on a full-time basis, wearing the mainstream uniform and participating in school events, such as end of term concerts.
49. Although still in the early stages of development, some pupils are beginning to integrate into subject classes with their mainstream peers. All pupils in both lower and middle inclusion classes integrate fully at break and lunchtimes, and are supported by a member of staff. Initially support staff from Sunnyside attended integrated lessons with their pupils. However, this is now no longer always necessary, which demonstrates the successful development of the initiative and the good progress of the pupils.
50. The pupils' response to the integration programme is positive and enthusiastic. They enjoy being involved with the school's activities and some friendships are beginning, with the pupils from Sunnyside smiling and chatting with pupils from the mainstream school. These opportunities make a strong contribution towards the pupils' personal development.
51. The head teachers of both mainstream schools are positive in supporting inclusion, and there is a full time commitment from Sunnyside staff towards making the project successful. On occasions, Sunnyside staff support the other schools with advice on special educational needs.
52. The inclusion policy is linked to regular meetings between all interested parties, and there are agreed criteria for the selection of individual pupils from the school. Parents are fully consulted and kept well informed of their child's progress. They say they are pleased with their children's improving maturity and social skills.
53. Records of the pupils' progress are well kept and linked to IEPs, with small, staged, achievable targets, which are regularly reviewed. Older pupils, for whom the middle school is no longer a suitable placement, return to the Key Stage 4 and Post-16 provision at Sunnyside, and continue their development through links with a local college
54. For the youngest pupils in the school, there are very good links with the neighbouring nursery with children working together for one afternoon weekly. This valuable opportunity to mix with similar aged children is well-structured and particularly benefits higher attaining young pupils at Sunnyside by providing good role models of language and social development. This opportunity will be enhanced very soon when the new building for the joint nursery provision is brought into use.
55. For the oldest pupils, the opportunities to work off-site are particularly relevant. Currently there are only a very few pupils nearing the end of their time at the school. The off-site links provide them with very good chances to mix with many more people of their own age, and to develop close friendships. They experience activities and lessons not available at Sunnyside, such as

use of the hydrotherapy pool, or creative dance, where two Sunnyside pupils gave an impeccable and very enjoyable performance of a dance routine to the class, based on the music of the pop group 'Steps'. The good attention paid to developing the social skills and confidence of pupils as they become young adults is particularly effective.

56. Preparation for further education and the world of work is also highly valued. There is a very well established link with a college in Stevenage, who tutor pupils in their final year at Sunnyside, providing a weekly session, working towards a vocational ASDAN accreditation. This gives them very good insight into the life of a busy college and for those who continue their education there, an insight into the requirements of the 'New Horizons' course. Three Sunnyside pupils have been accepted onto the course and are eagerly anticipating becoming full-time college students in September. In college, they work hard, with commitment and enthusiasm, taking great care in the presentation of their work and being justifiably proud of their achievements. They learn about wider college life through visiting the refectory and being able to make independent use of the college library facilities, and visiting places such as the local recycling plant, linked to their current project. They enjoy the increased maturity and level of responsibility at college.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. The school promotes sound standards of care for its pupils and procedures for health and safety and child protection are all satisfactory. The good teamwork of all staff within a supportive and positive environment, ensures that every pupil is encouraged to develop as fully as possible.
58. The staff have worked hard since the last inspection, to improve procedures for assessing pupils' progress, achievements and experiences. Each pupil's records and assessments provide a detailed picture for parents and other carers. The pupils' assessment records show good progress in learning in relation to the targets set on their IEPs. Pupils' records are particularly good for children in the early years and Key Stage 1. They are well prepared and fully completed, giving excellent information about progress towards IEP targets. This helps parents fully to understand the progress their child is making and also aids staff in planning the pupils' next steps of learning. The monitoring of pupils' personal development and behaviour is also good. When pupils occasionally display inappropriate behaviour they are given firm, consistent, verbal reminders from staff and, on occasion, from other pupils.
59. Good records are also kept of pupils' personal progress, their attitudes to school and their habits, including their likes and dislikes. This system ensures that all staff are fully conversant with the pupils' needs and preferences and helps them to plan relevant rewards and responses. Independence and responsibility are encouraged at all times, with some pupils having targets for the extension of such skills when they are mature enough to undertake such work. This culminates in students undertaking responsible tasks during work experience placement or during social activities within the school, such as preparing and serving a buffet.
60. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory overall but staff do not consistently total pupils' absences in the class registers although they are rigorous in identifying reasons for pupil absences. Parents are able to obtain support and advice from the educational welfare officer in case of difficulty.
61. Whilst arrangements for child protection are satisfactory overall not all staff are fully aware of the correct procedures and there is an agreement that staff training requires updating. The school has its own policy developed from local authority guidelines. Sensitive and confidential records are securely and appropriately stored.
62. The pupils benefit from the support of a good number of visiting specialists. A school nurse or assistant is available within the school to cater for the pupils' medical needs and other specialists, such as the music therapist, the educational psychologist, the speech and language therapist and the physiotherapist regularly work with pupils and staff and also attend annual reviews. There is a good system for recording the administration of medicines.
63. The quality of daily care and supervision offered to pupils is good. The school has an 'intimate assistance' policy for staff dealing with pupils' personal hygiene. This sets out clear guidance on the importance of treating pupils with respect and affording them privacy. Staff follow this guidance very well; they are caring and sensitive always considering the pupils' feelings and

yet encouraging them to help themselves whenever possible. For example, at lunchtime, all pupils are expected to help themselves and eat a balanced diet. In the playground staff are alert and vigilant, and do all they can to ensure that pupils enjoy their playtimes by helping them with apparatus or joining in with their games. Many staff are trained in first aid and resuscitation.

