

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LINDEN BRIDGE SCHOOL**

Worcester Park

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125475

Headteacher: Mrs R Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr T Richardson  
16500

Dates of inspection: 16 – 18 May 2000

Inspection number: 191957

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 17
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grafton Road Worcester Park Surrey
Postcode:	KT4 7JW
Telephone number:	020 8330 3009
Fax number:	020 8330 6811
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Mapleton
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides outstanding and clear leadership from the headteacher and management team, which creates a very good ethos and positive atmosphere that values all pupils, so they participate fully</li><li>• Has a highly skilled and knowledgeable staff that works very well together as a team. Their very good teaching leads to pupils making very good progress. As a result, pupils' achievements are high</li><li>• Promotes very good behaviour, personal development and very high standards of social development</li><li>• Staff assess pupils' needs very well and use this knowledge to ensure that pupils gain appropriate accreditation and that their achievements are celebrated effectively</li><li>• Provides exemplary work as a Beacon School, that is effective in helping to raise standards and also in assisting other schools to work with autism</li></ul>	
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>14</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication with parents so that they are more clearly informed of what the school is doing and how this will benefit their children</li><li>• The behaviour policy, to have more relevance to the full range of needs of the pupils</li></ul>	
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>17</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Linden Bridge is a community mixed special school for pupils with autism aged from five to seventeen. The school is above the average size for special schools with 98 pupils on roll, of whom 85 are boys and 13 are girls. All pupils and students have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils are of white European ethnic background; five pupils have English as an additional language, the main home languages of these pupils being Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Spanish. The school is part of Surrey's continuum of provision for autism with emphasis on meeting the needs of pupils towards the more (but not the most) severe part of the autistic spectrum. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below national averages as a result of their special educational needs. The school is over-subscribed, and popular, with an extensive waiting list. It follows Surrey's policy of continually reviewing educational placement and some pupils enter the school from mainstream and other special schools, particularly at secondary age, whilst a minority of pupils transfer from Linden Bridge to mainstream and to other special schools as appropriate to their needs. Since the last inspection, the school has changed its nature and is now solely for pupils with autism. It has also been awarded the status of a 'Beacon School' and provides training for others in the teaching of pupils with autism.

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

Many aspects of the school's work are exemplary and are a model for the successful teaching of children with autism. The school has outstanding leadership and very good teaching that leads most pupils to make very good progress and achieve high standards for their degree of special educational needs. These achievements are in their social and personal development as well as in academic subjects. The school makes a considerable difference to the lives of its children and young people and provides very good value for money.

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

- Provides outstanding and clear leadership from the headteacher and management team, which creates a very good ethos and positive atmosphere that values all pupils, so they participate fully
- Has a highly skilled and knowledgeable staff that works very well together as a team. Their very good teaching leads to pupils making very good progress. As a result, pupils' achievements are high
- Promotes very good behaviour, personal development and very high standards of social development
- Staff assess pupils' needs very well and use this knowledge to ensure that pupils gain appropriate accreditation and that their achievements are celebrated effectively
- Provides exemplary work as a Beacon School, that is effective in helping to raise standards and also in assisting other schools to work with autism

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

- Communication with parents so that they are more clearly informed of what the school is doing and how this will benefit their children
- The behaviour policy, to have more relevance to the full range of needs of the pupils

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

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

The school has made very good improvement. Many facets of its work are now exemplary and being extended to raise the standards of provision for autism in other schools. The school is becoming a national and international model of good practice, whilst ensuring that pupils continue to receive the best the school can offer. All the key issues of the previous inspection have been implemented in full. The quality of teaching has improved and all permanent staff show a high level of skill with autism. Standards have risen and pupils' achievements are recognised with a wider range of accreditation. There has been sustained high quality leadership and added confidence is evident in the senior managers of the school who have been successfully enabled to become effective leaders. There has been a significant increase in the popularity of the school. As a result, the quality and number of applicants for teaching and assistant posts has increased, and more parents want their children to

attend (even from other local education authorities).

