

INSPECTION REPORT

WAVERLEY SCHOOL

Enfield

LEA area: London Borough of Enfield

Unique reference number: 102070

Headteacher: Louise Gibbs

Reporting inspector: George Derby
25349

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 192431

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	105 The Ride Enfield Middlesex
Postcode:	EN3 7DL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor John Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25349	George Derby	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Information and communication technology.	Characteristics of the school; Pupils' results and achievements; Teaching and learning.
13807	Christine Haggerty	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; The care the school has for its pupils; Partnership with parents; Links with business and the community.
17530	Mary Cureton	<i>Team inspector</i>	Post 16; Modern Foreign Language; Personal, social and health education.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
25340	Robert Franks	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Equality of opportunity; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	Assessment.
17885	Gordon Gentry	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History Physical education;	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
18261	Tony Hill	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design; Design and technology; Music.	Finance.
10099	Sue Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Foundation Stage.	Leadership and management.
10781	Robert Thomson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Religious education.	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils and students.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Waverley School is a 120-place community day school for pupils who have severe or profound learning difficulties. There are 114 full- and part-time pupils on roll, between the ages of three and 19 years. The school is admitting pupils with more complex needs. Just over a half of the pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), and the school is admitting an increasing number of pupils who have autism. Two thirds of pupils are boys. Almost half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Just under three tenths of pupils have English as an additional language. Their home languages include Turkish, Bengali, Gujarati and Greek. Many of these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition, mostly because of their learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is very low compared to that expected for their age, and some pupils exhibit challenging behaviour. There have been a number of staff changes over recent years. The school is divided into four age-related departments. The early years department contains Foundation Stage* children and those in Key Stage 1. The lower school department covers classes with pupils mainly in Key Stage 2. The middle school department has Key Stage 3 pupils, and the upper school, Key Stage 4, together with Post 16 students. The school was inspected at the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year when staff were just becoming familiar with the new pupils in their classes.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Waverley is a good school, with a strong sense of community. It gives sound value for money. It is socially inclusive, and its work has some very good features. There is a very strong ethos of care and concern for all pupils, and a great sense of valuing pupils' efforts and contributions. As a result, pupils' responses in lessons, and their enthusiasm for school, are very good. The school is very good at supporting families and helping them to support their children. The school is well led and managed and there is a shared commitment by all staff to improvement. The very good accommodation is used very well, and contributes to a positive learning environment. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, and are very good in the Foundation Stage and Post 16. The curriculum strongly supports learning in these parts of the school. Elsewhere the curriculum is narrow in parts and not enough time is allocated to some subjects. Consequently, the potential of good teaching is not wholly fulfilled, and pupils make satisfactory progress, rather than good progress.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- There is a very high quality of care for all pupils. PMLD pupils are socially included in the whole of school life. The extended physical and sensory curriculum meets pupils' needs very well. Staff have great respect for pupils as individuals.
- The school's work with parents is very good. As a result, parents' support for their children and for the school is excellent. The quality of information for parents is very good.
- Relationships are very good, and pupils have a real keenness for school.
- The quality of education is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage and the Post 16 department.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good overall, and is very good in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Post 16.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The balance of taught time for the whole curriculum, and allocations of time for individual subjects. Provision of religious education in age groups where it is a legal requirement.
- Subject co-ordinators' monitoring of the curriculum, especially what is taught and the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' progress in information and communication technology (ICT), and the planning for them to study all aspects of the subject.
- The use of ICT, communication aids, signing and symbols to help pupils communicate more effectively especially to enable those with PMLD, autism, hearing and visual impairment to make a fuller contribution to lessons, and learn even better.

**The Foundation Stage covers all children to those rising four years old in nursery as well as those rising five in reception. Key Stage 1 has pupils in Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 pupils are in Years 3 to 6. In Key Stage 3, pupils are in Years 7 to 9, and pupils in Key Stage 4 are in Years 10 and 11. Post 16 pupils are in Years 12 to 14.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the inspection in November 1996, although development has been uneven. Pupils' progress is similar to that evaluated previously. The proportion of very good or excellent teaching has improved considerably. The curriculum has been improved, but is still too narrow in some subjects and classes. Insufficient time is allocated to some subjects. The curriculum's strength, however, is in now providing relevant and meaningful opportunities for all pupils. The inclusion of PMLD pupils into lessons is now stronger, and an effective programme, strengthened by such initiatives as the Intensive Interaction programme, has further improved this. With the exception of ICT, all subjects now have schemes of work. Clear, long-term, individual targets now support pupils' learning in subjects. The teaching in subjects is still monitored insufficiently by subject co-ordinators, although planning, teachers' practice and pupils' work in literacy, for example, is now evaluated and improvements to practice made on the basis of this. Religious education is still not provided in all parts of the school where it is legally required. Registration procedures are now satisfactory, and attendance figures are published. Some whole-school assemblies are acts of religious worship. There is a good, shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by year R	by year 6	by year 11	by year 14	Key	
speaking, listening, signing and watching	A	B	B	A	<i>very good</i>	A
Reading	A	B	B	A	<i>good</i>	B
writing	A	B	B	A	<i>satisfactory</i>	C
Mathematics	A	C	C	A	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	D
personal, social and health education (PSHE)	A	B	B	A	<i>poor</i>	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in their individual education plans (IEPs)	A	B	B	A		

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, and are good in English / communication (including literacy), personal, social and health education, and physical education. Progress is stimulated by the generous amount of time allocated to these subjects, and the very good sensory and physical opportunities provided. Pupils make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and Post 16 departments because very strong teaching and curriculum is closely related to their needs. In French, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, in parts of the middle school department, progress is variable because there is too little time allocated to the subject. Most pupils make unsatisfactory progress in ICT. In many subject lessons, the progress of pupils with the most complex needs is limited by restricted communication. Information and communication technology, sign, symbols and other communication aids are not always available, or are not fully used by staff. In pupils' individual education plans, targets are now more specifically related to learning, and aspects of development. Pupils make good progress towards the targets. However, the school does not collect and analyse data on pupils' achievements, and no whole-school targets are set for further raising pupils' attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very interested, responsive and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well, and are courteous to staff and visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils' relationships are very good. They are beginning to gain an understanding of the effects of their actions on others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Despite the best efforts of the school, pupils are sometimes late because of transport problems.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1-6	Years 7-11	Years 12-14
Lessons seen overall	very good	good	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.

The quality of teaching is good, and has some very good and excellent features. Varied and stimulating teaching encourages pupils to listen well in lessons, and to try very hard to achieve their targets. Most pupils sustain activities for extended periods of time although, for some, this can physically be very difficult. Where there were weaknesses in the teaching, pupils lost interest when they were confined for too long to one activity. Teaching is very good in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Post 16. Teachers have a particularly comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils at these stages. Teachers overall are very committed to providing meaningful and interesting experiences to help their pupils learn. They include pupils with more complex needs, such as those with PMLD, generally well in lessons. The teaching of literacy, including English, is good overall. Pupils' communication skills are very well promoted overall. A good start has been made using the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), although more consistent use could be made of signs, symbols and objects of reference as well as ICT for writing (in words and symbols) and for helping pupils to express themselves, especially those with PMLD and other complex needs. The teaching of mathematics (including numeracy) is good. Support staff make a very strong contribution to lessons, supporting individual pupils very well. The teaching of science and PSHE is good. The very good teaching in physical education is a strength of the school. Pupils are managed well overall; staff have clear and effective ways of dealing with any incidents of challenging behaviour.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and there is richness in the programmes provided. Statutory requirements are not met in the teaching of religious education, however. Links between subjects are often good. Restricted time in some subjects limits the progress of all pupils. Time is not always used well in PSHE sessions. The programme for Post 16 is very strong, because of emphasis on relevant award bearing courses. The Foundation Stage programme is very strong.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good quality support is provided. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, with some making good progress toward individual targets. Bilingual provision is mainly targeted in relation to pupils' main languages.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted through assemblies, lessons and the celebration of festivals. Staff are good role models. Good relationships with pupils enable them to talk about a range matters sensitively, and promote moral development well. The provision for social development is very strong. Pupils have very good opportunities to respond to staff and to other individuals. An intensive interaction programme supports many pupils' attention spans, awareness of others and motivation to communicate. Access to a good range of cultural experiences helps pupils to appreciate their own cultures and the cultures of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe and very caring environment where every pupil is valued and well supported. Staff know the pupils very well, and work well as a team to promote their welfare, and to make them feel safe and secure. Assessment procedures are good overall, although some teachers could make better use of this information in their planning and target setting.

The school's links with its parents are very effective. Parents have very positive views of the school's work. They make a very strong contribution to their children's learning, aided by very good support from the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. The strong senior management team and departmental heads have clear lines of delegation, support the school's aims and values well, and manage their areas effectively. Staff changes have been managed very well, resulting in a high quality and committed staff team. There is a strong sense of community and purpose and a good commitment to improvement. However, the role of subject co-ordinators is insufficiently developed in keeping a check on their subjects.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a strong commitment to the school and reasonable understanding of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. Their roles in viewing standards and the school's curriculum, needs more development, although this is strong for financial matters, health and safety and premises management. They have a clear view of how their responsibilities contribute to the leadership and management of the school, but need to be more involved in agreeing priorities, setting targets and monitoring more directly, progress towards these, to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Senior managers satisfactorily monitor the quality of the work of staff in their departments. The school's induction programme for new staff is very strong. However, whole school target setting based on an analysis of the attainment of groups of pupils is not sufficiently developed. There needs to be a greater sense of pace and urgency in addressing this and the ways the school links its development plan and spending priorities to pupil attainment.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. There are clear procedures and financial planning is well tied in to current school improvement priorities. Governors regularly monitor budgetary spending. Specific grants, such as the ethnic minority grant, are used well.

The accommodation is very good, is very well maintained, and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The level of staffing is good overall and there are many experienced and highly skilled support staff. Learning resources are satisfactory, although there is a need for more equipment to promote communication of pupils with more complex needs. The school applies best value principles well for financial purchases and soundly elsewhere.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The school works well with parents, and is easy to approach with questions or problems.• Good teaching.• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. They are helped to become mature and responsible.• The school is well managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of work their children are expected to do at home.• The range of activities provided outside lessons.

Most parents who returned the questionnaires, and those who attended the parents' meeting, are very pleased with the school. The inspection team supports the positive views of parents, and finds that relationships between home and school are very strong indeed. However, inspectors agree that activities outside lessons are limited. The amount of homework set is judged to be appropriate, although the school needs to inform parents of the different forms that homework can take. One parent raised a concern about a lack of speech therapy. The health authority has been unable to provide a speech and language therapist for the Post 16 provision during the last academic year. However, arrangements have been made with the health authority for a speech and language therapist to visit the unit this term to assess students' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

Pupils' achievement across the school

1. The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge their attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand, and can do at the end of key stages. Judgements about progress and reference to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews. References to higher and lower attaining pupils and those with additional needs are made within the context of the school's population.
2. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Children in the Foundation Stage and students in Post 16 make very good progress and achieve very well. This is because of the very good teaching and the very good range of opportunities provided to underpin their learning. The accredited courses at Post 16 provide a very good framework for students' learning. Post 16 students achieve particularly well in their personal and social development, leaving school with skills, which strongly support their inclusion in society. Their progress is very good, and is well supported through a wide range of vocational, college and community experiences. In Key Stage 1, pupils' achievements are good. In key stages 2, 3 and 4, their achievements are satisfactory. Teachers set specific targets in relation to what pupils should learn and achieve next in all subjects. Targets are produced from a range of information, including the school's own assessment data, and the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, some subjects are not underpinned by either a broad and balanced programme of work or planning does not enable pupils to make the progress they could. There is insufficient time for the teaching of the curriculum overall. In ICT, pupils' achievements are limited by the lack of a coherent programme of study for teachers to follow and plan from. Inadequate time is allowed for several subjects, including the core subjects of mathematics and science. In religious education and French, learning opportunities are narrow. This limits what pupils and, particularly, higher attaining pupils, can achieve in these subjects. Higher attaining pupils' achievements are satisfactory, but could be better. Personal, social and health education (PSHE), and physical activities dominate the curriculum. While this is rightly so for the majority of pupils, not all time is used effectively, especially during the taught element of PSHE at break time. The curriculum is well planned to take into account the needs of the most disabled pupils. It now requires extending to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, and their achievements made even better.
3. The school has a good range of award bearing courses at Post 16, which meet the needs of its students well. Students work towards awards in the National Skills Profile (NSP) and the Accreditation for Life and Living Skills (ALL) scheme, covering aspects of work-related learning, home management, personal, social and health education, communication, ICT and, more recently, numeracy and leisure. The number of modules achieved by students has increased significantly. In 1999, one student gained an NSP award in communication. In 2001, five students gained awards in communication and numeracy (five and eight modules achieved respectively).
4. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) receive very good care during their time in school. Particularly good attention is given to their physical well-being. The progress they make in relation to their individual targets is usually good because these are well thought out, and are specific to their needs. Pupils are well supported in activities related to their targets, and work is provided in small, progressive steps. The learning opportunities provided in class lessons for PMLD pupils are usually well planned, and support their progress. Some good examples include sensory opportunities in the school's 'white room', and the very carefully structured teaching in Post 16, where PMLD pupils and students make very good progress. However, this is inconsistent across the school. These pupils' progress, in relation to their wider understanding in subjects, is satisfactory, although less strong. This is because of restrictions in

parts of the curriculum. The use and application of ICT and other aids is limited in supporting pupils' ability to communicate, and to make decisions and choices in their learning activities. Pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) make sound progress. The school's provision is good and pupils are well supported; however, the weaknesses in the whole school curriculum limits their achievements.

Pupils' achievement in subjects

5. Pupils' achievements in English are good. They are strongest in speaking and listening, signing and watching, and pupils occasionally make very good progress in these areas. Support for pupils' communication has been strengthened, and work in English is well supported through other subjects. Some pupils make very good progress in their communication skills, and especially in signing and use of symbols. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and Intensive Interaction project, although relatively new, are beginning to have a very positive effect on pupils' progress. Progress in reading and writing is good and, in Key Stage 1, is very good. However, throughout the school, ICT is used insufficiently for writing. Where it is used, pupils find the experience productive and motivating, and some achieve well. Drama, role-play, story telling and music make significant contributions to pupils' progress in listening, literacy and self-expression.

6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics. There is a strong emphasis on practical activities to help them learn, and well-chosen and adapted materials are used by staff in order to engage the pupils and make learning fun. Progress is uneven across the key stages because of the wide range of abilities in each group, and the lack of time some classes have to study the subject. There is improved challenge for pupils now, compared to that identified in the previous inspection and higher attaining pupils participate fully in challenging and stimulating activities.

7. In science, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Improved planning has helped to strengthen their achievements. However, although pupils overall often make good progress during lessons, and very good progress in Key Stage 1, their progress over time is affected by the limited amount of lesson time allocated to science during the week.

8. In ICT, pupils make unsatisfactory progress during their time in the school. There is a high level of focus and support for individuals, and their targets, but no overall plan which aids their progress over time. Individual teachers largely decide what pupils will learn, and there is a particular lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Although there is a 'continuing work statement', there is no planning to guide teachers systematically about what should be taught, and when it should be taught. This weakens the progress pupils can make in all aspects of the subject.

9. Pupils make good progress in personal, social and health education. This is a result of the high priority the school gives to the subject. The large amount of time allocated to specific lessons is generally used effectively, and pupils' progress is well monitored. Pupils' good progress is ensured by a combination of specific teaching in personal and social development lessons, and good promotion of the subject in all other lessons. However, personal and social education time at break, considered as taught time, is not well used, and limits the amount of taught time available in all subjects.

10. Pupils' achievements in physical education and their progress in physical skills are very good, and are very well supported by the school's highly skilled specialist teacher, support staff and physiotherapists. The school's provision for physical education is very good, and much time is rightly allocated to physical activities. Swimming in the school's various pools, and body awareness movement, including dance, are strong areas of the curriculum, and well support pupils' progress. For pupils with the most complex difficulties, the Sherbourne movement programme is very successful.

11. Pupils' achievements are good in art, music, and design and technology. From work seen, achievements are satisfactory in geography and history and, within a narrow range of opportunities, pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education. In French, pupils' achievements are satisfactory although the subject has too little taught time in parts of the school for their learning to be reinforced.

Pupils' achievements in relation to their personal targets

12. Overall, pupils make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Targets are being more precisely set to identify the most important things pupils need to learn in subjects, and in aspects of their development. Some targets, such as those in ICT, still require considerable improvement because they are too general to allow effective measurement of pupils' successes.

Target setting

13. The school is committed to raising pupils' individual levels of achievement. A range of assessment information is collected, especially in relation to personal targets, and pupils make good progress towards these. Staff and the headteacher are examining how the nationally recognised *Differentiated Performance Criteria – 'P' levels* can be used to provide a measure of pupils' progress, and help the school to set the statutory targets required by December 2001. The school does not yet analyse whole school assessment data in order to set whole school targets. The senior management team is now considering how to collect and analyse data on pupils' achievements, in order to set whole school targets for further raising attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good overall, and have improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be good. Pupils' very good, and sometimes excellent, attitudes towards learning have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. Parents are very pleased with their children's attitudes and behaviour, and report that they greatly enjoy school and would come every day if they could. Many pupils show excitement and enjoyment during lessons. For example, during a lower school physical education lesson, pupils, some with support, were running and stopping in time with the music. They were smiling, chuckling aloud and showing real pleasure in the lesson. During an early years assembly, pupils were enjoying the experiences of smell, taste and touch when looking at, and handling, honey and apples to celebrate the Jewish New Year. Students in Post 16 concentrate exceptionally well, apply themselves diligently and work very well together. For example, in one lesson, students were making drinks as part of a home management module. Those taking part in a coffee tasting session clearly showed their likes and dislikes by facial expression and, in some instances, by speaking. Pupils' very good attitudes have a positive effect on the standards achieved.

15. The behaviour of pupils is very good overall, and is sometimes excellent. No incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection. Behaviour in, and around, the school, is very good and is sometimes excellent. For example, at the end of the school day, when waiting in the hall for transport, more able pupils talk and sign to each other and to staff, ensuring a calm and orderly finish to the day. During break-time, different classes mix well together, and there is some socialising between pupils. At break-times, pupils are very well supervised and supported by staff. Post 16 students pupils behaved very well and were very responsive to a new tutor from Hertfordshire Further Education College, who was preparing them for their college course.