64. The staff pay satisfactory attention to health and safety and the school undertakes risk assessments, for example, of fire hazard. A number of minor health and safety issues were brought to the attention of the Education Director.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Since the last inspection, when links with parents were judged to be unsatisfactory, there has been a very significant improvement in the quality of partnership with them. Partnership is now good. Out of almost forty per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire, all agreed that the school is now far more approachable, and ninety four per cent feel that the level of parental involvement is good. This was also borne out in views expressed at the parents' meeting.
66. Few parents actually help in classrooms, but they are made very welcome when they visit the school. Parents who drop and collect their children have good informal opportunities to chat to staff before or after school. Other parents are able to make appointments at mutually suitable times to meet staff or the Education Director, if they need advice. Parents are involved in helping with school visits and participate in many school events as do members of the local community. The photography exhibition, held during inspection week, was the culmination of a project involving senior pupils and their families over several weeks. It was very well attended and appreciated by parents. Pupils acted as good hosts and ambassadors, clearly explaining what had been involved, to the many visitors.
67. The quality of information provided by the school is good. The prospectus and annual report are useful documents. Parents are properly and regularly consulted about, and involved in their children's annual reviews. They are able to voice any concerns and their views are treated with sensitivity and respect. A half yearly summary of progress is received. At the end of the year parents receive a copy of a combined report and annual review. This is of good quality with contributions from outside agencies included. They are very detailed, giving information on areas of development, such as physical or creative, but also detailing subject progress. Very clear targets are set in all areas. This is very good practice enabling parents to have a full picture of their child's progress and areas requiring attention. However, art is not always reported upon, and there is little information about the progress of pupils preparing for further education or training. Newsletters are sent, usually termly, but sometimes half termly. They too are of good quality, detailed and with samples of pupils' writing and drawing included. Some newsletters also have contributions from parents. A centrally placed noticeboard gives parents additional information, such as events and support groups in the local area. The governors and senior management team have supported parents very well in improving their relationships and communication with the school.
68. Parents make a regular contribution to their children's learning. Parents of children on the autistic continuum are actively involved in learning and feeding programmes, often using the same daily 'TEACCH' system to provide maximum continuity and impact on their child's progress. All teachers use home-school diaries as a means of communication, some also send more detailed, supplementary information about activities the pupils have been undertaking. Many pupils take books home but these systems differ between classes and parents commented on the differences they noticed when pupils changed classes. The provision of homework has a relatively low profile, but the school will always provide homework at parents' request. Apart from being able to borrow books from the college they attend, homework for the oldest pupils working towards gaining accreditation is limited and could be further extended.
69. Parents are very happy about the new and improved quality of relationships, partnership and approachability since the appointment of the current Education Director. They do, however have some concerns about homework and the limited extra-curricular activities available which are inevitably restricted by transport arrangements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The overall responsibility of the school lies with the Education Director who is also responsible for another special school within the authority. The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the Education Manager and the Deputy Education Manager. The Education Director spends approximately half of her time at school.
71. The leadership and management of the school are very good and are two of the main reasons for the success and improvement in the school since the last inspection. The Education Director, senior staff and governing body have a very clear understanding of the kind of school Sunnyside should be. The Education Director has very successfully shared her views of the direction in which the school should be heading in its development to all those involved with particular emphasis on keeping parents well-informed. Her views are shared by the governors, the senior management team and supported fully by the school staff. At the time of the last inspection the educational direction of the school was not clear, the improvement in this area is due to the effective communications between the Education Director and the rest of the school. The improvements in teaching, in curriculum development and in communication are some measures of how successfully the school is now achieving its aims. The senior management team encourages staff to give feedback on how the school is led and managed. This enables the sharing of aims, priorities and decisions. The school has a commitment to achievement and planning reflects this in the use of very effective IEPs and the evaluation of teaching and learning particularly in the core subjects. The recent emphases on numeracy and literacy have focused the whole school towards academic achievement and have been most successful. Members of the senior management team spend time in classes observing and supporting pupils and staff. This works well, as a result of the high quality leadership and support given to staff. Morale in Sunnyside is good.
72. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. The governors are fully involved in the management of the school, they are instrumental in school improvement planning and regularly visit to discuss developments or observe classroom work, each being linked to a particular class so the visits are effectively shared. Governors are well-informed, manage the finances very well and have a full understanding of the aims and vision of the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection as the governing body is truly seen as a 'critical friend', a relationship which leads to success in and out of classes. The influence of the governors on the school improvement plan has been a significant feature in assisting the Education Director and staff to move the school forward.
73. The senior management team is developing procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. The arrangements for the core subjects are good, teaching has improved significantly and the teachers' understanding of the curriculum has improved. This is due to the support available from subject co-ordinators and the senior management team. This emphasis has led to improved opportunities to observe teacher performance and pupils' learning. Formal appraisal is currently under review but there are good arrangements for teaching staff to have regular interviews with the Education Director or other members of the senior management team. This team is a model of good practice which has a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning at Sunnyside.
74. The procedures for inducting new members of staff are unsatisfactory. They are not specific and are not delegated to any senior management staff. Although new members of staff feel well supported, procedures are informal and lack a clear structure. For example, new members of staff are not provided with a formal mentor to act as a point of reference and support. The current system results in staff picking up information and some working practices as they go along rather than as a series of planned initiatives and there is a possibility that some staff are not fully conversant with all necessary procedures. Nevertheless, staff have benefited from many training opportunities including TEACCH methodologies, 'Team Teach' for dealing with challenging behaviour and information on the content and delivery of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Visits to other schools form part of professional development and staff are committed to raising standards by increasing and improving their own skills.
75. The governors and senior management team are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Comprehensive audits have been carried out in many subjects and the audit of ICT has resulted in a full analysis of need and the setting up of a pilot scheme to raise standards by improving teaching and learning in the subject. The system for keeping governors well-informed about school improvement and development, and relating this information to the

school's strategic planning, means that the school and governing body share a very good commitment and capacity to succeed.

76. The quality of financial management and planning is good. Governors are closely involved and the finance committee carries out its duties very efficiently. All checks and balances are in place. The day-to-day administration of the school is very efficient, procedures are secure and professional. School improvement plans identify priorities and targets that are relevant to the development of the school. The budget is well-managed and systematic and all expenditure is carefully monitored and the school always seeks the best price and value for the goods and services it purchases. Information technology is effectively used in the administration of the school. Internet access is available for managers and pupils. The use of technology is less well developed in classes, although each class has a computer and digital camera. The access to the internet is in the library and is used to find information for pupils. Switches and communication aids are available and used appropriately for the few pupils who need them.
77. The school makes good use of additional funding and it is very well monitored. The recent funding for literacy and numeracy projects has been extremely well used and has made a major contribution to the improvement in standards in pupils' skills.
78. The school has sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum, including areas of learning for children under five. The teaching staff are deployed effectively to meet the pupils' needs. Appropriate responsibilities are delegated in line with teachers' and assistants' interests and expertise. Support staff are very committed and work well together in teams for planning, recording and assessing in co-operation with the class teachers. This has a positive effect on the pupils' and students' learning and achievement. Staff responsibilities are now much more clearly specified through job descriptions and the reorganisation of the senior management team has resulted in better organisation and use of staff since the last inspection.
79. The school accommodation is satisfactory overall with sufficient space for the number of pupils on roll. It is decorated well and is in good repair and well maintained. Facilities for design and technology and science are unsatisfactory for the full age range of pupils and students. However, this is partially offset because some pupils and students are provided with appropriate facilities in inclusive classes in mainstream schools and at college. There is no specialist art room. The outside recreation area is limited but the imminent building of the new nursery will result in improved external facilities. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. These include the provision of a sensory area, a hoist for the jacuzzi, a new senior common room, a new library, a good specialist music room, improvements to bathroom areas and a new secure area outside the TEACCH room. There is an appropriate play area for the children under five.
80. Learning resources are satisfactory. Resources for most of the subjects are adequate, efficiently deployed and stored well. Allocation of resources still depends on bids being made to senior management, as in the previous inspection, but allocation is now related to the school improvement plan and all bids are prioritised. Information and communication technology resources have improved since the last inspection but remain a focus of school improvement. In the library there is now a personal computer which is linked to the Internet, and each class now has a digital camera. There has been a good start made to restocking the new library and books and computer software are suitable for the age and range of pupils and students. Access to the library, not appropriate in the previous inspection, is now good. Resources for the older pupils and students in design and technology and science are inadequate but are partly compensated for by their access to facilities in mainstream schools. The school now has a hoist for the Jacuzzi. There is a lack of artefacts in history. Resources in physical education are good, also because of the extra provision offered in inclusive situations in mainstream. Resources for mathematics, music and religious education are good. The school has a commitment to improving resources in line with its improvement plan.
81. Given the good and often very good teaching, the good progress made by pupils and students, the very good leadership and the substantial improvements since the last inspection, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. In order further to improve standards the governors and school should:

- Provide sufficient facilities for pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 to undertake practical work in science and design technology. (paragraphs 10, 31, 80, 119, 123, 136, 139)
- Ensure that ICT is planned for and used consistently to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, but particularly in literacy and numeracy. (paragraphs 11, 30, 33, 136, 158)
- Use the terminology of the National Curriculum to identify and acknowledge pupils' achievements and progress. (paragraphs 23, 31, 32, 90, 123)

The governors may also wish to take into consideration the following minor weakness identified in the report:

- Introduce formal procedures for the induction of all staff when they join the school. (paragraph 74)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

67*

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

45

* 54 graded for teaching; others led by mainstream teachers or other non inspected staff.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

* based on 54 graded observations

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
15	22	42	17	2	2	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	46
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	10

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	46
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.0
Average class size	8.6

Education support staff: YR – Y13

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	391

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	363,808
Total expenditure	377,632
Expenditure per pupil	10,207
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,442
Balance carried forward to next year	42,618

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	46
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	53	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	53	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	41	0	0	18
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	6	18	12	12	53
The teaching is good.	53	35	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	35	12	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	35	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	47	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65	29	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	35	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	12	12	18	23

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

83. Children make very good gains in learning in all areas of the Early Years curriculum. They work well in groups and develop their confidence through working with older children within the school, and with other children under five from the neighbouring nursery. Although they work in a very large class, the organisation of children and staff enables all children's individual needs to be met very effectively. The provision for the younger children in the school is a strength.

Language and Literacy

84. Children's progress in language and literacy is very good. They are gaining a good understanding of the use and enjoyment of books. Together with older children, they listen attentively to a story and point things out in pictures. They match items in a story to real things in the classroom, such as a toy or a cup. The development of language is a priority and is given due emphasis in all activities. Children respond well to this work, some understand signs and respond with help, others express their understanding by increased movement or smiles. During a plenary session they name things they like doing, for example, one shows how to choose shampoo to wash the doll's hair.

Mathematical development

85. Most children are at the very early stages of mathematical understanding but are making good progress. They show a genuine interest in joining in with counting activities and understand that, in a counting song, when they put five toys in the bed they then count down as they are taken out again. Higher attaining children are beginning to use the computer to reinforce their learning and enjoy the colourful display and sound effects connected with counting and matching. All children are developing an understanding of the passage of time and anticipate some routines of the school day, especially drinks, dinner and 'home time'.

Knowledge and Understanding of the world

86. Children all make very good progress, they understand the layout of the school and the general direction of places, such as the splash pool. All children enjoy experimenting with sand, water and paint; they develop their understanding of the feel and texture of materials in this way, one pupil showing enjoyment when plunging his hands into a bowl of pasta and experiencing its slippery feel. In the playground, under supervision, children use large and small apparatus and, with reinforcement from staff, develop their concepts of 'up' and 'down'. This links very well to previous work on the computer when children were working on 'on', 'in', 'under' and 'over'. Staff are rigorous in ensuring such conceptual links are established and understood.

Physical development

87. Several children have physical difficulties which limit their movement in and around the classroom. The staff make very good use of specialist equipment, such as standing frames to ensure that these children participate fully in classroom activities. In the splash pool, children move freely in the water and they also enjoy a variety of indoor and outdoor games, often acting out songs and stories in groups.

Creative development

88. Children make very good progress in all aspects of creative development and the teacher rightly places a strong emphasis on this area of the curriculum. Children are particularly motivated by music and try very hard to join in with songs using signs where necessary. They watch and listen well and understand when it is their turn to wear the hat or to play an instrument. All children enjoy cutting, sticking and painting. Most make a good attempt at using scissors and paste and the teacher makes very good links from creative work to scientific exploration through the use of many materials, such as different coloured foils and papier mache around balloons.

Social and Emotional Development

89. Children make excellent progress in this area of the curriculum. They benefit from working with older children for some periods of the day and these older role models aid their understanding of turn taking, speaking and listening, both to the teacher and each other. The children enjoy choosing their preferred activities but understand that sometimes they have to do other things. They frequently try to help themselves or the teacher by getting out or putting away equipment or, with the help of an adult, delivering simple messages. Children understand the rules of the

classroom; for example, they know they have to line up quietly for break or when leaving the room for any reason. They frequently work in small ability groups and within this situation, begin to understand the needs of others, for example when another pupil needs extra attention or help. Relationships between children and adults are excellent. A team of highly skilled staff provide outstanding role models and, because they have very high expectations of the children, even the very youngest tries extremely hard to comply with the routines of the classroom. Children understand the difference between noisy and reflective, quiet activities and, at the end of the day, are stilled by the very effective use of a fibre optic lamp to focus their attention. They watch with wonder as the colours change and a mood of quiet pervades the room. They then sit quietly as the teacher finishes the day in a calming way in preparation for them to go home.

90. Teaching for children under five is at least good and in most cases outstanding. The teacher and support staff work as a well formed and seamless team. The organization of activities, planning, recording and assessment is rigorous and it is only due to the undoubted skills and commitment of all staff that the children in this large and mixed ability group are able to make such good progress. All children's files and records are fully completed and detailed and show regular emphasis on and success with children's individual targets. Whilst the curriculum is currently identified under the SCAA Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning, the teacher has a firm working knowledge of the National Curriculum and consistently identifies children's progress towards and within it for older and higher attaining children in this class. The staff have an excellent knowledge of the children in their care and are extremely skilled in delivering the curriculum in an individualized way which ensures children are motivated, interested and challenged. This provision is a strength of the school.