## 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 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	A	very good	A
reading	A	A	A	good	B
writing	A	A	A	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A	A		

Standards throughout the school are high. Pupils with higher levels of attainment are stretched and many pupils are achieving highly against their special educational needs. Most pupils with lower attainment are making progress at the same very good rate as their peers. The school rightly places high emphasis on improving pupils' communication. As a result, standards in mathematics are not quite as high as in English, but are better than at the last inspection.

**Standards in communication:** Pupils learn to communicate through natural conversation, exchanging pictures, and using signs and symbols. They very soon come to understand their lessons and, by the time they leave school, many are sufficiently confident to politely begin conversations, listen carefully to others and ask maturely for help and clarification.

**Standards in social development:** Pupils develop the desire to relate to others. They make friends and value one another. Achievements made in the classroom carry on into break times, where pupils play together with a high level of social interaction. By the time they leave school, pupils gain sufficient confidence to face real life situations and learn to accept changes in routines. They develop self-esteem and enthusiasm to participate as members of a group.

**Standards in imaginative development:** From taking everything literally, pupils learn to develop and extend their thought. Through activities such as role play, pupils are enabled to achieve appreciation of, for example, poetry and humour at higher levels than expected for their degree of autism. They extend this successfully into problem solving, for example, estimation in mathematics and predication in science.

**Standards in academic achievement:** Pupils make very good progress in their lessons and a significant number achieve academic standards above the level expected for their autism. For example, one Year 11 student is in line to attain a grade B in GCSE art; a student in the extended education department is studying GCSE English literature; and a Year 9 pupil, who attends a mainstream school for art, has already attained National Curriculum Level 6 and is being entered for GCSE. Other examples were seen of 16 and 17 year old pupils line dancing and tap dancing at a high level for their age and some pupils are accomplished performers on drums, flute and other instruments.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very happy, enthusiastic and relaxed in school. They show a marked lack of anxiety, and sustain interest in the activities presented for long periods of time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils understand the acceptable limits of behaviour. The school is very good at managing difficult behaviours, but adults sometimes don't give sufficient emphasis to what pupils are trying to

	tell them when they are upset.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop independent learning skills and learn to make decisions. They look after materials and their work space, and genuinely care for one another.
Attendance	Very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, teaching was excellent in 5 per cent of lessons; very good in 33 per cent; good in a further 43 per cent; and satisfactory in the remaining 19 per cent of lessons. No teaching was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is very good in all key stages other than Key Stage 3, where it is good. Teachers and assistants are highly skilled in the teaching of autism, work very well together as a team in each classroom and have high expectations for what all the pupils can do. There is very good liaison between teachers and speech and language therapists and this is effective in helping to raise the pupils' standards of communication. This, in turn, helps all pupils to gain more understanding of their lessons. Teachers also assess the needs of pupils very well and plan their lessons to build on what pupils already know. Pupils' interests are developed and they are helped to improve their social skills and their imagination. Teachers provide very well structured environments and routines that are very helpful in enabling pupils to know with certainty what they are learning and what they will do next. This is achieved within a friendly, relaxed and seemingly informal atmosphere, and leads directly to the very good learning and progress that pupils make. English, literacy and numeracy are taught very well, but too few lessons of mathematics and science were seen to judge the quality of teaching in these subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, and meets statutory requirements. All opportunities are taken to keep developing the curriculum to meet the changing needs of the National Curriculum and the pupils. Good opportunities are provided for integration into other schools and for pupils to gain extended leisure activities; for example, sailing.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for social development is very good and leads to pupils gaining high social achievement for their degree of autism.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are safe and secure at school. Their needs are assessed very well and their development is monitored most effectively. The behaviour policy is now out of date and needs revision.