16. Overall, pupils' personal development and relationships are good. The more able pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and pupils become more mature and socially responsive as they move through the school. For example, during a lesson when pupils were throwing a ball to each other, one pupil carried the ball over to another pupil who was in a wheelchair, who immediately 'beamed' appreciation. Parents report that their children are moving towards greater independence. Pupils are given many opportunities to make choices, thus promoting their independence. For example, they use 'picture exchange cards' for pointing to a symbol of what they want or of their likes and dislikes. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, some pupils do not have access to symbols and signs consistently enough. For example, this is a particular problem for pupils with more complex needs, such as deaf pupils who have very limited hearing and do not use hearing aids. Throughout the school, there is a feeling of mutual care and respect between pupils, staff and adults. This has a positive effect on the personal development of pupils, and on their self-esteem.

Attendance

17. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, and is slightly above attendance at similar schools. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and attainment. Most absences are due to medical reasons. Some pupils take extended holidays in term time, authorised by the school. There is no unauthorised absence.

18. Buses begin to arrive at the school at approximately 8.40am, but pupils are not taken off these until 9.00am. This necessarily lengthy process, taking as much as thirty minutes, confines some pupils to buses for considerable periods additional to their journey times. Parents report that the transport drivers and escorts are always very helpful and considerate when dealing with children. These high standards were confirmed during the inspection. The loading and unloading of the buses is very well organised, efficient and safe.

19. The school reports that the first teaching session is timetabled to begin at 9.30am and registration is taken at 9.35am. During the inspection, some buses arrived considerably later than this, and reduced the amount of time in the teaching day. These late arrivals are not recorded as 'late' in class registers.

20. Lessons do not always start on time after morning break and after lunch. Staff deal with pupils' personal needs at break time. As the inspection was near the beginning of the new school year, and some staff were just becoming familiar with pupils' personal routines, the process was extended. In other cases, lateness was related to the general management of the 40-minute break, to staff breaks and duties, and the nature of class groups. The late start to some lessons reduces the teaching day and disrupts the planned timetable.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

The quality of teaching in key stages and across the school

21. The quality of teaching is good overall and has some very good and excellent features. This good quality of teaching contributes well to pupils' learning in lessons. The teaching was satisfactory or better in 99 per cent of lesson, and in 78 per cent of lessons was good or better. In the one lesson where there were specific weaknesses in the teaching, pupils lost interest because the same repetitive activity went on for too long, and there was a lack of knowledge in how to present the experiences to pupils. Thirty-six per cent of teaching was very good or excellent. Of the 91 lessons observed, the teaching was excellent in five, spread across five subjects. Teachers expertly presented these lessons so that all pupils, including those with the most complex needs, were included, built upon their previous experiences and learning, and made excellent progress. Teachers and support staff work well in departmental teams. They are mutually supportive of children, families and each other, and this was especially evident during the inspection, following the bereavement of one of the pupils at the previous weekend. Teaching is

often interesting and lively. It engages pupils' interests and imaginations and, particularly, helps to sustain the interest and involvement of those who find difficulties in watching and listening. Teachers and support staff use and adapt materials in a highly creative way in mathematics, drama, story telling and role-play in English.

22. In the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Post 16 the teaching was very good overall. Teachers have a particularly expert understanding of the needs of the pupils in these parts of the school, and provide really meaningful experiences for them. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, learning is fun and is exciting. There is a positive response from children to the interesting ways that teachers help them to learn. In Post 16, the work is particularly carefully planned, and well matched to the needs of pupils. Teaching was good in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

The quality of teaching in subjects

23. Teaching is good in English including literacy, mathematics including numeracy, science, art, design and technology, music, and personal, social and health education. In physical education, teaching is very good. No judgement could be made on the teaching of geography, history, ICT, religious education as too little teaching of these subjects was seen. No geography was taught during the inspection, and only a small number of lessons could be seen in history or religious education.

The features of teaching and learning

24. Staff greatly value pupils' contributions, praise them for their achievements and have high expectations of what they can attain. They are keen to identify where pupils can improve. They guide them carefully, and encourage them well in lessons to help them to learn more effectively. The school is strong on the rights and responsibilities of individual pupils. Pupils' ability to make choices is very strongly promoted. All activities are carried out with pupils' personal dignity in mind. These include moving them, attending to personal needs and seeking pupils' expressions of their likes and dislikes. Pupils' successes are publicly acclaimed during assemblies, and in high quality displays, especially of artwork, around the school. The school is good at promoting routines and helping pupils follow the sequence of the day. For some, this is well promoted through the use of symbol timetables, but these are not always referred to consistently, nor are objects of reference used for the most disabled pupils.

25. Pupils have trusting relationships with staff, and these are particularly strong in the Foundation Stage. Mutual respect and is clearly evident throughout the school and there is an emphasis on listening to others, and sharing with them. The safe, secure environment in the Foundation Stage, and the trust children have in adults results in their willingness to try out new experiences and staff know how far to 'push' the children. In many areas of the school, very good relationships mean that pupils mostly listen well to what they are asked to do, and respond positively when asked to pay attention. As a result, pupils behave well. Where pupils display challenging behaviour, staff carry out the school's management strategies well, and incidents are quickly concluded.

26. Activities are usually well-organised and meet pupils' individual needs well. The pace of lessons is usually brisk, and this maintains pupils' interest and enables them to listen and attend. The management of pupils is strongest where there is the greatest understanding of how pupils and students learn and can be involved. Pupils' interest is maintained well because activities are made relevant and enjoyable.

27. Support staff make a very positive contribution to teaching. They are a highly skilled group, who generally understand the needs of pupils well. A small number lack experience in working with PMLD pupils, and need to be given clearer direction about ways of working with them. Many do, however, use their initiative, and intuitively offer good support to pupils with the greatest needs. There are weaknesses apparent in support staff's knowledge of how to use ICT to support

learning. Other activities are occasionally carried on for too long, especially when there is little direction or monitoring of the activity by the teacher responsible for the class. At times, they support pupils to use switch-operated equipment by holding switches, which would be better secured by fixing devices, such as adjustable clamps. Occasionally, they are too quick to direct pupils, instead of allowing time for choices. In some whole-class parts of lessons they do not appear to have clear roles. Support staff's work is strongest when the lesson plan and the intended learning outcomes are shared with them in advance of the lesson, and they are clear about their roles. They are particularly good at supporting pupils' communication, and extending their involvement with others. At other times, they are used very well for observation and assessment of pupils. In the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Post 16, they are used fully, and teachers make efficient use of their time and expertise. Assessments by teaching and support staff are thoughtful and are used well to plan subsequent lessons or stages of development. The assessments are used very well for the youngest pupils and the staff's expertise in the assessment of these pupils' needs is a particular strength.

28. All facets of communication are strongly promoted but some aspects are not consistent throughout the school. A strength of teaching is the teachers' aim for all pupils to make responses during lessons, whatever their level of disability. Where this is done particularly well, there is good use of signs and symbols to support learning and communication. A good start has been made in using PECS. However, the use of these systems is not consistent through the school. Although good examples were seen for some pupils, not all pupils have consistent access to the communication systems they need or to the technology to support their self-expression and learning. This would strengthen their progress, and especially the progress of pupils with sensory difficulties and those with more complex needs. In some classes, the use of technology is beginning to support pupils' writing, but this is not generally successful largely because the staff lack knowledge of how ICT can be used, and how it should be taught to pupils with the most complex needs.

29. Teachers' knowledge of their subjects and pupils' needs is good overall, although there are some weaknesses. Although teachers' knowledge in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is very good overall and is strong in Key Stage 2, some newer teachers in parts of Key Stages 3 and 4 lack knowledge and experience in working with pupils with complex and profound learning difficulties. Some teachers are new to the school, but they are keen and enthusiastic, and are learning quickly. As a result, they have built on the school's systems and developed good quality planning, assessment and recording procedures. They are well supported by school staff, and are developing approaches, which are increasingly relevant to the needs of PMLD pupils. Nevertheless, these approaches need extending. Secondary staff tend to be more experienced than the primary staff. The majority of staff has a good range of expertise in dealing with the wide range of pupils' needs, and they ensure these pupils are appropriately involved, particularly in class lessons. These pupils learn because of staff's specific targets for them, although the teaching methods of some staff are limited.

30. Most teachers have good methods to help pupils learn in individual, group and whole class sessions. Activities are frequently changed to maintain interest. Regular role-play, drama, visits and visiting speakers all enrich pupils' learning, and make it relevant to their needs. During the inspection drama was particularly successful at helping pupils understand the sequence in a story of the *Odyssey* in Post-16. Individual support is usually well focused, and support staff take a very effective role in helping individuals. Most know the correct level of support to give. Overall, however, little systematic use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in subjects. Good use is made of ICT to develop pupils' sensory skills, especially when using the school's sensory room and equipment. However, more use and application of skills developed needs to be planned for when they are studying other subjects. Occasionally, in whole class activities, there is too much waiting while support staff work with one pupil while the rest of the class watch and wait their turn. This slows the pace of the lessons (which are usually brisk) and sometimes pupils' interests wane. Better use of group work could take place at this time.

31. Pupils with additional special educational needs are often taught well, and sometimes very well, during class lessons. The good aspects of teaching occur when teachers use a range of strategies to support learning including signing, symbols, technology aids and good questioning techniques. Good teaching is based on pupils' prior learning, and staff's very good knowledge of each pupil's, social, physical and academic needs. Learning support staff are well deployed, and they work effectively with individuals and small groups of pupils. Teaching is less effective when lesson objectives lack clarity, and pupils with the most complex needs have an insufficient range of communication aids to respond to instruction with greater independence and choice. On a few occasions lessons lack pace and variety which decreases these pupils' motivation and interest.

32. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported. The new co-ordinator has developed individual teaching plans for those pupils currently being supported by bi-lingual support workers. This new procedure is having a positive impact on ensuring learning support is effectively deployed and targeted. All pupils not receiving specialist support have their needs met through the cycle of reviews of their six monthly priority learning targets.

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

The quality and range of learning opportunities

33. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its whole school curriculum and strengths outweigh weakness. Over the years it has built upon existing strengths to consider carefully the changing needs of pupils and, especially, to broaden the opportunities for PMLD pupils. However, statutory requirements to teach religious education are not fully met. The key issue from the last inspection relating to this has not been addressed and progress in relation to meeting this requirement is unsatisfactory. Religious education is not sufficiently taught to five-year-old children in the Foundation Stage or to pupils in Key Stage 1. It is not formally planned and taught at Key Stage 1, although pupils are taught about religions, celebrations and festivals. It is taught in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, although limited time is given to the subject. Post 16, it is not taught at all. Pupils, therefore, only make progress within a limited range of learning opportunities. The school recognises this oversight and plans to rectify it as soon as possible.

34. The curriculum is now satisfactory overall. It is very strong on providing relevant experiences and opportunities, and is reasonably broad and balanced, although there are deficiencies in balance of subjects in some parts of the school. All National Curriculum subjects are now taught, as well as personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs awareness education. Careers education is good and is taught to all pupils from Key Stage 3. It develops well, so that in Post 16 there is a very well developed programme, with work experience opportunities and mini-enterprise projects.

35. The whole school curriculum includes the National Curriculum, suitably modified to take account of pupils' needs, and the sensory and the extended physical curriculum, both of which permeate through the school. The sensory, tactile approach is effective for pupils with the most complex and profound physical and learning needs, who benefit from the planned careful handling, moving and positioning. This works well, and ensures that they are comfortable and in the best position to achieve and increase their learning. The planning and approach has a positive impact on pupils' learning and understanding as they use all their senses when listening carefully, looking, touching, tasting and smelling during lessons. For example, in sensory science lessons, pupils investigate fruit and vegetables, and smell and taste them before expressing likes and dislikes. While in the sensory room, pupils progress well when experimenting with dark and light, using a range of switches to switch a variety of lights off and on. The curriculum is enhanced by personal, social and health education, together with communication, the planned sensory curriculum and extended physical contributions.

36. The curriculum is very good for nursery and reception age children in the Foundation Stage. This is because planning takes account of the children's needs, and staff have a high degree of knowledge as to how to make the learning opportunities interesting and meaningful for these children. Pupils taught within the school's Early Years department (Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1) follow the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is very relevant for the needs of the pupils. For pupils in the lower department (Key Stage 2) of the school, the curriculum is planned and delivered within a primary school model, and effectively meets their needs. Much of the teaching is through a topic approach; and is appropriate to pupils' age, interests and needs. In the middle school department (Key Stage 3), the curriculum is planned and delivered through a secondary, subject-based approach. This works well, taking into account pupils' academic and personal needs. The curriculum is very good at Post 16, with a very good range of accredited courses, supported by very strong college links and opportunities, and carefully considered, well-balanced timetables. Although in the rest of the school the curriculum is satisfactory overall, there is too little time for pupils to learn a modern foreign language and, consequently, they do not make enough progress because of this. All aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) are not sufficiently taught and there is no progressive programme for pupils to build on their earlier experiences and skills.

37. Physical and sensory opportunities have a high priority within the curriculum. While this is reasonable for some pupils, a direct result is that other pupils have too little taught time in some subjects. For instance, there are approximately three half-hour sessions for mathematics per week in the lower school, which is too little time for higher attaining pupils. Subject leaders insufficiently audit the amount of time given to the teaching of subjects and, consequently, there is no overview about the amount of time allocated to a particular subject. There are weaknesses in identifying where links are made with other subjects and, although some of these may be good, they are not systematically planned.

38. All subjects now have policies, which guide subject provision and planning. All, except ICT, have appropriate and good quality schemes of work. However, subject policies are mostly only reviewed and revised on a five-year rota. Many are now considerably out-of-date and do not take account of the new National Curriculum 2000. Some, however, are now planned for a two-year review. This more regular re-appraisal should be applied to all policies. All policies and schemes of work need to contain criteria on how and when the subject is to be monitored and evaluated. This information is often missing from these documents. Information and communication technology has a 'continuing work statement' until the new scheme of work is formalised. There has been no scheme of work for some considerable time. The 'statement' contains only brief guidance on how ICT could be used in the whole curriculum.

39. There is insufficient taught time for the whole curriculum. Planning the curriculum to meet the complex and varying needs of pupils on the school's roll has been tackled with reasonable success, and the sensory and physical approaches and opportunities do support pupils' learning and progress during the time available. The inspection was early in the term, and many pupils were new to their teachers. Staff were learning about pupils' management routines and developing an understanding of their physical management. Even when taking this into account, many lessons frequently do not start at the prescribed time on the timetable and break time is often extended. The school considers that some of the break time is counted as taught curriculum time although, in some classes, little teaching goes on. Some form time sessions, at the beginning and end of the day, are not productive, as there is little teaching while, in other classes, teachers start lessons swiftly and work right up to the ends of sessions. This difference is partly due to the complexity of the physical needs of classes, the organisation of staff breaks and the available staff on duty but in other instances time is not used productively. More attention needs to be given to the organisation of form time and break times to minimise lost time. Furthermore, the balance of time on timetables is based on the needs of those pupils with PMLD and not enough time is given to some subjects for higher attaining pupils.

40. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been introduced satisfactorily, and the school's response is having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. Support for pupils' communication and listening has been strengthened. Support for literacy is strong in identified

literacy sessions, but the school recognises that not all teachers make effective use of opportunities to support pupils' emerging skills or their reading and writing in other subjects. Opportunities are lost, particularly for higher attaining pupils in some subjects. The school has made good efforts to ensure that all staff received training prior to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. There has been a series of in-house workshops to share good practice, and explore common concerns primarily amongst teaching staff. Staff have discussed the implications of mental and oral starter work for different ability levels of pupils, and have modified their practice accordingly. However, there are inconsistencies in the way planning is presented across departments, which makes monitoring of the full impact of the strategy difficult to evaluate. In addition, although numeracy elements are being taught across the curriculum in areas such as science, subject policies and medium-term plans have yet to state the relevant numeracy links being covered in the different subject areas.

41. Extra curricular activities are inadequate. This is similar to the situation identified in the last inspection. This is mainly due to the transport arrangements of the school, although there are no lunchtime clubs or activities during the long midday break. The school does participate in residential experiences, mainly for pupils from the lower school department and above. As pupils move through the upper school, they are given at least two opportunities to participate in residential experiences, and a further two opportunities in the middle and upper departments. Many pupils, supported by some school staff, also take part in a summer play scheme organised by the local social services department for Waverley pupils.

Community links, links with other institutions and integration

Links with the community

42. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Staff work with social services to provide a summer school for pupils during the long holidays. This is very effective in providing continuity for pupils and respite for parents. A well-known food company has provided invaluable help for pupils at the school. The company provides financial support on a regular basis through fund-raising activities, and two members of their staff also help in school on a weekly basis. Pupils have recently submitted Christmas card designs, and the company will select one design for the Christmas card. These activities raise funds and contribute significantly to the personal development of pupils. The local community supports the school's fund-raising events, and regular community use of the swimming pool, brings in additional income. These visits contribute to pupils' social development. Other positive links with the community include work experience placements for pupils at local supermarkets and parks. The school has strong national and international links. Teachers have visited Waverley School from Gambia, Singapore and the school was featured in a Japanese Magazine. The school welcomes nursing students, who make a valuable contribution to the care of pupils. The school makes very good use of the local community with regular visits and visitors to support and enhance the curriculum. The school maintains links with Enfield College through the Links Consortium, but, at present, this does not provide any courses for Waverley students.

Links with partner institutions

43. Links with partner institutions are excellent. The school is very welcoming to visitors from partner institutions, who take full advantage of the opportunities, such as the swimming facilities, offered by the school. Excellent links with social services provide support for the school, parents and pupils. Links with Hertford Regional College and Capel Manor College are excellent. Staff from Hertford visit weekly to provide a transitional link programme for students, and work alongside staff to get know pupils and students before transfer to the college. This is very effective in building pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Both Hertford and Capel Manor tailor their courses in consultation with the head of the Post 16 unit to suit the needs of the pupils, and this is proving to be very effective. Parents are very pleased with the improvements that have been made to college placements, and are kept fully involved by the school. The quality of the provision offered

by both colleges more than compensates for the time lost through pupils' travelling. Pupils from mainstream primary schools involved in integration packages visit the school on a regular basis. A Key Stage 1 class visited the school for a whole day, and enjoyed some mixed sessions in physical education, story telling and social play. Three Year 9 pupils from a local secondary school help in the middle school for half a day per week. This is very effective in promoting the personal development of all pupils involved in these exchange visits. There are many visits by staff, pupils and parents to and from other schools and this often leads to very good exchanges of information and ideas.