ENGLISH

91. The standard of English has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. It is good and sometimes very good for pupils at all key stages and at Post-16. The introduction and good management of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on the pupils' learning and they make good, and sometimes very good, progress in relation to their individual ability levels. The high quality of teaching and the very good use of support staff, together with well-structured lessons, are reflected in the pupils' progress and their attitudes towards work. Pupils with additional speech and language difficulties are assisted through regular visits from speech and language therapists.
92. The pupils' gains in their speaking and listening skills are good, and have improved since the previous inspection. They are keen to express themselves, and this is particularly marked in group teaching sessions. The teacher's good use of questions to probe pupils' understanding at Key Stage 1 draws out their observations and thoughts on stories, such as *The Hat Seller*, and the pupils consolidate their skills through the dramatic enactment of the storyline, which also enhances their personal development in sharing and working together. At Key Stages 2 and 3, and where the pupils are part of the mainstream based group, they listen attentively to stories, responding well to question and answer sessions to predict what might happen next in the story or discuss the different characters. At Key Stage 4 and at Post-16, the pupils are particularly clear in expressing themselves. For example, during a public exhibition of their photographic artwork, several pupils were happy to explain the project and acted as hosts, welcoming visitors and guiding them through the exhibition. This valuable opportunity supported their personal and social development and demonstrated their ability to speak to visitors in a mature and sensible manner.
93. Teaching is good overall. It was very good in almost half of the lessons observed and in two lessons it was outstanding. In the remainder it was satisfactory. These high standards result in pupils making good, and often very good, gains in learning in relation to targets on their IEPs.
94. The effective use of TEACCH strategies for pupils with autism ensures a consistent level of progress, which is good overall and often very good. It enables these pupils to make similar progress to other pupils in the school. Although some are unable to speak they make good use of symbol cards and eye contact to communicate and demonstrate their listening skills by following simple instructions correctly.
95. The standard of reading and writing is good at all key stages. The teachers' well-planned and structured lessons strongly support shared and individual reading, and all pupils receive regular one-to-one reading sessions. Younger children and pupils enjoy listening to stories and looking

at the 'big books' used in whole class reading sessions. They begin to sort and identify different letters using letter blocks. By the end of Key Stages 2 and 3, the majority of pupils are aware of a range of letter sounds and phonic blends. They use letter boards to form simple sentences, copying these into their books. Higher achieving pupils and the pupils at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 read simple stories from a commercial reading scheme with confidence and fluency, and some demonstrate their comprehension of the text by explaining what has happened so far or by predicting what might happen next. The teachers' good classroom and pupil management skills, and the efficient deployment of support staff ensure that opportunities for reading are used effectively in all subject areas; for example, the pupils are encouraged to read out instruction labels on food packets in food technology. The pupils with autism improve their reading skills by using a computer, where they read and follow relevant instructions.

96. All pupils are encouraged to take an interest in books, borrowing these from the improved school library for home use. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection, as is the relocation and development of the library, which now houses a developing collection of age and ability appropriate books together with a small reference library. Post-16 students are encouraged to use the college library facilities on a weekly basis.
97. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. These range from tracing or writing over single letters, to writing extended pieces of text in a story. Many pupils use the computers well to draft and redraft their work which results in very good presentation of writing in classes and around the school. Pupils also use symbols to aid their understanding and the good use of a symbol writing program also enhances the work on show; for example there is a very detailed account of a design and technology project in the school entrance supported by text with symbols.
98. Teaching and learning are good. Because teachers include a wide range of activities within their lessons, pupils are well motivated and their behaviour is good. All pupils enjoy English lessons and listen with enthusiasm to stories and poetry. Teachers are skilled in managing the learning and behaviour in the classroom. Pupils are clear about what is required of them and understand the need to work quietly and not to disturb others. Older pupils at Key Stage 4 and beyond show a mature attitude to work and are frequently able to undertake tasks independently.
99. Teachers are skilled in their understanding and teaching of English. Their work on the Literacy Strategy is particularly effective. For example, in an outstanding lesson, the teacher used the basic outline of the strategy to teach the whole group together at the beginning of the lesson where they each used cue cards to identify and sound out initial letter sounds. This was followed by individual work which was linked to this activity but individually planned according to targets on pupils' IEPs. The teacher used a range of resources, including pictures, cards, display within the room and information technology to motivate the pupils and to keep them on task. By the end of the lesson they had each completed a large number of linked tasks, such as letter identification, reading key words to an adult and writing the specific letters which were their focus.
100. The leadership of English throughout the school is strong. The main priority since the last inspection has been to improve the school's provision for the subject and to firmly establish the structures and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This has been achieved very effectively and helps pupils make good progress. An overall English policy is currently being developed to extend the breadth of the subject and to link more closely to the National Curriculum for higher attaining pupils. In some lessons, English is further consolidated through the use of computer technology, but this is underdeveloped at present. Resources are adequate to support the subject and staffing levels are satisfactory. All staff have received in-service training in delivering literacy across the curriculum, and this is reflected in the good provision of English, which meets statutory requirements.
101. The school actively promotes the use of literacy within all other areas of the curriculum. Teachers are rigorous in ensuring that opportunities for reinforcing such skills are used well so that pupils can understand how to use the skills they have learnt in other settings. There were many examples during the inspection of pupils being encouraged to use their reading skills for worksheets, displays, books or instructions.

MATHEMATICS

102. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, beginning in September 1999, and has generally maintained the standards in mathematics reported at the last inspection. Pupils' achievements are good in lessons and in achieving targets on their IEPs.
103. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils sort shapes and colours, and some count up to 100. Higher attaining pupils count in fives up to 50, while others do this forwards and backwards. Many are becoming familiar with the purpose of basic addition and subtraction in tens and units. In one class, the work was made more interesting because the teacher was using chocolate biscuits as counters for addition and subtraction, with the promise of eating them later.
104. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils talk about and match 2D shapes, naming them correctly and understanding some of the characteristics, such as the number of sides. Pupils understand terms such as 'fewer', 'greater', 'more', and adjectives such as 'little', 'short', 'light', and 'heavy'. The more able pupils recognise the value of coins and can put them in order. Some are very confident over doubling numbers and do simple problems involving a number "more than" the starting one. The more able pupils double larger numbers and subtract in their heads. They handle money and give change for "shopping", many tell the time in half hours.
105. By Key Stage 3, some pupils know time, days, months, and seasons. They have increased their mathematical ability to include descriptions of solid shapes and flat shapes. They measure volume and capacity, often using this in practical applications, such as measuring flour or sugar in food technology.
106. By Key Stage 4 and Post-16 pupils have made good gains in learning and put their mathematical skills to good use in food technology, science and other projects such as garden design. For this, they measured the ground using a tape and a trundle wheel, having worked out on paper what was needed.
107. Teaching is good overall. It was good or very good in over half of lessons observed. The remaining lessons were satisfactory with the exception of one unsatisfactory lesson at Key Stage 3. Teachers generally have a good grasp of the National Numeracy Strategy, and are implementing it well. Their good planning includes a good range of appropriate methods which are suited to the needs of the pupils. These include mental mathematics, working with colourful and interesting apparatus, using the computer and helping pupils to record their work neatly in workbooks. Teachers are particularly adept at adjusting their questions or setting work to match the needs and abilities of the individuals. The challenge and pace of the lessons are nearly always good, and teachers impart their enthusiasm to pupils so that they learn well. However, in some lessons there is insufficient challenge, and pupils' work is not properly focused on the topic so that they can learn more about it from the tasks set. For example, in the unsatisfactory lesson, the task set by the teacher did not challenge or extend the pupils' learning; they were required to compose a picture using squares and rectangles but the teacher missed the opportunity to adjust the task so that higher attaining pupils were stretched in their work. Upon finishing she accepted all the pictures as 'good' without testing pupils' understanding of the concepts they had been studying.
108. Teachers make good use of resources, often making their own resources such as creating mathematical shapes from carpet tiles. Resources have been improved since the last inspection, and are now good, matching the needs of the Numeracy Hour well. Teachers and support staff work closely together, often interchanging their roles, and ensuring that all pupils receive appropriate help.
109. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They pay good attention and this helps them make good gains in learning. Because of their learning difficulties some pupils have problems in retaining and recalling what they have learnt. However, with the patience shown by teachers, pupils are helped, by small steps of learning, to practise and reinforce their learning.
110. Pupils try very hard and persevere well. They work well on their own, as far as they are able, and understand that they can ask for help whenever they need it and teachers manage their classes well. Pupils are usually keen to learn and apply themselves well to a class discussion or to individual work.