Some parents questioned the grouping of pupils in class secondary 2. Inspectors judge this to be appropriate, given the numbers of pupils and composition of other classes in Key Stage 3. Parents gave strong support for the work of the school in their questionnaire returns. The school has missed some signals from parents that should have been addressed earlier. This has led to a small minority of parents currently expressing their dissatisfaction.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
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Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is powered by outstanding leadership. Senior managers continually seek to enrich the provision and lead by example. This leadership sets an ethos and positive atmosphere that values all individuals and moves the whole school forward.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Effective in supporting the school, and helping it to continue to improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and deputy strive continually for school improvement and the quality of education provided, along with all new initiatives, is routinely and rigorously evaluated.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources. There is very good application of the principles of best value in all aspects of school's work.

The role of Beacon School is exemplary. High quality provision is made for other schools to gain confidence and skill in their provision for pupils with autism. Within the school, staff have improved their skills, knowledge and professionalism. Teachers are motivated to sustain their work at levels of high quality, and pupils achieve more highly as a result.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching and the progress their children make</li> <li>• Children like school and want to attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistent high standards in the use of home-school books</li> <li>• improved communication with families</li> <li>• the amount and type of homework</li> <li>• the provision for pupils with lower attainment</li> <li>• the perception that the school is becoming increasingly selective</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by parents. They also judge that home-school books are of a consistent good quality, with suitable variations in style between teachers, and that appropriate provision is made throughout the school for lower attaining pupils. The provision made for homework is appropriate, but the school could do more to communicate more effectively with its parents. The school is working within the local education authority's policy on provision and is not becoming increasingly selective, but this has not been communicated effectively with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Provides outstanding and clear leadership from the headteacher and management team, which creates a very good ethos and positive atmosphere that values all pupils, so they participate fully**

1. The headteacher provides a very clear educational direction for the school. She is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher and heads of departments, who together comprise the senior management team. Governors are of good quality and work effectively to support the work of the school. There is a positive atmosphere. Pupils feel secure, staff and pupils demonstrate confidence in their own abilities and the whole school community exudes enthusiasm for learning. Much of this atmosphere has been created through the very good example set by the headteacher and other senior managers. They all have a very detailed and high level of knowledge about autism and demonstrate considerable skill in their daily interactions with pupils. This provides all staff with a model of good practice to aspire to, and establishes a culture of everyone wanting to improve what they do and providing the pupils with the best the school can offer.
2. All members of the school community provide a warm and friendly welcome. This is due to the expectations set by the headteacher and senior managers. As a result, the school is a happy place and pupils and staff are equally motivated to give of their best. High expectations for what the pupils should do are clearly provided and there are very effective routines and structures in all classrooms that help pupils to know what to do. For example, the principles of TEACCH (a systematic approach to the teaching of children with autism) are applied, with equal levels of skill, in every classroom. Pupils follow set routines and learn when to sit and listen, how to contribute and answer questions, and when they are required to work independently with sustained effort. These routines are very effective indeed and pupils work very hard to complete their daily activities. This results in all pupils showing a very high work ethic so that they concentrate on their studies and achieve more than usually expected for their degree of autism.
3. Another expectation, set by the senior management team, is that time should not be wasted. The effect of this was clearly seen in lessons where every minute was filled with purposeful activities designed to promote further achievement. The time that staff have together is also used well and senior managers make sure that information and knowledge about the pupils is communicated effectively to all concerned. Despite their considerable workload, senior managers always make time for the needs of pupils and staff and, through this, gain information that is used very well to help to plan the future direction of continued school improvement.
4. The impact of the ethos for hard work and the valuing of individuals is most evident in the pupils. A common feature of autism is the level of anxiety often shown by pupils. This is noticeable by its absence in Linden Bridge. Throughout the school, pupils feel relaxed, know what is expected, know what they are doing and mostly show that they are happy. Pupils show such an awareness of others that they want to please their teachers and assistants and try hard to do their best. In particular, pupils learn to accept change and take on new challenges; for example, going to college independently and managing successfully the day to day issues of public transport not running to time.