Integration

44. The school has a very good policy and very good procedures for integrating pupils into mainstream schools. The main criteria are that the placement must extend the social or educational experiences of the pupil. Parents are fully involved in all discussions about integration. In summer term 2001, fourteen pupils were on part-time integration 'packages' with mainstream schools. All of these placements were successful, and will continue this academic year. Integration is often identified on pupils' statements and much time and thought go into finding the correct placement. All placements are well planned with the receiving school and, a learning support assistant always accompanies the pupil. This policy is very effective. In the last two years, two pupils from the early years department were successfully integrated full time into mainstream schools. The school consistently encourages pupils' integration into mainstream schools.

Provision for personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

45. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. Although an assembly or period of reflection takes place for the pupils daily, these can be perfunctory. Opportunities are missed to promote the spiritual dimension more fully. The time given to religious education in the school curriculum is minimal, and entirely absent in Post 16, so that planned opportunities for pupils and students to gain spiritual opportunities in their study of religion are few. The school celebrates a range of religious festivals, and Easter is planned as a strong focus for pupils to experience the awe and wonder of new creation. Art lessons and the study of a range of sculptures and paintings successfully extend pupils' imaginations. Pupils enjoy music. During the week of the inspection, they were seen responding boisterously to Beethoven's *1812 overture* as they played gleefully with piles of shredded paper. However, opportunities to stimulate pupils' senses to extend their imagination in music are not as extensive as they could be and need developing.

46. The very good use of stimulating resources in almost every lesson helps pupils' spiritual development as they begin to use their senses to appreciate what has been closed to them before. Post 16 students respond positively to the exceptionally beautiful gardens at a neighbouring college. During an introductory visit, students were able to see, smell and touch new plants and flowers, which were startlingly new to them. They responded with great pleasure, as they were able to sink their hands in compost. They enjoyed walking in the large and beautiful greenhouses. Similarly, pupils enjoy the school's sensory garden. Such experiences lift the pupils' spirits, and enhance their spiritual development. Staff sensitively improved pupils' awareness to spiritual issues as they spoke individually to them about the death of a pupil during the weekend previous to the inspection.

47. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils have no doubt as to the school's expectations of them, and they clearly know right behaviour from wrong behaviour. All staff reinforce this on an on-going basis. Pupils are taught to have a strong awareness of their group, and share responsibility for each other within it. They help each other whenever possible, and take some measure of responsibility for their own actions, and, on occasions, those of the group.

48. Opportunities for pupils' social development are very good and are a strength of the school. Pupils have very good opportunities to respond to teachers and to other individuals. Language and communication are painstakingly developed. Pupils are enabled to communicate in a variety of ways. *Intensive interaction* activities improve pupils' attention spans, and encourages them to communicate. Breaks and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions. Pupils take turns, make choices and treat each other politely. School visitors, and visits of pupils to a range of community and cultural destinations widen pupils' social experiences, so that they become more confident. Post 16 visits to college and work experiences further enhance this process. There are good opportunities for residential experience, which helps pupils' independence, and increases their sociability

49. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about British culture and of a wide range of other cultures. During the year, pupils have enjoyed unfamiliar music played by an Elizabethan quartet. They have taken part in a whole day's interaction and communication through visual arts. There has been a school visit to St Albans to see Roman remains. The upper school has visited Tate Modern and Tate Britain. There are regular outings within the community, some involving visits to venues, such as museums and exhibitions. The 'big books' in the school such as *Handa's surprise* reflect other world cultures. An African drumming group has played for four sessions to support the study of the humanities. The school has organised visits to the mosque in Regent's Park, and the Hindu temple at Neasden. During the week of the inspection, the school celebrated *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year, with energy and enthusiasm. Pupils have joined in an annual 'French experience', organised by the local education authority, and there are plans to take pupils abroad next year for the first time.

50. Since the last inspection, social development has been maintained. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development are still less developed than the planned opportunities for social, cultural and multi cultural development. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory in these aspects of the school's provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare

51. The school takes very good care of all its pupils. The quality of support and guidance is very good. All staff, including the very hardworking premises manager, are fully committed to meeting the needs of the pupils. The school has maintained the very high standards of care identified in the last report. During the inspection, very good support was provided for pupils who were coming to terms with the bereavement of one of their peers.

52. Very good procedures are in place for dealing with pupils' medical conditions and first aid incidents. Approximately half the staff have attended a first aid course. All medication is kept in a locked cupboard, and there is a secure fridge for storing other medication. Very good procedures are in place to attend to pupils' medical conditions, to dispense medication and deal with pupils' feeding requirements. Pupils are well supervised at all times by a very committed and caring staff. Parents report that all staff are very helpful and supportive when there are concerns about a child. The school nurse provides induction for all new staff on how to deal with epilepsy and the medical conditions of the pupils in their class. The school doctor visits fortnightly and a paediatrician runs a monthly clinic.

53. Procedures for health and safety are excellent. All legal requirements are met, and fire and electrical regulations fully adhered to. The premises manager is a governor on the school's health and safety committee, and provides regular reports to other governors. There are regular risk assessments of the school premises and the premises manager carries out all minor repairs. All

accidents and serious incidents are recorded centrally. Six members of staff have a highly prized national qualification to act as lifeguards. The school also takes up references on all volunteers, and their names are checked with the Department for Education and Skills. To further ensure pupils' safety and protection, the school has a strict policy of never leaving pupils alone with volunteers.

54. Procedures for child protection are good. There are three named people for child protection who have attended the appropriate training courses, and the school follows local authority guidelines and meet legal requirements. The headteacher has weekly meetings with a representative from social services, and attends all case conferences. Staff are looking forward to attending training courses on the new category of identifying neglected children when training is available. The school makes very good use of all outside agencies to ensure pupils are provided with a very high level of support. The school does not yet have a policy for looked after children, but formal procedures are being put in place, based on current practice, which is effective and includes regular meetings with carers and the educational welfare officer.

55. Very good procedures are in place to monitor the attendance of pupils. Registers are well kept, with the exception of accurate late recording, and meet requirements. Parents are expected to telephone the school on a pupil's first day of absence. Sometimes, parents write messages in the home-school diaries, or pass information to escorts who then inform the school. If there is no contact from home on the first day of a pupil's absence, the school endeavours to make contact with parents, but this not a formal policy. The home liaison teacher makes regular contact with parents if there are concerns about a pupil's attendance at school, and liaises with the educational welfare officer when appropriate. The educational welfare officer is very supportive of the school, and makes home visits on request. This has brought improvement in the attendance of some pupils. The school presents certificates to pupils whose attendance has improved. This is a good incentive.

56. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good. Staff make good use of verbal praise, signs, smiles and stickers to reward pupils' good behaviour. Pupils respond very well to the staff, and try to do their best. The behaviour policy is used consistently across the school, and is effective. Pupils with more challenging behaviour have an individual behaviour plan. These plans are drawn up after discussions with the head of department, learning support assistants, class teacher and the educational psychologist. Behaviour concerns are identified, and there are discussions on strategies that are working or not working. A plan for action is then put in place and is reviewed termly or earlier if required. These procedures are very effective in bringing about improvements in behaviour. When monitoring a pupil where there are particular concerns, the class teacher keeps an individual record of all incidents, and involves and alerts the parents. When a pupil moves from one school department to another, the school puts in place a transitional behaviour plan, drawn up after meetings between the current staff and the new staff. This stays in place for one term, then it is reviewed. This ensures a consistent approach to supporting the pupils' needs effectively. The school has reported to the governing body a significant reduction in the number of serious incidents.

57. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Pupils' personal development is monitored through their records of achievement, which are kept throughout their time in the school. The 'goodbye' / end of day session is used very effectively to present stickers for good work or effort. However, this session is not always used for this purpose, or to good effect in all classes. Pupils respond very well to these sessions with big smiles when their name is called, or when receiving applause from their peers. At regular meetings, learning support assistants and teachers share information to ensure careful monitoring of pupils' personal development. The personal development of pupils is also monitored by the progress they make towards the targets on their individual education plans for personal care, and personal and social education. However, some of the targets on the individual education plans are too broad and continue over long periods of time. A number of pupils with more complex needs do not have sufficient access to technological aids to support their self-expression and independence. Although staff training, and the recently acquired 'concept keyboards', will provide some additional support, it is too early to measure its impact.

58. Overall, the school provides good support for the majority of pupils identified as having English as an additional language. The school has prioritised support relative to the most common home languages, which are Bengali and Turkish. Current bi-lingual support for Turkish pupils is more securely established than for Bengali students. The school recognises this, and is reviewing its current situation. The present co-ordinator, who is relatively new to the post, has developed individual teaching plans for pupils currently being supported by bi-lingual support workers. This new procedure is having a positive impact on ensuring learning support is consistent and appropriately targeted. All pupils not receiving specialist support have their needs met as part of the school annual review procedures, which involve teachers setting six monthly priority learning targets for each pupil. Staff have received induction training appropriate and sensitive to a school population that comprises a mix of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The school makes good use of translators, and ensures that all annual review meetings have interpreters present when needed, and that information is presented in pupils' first language when necessary. Although there are satisfactory systems for monitoring the effectiveness of support, such as the annual review, all EAL procedures have not been formalised into a separate policy that clearly outlines all aspects of current practice. Existing bi-lingual support is insufficiently based on a formalised screening procedure, which identifies all students at various stages of Early Language Acquisition across all ethnic groupings. Although the school has a good quality action plan to move this area forward, some proposed outcomes lack clear criteria for success.

Assessment and the monitoring of pupil's academic performance

59. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in improving its arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress. However, the policy requires updating to ensure that staff in all departments are aware of, and use, the agreed monitoring and recording procedures. The school recognises the need to formalise its procedures for analysing attainment, and to state clearly the impact on practice. In preparation for setting statutory targets to raise pupils' attainment, it recognises the need to develop a system of recording pupils' progress that enables teachers to set realistic group targets and to track individual progress over time.

60. Overall, procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievements on entry to the school are good. They are very thorough and detailed, and cover important areas associated with developing each pupil's skills and knowledge in areas such as social, emotional, physical, independence and communication. However, they do not make provision to record pre-literacy and numeracy achievements for those students who demonstrate achievements in these areas. This is a missed opportunity by staff to baseline these two key areas of learning, which could later be used to illuminate National Curriculum progress over time. Assessment is also unsatisfactory in geography and history. Although there have been satisfactory improvements in the areas related to assessment since the last inspection, there are inconsistencies in the quality of individual targets stated in pupils' individual education plans and lesson plans. Although overall, they are satisfactory, some targets are written in general terms and are not specific enough.

61. Assessment information is satisfactorily used to enable staff to monitor standards accurately across the school, and to aid planning. However, the school recognises this as a key area for development. The majority of staff record pupil outcomes at the end of lessons on a daily basis, and modify their planning and teaching as necessary. However, formal systems are variable for monitoring what has been taught and learned over each term in National Curriculum subjects. Current medium-term planning systems do not enable staff to make an evaluative comment concerning aspects of teaching that went well, and not so well. Teachers' medium and short-term plans are not adequately monitored by all co-ordinators to inform them of what has been taught and learned across all subject areas. This results in co-ordinators not knowing exactly if there is adequate time for the delivery of the subjects they are responsible for. It also affects the quality of long-term action planning based on a thorough audit of teaching and attainment. Although end of key stage assessments are being carried out, the school recognises the need for more in-depth analysis of National Curriculum attainment by class teachers and

subject co-ordinators. Performance management systems are developing in school and, as a result of this, teachers' knowledge of target setting and tracking procedures has recently improved. However, group target setting procedures are underdeveloped as a way of improving performance of different groups of pupils in particular areas associated with National Curriculum attainment targets.

62. Overall, procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. This results in the school providing effective support and advice for all pupils. The school has employed additional teaching assistants, and their work in classrooms is generally of high quality. They give caring and sensitive support to all pupils. The school makes very good use of outside agencies in the assessment of pupils' individual teaching and learning needs. The behaviour policy clearly states what is good practice, and outlines procedures for physical intervention when necessary. It also provides staff with information on what should be included when writing an individual behaviour plan to support pupils who are exhibiting extremely challenging behaviour. The school offers older pupils a satisfactory range of accreditation systems based on their levels of ability. An area for development relevant to all age ranges of pupils is the need to provide staff and pupils with a range of technology aids to support learning across the curriculum and improve communication. This would increase staff's ability to introduce and reinforce core skills and concepts more effectively, and pupils would be able to increase their ability to respond to adult questioning more independently.

63. Procedures are good for reviewing pupils' progress against specified targets within the annual review framework, and are a strength of the school. Schemes of work that state learning objectives in all subject areas have now been completed for most subjects, and are used to plan and assess pupils' attainment during lessons and over time. The school has established secure systems for monitoring end of key stage National Curriculum attainment. All parents receive an end of year Annual Statement of Achievement and Experience report, which comments on progress over the year, and topics covered, including events and visits. In addition, the school uses an individual profile and a record of experience and achievement folder to record each pupil's attainments and achievements as they move through the school. A significant strength of the current assessment procedures is that each pupil has individual targets for each subject. Although these priority targets are linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, they are not directly referenced to the suggested levels of attainment that would assist teachers in the setting of class, group or individual progress targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

64. Parents regard Waverley as a very good school. They are very pleased with what the school offers and achieves.

65. The school has very good links with parents. The home liaison teacher provides a very effective partnership with parents. The school listens to parents, and draws heavily on their knowledge of their own child, and the child's likes and dislikes, as part of an exchange of information before pupils join the school. The school uses the information from parents to support an easy transition from home to school. These pre-school meetings are very effective in building trust at an early stage in the partnership between parents and the school. The full induction process for pupils and parents new to the school is carefully planned, with the needs of the child and the parents at the centre of the plan. The school supports parents very well, especially at times of bereavement, and is very sensitive to family needs. For example, staff have considerable understanding of the needs of families with pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties.

66. The quality of information provided to parents about their children's progress is very good, with some excellent features. The school works very hard at providing parents with good quality information about their child's progress. Recently acquired software, will enable the school to provide some parents with notes and reports in their home languages. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and levels are reported to parents at the end of each key stage, together with a report of what their children have experienced over the last academic year, and the topics which

have been covered. Some parents would like more information on how to help their child at home with topic work. Parents are provided with written reports from all the professionals before the annual review takes place. This allows them to take part in informed discussions about their child's progress. Parents are also given detailed information on their child's progress. Parents can, and do, request interpreters and health specialists to attend these reviews. The targets, which are set at the annual review, are reviewed informally after six months by the class teacher and parents. There is a consultation meeting between parents and teachers in the autumn term, and pupils share their work with parents in the spring term. In the summer term parents are invited into the school to meet their child's teacher for the following term. In addition to these formal meetings, parents are invited to coffee mornings. The school arranges for speakers to provide parents with information over a range of areas such as feeding, youth services and benefits, and responds very quickly to parents' concerns. The school provides a parents' room where parent groups, some from ethnic minorities, meet and offer support to each other, and to the school. The home school diaries are very well used, and transmit a wealth of information between home and school, including photographs of pupils involved in different activities. These are much appreciated by parents. The school is very innovative in ensuring parents can access the information provided. For example, parents with poor literacy skills, who cannot use home school diaries, are provided with dictaphones for daily exchange of information. In addition, the school provides regular newsletters with information on all forthcoming events. Parents appreciate the amount of time and effort that the staff put into providing them with information. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are informative and very well presented and conform with legal requirements.

67. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is excellent. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is excellent. Parents make a very valuable contribution to the life of the school. The school generates a very warm and welcoming atmosphere, and the parents respond to this. During the inspection, parents made many positive comments, such as 'The school is an extension of the family'. Parents are quick to take advantage of the many opportunities the school offers them to become more involved in their children's learning. The school reports that almost all parents attend the annual reviews and other meetings that the school arranges. Some parents help regularly with swimming and with the hydrotherapy pool. The physiotherapist and the occupational therapist visit families during the summer holidays to check that equipment is correctly sized, and to work with parents and pupils on the programme used in school. Parents appreciate this and continue to work with their children throughout the summer. This makes a valuable contribution to their children's progress. The school constantly encourages parents to increase their involvement in their children's learning. For example, one parent whose child has just joined the school, has been encouraged to take a Signalong course, which begins later this term. The school has already discussed with her the possibility of integration at some time in the future. Parents welcome similar advice and support. The hard working Waverley Association for Special People (WASP), an association of parents, teachers and friends, is professionally organised and supports the school very well. Each year, WASP raises considerable amounts of money for the school, and pays the running costs of the school's transport as well as supporting the school's integration programme. The current project is to purchase a new bus, in conjunction with the Variety Club of Great Britain. WASP organises social and fund-raising events that are all well supported by parents and the local community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Leadership and management

68. The leadership and management of the school is good overall and some elements of its work, such as the linking of financial planning to school development priorities, are very good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school, and is well supported by senior staff. She has built up a strong, competent team who are very committed to the school's aims and values. The school fulfils its aims well, and the day-to-day management is good.

69. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall in relation to the key issues raised, the school's response to new initiatives, such as the literacy and numeracy strategies, performance management, and its own identified priorities. However, although some aspects of all the key issues raised during the last inspection have been dealt with well, not all have been fully addressed. Success criteria for the school development plan are now mostly well defined and carefully monitored, although their link to raising standards is less clearly stated. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work have been set up, such as those in relation to some aspects of teaching, new initiatives such as the intensive interaction project, and the literacy strategy. Curriculum co-ordinators are still not sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and teaching in their subjects in the school as a whole, although monitoring within departments and of curriculum coverage and planning is more established. Staffing difficulties have slowed the school's monitoring programme, particularly at co-ordinator level, and it appreciates that it must now address this further. The curriculum has been broadened. All subjects of the National Curriculum are now taught, although religious education is not taught at Foundation Stage for pupils of statutory school age and in Post 16. In some classes the amount of time spent on some subjects, such as French, is too limited. Although this is sometimes because of the need to attend to pupils' physical needs and to allow time for staff breaks, this is further compounded by pupils' late arrival at school and the lack of urgency in starting lessons in some classes. As a result, the curriculum in some subjects is still too narrow, because the time spent on teaching them is insufficient.