111. Assessment is unsatisfactory, as it is not yet consistent across all levels of work, but this has been identified by the co-ordinator as a priority for development. The use of information technology in mathematics is insufficiently planned or carried out, and this also is part of the development plan.
112. The subject is led well and continues to be effective, as reported at the last inspection. The co-ordinator has received training for the Numeracy Hour and has successfully passed this on to the rest of the teachers. There is, generally, a strong commitment to this strategy, and the staff team, under the guidance of the co-ordinator, is making it work well. Monitoring of planning and lessons has taken place and there is opportunity at staff meetings, or more informally, to exchange ideas and views about the new commercial scheme which is the basis of the school's planning for mathematics. The co-ordinator offers help and guidance to teachers. The co-ordinator is currently revising schemes of work through amalgamating current documentation with the new National Curriculum orders and the use of a newly-acquired commercial scheme.

SCIENCE

113. Provision for science is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement in science is good overall and they make good gains in lessons. In four lessons out of six, progress was good and in the remainder it was very good and excellent in one lesson. In the outstanding lesson, older students made excellent progress in understanding the properties of glass during a visit to a recycling centre. They learn that glass will not rot away and also how it should be handled to reduce the risk of injury.
114. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are working on materials and their properties. They work in pairs to make a robot using different coloured foils. They know the different parts of their body and can discuss which materials they have used to represent those different parts, for example, the limbs. They use scissors and glue and the higher attaining pupils can name the safety precautions that they need to take when using these. Other pupils with more complex needs have adult help and enjoy the sensory experience of listening to the noise of the foil and looking at its reflective qualities. Pupils have made boats out of a variety of materials to discover which will float and which will not. They tested their boats in the splash pool and recorded their results. They have also worked on light, using filters and they know the colours of the rainbow.
115. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with autism fill plant pots with compost and plant flower seeds. The higher attaining pupils carefully fill their pots independently. Those with more complex needs have adult help. The pupils show, through facial expression and gesture, that they enjoy the calming sensory experience of having seeds trickled over their hands. All like to feel the texture of the compost. They planted cress seeds the previous week and have been watering and observing the growing seedlings. The higher attaining pupils are learning to recognise and spell words in the scientific vocabulary, including growth, water, seeds, roots and leaf. To aid this learning, pupils match cards with appropriate symbols and words. Pupils name the parts of a flower including leaf and stem. They use a magnifying glass to look at the seedlings and compost, developing good observation skills. Pupils choose the coloured watering can, which they wish to use and water the plants. Those with more complex needs have adult help to explore seeds and compost, using their senses.
116. Examination of pupils' work shows that pupils in Key Stage 2 in inclusion classes, have made good use of computers to search for information on the characteristics of different sorts of animals and presented this well in their work folders. They have carried out experiments with bean seeds, to discover what plants need to grow and they know that if they do not water plants, the plants will die. Higher attaining pupils have some understanding of push and pull forces. They can recognise and name the major parts of the body. They can connect a simple electrical circuit.
117. Key Stage 4 pupils and Post-16 students are growing daisy and cornflower seedlings and taking and planting cuttings. They look at those planted last week carefully, to see if any roots have started to form yet. The higher attaining pupils and students know that seeds need warmth and light to grow. Several higher attaining students examine the seedlings closely and make a record of how they are growing. They also use a camera to record the plants' growth. They are keen to discuss their design for their new garden and their plans to plant vegetables and fruit. Pupils and students with more complex needs have adult help to explore seedlings, cuttings and compost using their sight, touch and smell.

118. Analysis indicates that higher attaining Key Stage 4 pupils and Post-16 students know the difference between deciduous and evergreen trees. They understand that light travels in straight lines and is reflected at an angle if it hits a mirror and they have drawn and labelled parts of the eye. Students who have attended a mainstream college understand that milk bottles go back to the dairy. They have visited a recycling plant and have some knowledge of how metals, paper and bottles are recycled.
119. Since the previous inspection there has been a sound improvement. Teaching has improved and is now good overall. There is a new programme of work, although the co-ordinator has recognised that this is not yet fully used by all teachers. There is provision for learning to take place in the appropriate sequence and revisited as necessary. There is still no specialist science teacher or specialist room. The teachers are, however, experienced enough to teach the subject and pupils who are included in some mainstream situations, are taught by subject specialists and in appropriate accommodation.
120. Teaching in science throughout the school is good overall, with two satisfactory lessons and three that were good or very good. In the most successful lessons the teachers have a clear understanding of the subject and health and safety issues. They have very good management skills, quietly insisting that pupils and students attend to the lesson. Teachers do not volunteer answers to problems unless absolutely necessary and because of this pupils and students have to think and try hard to recall information. Time is used well and the lesson takes place at a good pace. Changing activities keeps pupils well motivated so that they work hard and remain on task. Consequently very good learning and progress takes place. Because of very good questioning techniques, pupils and students respond well to the subject. Support staff are directed well and give good support and work is planned to individual needs. This enables pupils with more complex needs to experience the lesson. Because the teachers manage and organise the class very well, pupils and students enjoy the lessons, remain on task, behave well and form very good relationships. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in science are very good overall. Where teaching is satisfactory, sound classroom management ensures that pupils behave well and satisfactory learning takes place.
121. Support for literacy is good in science; teachers ensure that the key words in lessons are emphasised and used appropriately by staff and pupils. Similarly, good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their numeracy skills when recording experiments. The use of computers is less regular although equipment such as the digital camera is effectively used to record pupils' work.
122. All pupils make equally good progress in science. This is because the work is planned to their specific targets in their individual education plans and teachers and members of support staff are very sensitive to the pupils' individual needs.
123. The science co-ordinator monitors planning but has not yet monitored other teachers' lessons although this is in the school's current plans. Time allocated for science on the curriculum is a little short for a core subject, although pupils and students have extra time for the subject within inclusion classes or when attending college. The co-ordinator has identified the need to improve and extend the programme of work, which does not consistently challenge the older and higher attaining pupils. The lack of a specialist room limits opportunities for practical work and experiments but opportunities to extend the pupils' and students' experience through integration projects in mainstream schools are effectively used to broaden pupils' experience. Whilst the National Curriculum targets and levels are referred to occasionally, a thorough understanding of these levels is not always evident. The co-ordinator has not fully developed a clear understanding of the science content in all the programmes offered in inclusion classes in mainstream schools and the college and acknowledges that the content is not monitored closely. Good science displays support the curriculum.