**Has a highly skilled and knowledgeable staff that works very well together as a team. Their very good teaching leads to pupils making very good progress. As a result, pupils' achievements are high**

5. There has been a substantial increase in the skill and knowledge of teachers and assistants since the last inspection. Staff have benefited from specialist training in the teaching of children with autism and have also been helped by the school receiving visitors who expect to see a high level of skill in evidence. The result is that staff display consistently high levels of expertise in their work and are confident in the knowledge of what they do well. Assistants are frequently given the responsibility of leading the work with individuals, groups of pupils and sometimes the whole class. They do this very well and the result is that each class has a very effective team of teachers and assistants who work together so that pupils receive a continuous educational experience. This teamwork is also extended into the way lessons are planned. Teachers and assistants share their knowledge well and help one another to plan the topics to be taught and the

detail of what should be learnt by each pupil in every lesson. This, along with their clear understanding of autism, is very effective in providing pupils with lessons that are directly matched to their needs that help them to develop social and communication skills and also to further extend their knowledge. There is very good liaison between teachers and speech and language therapists and this is effective in helping to raise the pupils' standards of communication. This, in turn, helps pupils to gain more understanding of their lessons.

6. During the inspection, teaching was excellent in five per cent of lessons; very good in 33 per cent; good in a further 43 per cent; and satisfactory in the remaining 19 per cent of lessons. No teaching was unsatisfactory. These figures are an improvement on the previous inspection. In the very best lessons, teachers organise the seating positions of pupils well so that everyone can be supported, yet is able to see the teacher. The communication between teacher and pupils is very clear and this leads directly to all pupils being actively involved and on task. For example, in a literacy session with Year 7 pupils, the teacher demonstrated very good knowledge of each pupil and their particular communication needs. This led directly to pupils smiling as they gave good eye contact and enabled them to show their understanding of phonics by adding new initial letters to word endings to make new words. Most teachers make good use of visual aids to improve understanding. For example, in Year 6, the teacher made a classroom display that brought to life the story of *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* and helped all pupils to know exactly what it was about. Teachers and assistants know their pupils very well and there is a genuine warmth of relationships that encourages pupils to work hard. Staff make very good use of praise and reward pupils positively for actions such as 'good sitting' and 'good looking'. This is received well by pupils and they respond by working even harder to improve their concentration. Throughout the school, there are high expectations for what the pupils can do and these lead to effective challenges being set. For example, in an expressive arts lesson for students over the age of sixteen, the teacher expected students to listen to a contemporary recording and take careful note of the arrangement and when exactly each instrument was added. In response, the students gave their utmost concentration and very quickly established how the arrangement was scored.
7. The quality of teaching is very good in all key stages other than Key Stage 3, where it is good. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below average. However, the impact of this very good teaching is clearly evident in the very good progress pupils make and the achievements they gain over their time in the school. Standards throughout the school are high. Pupils with higher levels of attainment are stretched and many pupils are achieving highly against their special educational needs. Most pupils with lower attainment are making progress at the same rate as their peers. The school rightly places high emphasis on improving pupils' communication, social development and increasing their imagination. Pupils learn to communicate through natural conversation, exchanging pictures, and using signs and symbols. They very soon come to understand their lessons and, by the time they leave school, many are sufficiently confident to politely begin conversations, listen carefully to others and ask maturely for help and clarification. Pupils make friends and value one another. They gain sufficient confidence to face real life situations and learn to accept changes in routines. They develop self-esteem and enthusiasm to participate as members of a group. From taking everything literally, pupils learn to develop and extend their thought. Through activities such as role play, pupils are enabled to achieve appreciation of, for example, poetry and humour at higher levels than expected for their degree of autism.
8. Pupils make very good progress in their lessons and a significant number achieve academic standards above the level expected for their autism. For example, one Year 11 student is in line to attain a grade B in GCSE art; a student in the extended education department is studying GCSE English literature; and a Year 9 pupil, who attends a mainstream school for art, has already attained National Curriculum Level 6 and is being entered for GCSE. Other examples were seen of 16 and 17 year old pupils line dancing and tap dancing at a high level for their age and some pupils are accomplished performers on drums, flute and other instruments. The achievements of pupils are rewarded with nationally recognised qualifications and certificates in addition to GCSE and the school adds to this by presenting pupils with certificates of praise for other aspects of their development.