70. The headteacher and senior management team provide good leadership and management. They have done well to manage the many staffing changes since the last inspection, and build up a cohesive team. As a result, the school's shared sense of purpose and direction is good and commitment to improvement is very good. The systems for development planning ensure that everyone knows the school's priorities and has an opportunity to contribute to them. However, the timescale for some development has been too long. For example, curriculum policies and schemes of work need a shorter review cycle to ensure that the school takes swifter account of new guidance and initiatives, and incorporates these into its work within shorter time frames.

71. There is a satisfactory performance management policy, and the governing body is kept informed of the progress of performance management arrangements. Performance management is tied well into the school's development planning and action plans. Target setting for teachers, and for the headteacher, in relation to pupil progress and whole school target setting, is the subject of much current thought in the school as it reviews the ways in which it assigns assessment levels to its pupils and describes their progress. Governors are well aware of their responsibilities to set whole school targets by December 2001, and recognise the need to address this with more urgency. Financial planning is clearly linked to the school development plan, and progress towards achievement of objectives in the plan is reviewed annually and reported to governors.

72. The school's internal management structure and individual roles and responsibilities are clear to all staff. Departments are managed well, and communication within departments is very strong. Departmental heads meet regularly to discuss whole school issues, and to support pupils' smooth transition between departments. These arrangements work well. However, a number of subjects have more than one co-ordinator and the links between these could be further strengthened to provide better continuity for pupils' learning.

73. The school carries out regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of some areas of its performance, particularly in relation to meeting individual pupils' needs, and overall this is satisfactory. However, this needs to develop this further and the Governing Body and senior management team are now considering how it will meet its responsibilities in terms of target setting for the whole school. The heads of department and some subject co-ordinators regularly monitor planning. The senior management team, in conjunction with external advisers, has also monitored teaching in areas such as literacy, numeracy and the Intensive interaction project. The subject co-ordinators do not monitor the teaching of other staff in their subject, however, and this restricts the further development of good practice.

74. The work of governors is satisfactory. They are strongly committed to the school, and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. They largely meet their statutory responsibilities, although they are unaware that religious education is not taught in parts of the school where it is legally required. Currently, they are too dependent on the headteacher's reports for their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, although governors have a good understanding of progress in relation to initiatives within the school development plan, and know the school's strengths well, they are not aware of all aspects of the school's work which require improvement. There is, for example, no system of focused visits. There is an efficient system of governors' committees, properly constituted, with clear terms of reference and a regular programme of meetings, enabling them to report to the full governing body. The committees work well in areas such as health and safety, premises and financial management, but there is a need for the governing body to strengthen its role in relation to the overview of curriculum and whole school standards, so that it can more effectively fulfil its role as critical friend.

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77. Overall, the school makes satisfactory use of new technology to support its work. It is used very well for office administration and teachers are now beginning to use computers for their planning. There is a greater awareness of how the use of the Internet can support learning and teachers are embarking on training under the New Opportunities Funding. However, its use to support pupils' learning, and of ICT as a subject itself, is limited.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources of the school; induction and professional development of staff

78. Taking teachers and support staff together, the numbers of staff, their qualifications and experience are good overall. The combination of an adequate number of well-qualified and experienced teachers, and a very good number of high quality support staff, contributes to the high standards in the school. Staff changes over recent years have been managed very well, and the teaching staff comprises a core of well-experienced people who have served the school for many years, such as those in the senior management team. Combined with this, are a small number of relatively in-experienced teachers, two of whom started at the school at beginning of September, but who have brought with them valuable mainstream teaching experience. Excellent relationships

between teachers and support staff, combined with first-rate teamwork, are major factors in the success enjoyed in the classrooms. Support staff feel that they are valued by their teacher colleagues. However, they say they would enjoy even more satisfaction if there were ways for them to contribute to the target setting process for pupils and more involved in the formulation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The range of therapists in the school adds a further strong dimension to the staff team. Therapists share very good relationships with the classroom staff. The teachers, support staff and therapists work very effectively together in providing good quality education and therapy for the pupils and students in their care. Ancillary staff are valued for their contribution to pupils' well being. High staff morale is a significant strength of the school.

79. The senior management team are strongly committed to staff induction. Induction for new teaching staff is very good. All teachers receive basic initial training in areas such as behaviour, intensive interaction, dressing and toileting, and drama games and practical ideas for working with pupils with severe learning difficulties. New teachers have sessions with senior staff and other professionals, who explain the annual review process, discuss contact with parents and other important day-to-day issues. They also visit a range of other special schools. They are encouraged to attend relevant courses. Following the success of teacher induction, a programme has been introduced for support staff. This programme is comprehensive, beginning with two weeks' intensive training with the class teacher and head of department. After this, support staff attend eight half-day support staff training sessions that include areas such as hoist training, health and safety, behaviour management and child protection. This new training programme for support staff is an improvement in overall staff induction, which is becoming a strength of the school.

80. Professional development is good. All staff appreciate the support they receive from the senior management team in attending courses and other training. The various sources of funding for training are carefully managed and monitored by the deputy headteacher, who works closely with the professional development co-ordinator. The effectiveness of the staff team is enhanced by monitoring of their work by the senior management team. There is still considerable room for improvement in monitoring of subject staff by the subject co-ordinators. Currently, the latter rarely get the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching their subjects.

81. Accommodation is very good. It is spacious, bright and welcoming. Accessibility is very good. The swimming facilities are outstanding. As well as being an excellent provision for the pupils and students, the swimming pool is widely used by other schools and the community. The complex includes a very good hydrotherapy pool, which is well used in the school's physical education and therapeutic programmes. A weakness in accommodation is the absence of a dedicated science room. Such a room would enable some of the pupils to extend further their experiences in this subject. For example, they would have access to a gas supply for some practical work in Key Stages 3 and 4. The design and technology room is under-used for resistant material work: it is used largely as a store / resource room. Dining facilities are cramped, although separate from the hall, which is a very good facility for physical education. Foundation Stage and Post 16 accommodation are very good. The premises manager and cleaning staff take great pride in their work, and the building is exceptionally well looked after. The overall appearance of the school is enhanced by good displays of very well presented artwork, and photographic records of outings and achievements. Outdoor facilities are good and are well used by pupils. Attractive garden areas provide an extra facility as an educational resource. The school is a very pleasant environment in which to learn and work.

82. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Resources are very good in music and physical education, and are good in science, personal and social education, and Foundation Stage and Post 16. Since the previous inspection, there has been considerable improvement in resources for history and geography. However, more development is required in these subjects. Teachers make good use of resource centres. The school library is adequate. Although all classes are allocated a lesson in the library every week, it is generally under-used.

Financial planning and management

83. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school has maintained very good financial planning and control. The chair of governors, the finance committee and the deputy headteacher work closely and effectively together to set and manage the annual budget. The headteacher maintains an operational oversight of the budgetary processes. The school development plan is a well-constructed five-year rolling programme that enables the school to plan educational priorities well ahead, and ensure that careful financial management supports them.

84. The large amounts of money raised by the Waverley Association for Special People (WASP) from local business, charity events and individual friends of the school, are fully accounted for. WASP funds are often used to support local authority and City of London grants in major undertakings, such as the refurbishment of the sensory room. They are also used to support parents who are unable to raise the money to pay for school visits. Staff can bid for WASP funding if they need to organise special events and visits.

85. The standards fund is used effectively to support the in-service training and development of teachers and support staff. The Ethnic Minorities Action Grant is used to provide support workers in Turkish and Bengali, who directly support teachers and are invaluable for the school's translation needs. The small local authority grant for translation is supplemented from the school's budget.

86. The school understands and implements the four principles of best value. It is effective in securing the best price from tenders, such as for a new telephone system. It is not yet effective in using its links with similar special schools to compare its educational and financial performance.

87. The school administration officer works hard to support staff in managing day-to-day finances. Now in its second year of chequebook financing, the school is less cautious, but still prudent in managing its under-spend. Plans have been made to reduce the surplus to a little over two per cent of the annual budget in the current year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

88. In order to improve the educational standards and rectify the weaknesses the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- Improve the curriculum and pupils' progress so that:
 - * religious education is taught as the law requires;
 - * there is a better balance between the subjects of the National Curriculum and sufficient time is allocated to them, within the context of the whole curriculum provided;
 - * time is used effectively, so that the full time allocated to a lesson is used for teaching, that lessons start on time, and that all pupils arrive at school by the designated beginning of the school day;
 - * curriculum policies are more frequently reviewed, using included identified monitoring and evaluation procedures;
 - * planned links are made between what is taught in subjects, to further support the relevance of what pupils learn;
 - * that taught PSHE time at breaks is consistently supported by adequate planning, regularly evaluated and updated.
- Develop the role of subject co-ordinators in line with government guidance so that they especially:
 - * monitor pupils' standards in their subjects;
 - * regularly audit the provision in their subjects;
 - * evaluate the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Improve further the provision for pupils with PMLD and pupils with complex difficulties, including those with sensory disabilities by:
 - * improving the ways in which teachers help these pupils learn and communicate through the use of ICT and communication aids, and more systematic use of signing, symbols and objects of reference;
- Improve pupils' progress in ICT by ensuring:
 - * that planning for ICT builds on what pupils have previously learned and covers all aspects of the National Curriculum Programme of Study;
 - * there is enough time for pupils to learn the subject.

89. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan.

- Set whole school targets for raising pupils' attainment.
- Ensure that there is enough time to study French, that it is taught on more consistent basis than at present and that its profile in the school is raised.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	27	38	19	1	0	0
Percentage	6	30	43	20	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	114
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.45

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

Attainment

Because of the very small number of pupils, it is not possible to report on pupils' attainment as assessed by teachers or through tests / examinations.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	6
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	64
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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:

YR–Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.6
Average class size	9.5

Education support staff:

YR–Y13

Total number of education support staff	51
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1883

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	1533283.00
Total expenditure	1422177.00
Expenditure per pupil	13048.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	56894.00
Balance carried forward to next year	168000.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

107
26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	36	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	53	12	0	6
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	31	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	23	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	26	0	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	25	13	4	8

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

90. The provision for children aged five years and under is very good. This is because of the high quality teaching and learning, the strong links with families, the quality of learning opportunities provided and the careful assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress. Resources for learning are very good. The school's accommodation for Foundation Stage is also very good and is due to be extended in the near future. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The provision has been strengthened by the clear linking of learning opportunities to the Early Learning Goals and guidance regarding Foundation Stage curriculum, and a number of new initiatives such as the intensive interaction project and the sensory curriculum.

91. Foundation Stage pupils form part of the school's early years department, which also includes Key Stage 1 pupils. All pupils benefit from the close working relationships established between teachers in the department, which is strongly led by a very experienced and expert head of department. Children enter the school with varying skills and needs. They have a wide range of learning and physical disabilities, including a high number who with PMLD and a small number with autism. Children's achievements and progress within the Foundation Stage are very good in all of the areas of learning relating to the early learning goals. Children who have more complex special educational needs, and those with EAL, also make very good progress, particularly in their awareness of others, their communication, and their extended physical curriculum experiences. This is because the staff have detailed understanding of the children's needs, the relevance of the learning opportunities they are given and their very strong working partnership with parents and other professionals.

92. On pupils' entry to the school, very careful and detailed assessments of their levels and needs are made by the multi-professional team. This information is used well to help devise pupils' individual plans and targets, and strongly influences the ways in which teachers plan and deliver their lessons. All staff involved with children, including support assistants, contribute to the assessment process. They have very good understanding of what the children know and can do, and may next achieve. Formal and informal observation is used well to track children's progress, and detailed records are kept of their responses to experiences. The information gained is shared well with parents through contact books and reports. Retained samples of work and photographs are supported by carefully written comments and reports explaining what a child has achieved, and how it was achieved. This ensures that children's progress is meaningfully documented over time, and helps further targets to be set and appropriate programmes to be planned. Children of reception age are assessed using a local education authority baseline package, and a range of other profiles and assessments.

93. The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is planned with close reference to the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), 2000). The curriculum's strength is the way in which it is carefully planned in relation to the children's special educational needs, taking careful account of the broader Foundation curriculum, the six areas of learning and the early learning goals. Curriculum planning is carefully monitored by the Early Years co-ordinator. It is highly effective and enables staff to focus clearly on what children should achieve individually as a result of their lessons. The curriculum delivered to children with more complex needs, such as those with autism, PMLD, or additional sensory needs, is very good and is often excellent. They are expertly included in whole class activities and routines, songs and practical experiences. Skilful deployment of staff and careful target setting in the children's individual education plans ensures there is a very good curriculum balance for them.

94. In every area of learning, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers and support staff have uniformly high expectations of children's behaviour, attention and contributions. Lessons have very good pace, and support staff are well deployed. The use of classroom routines, including music, song, sensory experiences, visual aids, signs and symbols, keeps all

pupils involved in group and individual sessions. Very good examples were seen in language and literacy sessions, the use of a Copycat Faces theme, and the range of objects tried on and explored. Teachers and support assistants are particularly skilful in managing children's behaviour and retaining their attention. They provide strong support for children's communication, language and literacy and their personal and social growth.

95. The safe and secure environment, and the praise and support that children receive, encourages them to respond very positively to their learning experiences, whatever their levels of learning difficulty. They trust the adults around them, even when an experience is new and potentially disturbing. As they progress through the Foundation Stage they join in class routines with increasing confidence. They become more aware of the other children in their groups and look with interest at newcomers. The staff's highly sensitive use of language and praise enables children to become more aware of what they are doing, and its impact on others.

96. The school has very strong relationships with parents before children's entry, and after they are admitted to the Early Years department. The Early Years co-ordinator has a family liaison brief, and visits parents at home to ensure the greatest involvement in their children's experiences and that partnership with parents is very strong. During the inspection, when several pupils were attending school for the first time, early years staff supported transition very effectively for families and their children. The home-school contact books, and regular meetings, keep parents well involved and informed, and enable the school to build effectively on home experiences. High quality Annual Review and end of year reports make clear what children have learnt, and what they need to do to progress further.

97. Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and is due to be strengthened further through the school's planned Early Years extension project. There is a safe, outside play area with a satisfactory range of play equipment. Foundation Stage pupils have access to the school's very high quality accommodation, therapy support and resources for physical education, hydrotherapy and sensory experience. These are used well and further support children's progress in relation to their special educational needs.

Language, literacy and communication

98. The children's achievements and progress in language and literacy are very good overall, and are sometimes excellent. Achievements are particularly strong in speaking, listening and communicating. The teaching of language, literacy and communication skills is very good. Children use a variety of ways to communicate, including voice, gestures, simple signs and eye contact. Staff are highly skilled at interpreting, extending and supporting children's attempts to communicate. They have established an environment, which is sensitive to children's communications, which are acknowledged and listened to with respect.

99. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with very limited expressive language, and some have very little interest in what others say and do. The use of TAC PAC activities, sensory stimulation and intensive interaction helps children to become more aware of their surroundings. By five years, those with more complex difficulties display more interest in others. They vocalise, or use eye contact, facial expression and movement to indicate involvement, and they hold eye contact for increasingly long periods. They are happy to share extended periods of time with adults. Higher attaining children have extended their use of gesture and sign, and a few use voice and single words to indicate their needs and wants. Some can match picture to object. All are interested in the story telling of their teachers, and listen with interest to their teachers' voices. The use of tactile stories, and songs and rhymes, encourages and supports their involvement – as in a lesson using hand rhymes, and in a lesson using Copycat faces where children took their own turn and watched with interest the turns of others. There is systematic support for pre- handwriting skills. By Reception age, most children have progressed significantly in how they handle books and turn the pages. They look with interest at the pictures, and some spontaneously voice or sign the name of an object or person seen.

Mathematics

100. Children's mathematical development is carefully and systematically supported through their everyday experiences of song, counting rhymes, class routines and timetabled mathematics sessions. Their achievements are very good in relation to their starting points. Through action songs and matching games, children are beginning to develop an understanding of early mathematical vocabulary, such as more, same and different, and lay the foundation for counting. They learn about capacity through sand and water play activities. They sort a range of objects into colours and sizes. Higher attaining children can find and match similar objects and shapes, and some copy their teachers' signs for big, more or all gone. Occasionally, they try to imitate the number of fingers displayed when their teachers count or sing finger rhymes with them. All staff know the mathematical concepts that are being supported with individual children, and are quick to reinforce these.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

101. The children achieve very well in developing a knowledge and understanding of their world. The use of daily routines enables them to gain an early understanding of time. Introductory sessions are used well to tell children what they will do and to remind them of what they have done before. The outside and inside environments are used well to feel and explore textures and to develop the children's observational skills. Children have many planned experiences to try out, feel and look carefully at materials and at themselves and others. These support their awareness of the world around them and the people in it. The careful provision of activities and sensory experiences for those with more complex needs heightens their awareness of their surroundings. Staff skilfully talk the children through the activities, which are carefully thought out to offer some challenge. The children respond well in these sessions. They become increasingly curious and show more initiative in the ways they explore their environment and the materials they are given.

Creative development

102. Music, art, role-play and a range of sensory experiences provide good support for children's creative development and they make very good progress in this area. Music and song underpin key routines in the whole school day throughout the school day. They are used to help children recognise the activities they are doing, to calm and also to develop the children's awareness of sound and self-expression. The children show enthusiasm and interest in the sounds that they make. In other creative development sessions, the use of various materials and textures enables children to develop towards early making of marks, and to begin to use simple constructional toys. Teachers' expressive story telling stimulates children to engage in simple role-playing activities and enjoy dressing up. For example, they put on hats and make-up in their 'Copy Cat faces' theme.