ART

124. Due to timetabling arrangements and a photography exhibition planned when several art lessons normally take place, only one art lesson was observed during the inspection. Analysis of pupils' work and displays around the school show that provision and pupils' achievement in art are satisfactory overall throughout the school, in the context of a reduced curriculum.

125. Key Stage 1 pupils work in both two and three dimensions. They make clay tiles, using their hands and fingers to make impressions in the clay and illustrate nursery rhymes by making a three-dimensional collage using mixed media. Pupils draw and paint from observation. Pupils with more complex needs are helped to hold paintbrushes and make marks. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make paper collages and abstract paintings. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use paint and colour more sensitively.
126. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils with autism make good progress in collage. They weave with ribbons, wool and lace and print patterns using a variety of printing techniques, including leaf printing and hand printing. They have also, with adult help, made beautiful Mother's Day cards, using pressed flowers. This was in connection with their Victorian project.
127. Key Stage 4 pupils and Post-16 students make cards for Mother's Day. The higher attaining pupils use a computer program to design their cards, choosing their graphics and using a variety of fonts. The lower attaining pupils have a sensory experience using their senses of smell, sight and touch. They look at, smell and touch pot-pourri and the zest of oranges and lemons. With adult help they make their Mother's Day card by filling a small card dish with their chosen pot-pourri, covering it with net and sticking it onto a large coloured card. Higher attaining pupils spontaneously help others to cut the net.
128. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and subject documentation, indicate that teaching in art is satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully, taking into account pupils' specific individual needs through reference to their individual education plans. Classroom management is satisfactory and because of this, pupils and students behave well and concentrate on their task. The management of challenging behaviour is consistent and where teachers are new to the class, relationships develop positively throughout the lesson. Attitudes and behaviour are good overall in art. Pupils and students are encouraged and helped by teachers and members of support staff to develop their practical skills, including keyboard skills and fine motor skills, for example, glueing and cutting. Because teachers plan work at appropriate levels, pupils and students make satisfactory progress in art throughout the school.
129. Key Stage 4 pupils and Post-16 students have been working on a special photography project set up by the arts worker at Mid-Bedfordshire District Council. They make very good progress in photography because they have received instruction, help and guidance from a professional photographer, who has worked with them over a period of several weeks. They are rightly very proud of their achievement and are very keen to help put up the exhibition and show their work to their parents, representatives of the local education authority and other members of the community. Pupils and students discuss their work confidently and explain how they used several types of cameras, including a digital camera, to achieve certain effects taking a variety of photographs, including portraits of their friends.
130. Art makes a sound contribution to personal development through extending the pupils' creative skills. It makes a sound contribution to numeracy through spatial awareness, and to literacy through speaking, listening and writing, for example, Post-16 pupils' writing about the batik technique.
131. Since the previous inspection, satisfactory improvements have been made in art. Work is now planned to the specific needs of all pupils and there is a programme of work, although it is recognised by the school that this is not fully developed. Nevertheless, because of these improvements staff are now more confident in teaching art.
132. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the art programme. She understands that the curriculum can be extended to include more imaginative use of techniques and materials and has already used the coil technique in clay and introduced the use of inks and acrylic paints. Three-dimensional work is not fully developed. The co-ordinator understands that some pupils need to work at varying angles or levels and plans to improve provision for this. She has monitored work and planning but has not yet monitored teaching. There is assessment of targets on the individual education plans but there is not a structured assessment procedure in place for art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

133. Pupils throughout the school show satisfactory gains in designing and practical skills. However, standards of learning range from poor to excellent. Over half of lessons were good or very good, one was excellent and one poor. Where progress is outstanding is as a direct result of well planned and stimulating teaching. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 make cakes using syrup, cereals, butter and drinking chocolate. The higher attaining pupils read the numbers on the scales when measuring the ingredients and mix the ingredients independently. Other pupils read from signs and symbols and pupils with more complex needs experience the ingredients through their senses of touch, sight and smell. They mix the ingredients with adult help. All pupils enjoy the session and look forward to eating the cakes.
134. Pupils in Key Stage 2 who were included in a mainstream situation, worked on comparisons of the home in China and the United Kingdom. They can identify vegetables used in the UK and know that they are different in look and texture than some used in China. Some pupils remember Chinese food which they have eaten at home and discuss 'take-aways'. Pupils design and make their own Chinese lantern. They discuss their designs and evaluate them. Other pupils included in a mainstream situation make a wooden automaton for a Mother's Day gift. They use a pillar drill and mechanical sander. They know how to use paint and certain tools, including a file, drill, vice and saw, and understand the safety precautions needed when using these tools and paint. They know why they need to wear safety goggles. Pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 use symbols and signs to make toast, choose from a variety of spreads and apply the spreads to the toast. They understand the need for cleanliness and hygiene when preparing food and wash their hands. They take turns and some pupils find waiting for their turn more difficult than others. They have a rota to do the washing up, either independently or with adult help. Pupils make the toast and hand it out to the group, counting the pieces out using their numeracy skills. Pupils use literacy skills, when asking if others want toast and when replying, they respond politely or use appropriate gestures. Other Stage 3 pupils in an inclusion classes start their work on mobiles.
135. Pupils in Key Stage 4 and at Post-16 make satisfactory progress overall. However, when working on their project for a new garden and the development of their new common room they make very good progress. Their planning is in detail and information technology is used well, for example in the garden project. Pupils and students produced several designs to choose from and kept a photographic record of different stages of construction. They used their numeracy skills to measure the garden, which is providing a continuing source of work and pleasure for the students. Post-16 students make meals in Home Management within the school and at college they make jewellery and other articles to sell in the Enterprise project.
136. Since the previous inspection there have been satisfactory improvements made. Pupils and students now make satisfactory progress in the design process. They now usually know exactly what they have to do and can make suggestions as to how their products can be improved, for example, the Post-16 garden design. Staff are now more secure in their subject knowledge and plan for pupils and students to make choices. More attention is now paid to evaluation and modifying work. There is a programme of work, but it is not developed fully. There is some information technology used now within the subject, but this area is not developed fully. However, many more control devices are now used to help pupils access the curriculum. Display has improved to support the subject well, for example, the Post-16 garden project, the common room project and making boats in Key Stages 1 and 2. The accommodation is still unsatisfactory, as there is no specialist room.
137. Teaching in design and technology is satisfactory overall, with some excellent teaching and some poor teaching. Where teaching is poor, overall planning and preparation for the lesson are weak. For example, pupils attending other groups are not adequately briefed or prepared to achieve what is expected of them. The teacher is not appropriately skilled in questioning techniques. Meanings of words are not explored to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge. There is a lack of awareness of targets for specific pupils and work is not always planned to meet pupils' individual needs. The teacher's own model of writing is poor, expectations are low and the worksheets are not appropriate for pupils who do not read. All of these aspects of teaching have an adverse effect on learning and progress, and little takes place. Nevertheless, pupils maintain satisfactory attitudes and behaviour at such times. Where teaching is excellent, the teacher is very well prepared for the lesson, with excellent resources for the higher attaining pupils and for sensory work. This promotes good pupil discussion. The change over of activities takes place very smoothly. The timing of the lessons and well-planned sessions keep pupils motivated so that they maintain good levels of concentration and interest