**Promotes very good behaviour, personal development and very high standards of social development**

9. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school. Pupils learn how to manage their autism and are shown how to respond to others, and how to start a conversation. This work is very effective and pupils remember to use good manners, are polite, and work hard to be friendly and outgoing towards visitors and each other. They also learn how to be helpful and to be tolerant of others' behaviours. When classmates are upset they try to help each other. For example, when a pupil was reluctant to join in physical education in the hall, another quietly took his hand and led him into the group so that they could all share the activities. Another example of a high degree of social awareness was observed in a food technology lesson where a student calmly observed that the egg just cracked was rather 'bloody' and, without fuss, began the recipe again.
10. Pupils are enabled to develop high levels of independence and increased self-esteem. They show their eagerness to participate in groups, and to read aloud with confidence to one another. A measure of the highest levels of social achievement was observed in an assembly where pupils confidently read aloud and sang solo in front of the combined Key Stages 3 and 4. In addition, pupils learn complicated line and tap dancing sequences and take delight in a good group performance. These high standards are also seen outside lessons and structured activities as pupils play together with consideration and kindness and some older pupils gain sufficient confidence to join organisations such as guides and harriers. A feature of the class-work for students post 16 is that they produce action plans that help them to learn to anticipate what they need to do in new situations and to learn from their past experiences. Students practise these strategies on planned outings; for example, to libraries, shops and other local facilities. Some teaching is incidental and pupils are unaware that they are gaining social skills for later in life. In one dance lesson, for example, the warm-up exercise was based on the dance movements and music pupils could expect to do and hear at a party or in a club. Lunch times are also an example of how pupils learn to face new situations and how to behave and these are very effective in helping pupils to widen their knowledge of food and engage in social conversation. As a result, pupils and students are very well prepared and ready to face challenges after school, for example, working in a Virgin Megastore and attending college by themselves.

**Staff assess pupils' needs very well and use this knowledge to ensure that pupils gain appropriate accreditation and that their achievements are celebrated effectively**

11. The school has recently introduced formal assessment that is specifically designed for pupils with autism. This is carried out when pupils first join the school and is planned to be repeated at subsequent times as the child goes through school. This is designed to demonstrate more clearly and accurately the progress pupils make, the achievements they gain, and the value added to their lives by the school. Observation shows that the test is thorough, of good quality, and is well suited to the needs of the pupils. It is administered well and the school has suitable plans in hand to use the data it provides, not only to measure individual progress, but also to set targets for raising further the school's educational standards.
12. Staff observe children very well and build a detailed knowledge of their development. Effective relationships with most families also add to this knowledge and it is used to plan lessons so that they build on prior learning and experiences. Through this detailed and careful assessment, staff also come to know the individual interests and aptitudes of the pupils. These are developed further; for example, to promote awards in sports, music, dancing and public speaking. Through class lessons, pupils are enabled to sample a range of activities, such as water sports. Those pupils who show interest are encouraged to extend their involvement and many gain nationally recognised sailing and swimming awards as a result. Individual music tuition is extended to pupils showing an interest and the success of this is seen in the number of pupils gaining graded awards for instruments such as the flute and piano.
13. Since the last inspection, the school has worked effectively to increase the range of accredited courses available. This is successful in enabling all pupils and students to gain nationally recognised certificates as a reward for their work. Pupils and students follow courses that lead to ASDAN Youth Award Challenge certificates; the certificate of education courses for a wide range of subjects such as science and geography; and GCSE and other courses largely followed in

mainstream schools and colleges.