Physical development

103. Children's physical development is well supported in the nursery through separately timetabled hall sessions, the hydrotherapy and swimming session, and outdoor and indoor play and learning experiences. These are carefully planned, and link well into the children's physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes, contributing to a very good level provision for all children, including those with more profound and complex needs. Very good attention from support staff encourages children to try out new movements. This they do with increasing confidence. They try their best and take pride in their successes. Within the classes, there are wide ranges of physical needs. Some children are independently mobile, and others require considerable support for sitting and standing activities. In all teaching, careful support and well-chosen activities help children to develop their movement skills, and take more conscious control

of their bodies. Children's fine motor skills are carefully supported, through a good range of practical and creative activities, and in their programmes for eating and self help skills. At the time of the inspection, a number of new pupils were having their technology needs assessed, and so there was limited use of information technology to support pupils' skills and access.

Personal, social and emotional development

104. There is very good support for the children's personal and social development, and their achievement is very good. Personal and social development permeates all activities and there are many opportunities provided for children to make simple choices. For example, in a creative development lesson, a child uses a switch to activate, and switch off, a musical tape. Children are skilfully enabled to make simple choices during lessons, at break and meal times. Careful and systematic support is provided for children's self help skills, for example in feeding themselves, where appropriate. A good balance of support and freedom is allowed in most activities. The children are learning to wait their turn, to attend to each other and to watch and listen carefully to adults. Those with more complex difficulties are increasingly aware of self, and interested in others. Staff provide excellent role models in the way they listen carefully to and respect each child's contributions. Children begin to copy these behaviours, spontaneously. For example, they smile when another child is praised and look with interest as another child gets excited when touching the tactile story toys. Careful use of praise encourages children's flexibility, co-operation and willingness to try out new activities. For example, during the inspection, a child was cheerfully prompted to relinquish a favourite book and move on to a small group listening and story activity.

ENGLISH

105. The school's provision for English is satisfactory, with a number of good and very good features. These include close work with the speech and language therapists, the use of drama, role-play and song throughout the school. New initiatives, such as the intensive interaction project and the very good teaching and learning opportunities in Key Stage 1 also add much to pupils' progress in the subject.

106. At the last inspection, pupils' progress in English was considered to be almost always satisfactory, and often good. Support for communication and listening was identified as a strength of the school. Since the last inspection, progress in English has been sound. English and the support for communication and listening has been strengthened by the introduction of the school's literacy strategy, the extension of the sensory curriculum and the introduction of an intensive interaction project. Schemes of work have been strengthened as a result of the literacy strategy, although not all planning is sufficiently linked into National Curriculum programmes of study. Resources have been improved to include more resources appropriate to pupils' ages.

107. Pupils' achievements in English are good, and are strongest in speaking, listening and communicating and watching. Pupils throughout the school make good, and sometimes very good, progress in these areas. Achievements in reading and writing are good when related to pupils' starting points, and progress is good towards identified targets in these areas. The progress of pupils with EAL, and more complex needs, including PMLD, is good overall in all aspects of English. However, some of these pupils, and those with hearing impairment, would make better progress if the use of signs, objects of reference and symbols was more consistent in some classrooms. In addition, there needs to be more use of technological aids and ICT to support pupils' communication and literacy including in English and in other subjects and lessons.

108. The school's aims and English policy stress its commitment to providing pupils with effective communication skills. The emphases within English, and within the school's curriculum as a whole, reflect this commitment. Personal, social and health education sessions, in particular, provide strong support for pupils' communication skills. Most teachers and support assistants know pupils' communication and literacy targets. All staff, therapists and visiting specialists work together to provide effective communication support programmes for pupils.

109. Pupils' confidence in self-expression increases as they progress through the school. They make good progress overall, and occasionally very good progress, in speaking and listening, communicating and watching. At Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils are beginning to use their language to comment on, and describe, their experiences. They remember key words or phrases in stories and rhymes they have heard, using them when they see relevant objects and pictures, or in role-play sessions. Excellent story telling opportunities use drama to help reinforce words and phrases. In stories such as *The Bear Hunt*, the routine is emphasised, and pupils are increasingly involved as the story unfolds. The multi-sensory experiences involve all pupils at their own levels, and they are also challenged to touch or try something new. Pupils anticipate elements of the story, listen intently and follow the adult models well. Higher attaining pupils join in by imitating actions, and words such as 'not scared', and spontaneously say 'bear'. Lower attaining pupils laugh when they hear a familiar 'noise', and look expectantly for the next thing to happen. By the end of the key stage, lower attaining pupils, and pupils with more complex needs, express their meanings through eye contact, vocalisations, symbols, objects of reference, single words, gesture, or a combination of these. Through excitement and sustained eye contact, they demonstrate awareness of something they enjoy. Pupils generally attend increasingly well for short periods of time, although some need high levels of adult support to remain on task. Their awareness, self-expression, confidence and co-operation improve steadily over the key stage. Higher attaining pupils use single words, gestures and simple signs to respond to simple questions about themselves, their families and the work they are doing in school.

110. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening and communication skills are more developed. Higher attaining pupils use short phrases, and have extended their vocabulary of words and symbols. They readily contribute to lessons, take turns more effectively and answer teachers' simple questioning about the weather or what they are doing. They listen carefully for longer periods of time and, with the help of visual aids, can recount the main events of a story. Lower attaining pupils, and those with more complex needs, attend more readily to adult input for longer periods of time. They use switches, PECS boards, vocalisation and a growing repertoire of signs to help them to make choices, to indicate their understanding and to offer contributions to lessons. They continue to respond well within class routines, and within the structure of literacy sessions and stories. They take their turn in whole group sessions, vocalising or moving rhythmically to rhymes and songs. Higher attaining pupils have a small repertoire of rhymes and songs and they gain confidence in their use of voice and sign during these sessions. Some pupils with more complex needs know key class songs, such as the welcome and goodbye songs. They listen intently, joining in with their turn and sometimes singing along with their teachers.

111. Progress in speaking and listening continues steadily at Key Stages 3 and 4, and Post 16. Pupils show increasing confidence in self-expression. Their use of language and vocabulary matures, and they make good contributions within English and other subjects at the level of their ability. By the end of Key Stage 3, lower attaining pupils make their needs and wishes clear, and make simple contributions in group discussions, through sign, PECS or vocalisation. They watch and listen carefully to their teachers. Some continue to need considerable adult help for self-expression. Higher attaining pupils talk more fluently about their experiences and emotions, and they comment on their work or the books they are reading. They hold simple conversations with visitors about their interests, and try their best to answer questions appropriately. This trend continues at Key Stage 4 and Post 16, where pupils make good progress within their identified communication targets, English and within their ALL accredited work. They learn to ask for items that they need at the shop, and they know how to begin and end conversations. In lessons, they listen carefully, and generally with interest, and respond to adults and to each other's comments more appropriately than in earlier key stages. Lower attaining pupils, and those with more complex needs, continue to progress in their willingness to make contact with others, and in their response to others, and have acquired a range of social and language skills. They have been well supported to indicating their preferences through, for example, PECS and the use of sign and

symbols. Their vocabulary has been carefully supported to be relevant to their life needs and interests. Most make simple choices which support their independence and they can express likes and wants to others. However, the limited use of technological aids for communication, and the inconsistent use of sign and symbols in some classes, leaves some pupils less independent in their communication and literacy skills than they could be.

112. Pupils' progress in reading and writing is good. At Key Stage 1 it is very good. By the end of Key Stage 1, although most pupils have very limited reading and writing skills in relation to their age, individual pupils recognise occasional key words, symbols and the first letter of their name. They are helped to finger spell initial letters and sounds through stories such as Kipper's A-Z, and they look at letters, words and pictures with increasing interest. All pupils have positive attitudes to books, and enjoy sharing books with adults, for varying periods of time. Some turn the pages competently and point to pictures that catch their attention. They enjoy participating in class stories and in class routines. In writing they hold pencils and crayons increasingly well, and try their best to form accurate marks as they visually track the patterns they are copying. This work is built on well in Key Stage 2, where pupils use of a range of instruments and media to make marks. They make good progress in such pre-writing and emergent writing activities and the presentation of their work in line with their identified abilities. In a very good lesson supporting such learning, pupils pre-writing work ranged from constructing a symbol timetable to printing activities, using vegetables to 'make marks'. Very good use of classroom support assistants enabled all pupils to progress in their understanding of how to make marks through printing or using the computer. All pupils were enabled to print or write accurately and were proud of what they produced. The use of tactile stories, symbols to accompany text, and signs and photographs, supports pupils' progress, understanding and involvement in class activities and the school's literacy strategy at this and all other key stages. Pupils make small but significant gains in such reading and writing areas as recognising letters and sounds and individual key words or symbols, handwriting and in the presentation of their work. Higher attaining pupils read simple stories, and can write short sentences with support. They read simple sentences with symbols, and can name characters in the stories they are reading or sharing.

113. At Key Stages 3 and 4, higher attaining pupils can explain what they enjoy reading. Some write simple sentences, using symbols to help them. With support, they re-tell the basic events of a story or event they have read or shared. Their presentation and handwriting improves steadily, and they complete simple worksheets relating to topics they are studying. Lower attaining pupils have a word bank of significant words and social signs, and all pupils' usage of phonic clues continues to expand. Most recognise a range of everyday signs and symbols, and have made small but significant skills gains in hand control or writing, and letter, sound and word recognition. They continue to be interested in, and to have positive attitudes to books, photographs and magazines. They try to do their best when engaged in writing and pre-writing activities. They look carefully at symbols and writing around the room, join enthusiastically in role-play and drama relating to the books that they have read and, particularly, enjoy and learn well from their teachers' expressive story telling.

114. Pupils with more complex special educational needs, including those with PMLD, make good progress in English in relation to the identified targets in their individual education plans, and particularly in their communication, use of language, attitude to books, and co-operation with others. However, some do not have access to a range of technology and to the consistent sign and symbol support across the curriculum that would enable them to be more independent in self-expression, in their pre literacy, and reading and writing activities. Pupils with EAL receive strong support in English sessions where a specialist support assistant is available. Not all pupils have access to such support. Supported pupils make good progress, and sometimes very good progress, when available support fits well within lesson organisation. For example, in a lesson making vegetable prints, a bi-lingual support worker used Bengali and English very successfully to engage a pupil who clearly enjoyed hearing his own language, and was visibly more responsive than at other times.

115. The quality of teaching in English is good overall. At Key Stage 1 it is very good. Where teaching is good or very good, it has a clear English focus, and is very closely linked to pupils' individual education plan targets. These lessons allow pupils' experiences within the subject to be systematically built on, and ensure broad exposure to all aspects of English. Teachers' planning includes opportunities for everyone to be involved. They also carefully select activities for individuals and groups that make the learning meaningful and motivating, as well as offering some opportunities for independent learning. A particular feature of the strongest teaching is the way opportunities for extending pupils' language are seized upon. Good use is made of groupings within a class, and work is carefully planned to allow for higher and lower attaining pupils to be challenged. This was exemplified in group work pre-writing activities in Key Stage 2, and in a range of literacy activities in communication groups centring around Arabian Nights in Key Stage 3. Where teaching has weaknesses, lessons are poorly planned and structured, and have insufficient challenge, particularly for high attaining pupils, and time is wasted. Such lessons sometimes have little defined English content and are too narrowly related to pupils' individual English targets. All teachers have good relationships with pupils and promote an atmosphere in their classrooms of mutual respect and listening to others. Support staff work very effectively with class teachers, and make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. Their work is strongest when lesson planning has been shared with them, and they have a clear idea of the learning outcomes to be achieved. They are particularly good at supporting pupils' communication, and extending their involvement with others. Occasionally, they are too directive in pupils' learning. Although generally used well, there are instances when they have no clear role in lessons and their expertise is wasted. At other times they are used very effectively for observation and evaluation of pupils' responses.

116. English policy and practice has been reviewed to accommodate the school's response to the National Literacy Strategy. Support for literacy is strong in identified literacy sessions, but the school recognises that, in some curriculum subjects, not all teachers make effective use of opportunities to support pupils' emerging skills, or their reading and writing. In these subjects, many opportunities are lost for higher attaining pupils. Other subjects are used well to support pupils' communication skills. Assessment within English is good, and is being strengthened further by the development of a detailed assessment profile, linked to National Curriculum and the differentiated performance criteria (P Levels), but also incorporating other developmental detail. This should enable the co-ordinator to evaluate standards and progress more rigorously across groups, and for individuals, and will further contribute to standards and achievement in English. All pupils have English targets within their individual education plans, and progress towards these is carefully assessed. Some targets are not specific enough, however, and their success criteria unclear. Not all support staff have access to pupils' targets. Where they do have access, incidental opportunities to support pupils' literacy and communication targets are used very well.

117. Resources for English are good. There have been some recent purchases of high quality books and software, and resources made by teachers are generally of very high standard. The school makes good use of local resources, such as museums, the library service, and theatre and drama groups. The local environment and community are used to extend pupils' social use of language experiences. The school recognises that the range of age-appropriate reading resources, software and literature to support pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 is still restricted and needs to be extended. Information and communication technology is underused as a resource to support all aspects of English, and there is a need to develop this further. It is greatly underused in supporting communication and self-expression, and in reinforcement of key skills in reading and writing. The library is used well by some teachers to support pupils' interest in reading, in non-fiction and fiction books and to reinforce simple alphabet skills

118. English is soundly led by the English co-ordinator, who is highly committed to the development of the subject, but has only limited time and opportunity to monitor and evaluate it across the whole school. She works closely with teachers within her own department and has access to teachers' planning elsewhere in the school. A literacy audit was carried out as part of the school's literacy response, and this has informed development planning for English. The school works well with speech and language therapists, and has worked hard to ensure that all pupils have access to therapy in relation to their stated needs. There is good evidence of

teachers' planning and working together to support achievement. In addition, some very good support enables EAL pupils to progress optimally. There is, however, a need to strengthen the role of the English co-ordinator to enable whole school monitoring and evaluation of English coverage and standards to take place more systematically. There needs to be better consistency in planning and improved use of ICT and signs and symbols so that pupils' previous experiences and learning can be effectively built on.

MATHEMATICS

119. Throughout pupils' time in the school, their achievements in mathematics are satisfactory. During the inspection, progress in lessons was good overall. In the Post 16 department it was sometimes very good. A significant factor aiding pupils' progress is the strong emphasis teachers give to practical activities during lessons, and the way they try to relate what pupils are engaged in to real life situations. However, progress across key stages is uneven at times due to different groups not always having sufficient time to study the subject. Although all staff have received appropriate training in the principles and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, it is too early to assess its full impact on standards and progress at the end of each key stage because of inconsistencies in planning and monitoring.

120. Improvement in mathematics since the last inspection is satisfactory overall. The school has maintained consistently good standards in teaching across all key stages. Progress over time remains satisfactory, with some examples of good and very good achievement by individual pupils. The previous report judged that there was a lack of challenging and independent activities for the more able pupils. The current medium-term plans for mathematics enable teachers to plan work that is better matched to all ability levels. This factor, together with the recent implementation of the numeracy strategy, has resulted in all pupils, especially the more able, increasingly participating more fully in more challenging lessons offering a range of independent activities. However, there has been limited progress in ensuring that the subject is securely monitored. The school has been involved in a process of self-review, involving LEA officers reviewing aspects of subject practice. However, direct monitoring of teaching by subject co-ordinators remains insufficiently rigorous to ensure that there is good knowledge of what is actually taught, and how effective it is, across the school.

121. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Occasionally, some pupils make good or very good progress. By the end of the key stage, when they are seven years old, higher attaining pupils are well motivated to participate in number songs. They are beginning to recognise and match numbers to five, and count forwards to 20. They can post basic shapes into a shape sorter and match them to the correct holes fairly consistently. Pupils identify and name basic two-dimensional shapes, including square, triangle and circle. Pupils with very complex needs are given opportunities through exploratory play to experience mathematical ideas of volume, size, and mass. They take part in number games and rhymes, such as Two Little Dicky Birds and Five Little Ducks' with visual props and verbal prompts reinforcing number recognition and one-to-one correspondence. Supporting adults encourage pupils to count in everyday life situations, and point out numbers to pupils in class, school and the local environment. To develop pupils' mental imagery and object permanence, they are given opportunities to look and feel for hidden objects. They are beginning to show an awareness of colour and sequence. They begin to select one colour consistently from a range of colours and, through regular routines, are beginning to anticipate what comes next in everyday activities, such as 'hello sessions.' All pupils are introduced to, and encouraged to use, mathematical language linked to direction and shape such as up, down, rough, smooth and circle.

122. During Key Stage 2, pupils continue to experience a wide range of mathematical opportunities which involve applying their knowledge and skills to real life situations whenever appropriate. All pupils' prior achievements are built on, and progress is at least satisfactory throughout the key stage. Higher attaining pupils enjoy taking part in number songs such as Ten in a bed and they can take one object away at the appropriate time. They can count on to seven with a high degree of consistency. More able pupils develop basic number skills by taking part in

play activities that teach simple fractions such as, a half and a quarter. Pupils divide a whole pizza by cutting it into several pieces and, with support from adults, sharing it out equally. When participating in number rhymes and songs, all pupils are supported in developing their number recognition skills through the use of verbal prompts, signs and symbols. They are given tactile objects to touch as they count forward to a given number. Through play, they develop understanding of the properties of different shapes, and they find out which are the best shapes for rolling and stacking. Pupils are beginning to sort simple objects by one attribute, such as size. Through topic-based work, more able pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge of sets. For example, they choose their own criteria when sorting objects such as clothes. Pupils with very complex learning needs develop their understanding of capacity by being supported in filling and emptying different containers. They are supported in feeling the bottom of an empty container and filling containers of their choice. Pupils are supported well by adults in their understanding of linking an action to particular mathematical words, using symbols and sign language. More able pupils are encouraged to make reasoned choices and to indicate in some way if a container is full or empty. Throughout the key stage, when involved in practical tasks, all pupils are supported in developing their knowledge of new positional words like over, under and below. Pupils use data handling skills in real life and play. For example, they exchange money for goods in class, and observe people in and out of school in money exchanging situations.

123. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory overall. Some individual pupils make very good progress in lessons. More able pupils use their mental skills to complete simple addition to 10, with adult support where necessary. Pupils with complex needs continue to be supported in taking a part in number songs and games involving them in making choices, and giving appropriate responses to simple phrases and questions. For example, some pupils develop their turn taking and number recognition skills by taking part in a simple game such as hide and find. They are supported in pulling a cloth at the right time in response to numbers to 3 being counted forward and backward. If they pull at the right time, the cloth reveals a member of the class hiding underneath. They are able to follow objects visually, and by sound. Pupils with complex needs are helped to count the number of pupils in the group, and to beat out numbers to five on drums and tambourines. The most able pupils are beginning to sort different objects into same groups like cars and cubes. All pupils are introduced to more complex mathematical language like about and same, which are reinforced in practical activities involving estimation skills associated with work on volume and capacity.

124. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. The most able pupils extend their number skills by recognising numbers to 20 and writing numbers to 10 without help. Pupils complete simple addition sums to 10, and use mental strategies to add one more to a given number. More able pupils use their knowledge of number in real life situations, like recognising numbers on buses and houses. In game situations, they develop their understanding of the properties of different shapes by exploring the surfaces of three-dimensional shapes like cuboids, pyramids and spheres. For example, in one lesson seen in class 10, students were arranged in a circle and chose different types of balls according to their colour, size and texture. They received support in accurately aiming the ball to knock skittles down. All pupils explored the attributes of large and small objects by touching to identify whether a particular object had 'sharp corners and smooth surfaces.' Students develop their knowledge of standard and non-standard measures in practical activities like cookery. They are gaining confidence in recognising coins to a £1, and they use a variety of coins in shopping situations. Pupils with the most complex learning needs develop awareness of coins and notes by being actively involved in sensory activities involving touch. They use real money to buy goods from the vending machine in the school hall. More able pupils tell the time by the hour, and understand that the passing of time can relate to different events. Lower attaining pupils listen to short amusing stories like The Tortoise and the hare to get an understanding that time can move quickly and slowly. The most able students can collect data and record their findings, and are beginning to interpret their results in simple pictorial and graph forms. During lessons, pupils of all ability levels continue to experience new key words like opposite, towards and between which develop their accuracy in responding to questions linked to mathematical areas such as shape and space.

125. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good overall. It is good across all key stages, with some very good features Post 16. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Where teaching is at its best, expectations are high enough to challenge the most able pupils, but not so high that they are unable to complete the task. Teachers use a range of sensory stimuli and 'real' objects to gain pupils' interest and sustain individual concentration. They make very good use of games and practical activities during lessons to make learning fun, and try to relate the mathematical content of what children are doing to 'real life' mathematical situations wherever possible. Where signing and symbols are used consistently throughout the lesson, in conjunction with other teaching aids, pupils are well supported in understanding the key teaching points, and progress is often good. All staff use sensitive handling strategies. Their good knowledge of each pupil's social and academic strengths and weaknesses enables lessons to be delivered at a pace linked to each pupil's teaching needs. In the best lessons there is good adherence to the principles of the National Numeracy strategy, and these lessons have a clear structure, including a starter, main activities, and a plenary. On-going assessment is good. At the ends of lessons, teachers often record how children achieve, and they use this to inform future short term plans. Where teaching is less successful, there is an absence of a range of technological aids to support learning and develop the ways in which pupils can respond and interact with their peers in lessons. In some lessons seen, learning objectives were written in general terms, which affected the quality of assessment activities. In the vast majority of lessons seen, learning matched the good quality teaching that was observed, and pupils displayed good attitudes towards the subject. They often listened well with sustained concentration, and enjoyed their activities. Smiling faces were observed on more than one occasion. Resources for the subject are overall satisfactory to support teaching and learning. Some 'in house' made resources, like 'noisy' pyramids and huge tactile cubes, are of good quality, and pupils have good opportunities to handle them. The absence of a range of technology aids to support learning limited the quality of interaction in some lessons.

126. Overall, the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. The school has made good efforts to ensure that all staff have received appropriate training, and there have been a series of in-house workshops to share good practice and explore common concerns primarily amongst teaching staff. Some departments, like Early Years, have made good efforts in identifying the numeracy elements within the regular and continuous provision offered to pupils on a daily basis. Staff have discussed the implications of mental and oral starter work for different ability levels of pupils, and 'starter' activities are evident in the majority of lessons. However, there are inconsistencies in the way short-term planning is presented across departments, which makes monitoring of the full impact of the strategy difficult for the school to evaluate accurately. In addition, although numeracy elements are being taught across the curriculum in areas such as science, where whole and half fruits are introduced to the class, subject policies and medium term plans have yet to state the relevant numeracy links being covered in the various subject areas.

127. Two subject co-ordinators are responsible for developing the subject across the school. They are well experienced in different areas, and are committed to the task of improving whole school practice across the school. Overall, co-ordination for the subject is satisfactory. Although each co-ordinator has been involved in a range of purposeful activities to develop the subject, and there is a satisfactory action plan to improve overall provision, there continues to be a lack of formalised monitoring approaches, used consistently across all departments. Establishing effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating National Curriculum attainment was a key issue for the school raised in the last inspection report and has not been sufficiently addressed in mathematics. The school recognises the need to develop further its evaluation strategies for analysing National Curriculum attainment. It has planned procedures for reviewing current practice, including establishing a more formalised tracking and target setting system, based on a wider range of National Curriculum assessment instruments. Although the mathematics policy is satisfactory overall, it does not clearly state its monitoring and evaluation procedures, or reflect recent curriculum changes outlined in National Curriculum 2000, such as stating the literacy and information and communication technology links in lessons.

SCIENCE

128. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for science since the last inspection. This is due in part to a clearly written whole school policy, which gives good guidance for teaching the subjects, and a relevant scheme of work across the school. Good planning is in now in place, providing a useful framework for teaching.

129. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Progress in lessons at Key Stage 1 is very good. At Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, pupils' progress is good. However, progress over time across all key stages is only satisfactory, because of the limited amount of time science is taught each week. Pupils in the Key Stage 1 part of the early years department are taught within a Foundation Stage curriculum, and science is taught through the 'knowledge and understanding of the world' component. This works well. Pupils at Key Stage 2 (lower school department) are taught through a primary topic approach. This is appropriate. Pupils in the middle school department in Key Stage 3 are taught through a secondary model, subject based. This is appropriate to their age and interests and relevant to the pupils. At Key Stage 4 (part of the upper school department), as there is a single class, pupils are taught by their class teacher, using a primary model of teaching. Here, an emphasis on age-appropriateness and relevance works well.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1 (at the age of seven), pupils build on their scientific knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways. For example, they explore their body and find different things they can do with their feet. They kick, stamp, wriggle their toes, and enhance their mathematical skills by counting their feet and toes. Through a tactile, sensory approach, they walk, in bare feet, on and over a range of materials, responding to what they feel. They explore their senses of taste, touch, hearing, smell and sight. They walk on bubble wrap, shredded paper, rice crispies, soft wadding, paint and flour. Their expressions of likes and dislikes are recorded and assessed to build up pupil records and improve the quality of future planning.

131. By the end of Key Stage 2 (at the age of 11), pupils continue their investigations of materials. They enjoy the sensory approach to science, putting their hands in a 'feely box' to touch objects. They experience the size and texture of fruit, such as the roughness of a pineapple, or the smoothness of an apple. They classify these into categories, such as rough and smooth, hard and soft. Investigative skills are developed well. Most pupils will not tolerate a blindfold when putting their hands into the box, but are able to close their eyes when doing so. Pupils who do wear a blindfold find the experience very exciting. After identifying fruits, the pupils halve them, with help from an adult, and carry out tasting and smelling tests. This work enhances their numeracy skills as they discuss shape, whole and halves. They record their work to see which fruit they like the smell of, and which fruit they like the taste of. Photographs provide good evidence over time of pupils' satisfactory progress. Pupils at this stage entered the Enfield Science and Technology Challenge 2001 and were awarded a Certificate of Merit.

132. By the end of Key Stage 3 (at the age of 14), pupils explore aspects of light and sound. They know the difference between light and dark, and know they need light to see around them. They recognise and are aware of several sources of light. From the science box, they choose different sources of light, and switch torches on and off. In one lesson, a boy chose a torch, left the group, crossed the room to a large mirror, where he switched on the torch, using the mirror and light to look into his mouth to see his teeth. This innovative use of the torch and mirror, clearly illustrated his good understanding of the practical use of light. Pupils with more complex needs, such as those with PMLD, use a range of switches to switch on and off lights, fans and sound. This they do on request, and understand that if they press the switch they can access the sound, such as favourite pop music, or a bright light. This good use of information and communication technology enhances their particular computer skills. Pupils at this stage entered the Enfield Science and Technology Challenge 2001 and won their category.

133. By the end of Key Stage 4 (at the age of 16), lower attaining pupils experiment to generate light from different sources. Working in the sensory room, they push, pull and press a range of switches to activate different lights, fans and tubes. Pupils working in this environment find the atmosphere very relaxing and soothing, but also stimulating and rewarding. They show great

pride and enjoyment when successfully activating their chosen light or tube. Higher attaining pupils carry out experiments to explore the properties of paper. They follow instructions for a water test of the strength of a range of papers, predict the outcomes, carry out the test and compare their predictions with the actual results.

134. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1, and consistently good across Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. Of the eight lessons seen, the teaching in three was very good, in four was good and in one was satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and organised, with activities chosen to match the needs and abilities of pupils and ensure all are fully included in lessons. As a result, pupils participate fully, respond well and behave very well. This enhances the learning of all pupils. Teachers have secure knowledge of science, and also detailed knowledge and understanding of their pupils. Time is taken at the beginning of lessons to ensure all pupils are handled, moved and positioned with great care. As a result, pupils can access the lesson fully, which encourages them to concentrate and persevere to complete their tasks. This is time well spent in order to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers show great skill and patience when questioning pupils. They give individuals time to respond, rather than moving on quickly to the next pupil. Teachers use spoken language well. They complement correct scientific vocabulary with body language, signing, objects of reference, and symbols. They make good use of the school's Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to ensure pupils understand what is being asked of them. Praise and encouragement are used well and, as a result, pupils are happy in class and behave very well. Management of pupils is good, and they move efficiently from whole classes to small teaching groups. Learning support assistants are included in lesson planning, and know in advance which pupils are allocated to them, what tasks are planned are for the lesson. One Bengali pupil was very well supported in a science lesson, through one-to-one support from his Bengali speaking support assistant. Pupils are regularly assessed throughout lessons, with support staff taking an important role in the process. Notes made at the ends of the lessons contribute to pupils' individual records of achievement, and inform future lesson plans.

135. During lessons, pupils are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of science, which they find very exciting. This brings a positive spiritual dimension to the subject. Pupils learn to share, co-operate, help each other and take turns. They are quick to celebrate each other's successes. Science makes a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral, and social development of pupils.

136. The science curriculum is well planned and co-ordinated to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the pupils' needs, taking into account the additional special needs of many pupils. There are two co-ordinators, one for the lower school, and one for the middle and upper school. The latter co-ordinator takes overall responsibility for the subject. The co-ordinators work well together. They provide effective guidance and advice for colleagues, and monitor all planning. However, their monitoring role is under-developed and needs to be improved to monitor fully, and evaluate the curriculum, including time allocation and balance, and teaching. The development of science is a priority subject in the school development plan for 2002. The co-ordinators are beginning to evaluate the changes that may be necessary under National Curriculum 2000. Resources for learning are good. There is a lack of a specialist science room for secondary age pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

137. There has been good improvement in the provision of art since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and the progress pupils make, in lessons and over time, have both improved. The subject policy and schemes of work have been updated, although not yet securely linked to the new National Curriculum 2000.

138. The well-planned sensory curriculum considers the needs of pupils and students of all abilities, and enables them to achieve well in their lessons. The majority of pupils make good progress in lessons and over time. Work on display, records and discussion with teachers indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have explored colour and texture and enjoyed a broad experience of creative arts. Reproductions of important works of art, in particular the French

Impressionists, are used to sharpen pupils' awareness of colour and texture. They build interesting group constructions from junk, using monochrome colours for decoration. Patient, committed teaching enables them to improve control over their senses, and to produce colourful and lively finger paints and mono prints. By the end of Key Stage 3, the story of the Arabian Nights was used expertly to support the pupils in an imaginary multi-cultural journey through the desert. Here they explored the qualities of different media, and improved fine motor skills through the very good 'hand on hand' support of staff as they built a screen printed 'magic carpet' as a class project. Careful planning ensured that the project enabled pupils to experience a rich multi-sensory experience that maximised their response to the tasks in hand. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils are able to express likes and dislikes clearly through gesture and vocalisations. They achieve well in a good range of two- and three-dimensional media. One group has built an impressive totem pole from boxes. With co-active support they made papier-mâché masks to attach to the boxes, and further embellished the pole with a variety of scrap materials. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils recognise the pictures they have been working on and relate them to reference books they study. They lay out stencil designs independently, and choose their own colours for screen-printing. Following a visit to a Henry Moore exhibition, they used mod roc (a self-drying clay material) and wire to form an imaginative group sculpture based on his work. The Post 16 curriculum has been well planned to enable students to develop awareness of important works of art, and to use them in creating their own work. A portrait project based on the work of Picasso shows the value of this approach in exploring students, multi-sensory skills.

139. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages and is sometimes very good. Lessons are planned well to ensure that all pupils have access to the broad curriculum experience available to them. Learning support staff provide invaluable support to pupils, especially those with additional and complex needs. Their patience and understanding leads to good quality responses from pupils, enabling them to participate in lessons to the best of their ability. Teachers plan well and are generally well prepared. At Key Stage 3, teachers make very effective use of the Arabian Nights story to take the pupils on an imaginary journey through the desert. This journey is a rich multi-cultural and multi-sensory experience that contributes to the making of a large group screen-printed carpet design. Teaching is inconsistently supported by signing and the use of symbols for communication. Introductions to lessons are usually well supported by signing, but this support is not sustained throughout lessons. At this early stage in the term, pupils with autism present staff with particular difficulties which they have yet to overcome. The well-planned sequence of lessons at Key Stage 3 brings in the support of Asian music, joss sticks, candles and other sensory resources. On occasion, pupils are over directed by staff, rather than patiently being allowed time to develop their own responses. Sometimes, at Key Stage 4, the pace of lessons slows when the work area is not fully prepared. At Key Stage 4 and in Post 16, teaching is particularly well informed. Pupils and students benefit from teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the subject area. The use of a simplified story from the Odyssey is particularly rich and stimulating, enabling cross curriculum work in the creative and performing areas of the arts.

140. The subject benefits from the strong leadership of the two co-ordinators. They work effectively together in planning, evaluating and reviewing the school's work in art. One co-ordinator manages the middle and upper school departments and the other, the lower school department. They are given excellent support by an experienced and well-informed technician, who team teaches in many of the lessons, and is an invaluable source of technical and creative support. The co-ordinators have high expectations of work in the department, which is the focus of whole school development in the current year. They have organised shared workshops and regional and local art competitions in which pupils have been very successful. The co-ordinators are currently exploring the possibility of offering an accredited course for Post 16 students. Parents have commented that the artwork in the school is 'fantastic' and are pleased that some pupils are given artwork to do at home. The work of pupils and students is celebrated in excellently mounted, very creative displays around the school, which enhance the presentation of the school to parents and the public. There are very good facilities and accommodation in the school's art room.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

141. The provision for design and technology has improved since the last inspection. A co-ordinator is now in place, and is working effectively to raise standards and promote progression and continuity of the subject through the school. The quality of teaching, and pupils' progress have improved. Planning objectives are now clear, and the curriculum is generally broad and balanced, and within an appropriate multi-sensory framework. However, although control technology and resistant materials work are identified as part of the school's learning opportunities, these are under-represented within the curriculum. The subject was a focus of whole school development last year, and improved rapidly over that period. Resources to support the curriculum have greatly improved, although the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning remains a weakness. Resources and training are needed to improve this area of provision.

142. Pupils achieve well overall. Their progress in lessons is good, and is sometimes very good. Scrutiny of work and teachers' records indicates generally good progress over time. In Key Stage 1 pupils take part in Chinese New Year celebrations, helping to prepare a stir-fry with noodles. They make progress in working with tools, which is an experiential component of the school's multi-sensory curriculum. More able pupils learn to manage the specially adapted chopsticks. Pupils move toy cars along the floor, and those with additional and more complex learning difficulties receive 'hand on hand' support to set them in motion. More able pupils can direct cars along a marked road and through a tunnel. Teachers' records indicate that these are measurable experiences that show pupils' stages of awareness of materials and their use, and how mechanical constructions move. By the end of Key Stage 2, more able pupils can use a few signs, such as 'empty' and 'full' to indicate their understanding of a design idea. Those with more complex needs make their preferences for food very clear by gesture and vocalisation. They are aware of activities and show good eye pointing and facial gesture in response to the multi-sensory stimulus of food. With verbal prompting, more able pupils can independently mix and stir ingredients. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils with more complex needs, including those with PMLD, communicate well through gesture and vocalisation, when experiencing activities such as peeling a banana. Their responses are firm and clear. They assist, to the best of their ability, in making banana yoghurt, using the very good support of learning assistants. With supervision, more able pupils use a good range of appropriate tools for construction work. One pupil has used joining skills, developed over time, to make a 'robot' from junk material, and has constructed a 'buggy' powered by a balloon. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils plan and prepare their own sandwiches, choosing fillings from a limited range. In order to meet the design requirement, they arrange fillings to make sandwiches look presentable. They experience the colour, taste, feel and smell of food as they prepare it. They are aware of health and hygiene rules in the kitchen areas, washing their hands before and after food preparation, and helping to clear and clean tables. More able pupils can name the foods that make up a salad. In the Post 16 unit, pupils are able to follow accredited food studies courses, using linked further education colleges in the area.

143. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages, and is occasionally very good. Pupils are well motivated by the multi-sensory experience of food studies they are offered, and they taste a good range of ethnic foods in well-planned projects. Learning support staff are a valued resource in classrooms, and pupils and teachers appreciate their knowledge and empathy. In one lesson, very good management by the assistants enabled a lesson in which teaching was unsatisfactory in the early stages, to become a lesson where teaching was judged to be good overall because of the quality of their involvement. Some planning for lessons is of a very high standard, with clear structure and good detail of intended learning outcomes. Notes on individual pupils' barriers to learning are attached to the plan. Teachers are aware of dietary and health concerns when preparing lessons of food study. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils' responses to lesson are maximised to support communication. Some good signing was seen, particularly for pupils with hearing impairment, but signing overall is variable and is not always used effectively to support learning. The use of the Picture Exchange System (PECS) is beginning to have a positive impact on learning, as teachers use the system in a wide variety of contexts.