which greatly aids their learning and progress. Excellent plenary sessions enable pupils to evaluate their work. The teachers have a calm competent manner, which achieves maximum attention and results from pupils. All work is planned to individual subject targets on the pupils' individual education plans and their learning and progress is clearly assessed and recorded. Because of all these positive aspects of teaching, pupils make excellent progress and gains in learning. They also have excellent attitudes to the subject and develop their social skills, shown by their polite manner, for example, when they open the door for visitors. Pupils' and students' attitudes and behaviour in design and technology are good overall.

138. Design and technology makes a good contribution to personal development, mainly through food technology. It makes a satisfactory contribution to literacy and numeracy
139. The co-ordinator has recently joined the staff and has monitored teachers' planning but has not yet had opportunity to put into practice plans for monitoring teaching throughout the school. As there is no specialist room for design and technology the progress of older and higher achieving pupils and students is sometimes limited and results in a narrow curriculum. However, this is partially offset by the provision of opportunities for some pupils and students in inclusive situations in mainstream schools and the college. Resources are not adequate for the range and age of pupils, for example, there are no work benches at an appropriate height for older pupils and students. A new programme of work has recently been purchased for textiles and food, to improve provision. The co-ordinator has not fully developed a clear understanding of the design and technology content in all programmes offered in integration projects in mainstream schools and colleges. This is not monitored closely.

GEOGRAPHY

140. It was only possible to see one lesson of geography during the inspection. However displays and work classrooms and around the school and examination of pupil records showed that achievement in geography is good.
141. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to identify places from photographs. They know about the weather and their locality. By the time they are 11, pupils are aware of the environment. They can place objects into the correct situations in photographs, and have developed a simple understanding of maps. Many of them know how to find their way around school. All know about the seasons. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4 pupils use maps to find places such as their own country and county. They produce very good diagrams of Hot Springs, plans of rooms at home are very well presented and displays of work are neat. Older students make good plans for their garden which involves knowledge of weather conditions and the appropriate places for things to grow in the garden. The students understand the need to measure temperature, write well and produce clear diagrams; the work they produce enhances the displays in the school.
142. Pupils who have been assessed as autistic can place shapes on Velcro maps, the most able do something different every day in new situations. All are encouraged to visit museums, especially interactive ones, and match pictures of features on the routes.
143. The pupils enjoy the subject, their attitudes to learning are good and their behaviour is very good. They are attentive, respond when asked, work hard and behave well throughout the school. They are proud of their work and respect the good displays around the school.
144. Records and examples of work show that teaching is good across the school. The organisation of classrooms and the management of pupils are very good. Teachers use good questions to develop pupil interest and encourage imagination. The teachers use a variety of activities to stimulate interest. Teacher planning is good; it pays heed to the very special needs of the pupils and incorporates the individual education plans of all pupils. This good planning ensures that there are clear learning objectives and targets that are well matched to every pupil.
145. The surrounding area is used well to enhance the delivery of the subject, a Chinese meal clearly provided much food for thought. The scheme of work is effective and well produced. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, teaching is always good, reviews and reports are precise, social and cultural issues are addressed and understood. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for assessment and has produced good policies and programmes to simplify the process. Teaching is monitored and the subject co-ordinator has

some time to develop the subject across the school. The delivery of geography has improved in all areas. It is well managed.

HISTORY

146. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but judging from the work that the pupils have produced, their achievements in history are good across the school. The work they have completed is imaginative, and this encourages pupils to try hard and therefore do well. By the time they leave school, all pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of time and events in the past.
147. Pupils who have been identified as having autism show interest in the subject, they produce very good work based on life in Victorian times, some of them use information technology to develop their knowledge of the royal family and go on many visits to enrich their understanding. Cross-curricular work to produce Victorian cards for Mother's Day was of a high quality.
148. By the time pupils are 11, they have developed good concepts of time, they can place the days of the week in order, use good historical language, such as yesterday, tomorrow, new and old. The least able are able to follow the routines of school, and can identify 'old' from 'new' photographs.
149. The oldest pupils in the school know about other cultures and can explain, with some accuracy, life in the time of the Aztecs and their records of achievement provide good evidence of their understanding.
150. Pupils' behaviour is very good and this is a significant strength of the school. It was only possible to see one history lesson during the inspection but teachers' planning is good and shows a sensitivity to pupils' needs. Information in individual plans is used to ensure that targets are met and reviewed very effectively, and progress is good. Pupils' work is well marked. Visits to the local area and museums further afield consolidate learning and provide interesting stimuli.
151. There has been an improvement in the delivery of history since the last inspection. The scheme of work is very well managed by the co-ordinator who is addressing the issues of assessment and development of the subject across the whole school. Teaching pays attention to the National Curriculum, action plans have been refined, and they are constantly reviewed and updated. This is a good improvement. Very good use is made of visits to Biggleswade and places like the British Museum. Resources are adequate, kept in a central store and used efficiently. There are few artefacts, these are provided from outside sources. Planning is good and much work has been done in refining and defining history at Sunnyside; the subject is well managed and effective.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

152. Pupils' achievements in information technology lessons throughout the school are good; many make good progress in lessons and over time. Pupils who are under five also make good progress.
153. By the end of Key Stage 1, most of the pupils understand simple instructions relating to the use of computers, know about switches and are becoming more confident with computer. The organisation of the week made it impossible to see many lessons in information technology, but photographic evidence and pupils' own work indicate that pupils are achieving at a good pace. By the age of 11, most of the pupils improve their word-processing skills, the lowest attaining pupils use complex switches, develop their fine motor skills and are well motivated by computers. The higher attaining pupils know how to copy and save work, they use the space bar, letter keys and delete. Their achievements are good. Pupils who have been recognised as having autistic difficulties are making good progress in many areas, the most able access computers independently and know how to save, download and work quickly. They produce very good work. Lower attaining pupils switch on their tape machines and can use a mouse to cause changes on the screen. All pupils are comfortable with computers.

154. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have developed many skills, especially observation and pointing skills. The most able produce graphs, they use the computer to save work and to obtain information from disc, for example to access information for history. These are good achievements.
155. Behaviour is good. Most of the pupils throughout the school show pleasure and enjoyment when working with computers. They look forward to using them; they co-operate well with adults and other pupils and are happy to learn. They are happy to ask for help, or indicate that they need it. All pupils treat the equipment with care and show great pride in their work and achievements.
156. Teaching throughout the school is consistently good. Information technology is taught both as a discrete subject and across the curriculum. Teaching and support staff have a sound knowledge of the subject, providing individual and small group help. Long-term and short-term planning is good, individual programmes relate closely to the complex needs of the pupils. Special equipment designed to assist the pupils to use the equipment is available but not yet widely used. Teacher expectations are good; they encourage pupils to try their best. They use praise and encouragement to reward effort, this sustains interest. Pupils work well in a very supportive environment.
157. Many improvements have been made since the last inspection. The subject is well co-ordinated and resources are good. There are computers in every room, classes have digital cameras and access to the internet, switches and other aids are available for all pupils to access the computers. A great deal of software has been purchased and pupils are already seeing the benefits in their learning. An internal audit of skills and equipment has enabled the co-ordinator develop a picture of need for equipment and training as well as providing information on staff skills.
158. An assessment of pupils' skills has been made and the school is to be part of a pilot scheme to develop the use of information technology in special schools. This assessment is a great development since the last inspection but monitoring is not yet fully in place. Policy documents are good; the scheme of work is underdeveloped but is included in the school improvement plans. The action plans for teachers are very good, individual education plans include information technology and are also very good. Senior staff are aware of the need to have much more cross-curricular work in the classrooms assisted by technology. The subject has developed in the period following the previous inspection, and teaching and learning are good, teacher knowledge is satisfactory and training has been identified. Yet the subject does not have a consistent impact across the curriculum. ICT is not used frequently as an everyday working tool particularly where it could help pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons. Provision and potential for ICT has improved greatly since the last inspection, it has good capacity for growth.

MUSIC

159. Pupils make good gains in learning in music as a direct result of the good and often very good teaching. All pupils enjoy music and try hard to do their best. They choose and play instruments with care and even the youngest understand the difference between loud and soft. Within a mainstream class, older pupils listen carefully to recorded music and identify instrument as 'brass' or 'wind'. They go on to add sounds representing bird song to the music and then record this to review and appraise it later. This well planned activity helps pupils develop their critical listening skills and to work effectively alongside pupils in the linked mainstream school.
160. All pupils respond well to music and behave well in lessons. In over half of lessons behaviour was very good or excellent. In an outstanding lesson, pupils at Key Stage 2 made excellent progress in developing their understanding and skills of keeping a regular pulse and playing in groups. Having established their ability to maintain a simple beat the teacher gradually increased the challenge to play in groups and then in a three part round. The evident delight with which pupils recognised their success boosted their self-esteem and confidence. The teacher was extremely skilled in managing the pupils' learning and behaviour, needing only to give a warning look to keep pupils on task when they became overexcited. As a direct result of the teacher's high expectations, the pupils increased their musical skills, understanding and performance.

161. The music curriculum is currently undergoing a review. The co-ordinator recognises that it is somewhat narrow and has already put strategies in place to broaden coverage of National Curriculum attainment targets. The school has made a financial commitment to music since the last inspection through the purchase of a good range of untuned percussion instruments, although the number of keyboards remains limited and the school has yet to explore opportunities of linking music to information technology.
162. Standards in music have improved substantially since the last inspection when some teaching and learning were less than satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

163. Despite the fact that currently the school has no co-ordinator for physical education, the subject is well managed, and the pupils make good progress overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Four members of staff have received local authority training in the provision of physical education, and this, together with the good use made of off-site facilities and good links with other special and mainstream schools, ensures that the standard of physical education is good.
164. At the time of the previous inspection there was a subject policy but there were no schemes of work to ensure the breadth and balance of the subject or assessment procedures. The policy has been updated on a regular basis by trained support staff, and there is now a scheme of work, which identifies a balanced programme of termly activities. However, school equipment, and the good use of leisure centres, swimming pools and local amenities such as horse riding and golf, supplement the curriculum at all ability levels. Links with a local special school allow the physically more able pupils to participate in sports and athletics, while the pupils on inclusion groups integrate into mainstream gymnastic lessons and develop through dance sessions. The pupils participate in annual county sports meetings and enjoy visits to nearby sports centres, where they learn trampolining, badminton, unihoc and climbing.
165. Insufficient lessons were observed during inspection for a judgement to be made about teaching as many of the lessons were seen in the mainstream settings.
166. However, the pupils make good progress in their physical education, and gain much pleasure from these sessions. They understand safety procedures and listen to or follow instructions carefully. They develop their social skills, waiting in line and taking turns on the equipment. The pupils with autism fully participate in gymnastic lessons, and achieve similar gains in their physical and personal development as their peers. Pupils of all abilities are positive in their attitudes towards physical education, and help to clear away and store equipment correctly, before returning to a fixed base and sitting down. Their progress is monitored and recorded on their individual education plans, and their gains are matched against subject specific targets.
167. The school's resources are very good, with a wide range of quality equipment securely stored in the main hall. Within the limitations of recruitment difficulties, the school makes good provision for physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. During the inspection, very little religious education was available for observation, and it is not possible to make judgements from the small amount of pupils' written work. However, planning documents and the policy statement show that the locally agreed syllabus is being followed appropriately, and that the statutory requirements for the allocation of time are being met.
169. Religious education is taught within the framework of personal and social education. Pupils have times for reflection, listen to religious stories and do some written work on the various topics they study. For example, one class was observed working on the Passover as a topic. They watched part of a videotape, and learnt the significance of the events in Jerusalem during the last week of Jesus' life. They increased their understanding well by the good use of some worksheets about the festival.
170. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and are encouraged to discuss the topics they study. They know Bible stories, such as the time of temptation in the desert, or the Passover meal. They have

worked on topics about Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism as well as Christianity. They know some of the Bible stories, miracles and parables, such as the Good Samaritan.

171. The planning shows a broad and balanced curriculum where pupils are given a wide variety of experiences, including visits to places of worship such as a Sikh gurdwara. Pupils also experience festivals, such as Harvest, Divali and Hanukkah. Planning includes social development, such as the consideration of birth ceremonies or marriage. Pupils are taught an appreciation of the natural world and creation, such as walking on a misty autumn morning. They have heard stories about people who help us, and stories from other faiths, such as Rama and Sita and the origins of Divali.
172. From a small sample of lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall with one outstanding lesson. Teachers understand their pupils' needs and teach accordingly. They have high expectations both for work and for behaviour. They encourage pupils to discuss the topics and ensure that the vocabulary for religious education is explained and understood. For example, they explored the meaning of "trespasses" in its religious context. Teachers use skilful questioning to help pupils remember the stories they have covered previously, and as an example, one pupil remembered that Jesus cured a blind man. Pupils had pretended to be blind and expressed their feelings about it being strange, and how worried they would be if it happened to them.
173. Planning for the subject is good and covers world religions as well as Christianity. Pupils are taught the relationship of religious stories with the seasons of the year, such as Easter and spring, or Divali and Hanukkah as festivals of light in winter.
174. Resources are adequate for the subject, and there are some good displays round the classrooms, such as the one about Chinese New Year. Religious education is often coupled well with assembly themes, especially at times of religious festivals, and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.