**Provides exemplary work as a Beacon School, that is effective in helping to raise standards and also in assisting other schools to work with autism**

14. Since the last inspection, the school has become a Beacon School with responsibility for helping other schools and interested parties to raise the standards of their provision for pupils with autism. This work has been very well planned and the school has devised excellent courses of training which are delivered regularly to a growing number of people from local schools and farther afield. Representatives of the school have been invited to other countries to help raise the standards of provision there and firm links are established with highly influential training providers for autism in the United States.
15. Training courses are backed with visits, either from the school's outreach teacher into other schools, or by visitors attending Linden Bridge. In all cases, the emphasis is on practical training and really helping others to understand autism and work more effectively with their pupils. The Local Education Authority has been appropriately involved to ensure that Surrey schools receive the maximum benefit from the very high quality training provided. One of the major benefits to the school has come from the decision to enable all senior managers to deliver the courses to the same high standard. As a result, the senior management team all demonstrate high levels of practical skills in autism and influence other members of the school community to follow their example. Teachers and assistants have extended significantly the level of their own qualifications and the impact of beacon status is clearly seen in the raised professionalism and knowledge of all permanent staff.
16. Another benefit comes from the number of visitors who attend the school expecting to observe work of the highest standards. All staff have responded very well indeed to this challenge, with the result that most staff are now motivated to work continually at a very high level. The main benefit is with the pupils who are now taught by highly skilled and motivated staff and this, in turn, leads to higher levels of achievement than expected for their degree of autism. The judgement of the inspection team is that this work is exemplary and provides a model for other Beacon Schools to follow.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **Communication with parents so that they are more clearly informed of what the school is doing and how this will benefit their children**

17. Since the last inspection, the partnership between the school and most parents has remained good. However, a small minority of parents has recently expressed dissatisfaction with the way their children are grouped in class in Key Stage 3, and the quality of education provided. The school has not given sufficient attention to how their actions may have been perceived by parents and did not communicate its intent well enough to prevent their initial concerns growing into discontent. The parents' perception was that the school was 'segregating' its most difficult pupils and encouraging these pupils to transfer to other schools. Inspectors considered the ages and special needs of all the pupils in Key Stage 3 and concluded that they too would have grouped the current Key Stage 3 pupils in this way. Other classes also contain pupils with severe and challenging needs and the group concerned are sufficiently close in age to justify the school's decision to place them together, with significantly increased staff and support than in other classes. The quality of education provided for that group is at least satisfactory and often good. Behaviour is generally contained well and when individuals do show their anxiety, situations are managed effectively and other pupils receive little disruption to their learning. The school is scheduled to take increased numbers of pupils into Key Stage 3 in September and this will necessitate further considerations of how best to group pupils into classes.
18. Some parents expressed their concern that the school was seeking to become selective and only keep pupils of higher achievement. Inspectors investigated this concern with the school and also with the Head of Education of the Local Education Authority Children's Services Department. In answer to parents' concerns, inspectors judge that the school is not becoming selective. Linden Bridge is part of Surrey's continuum of provision for pupils with autism. It has the key focus of meeting the needs of pupils with the more severe autism, but not the most severe autism. The school follows the Local Education Authority's policy of reviewing pupils' placement continually, and especially at the age of secondary transfer, to ensure that children are placed in the provision that is best suited to their educational and developmental needs. As a result, pupils with higher levels of achievement transfer into mainstream schools and some pupils with more challenging needs transfer into other special schools better suited to their needs.
19. The school, however, has been diverted from giving full attention to its parents by the emphasis on working as a Beacon School and through paying slightly more attention to prospective parents rather than communicating more effectively with existing parents. Where families have been enabled to visit the school and see their children working in class, a more positive view of their placement has replaced previous concerns. More effort is now needed from the school to ensure that parents are more fully included in the work of their children in class; that families are better informed of school policies and decisions; and that parents come to see how the school fits into the breadth of the Local Education Authority's provision for children with autism.

### **The behaviour policy, to have more relevance to the full range of needs of the pupils**

20. The school's behaviour policy is out of date and does not address sufficiently the full range of strategies already in use in most classes, nor give appropriate guidance to staff on how to understand and change the most difficult behaviours. As a result, there is some slight inconsistency between staff in the way they manage the most challenging behaviour. In some classes, staff focus on containing difficult behaviours and keeping children on task with their work. In other classes, staff manage these behaviours equally well but also reach an understanding of why pupils behave as they do and seek to change this positively. For example, a clear contrast was seen in a Year 7 class where one pupil was cajoled repeatedly with his favourite toy into sitting and completing his work. However, with another teacher, the same pupil worked with concentration and interest without his toy as the teacher understood he needed to know how far the lesson had progressed and provided symbols for him that clearly showed the passing of time and how long to spend on each activity. There are rare occasions when pupils communicate their distress clearly but the signals are misinterpreted. For example, during a rainy

break time, pupils were read a story as a change to the planned outdoor play. The activity set for after break was also a story, but this repetition was insufficiently explained to one pupil who expressed his anxiety through refusal to cooperate. Subsequent management focused on calming the pupil down rather than understanding what he was trying to say and finding ways to help him cope with unscheduled change.

21. The current behaviour policy gives insufficient attention to involving parents in the strategies for managing and changing difficult behaviour and seeks to notify them of any school concerns at a later stage than expected. Also, there are some instances of teachers writing targets in individual education plans that are too broad to be met. For example, some targets are written as 'continue to improve behaviour in class' rather than breaking this down into smaller steps that are achievable, such as, 'extending concentration span from two minutes to five minutes'.

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

22. To continue to raise standards and further improve the work of the school, governors, managers and staff should now, as a matter of priority:

- (a) Improve communication with parents so that they are more clearly informed of what the school is doing and how this will benefit their children.
  
- (b) Review and implement revisions to the behaviour policy, so that it has more relevance to the full range of needs of the pupils through:
  - making sure targets in individual education plans have sufficiently specific small steps to improve behaviour
  - making sure the policy helps staff to work positively on what children are trying to tell them by their difficult behaviours
  - making sure that key staff who work with children, pupils and students with the most severe behaviours are skilled to the same high level.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	33	43	19	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	98
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	8

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	4.37	School data	0

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

### Accreditation offered by the school

Pupils and students are entered, as appropriate to their ability, for the following qualifications:

- GCSE (Within school, or at local secondary schools and colleges)
- National Curriculum Assessments at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3
- Certificate of Achievement
- City and Guilds Word Power

- City and Guilds Number Power
- Associated Examination Board – Lifeskills
- ASDAN Transition Challenge, bronze and silver awards
- ASDAN Expressive Arts Certificate
- English Speaking Board Certificates
- Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music graded examinations
- National Association of Teachers of Dancing certificates
- Amateur Swimming Association awards
- Riding for the Disabled graded assessments
- Various athletics and water sports awards
- Surrey Youth Music and Performing Arts Awards

In addition, the school routinely awards certificates for successful achievement in personal, social and academic development.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	89
Any other minority ethnic group	1

### ***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.*

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y[ ] – Y[ ]**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.1
Average class size	7.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y[ ] – Y[ ]**

Total number of education support staff	30
Total aggregate hours worked per week	795

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	1389775
Total expenditure	1336829
Expenditure per pupil	13641
Balance brought forward from previous year	135054
Balance carried forward to next year	188000

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	98
Number of questionnaires returned	57

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	42	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	21	2	5	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	37	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	42	11	14	4
The teaching is good.	70	23	0	4	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	21	7	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	12	4	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	32	4	4	4
The school works closely with parents.	61	23	11	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	25	7	9	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	23	5	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	32	11	7	5

The questionnaire shows that most parents support the work of the school, in most of the areas detailed above. A significant proportion of parents disagree that their children have the right amount of work to do at home. Additional comments were written on seven questionnaires. Separate letters were received from six parents, some of whom also provided written comments on their questionnaires. General comments were made in praise of the high quality of teaching and the progress that children make. A number of parents feel the school could improve its communication with families, include them more in the education of their children and they also feel that there is too much variation between teachers in the quality of home-school books. There is a perception among some parents that the school is becoming selective and seeking to reduce its provision for lower attaining pupils. This small group of parents provided detailed concerns regarding the management of extreme behaviour, the grouping of pupils with lower attainment, and the decisions over educational placement taken during annual reviews.