144. The subject is well managed by the hard working co-ordinator. She has devised a curriculum on a four year rolling programme, with links to the work of other departments, such as art, science, mathematics and English. Resources have been greatly improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. However, information and communication technology lack appropriate software and the staff expertise to use it efficiently. There are construction kits in every classroom, and a very good bank of 'junk' resources. Resources for the study of resistant materials are a weakness in the otherwise satisfactory resources for the subject. The upper school co-ordinator left at the end of last term, and the school is currently advertising a replacement to continue to develop the work in that area of the department. Overall, the accommodation is very good. There are wide ranging food studies facilities and in the lower and upper departments these are well designed with rising sinks and readily accessible ovens. However, the school's design and technology room is not used for resistant materials work but is mainly a resource room.

GEOGRAPHY

145. No geography lessons were taught during the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. A scrutiny of photographic evidence of pupils' work up to the end of Key Stage 3 was undertaken, together with an examination of teachers' records. The school has used its discretion not to teach the subject at Key Stage 4.

146. The evidence seen indicates that pupils' achievements in geography are satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the purpose of a simple map. They begin by finding their way around the school. Plans of the school are used to mark locations. They extend their trips to the garden, becoming aware of routes and 'landmarks'. They undertake a project on The Farm, examining and identifying the animals discovering why they are farmed. More able pupils gain a good sense of location. To reinforce their knowledge of places beyond the home and school environment, they explore Enfield on a double-decker bus and take a train trip to Liverpool Street. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have completed topics on the countryside and the environment, further increasing their knowledge of distant places. They visit a range of shops. Higher attaining pupils gain a simple idea of settlement. A project on the weather gives pupils of all abilities some understanding of climate and the causes of different weather systems. This is extended by a topic on the seaside, where pupils have opportunities to look at the consequences of changes in the weather.

147. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have developed their earlier knowledge of the environment. They make increasingly detailed studies of Enfield and other local towns. They recognise photographs of locations they have visited. They enjoy seeing new places, and they look with interest at new surroundings. A topic on water gives pupils an awareness of ponds, streams and rivers, and their connections with the sea. The more able pupils can make links between this topic and their knowledge of the weather. Pupils gain knowledge of countries beyond the sea when they undertake a project on Kenya and another on Egypt. They enjoy a visiting African band, and can play percussion instruments and dress in African clothes and jewellery. An awareness of other lands develops. Many pupils are able to produce correctly labelled sketches and diagrams illustrating geographical features.

148. Examination of records, and evidence of pupils' work shows that teaching has a sound impact on pupils' learning. The use of a satisfactory range of resources is good. Local trips out of the school and visits to other locations are numerous. These clearly extend pupils' geographical awareness and knowledge. The provision of a good number of quality classroom support staff is particularly helpful in arranging local expeditions, and also in going further afield. Evidence indicates that pupils are very interested in geography and they apply themselves well in lessons. There has been an improvement in resources since the last inspection. These could be further reinforced by an increase in the use of information and communication technology resources, although those that the school has are used to only a limited extent.

149. The subject co-ordinator has been in post only since the beginning of this term, and he is very keen to develop the subject further. Geography forms part of a humanities policy dated 1995, and requiring urgent review in light of the new National Curriculum 2000. Schemes of work require updating. Breadth and balance of the opportunities pupils receive is evident in the planning although these do not fully support pupils' progress as there is limited planning for them to build on pupils' prior experiences. There is no consistent system for assessment and recording in the subject. As seven teachers are involved in the teaching of geography, it is important that this matter is addressed urgently. Similarly, monitoring of what is taught and learned has been limited. The new co-ordinator is very aware of the urgent need for review and development of the subject. He has sound ideas for dealing with the task. This is particularly important since there is little identifiable improvement since the last inspection.

HISTORY

150. During the course of the inspection, three history lessons were taught. These were at Key Stage 3, and were all observed. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement on the teaching of history, but the quality of teaching seen at Key Stage 3 was good. Teachers' records and some photographic evidence were scrutinised at Key Stages 1 and 2 to gain a view on pupils' progress, and the breadth of the curriculum. The subject is not taught at Key Stage 4; the school has used its discretion not to teach the subject at this key stage.

151. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have made a start on gaining a sense of the passage of time. They know how they have changed since they were babies. This is part of a broad topic on Myself. They can relate to time through important celebrations such as birthdays and Christmas. Some higher attaining pupils gain a sense of the age of buildings as they go on tours of the locality, and take a train to London. They are able to gain a sense of time by considering the order of the school day. Words such as before and after are spoken or signed. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils know the days of the week, and can relate certain activities to the days. Some simple examples of the passage of time are communicated in a study of the past, based on how grandparents lived. For example, they look at clothes from the past, and at Victorian toys. They begin to absorb local history, touring Enfield on a double-decker bus and stopping off at a few carefully selected places of historical significance.

152. By the end of Key Stage 3, higher attaining pupils know the current day and date, and are aware of changes in daily routine. They do not have a grasp of distinct periods in history, but recognise differences in clothing, buildings and vehicles. In the lessons observed, this age group was comparing the old Enfield Grammar School with the modern Waverley School. They moved back in time by using a 'time tunnel' formed by covering them with gently waving sheets to the accompaniment of appropriate music. They then looked at old photographs of Enfield Grammar School and listened to the school bell. Later in the lesson they returned in time and look at photographs of Waverley School. They enjoyed the experience and it is clear that some pupils have sensed the passage of time. This age group, over a period of twelve weeks, has undertaken a study of the Romans. They have constructed very good models of a Roman road leading to the temple. Adjacent to the temple is a fine looking model of the Coliseum and another of Roman baths with a villa. They have made realistic gladiator uniforms and weapons. They performed part of the story of Romulus and Remus to a whole school assembly. The staff reports that pupils greatly enjoyed this experience. Pupils expressed satisfaction as they took votives, which they made from clay, along the Roman road to the Temple. A photographic display shows the pupils enjoying a visit to the old Roman city of Verulamium and exploring features of Roman life.

153. The quality of teaching seen in lessons was good. The class teachers and support staff work very closely together. Further evidence of the quality of teaching and learning came from analysis of photographic evidence, and records of pupils' work. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly, and select resources carefully to help pupils acquire historical ideas. Resources have improved since the last inspection. Good use is made of local resource centres and visits. Activities are presented so that

pupils with different abilities have similar experiences using their various levels of skill. For example, some recognise simple words, and some use symbols and signing. Staff manage pupils with great skill, so that pupils remain interested and eager to take part in lessons. The lessons seen were very orderly. From observation of staff, pupils learn acceptable ways of behaving.

154. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for History from the beginning of this term, and he is very keen to develop the subject. However, there is a great deal to do. The humanities policy is dated 1995 and requires updating to encompass the new programmes of study of Curriculum 2000. Schemes of work, similarly, need revision and the co-ordinator plans to update the schemes on a rolling programme as elements are taught, and in the light of their evaluation. History is taught by seven teachers, across the three key stages. Whilst there is breadth and balance in the planning, the new co-ordinator needs to look at how the planning supports progress and why elements insufficiently build on one another. There is no single system across the school for assessment and recording, and what is taught and what pupils' learn is not adequately monitored. This needs to be addressed urgently, and the co-ordinator is already beginning to look at this area. The limited resources highlighted at the last inspection have been partially improved. Although there has been an improvement, further development is required, especially in the provision and use of information and communication technology to help pupils understand and experience aspects of history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

155. The school has worked very hard to improve the provision for ICT. Improvement in resources has been a priority over recent years (through NGfL grants and school monies) and the development plan for the subject now mainly focuses on increasing teachers' skills through training using the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). This means that this is an improving subject but most developments have yet to impact on pupils' achievements and progress in the subject and on ICT use in other subjects. Resources throughout the school now include a reasonable number of good quality modern computers and other equipment, such as pointing devices, touch screens and digital cameras. There is a concept keyboard for each department, and some Big Mac switches which speak a single word or a message when pressed. Computers are connected to the Internet, and there is a good range of switches and software across the school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. However, there is a limited range of 'communication' aids and those that the school has are inconsistently used. Software to support pupils' communication, including writing (using word and symbols), is not always used.

156. The ICT policy to guide practice within the school is considerably out-of-date and, given the nature of the subject and the curriculum developments which have taken place nationally over recent years, far too much time has elapsed in up-dating this important document. However, the policy is identified in the development plan for revision at the end of this year and the school is strongly committed to the more consistent use of ICT throughout the school.

157. Although pupils do make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in ICT, they currently make unsatisfactory progress within ICT as a whole, because not all aspects of the subject are taught and pupils' previous learning opportunities are not systematically built on. All pupils have individual education plans for ICT, which aim to support their individual progress. However, targets, are often too general and do not specify exactly what they are to learn. Pupils with PMLD have good opportunities to use 'control technology'; for instance, in the form of switches to operate programs but, overall, the breadth and balance of the opportunities pupils' receive are insufficiently checked. The school's emphasis has been on the use of ICT in curriculum subjects, in order to make the learning opportunities meaningful and relevant. Teachers do identify some opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons, such as in Key Stage 3 drama lesson for PMLD pupils, where they operated lights, fans and sounds in relation to the story being narrated. However, use is not tied to an overall plan to help pupils build on their skills over time. There is no scheme of work to facilitate this. The school's 'continuing work statement'

provides general advice about how teachers should use ICT in lessons, such as use ICT to support other areas of the curriculum. However, there is a need for more detail to support the work of staff who are less confident in ICT, in planning developmental ICT experiences and its use for pupils.

158. In Key Stage 1 pupils are motivated by using computers. Some use a single switch to operate a resonance board, and others press a switch to build simple pictures of the screen. Some use the touch screen to create coloured lines or to make objects move. Lower attaining pupils gain great pleasure from using the computer independently, such as when pressing a Big Mac switch at appropriate times to add sound effects to the story in a literacy lesson. By the end of Key Stage 2 some pupils use a mouse reasonably well, and can move it accurately to point to an object. Higher attaining pupils select a picture, choose a colour and fill in part of the picture, moving the mouse accurately and clicking on the colours. Some pupils begin to concentrate on using reading programs although some materials, such as a 'Noddy' program, are not appropriate for the age of the pupils. By the end of Key Stage 3, some pupils, although not showing much interest in using a computer, use a keyboard to type in pupils' names. Some say 'hello' by pressing the Big Mac switch. Some higher attaining pupils use a mouse adeptly to select a program from the screen display. They competently use a keyboard to type in words using the same initial sound. Older pupils show little interest in the school's software; the school's evaluation of this is that pupils have more exciting software at home than they use at school. By the end of Key Stage 4, some pupils use a mouse to move around the desktop display when choosing programs, and can draw simple pictures using a 'painting' program. Some pupils record their voice on the Big Mac switch for others to use. Throughout the school PMLD and lower attaining pupils use a single switch to make things happen on the screen, or to control real events. However, there is little development of their skills, such as progressing on to two switches, or using scanning methods for accessing symbols or text.

159. Very little specific teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection. Although there were some examples where pupils were supported to carry out an activity using a computer, it was mainly support staff who carried out this work. There is too much reliance on support staff, and they receive too little direction and guidance from teachers. Although teachers are undergoing training at present, there is a need to also provide training for support staff. Some good use of ICT was seen to support pupils with PMLD for enacting stories and for giving them the opportunities for choice through pressing a single switch.

160. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching across Key Stages 1 to 4 but, in some of the examples seen, the support for pupils' learning had specific weaknesses relating to knowledge of how to teach ICT to pupils with severe learning difficulties. In one example, lack of knowledge was apparent in how to use a concept keyboard, and how to change the size of display, which had inadvertently been altered by a pupil who was using a mouse at the same time. Even where ICT is used well to promote learning in lessons, and to make activities relevant, sometimes the equipment is not properly positioned. For example, the computer is at the wrong height for the pupils, or switches are propped up on boxes or held by an adult, instead of being secured by an adjustable arm. The use of the sensory room supports pupils' use of ICT well, and gives PMLD pupils important sensory experiences which they help to produce and control.

161. The management of the subject is satisfactory. While there has been very good improvement in the resources available since the last inspection five years ago, the curriculum is no longer as broad or balanced as previously stated in the last report. The co-ordinator has been successful in improving provision in general, but there has been a lack of attention to the planning for pupils' progress. Monitoring is still insufficiently developed. There is some examination of planning, auditing of staff skills and training needs in relation to staff development, and checking on the use of resources. However, there is little in the way of monitoring of planning in relation to supporting pupils' progress, of the quality of teaching or of pupils' progress year-on-year. There are no formal systems in place for the school for these. Staff knowledge is improving as a result of the NOF training but is still limited. As a result, progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory overall.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

162. No French lessons were seen during the inspection because French is taught alternately with some other subjects, and was not timetabled for the week of the inspection. Teachers and pupils were interviewed, however, and curriculum planning scrutinised. Examples of the students' work and their assessments were carefully analysed. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall by the time they leave the school. The time they spend on studying the subject at Key Stage 4 adds to the progress pupils make. However, at Key Stage 3 there is too little curriculum time for them to learn the language and the gaps in time between learning opportunities are too long.

163. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils respond in some measure, when they are greeted in French. Higher attaining pupils can greet each other in French. The very highest attaining pupils are able to say who they are, and where they live, using correct French. They can use, for example, such greetings as Bonjour and Comment ça va? Higher attaining pupils are able to use everyday French vocabulary to buy simple foodstuffs, such as baguettes, gateaux and tartines. All have engaged in role-play as French customers and shopkeepers. All have been given the opportunity to express preferences of for a variety of French foods, such as various kinds of jam, labelling their favourites by copying vocabulary. The highest attaining pupils have some knowledge of where France may be found on a map of Europe. Emphasis in the subject is on listening and responding, although the other attainment targets in the subject are addressed. Symbol software is not yet in use to support the subject.

164. It is not possible to make a judgement as regards teaching in French although scrutiny of work and records revealed relevant teaching techniques used in the subject such as giving pupils sensory experiences of things for which France is famous. Pupils feel, see and touch a range of interesting fabrics. They smell French perfume. They explore a range of French foods and kitchen utensils. Pupils enjoy listening to typical French music, including folk and pop. The curriculum also utilises a range of suitable activities to support the learning of French and foster an interest in France. Pupils take part in French assemblies. French people are invited to school. Pupils attend a day of French experiences organised by the local authority, where they are able to 'shop' using French currency. A day trip to France has been planned. This is a new venture.

165. Since the last inspection, there has been some improvement in the subject. The subject is now taught in Key Stages 3 and 4. There is now a specific scheme of work and a reasonable level of assessment, although ongoing recording of progress is limited. Curriculum time is, however, limited and the amount of progress pupils make is variable in parts of the school. The management of the subject by the co-ordinator is now satisfactory. However, the contribution that the subject can make to pupils' wider communication skills is not recognised sufficiently by the school. This has resulted in a low prioritisation being given to the time allocated to it.

MUSIC

166. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for music since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, and the pace of pupils' progress in lessons show some improvement. The quality and range of musical instruments has improved significantly, and resources for the department are now very good. There are two computer programs to help pupils compose music, but they are insufficiently used to support learning because staff lack confidence and appropriate training to use them effectively. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is still not fully developed and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop her role across the school. An audit across the curriculum would provide a useful map of the musical experience of pupils, and a good foundation for extending the co-ordinator's role.

167. Pupils achieve well overall, and make generally good, and sometimes very good, progress in lessons and over time. At Key Stage 1, newly arrived pupils make very good progress in gaining confidence and trust in staff. They accept the expert handling of staff and show a clear interest in lessons. They are able to eye point towards the source of sound, and the most able pupil sustains his attention and tracks the sound. Teacher records show that the highest attaining

pupil can play a variety of instruments with increasing skill, using different speeds and pitches. He stops and starts on cue and picks up simple tunes quickly. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are well motivated to explore a range of kitchen utensils, choosing ones that make a sound they enjoy. They learn to start and stop on cue, and take turns in demonstrating the sounds they produce. Pupils listen well to pieces of music from different cultures. More able pupils can sign 'long' and 'short' in evaluating sounds. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils become very expressive in response to musical stimuli. Teacher records show that one group has recently made a soundtrack based on the 'Star Wars' theme. By the end of Key Stage 4 more able pupils can choose an instrument from the music trolley and play it to the best of their ability. One pupil has a growing musical vocabulary and recognises several musical symbols. Less able pupils begin to understand 'pitch' and 'timbre', and make a good effort to follow instructions. They enjoy spinning coins on different surfaces to explore the sounds they make.

168. The quality of teaching is good overall, and is occasionally good or excellent. The very good teaching at Key Stage 1 is supported by some excellent 'hand on hand' support from learning support assistants, as they mirror the actions of the class teacher. The best lessons are characterised by energetic and enthusiastic teaching that motivates pupils and builds towards exuberant group performance. In one lesson seen during the inspection, pupils with additional and complex special needs responded in a very determined way to the excellent teaching. They showed independence of choice, and joined in the lesson enthusiastically. Lessons are structured and paced well, ensuring that responses are maximised in variety and depth. Symbols are used to introduce some lessons and communication is furthered by the staff's very good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. Time is lost in some lessons as pupils move in, and around, the school. However, one lesson seen, where the teaching was excellent, started on time, and provided a rich multi-sensory experience through to the end. Some pupils were clearly keen for the lesson to continue.

169. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator works hard to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum to pupils. She has organised music workshops and booked a concert organised by the Borough Art Support Service. She benefits from the excellent knowledge and experience of the school's music therapist, who advises on resources and helps to maintain them. Monitoring of the school's work in music is limited. However, the co-ordinator's role has yet to be fully developed to enable her effectively to monitor the work of the department across the school, including teaching. Good schemes of work for music require a more secure link to the new curriculum, and to the more refined early National Curriculum Levels ('P' Levels) used to measure pupils' attainment and progress. Music is widely used in lessons across the school, but there is no effective co-ordination or auditing of the many opportunities, which contribute to pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in music. In 2000, all staff received training in the new music curriculum planned from the National Curriculum 2000, but several still lack confidence in teaching the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

170. Pupils make good progress in their personal, social and health education, and they achieve well. Pupils' self-care and social and emotional development are central to the work of the school. Besides being taught as a discrete subject, PSHE is strongly and successfully taught in a full range of subjects. Additional taught time is set aside for PSHE at morning break and at lunchtime.

171. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to have some idea of self, and learn to notice other people. They fix their eyes on others, and learn to focus on bright objects. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know some of their care and learning routines. They make choices, and sometimes predict what will happen next. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of care and learning routines. By the end of Key Stage 3, higher attaining pupils begin to respond to other people and say, my friend. Although they realise that adults are in school to help them, they do not wholly realise that not all people may have their welfare at heart, and that they must learn to keep themselves safe. They use non-verbal means of communication, such as eye contact, to communicate and to ask for what they need. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils relate to others in

a positive and friendly way. They have 'friends'. They understand, to some extent, that caring routines enable them to stay healthy, and some pupils make good gains in independence when they begin to realise this. Post 16, students extend their knowledge of a 'physical self'. They are helped to understand such emotions as love, fear and hate, and to relate to others in a socially acceptable way. Towards the end of their time in the school, students are enabled to examine their sexual feelings and thus extend further their knowledge of relationships. At this time, students frequently come to some knowledge of their sexual identity.

172. The quality of the teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well, and there is a high level of trust. Planning is careful and individual, securely based on previous progress. There is good use of resources to stimulate response. In a lesson of Year 10 and 11 pupils, a large brightly coloured silk parachute was used to good effect. Pupils initially became interested, and then excited, as they were able to make it rise and fall. As they realised they were able to control the interesting effects, they became motivated to co-operate, and responded to such commands as 'faster', 'higher' and 'lower', which helped their linguistic and spatial perception. Earlier in this lesson, good use of skittles motivated pupils to count, reinforced their previous learning, and improved their co-ordination. Pupils' independent learning is extended as they are allowed to choose what they do, as in a Year 12 lesson where students were allowed to select photographs of themselves to show others. In this lesson, students selected things they liked from a time table, and as a result were able to increase their understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. Cross curricular planning was evident in a Year 4 lesson on free play activities, which included ICT, literacy and construction using Duplo.

173. The curriculum is good. It is well planned with a strong extra-curricular dimension. It is tailor made to the needs of the pupils and well adapted to their needs. The school uses a well-adapted sensory curriculum to extend pupils' perceptions and help them to learn. Individual programmes and specialist equipment, such as Big Mack switches, help pupils' access to lessons. The subject is nationally accredited. 'Hello' and 'goodbye' sessions, circle times, breaks and lunchtimes are used to extend and consolidate learning. This is carefully planned on an individual basis.

174. Shared management of the subject is good. The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements with regard to sex education and the abuse of drugs, but the school is aware that citizenship remains to be developed. Plans for this are well advanced. It is a strong feature of management that the school has joined the local 'Healthy Schools' programme, which will serve as a tool for improvement. Lesson monitoring in early years is beginning to improve the standard of teaching and learning, and will be expanded to advise teachers on how to raise them. The school is aware that a curriculum audit is now required to ensure curriculum coverage and move the subject on. Mechanisms exist for this, but the process needs to be speeded up. Resources for the subject are good.

175. The use of time for the taught PSHE elements during break time is a concern. This is counted towards the total teaching time for the subject, but very little teaching actually goes on in some classes. During the inspection this was partly because some teachers were understandably just getting used to the management routines for their new pupils and this meant that longer was spent on these than would normally be the case. However, it was the organisation of the break time arrangements for staff breaks, which resulted in some pupils having little access to teaching. Even when staff were available to teach, they did not always do so, and the session became an extended break. In one class, the teacher reported that break could be up to one hour. By contrast, lunchtime eating arrangements are well organised. All time is used well, pupils' have clear and specific plans and are very well supported in eating and drinking, as well as in their social communication.

176. A very good level of improvement has been made since the last inspection. All pupils now have at least one discrete lesson in the subject each week. The subject is now taught rigorously and well, and properly separated from the caring and behaviour management, which formed a large part of the school's previous provision.

POST 16

177. Provision is very good for students who stay in the school after they reach the end of Key Stage 4, when they are 16. Students' achievement is very good in relation to previous attainment in all aspects of their work. Students are very well prepared for their transition from Key Stage 4. By the time they leave to attend college courses or sheltered employment at the age of 19, they have made very good progress in the key skills they will need after school.

178. By the end of their time in Post 16, the students make very good progress in their personal and social development, and are capable of good social interaction. For example, they greet others politely and say their own names. They watch others, and listen carefully to what they have to say. Higher attaining pupils know where they live. They are capable of giving and receiving. Higher attaining students know that clothing requires maintenance, and know that it must be kept clean. Higher attainers, with help, make drinks and snacks. Students become increasingly aware of how to behave sensibly in public places, such as restaurants.

179. In communication, lower attainers indicate their needs and preferences. Higher attaining students read familiar words, sometimes with the aid of symbols. Others need an adult to help them recognise symbols reliably, and some do so only intermittently. Many speak in very simple ways, with differing levels of clarity. Some use body language and signing to communicate. All students make requests in some simple way, by signing or body language. Higher attaining students are aware of their strengths and, with help, can produce a simple curriculum vitae. Higher attaining students retrieve information stored on a computer. With help, they become increasingly familiar with some of its uses, and they find and print information.

180. Students know their names, and respond when they are addressed. Most students recognise familiar faces, and higher attainers greet others conventionally, although others vocalise or smile. Students respond increasingly positively to the teacher and to each other. By the end of their time at the school, all become increasingly aware of regular daily activities, and develop some appreciation of learning and care routines. All are able to take at least some small measure of responsibility for themselves and others, such as co-operating when being helped to put on a coat, or tidying up in some small way after an activity. Students experience a variety of social situations, when visitors arrive at the school, for example, or when they visit a workplace or college. Most are capable, with support, of behaving sociably and appropriately in a variety of situations in which they feel secure.

181. In numeracy, almost all students count confidently to 10, and some understand numbers beyond 50. Higher attaining students add and subtract numbers up to 10. Students are given good opportunities to handle money, and begin to understand the value of coins when helped to make small purchases as part of their studies.

182. Students are familiar with information and communications technology, and become familiar with, and learn some of its uses. All make a graphic record of what they have achieved Post 16 at the school, although some require considerable help to do this. Some make marks on paper, some use ICT to print out a word, phrase or series of phrases as a permanent record of what they have done.

183. Students are very well taught. Teachers plan very carefully, so that all students have activities at the appropriate level to help them learn. In trampolining, for example, each student has an individual programme. Inventive and stimulating strategies are employed to aid learning. For example, when students made a Cyclops as part of their study of the Odyssey, they were given the experience of pushing a balloon through the eye sockets of a mask and experiencing the cruel thrill when the balloon was pricked and the air hissed out. Students are consistently well stimulated, so that they make the best possible responses. For example, lower attaining students make positive responses when chopsticks are rhythmically tapped on their hands in time with Chinese music, or when their skin is gently touched with a sponge. In a lesson on the concept of 'one', a range of brilliant and interesting materials helped pupils' motivation to find 'one' discrete object. In this lesson 'To find one object in a silver bag' was another activity highly motivating to

lower attaining students. Lessons are rigorous because they challenge students to make the greatest progress possible. Students also record what they have done. One student was helped to record her work by cutting out a large cardboard 'one'. This reinforced her learning. Group work is a strong feature of lessons, helping students to respond to the teacher and to others in the class. Teachers keep up a commentary in lessons, which helps students maintain their focus. All are helped to take an active part in lessons. For example, they stirred the witches' cauldron in Macbeth. As a result, students stay interested and they want to learn. The teachers and learning support assistants work as a harmonious and highly effective team to ensure that all students make the greatest progress of which they are capable. Methods are strongly multi-sensory, and students respond positively to them. Assessment is such that activities are pitched at the right level. Students are helped to communicate by tuition in response, carefully pointing, and using signs, symbols and body language. Students love school, they enjoy their lessons and appreciate their teachers and the friends they make. All make very good progress both socially and academically.

184. The Post 16 curriculum is very good. It provides a broad and balanced range of opportunities in an age appropriate environment for students to communicate as effectively as they can, and become more independent and responsive. The accommodation for Post 16 is very good and supports the curriculum and pupils' personal independence very well. The curriculum is enriched by very good opportunities for students to undertake leisure activities, and an excellent range of appropriate physical activities. Community links are a strong feature of provision, as students explore people and places in the neighbourhood of the school. Creative subjects such as art provide scope for students to do well. The absence of religious education, however is a breach of statutory regulations, and must be regarded as a considerable weakness. Good quality provision in personal and social education, besides helping students to achieve a level of independence, addresses sexual aspects of students' lives in a sensitive and accessible way. Lessons also address the misuse of drugs. There is a strong sensory curriculum, which stimulates students' responses, and consolidates the learning process. Physical aspects of the curriculum help students' learning, add to their comfort and well-being and fosters students' independence. Key skills such as literacy and numeracy are very well taught.

185. Careers provision is good, and students build skills and knowledge reliably from previous lessons in Key Stage 4 to learn about the world of work. In Post 16, this provision becomes nationally accredited, as students look at work that is done within and outside school. Almost all students have good opportunities to take an active part in work related activities, such as car valeting, cleaning windows and visiting a range of workplaces. Some take part in a mini enterprise in which they earn money by running a tuck shop in school. After they had washed two cars, a small group of students were taken to a local café to spend some of the money earned. This enabled them to associate work carried out with spending the money earned. Although careers advisers are present at all national reviews, the local careers service has a staff shortage and is not currently able to provide specialist advisors to visit the school. As a result, students are denied the level of impartial advice to which they are entitled.

186. Links with local colleges are very good. All students are enabled to work offsite on courses building effectively on the school's curriculum. These extend the students' experience, and provide a very good standard of vocational and social training. During the inspection, students made an introductory visit to a local horticultural and animal husbandry college. They were carefully and successfully introduced to a new workplace, which included large shire horses, greenhouses full of plants, and the necessity of handling compost. During this visit some of them showed a high degree of independence, bought drinks in the public restaurant and sat down sociably to consume them, showing good social awareness. Liaison with the college is excellent and productive. As a result, routines are rapidly established, and students feel secure because they know what to expect. Monitoring of students' progress in these courses is very good.

187. Post-16 provision is very well led. The management of rapid change has been excellent, detailed and very thorough. All staff have been trained and well supported. Good supportive guidance is on going, and there is very good teamwork. There are frequent reviews of procedures and assessment. Recording is comprehensive and helpful. Students continue to contribute to their National Record of Achievement.

188. Since the last inspection, there has been a very good level of improvement. All students, whatever their ability, now follow fully documented national accredited courses in almost every subject. This course, 'Life and Living', encompasses communication, numeracy, ICT, personal skills, home management, leisure and the community. The accreditation is greatly appreciated by parents and students alike. It raises the status of learning, and endorses achievement. The curriculum is now broader, and provides students with lessons in home management. Students now have opportunities to make links with the community such as those with the fire service and police. Assessment of students' progress has improved, and is now excellent. It provides a firm base upon which teachers plan their lessons to ensure the very good progress seen during the inspection. College links are now much stronger and more productive than at the time of the last inspection. Work placements, criticised in the last report, are now entirely suitable and frequently take place off-site. Careers advice is now good. Advisers give support and guidance when required, and the careers service always sends a representative to transitional reviews. Support and guidance offered by the school to parents continues to be a strength. Parents are given a high standard of advice on how to deal with such issues as toilet training, eating, and the prospect of students' hospitalisation if an operation is required, or at the onset of serious illness.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

189. Physical education (PE) is a strength of the school. Pupils' achievements are very good throughout the school, from the early years department through to post 16. All age groups benefit from specialist teaching in PE. Swimming is taught by a by a number of class teachers and support staff, all of whom are well qualified and skilled in this area. Some of these staff, and the physiotherapists, also help pupils to make good use of the excellent hydrotherapy pool. Body awareness and movement, including dance, are strong areas in the PE curriculum. Pupils and students enjoy their PE lessons very much. They are particularly challenged by what they are expected to do.

190. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are able to use low apparatus independently. Some of those who have more acute physical problems are able to use this apparatus with the help of support staff. Pupils who cannot manage the apparatus, do increase their physical movement very well. All of the pupils explore other ways of moving, such as rolling on the mat or playing simple ball games. Lessons are challenging, and pupils enjoy exercises, which extend their physical abilities. In swimming, younger pupils require one-to-one staffing, and are supported very well in the water. Their gains in water confidence are already evident.

191. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the necessity of the warm up exercises, which are a feature of every lesson. The most able are aware of the effects on their bodies of the warming up process. All complete simple circuit work, some after having observed the more able demonstrating what is required. All pupils participate well in PE sessions, and learn that it is sometimes necessary to wait for their turn. The good staffing ratio in PE lessons enables pupils with more profound difficulties to benefit from their extended individual programmes. For example, with one-to-one staff, they may engage in a stretching programme for a few minutes. In swimming, some of the most able pupils are independent in the water, but many pupils still require quite intensive staff support. By this age, all pupils show good levels of confidence in the water.

192. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils form a circle to complete their warm up exercises. They thoroughly understand each step in the process, as the teacher talks them through it. Their ball handling and control skills develop well. In one lesson seen, they engaged in an adapted volley ball game, practising, repeating and refining their ball skills. They participate well, and with great enjoyment, in team, small group and individual activities. Movement has developed well, and this is

particularly noticeable when accompanied by music, which is well matched to the activity. Dance is well integrated into the programmes. The less able make good progress, although they engage in adapted activities with simpler goals. Use of the Sherborne programme for non-ambulant pupils is very successful. Pupils accept the contact with staff, smiling and feeling relaxed as their confidence grows. Their swimming continues to improve. One group observed gained considerably in confidence. In this group, one pupil now swims independently, another requires a little assistance from staff, and another requires continual staff support. All know their maximum buoyancy positions.

193. No Key Stage 4 lessons could be observed. Staff plans and records indicate a continuation of the very good progress made up to the end of Key Stage 3. Pupils develop their range of games to include netball, volleyball, tennis, badminton, cricket and athletics. They also begin trampolining and participate in dance, group awareness activity and tabletop games. It was possible to observe only one Post-16 lesson. The progress over the years is very positive and clear to see. Confidence and self-awareness have greatly increased. By the time they leave school, pupils and students have experienced an impressive range of physical and sporting activities. These include some activities outside the school, such as competitions in football and athletics, sailing and abseiling. Other enriching visits include outings to Lords, Crystal Palace and Heathrow Sports Centre.

194. Pupils have very good attitudes to physical education. They enjoy it, and work hard in all of their lessons. They learn to communicate well, listen carefully to instructions and develop levels of independence, which are good for their individual capabilities. They are enthusiastic in the gymnasium and the swimming pool, and their behaviour is very good. Staff create a structured learning environment ensuring that pupils can participate with minimum anxiety. Pupils become confident and secure. They maintain their participation throughout the whole lesson.

195. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The lessons observed during the inspection ranged from early years to Post 16. With the exception of a lesson at Key Stage 3, where the teaching was good, all teaching was at least very good. It was excellent in one Key Stage 2 lesson. Lessons are well prepared and carefully planned. No time is wasted once the pupils arrive after changing. The objectives clearly stated in each lesson plan give the intended learning outcomes for each pupil. Very good learning is promoted by the excellent teamwork of teachers, support staff and, when available, therapists. Lessons are enthusiastically presented, and staff have high expectations of pupils. Good use is made of certificates, photographic records and other rewards to help the pupils fully celebrate their successes in the various elements of the physical education programme.

196. Physical education throughout the school is very well managed and co-ordinated. Excellent schemes of work produce a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by out of school activities. All staff involved in delivery of the subject are fully conversant with general aims and individual targets. Record keeping and assessment of pupils' work is of a very high quality. It is possible to see, in detail, exactly what each pupil has achieved. These records are well used to revise individual targets.

197. The accommodation and the subject's learning resources continue to be very good, and there are useful additions since the last inspection. The trampoline is a most effective piece of apparatus for older pupils and students. All facilities are used fully, including the outside play areas. Consideration could be given to the benefits of extending activities to one or two extra-curricular clubs. Lessons in school, and outside visits, make a considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

198. There has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of provision for religious education over the past five years. Since that time the school has amended its policy for religious education to ensure it is closely linked to the local education authority's (LEA) locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There is also an appropriate and relevant scheme of work. However, the subject is not taught as legally required and progress, overall, since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. It is not taught often enough to pupils aged five to seven years in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and is not taught at all in Post 16. The school recognises, and intends to

rectify, these omissions as soon as possible. In some groups there is not enough time for pupils to study the subject in sufficient depth and a limited range of opportunities is provided. For instance, in the middle and upper departments, for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils, religious education and modern foreign language are taught over a two-year period. Religious education is taught for two terms the first year, and for one term in the second year. This is insufficient time over the two years. Some collective acts of worship, however, do make a positive contribution to pupils' religious understanding.

199. Due to timetabling arrangements in the week of inspection, only one religious education lesson was seen. Therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. Nevertheless, sufficient evidence about pupils' progress and their achievement was gathered from discussions with teachers and pupils, and an analysis of teachers' planning, assessment and recording. Other evidence included the marking and evaluation of pupils' work, individual education plans and targets, evaluation of educational visits, and supplementary work in assemblies. Within the narrow range of experiences pupils receive, they make satisfactory progress. During Key Stage 1 (by the age of seven), pupils celebrate festivals from different religions. They experience features of festivals such as food, clothes, artefacts and music. They reflect on what they have done during the day by showing their work and receiving praise for good work. They share their work with the whole school in a termly assembly.

200. By the end of Key Stage 2 (at the age of 11), pupils continue to develop their awareness and understanding of different religions and cultural diversity. As part of a topic on Water, they listen to stories and relate water's significance in people's lives. They recall the stories of Noah's Ark and Moses.

201. By the end of Key Stage 3 (at the age of 14), pupils experience a daily act of collective worship. They sit quietly, listen to music, and reflect while a candle is lit and shown round the class. As part of their science Dark and Light topic, they discuss celebrations, such as Diwali. In the school Christmas production, Key Stage 3 pupils acted the roles of the Three Kings.

202. By the end of Key Stage 4 (at the age of 16), pupils study Christianity and Islam. They look at major celebrations within the religious calendar, and the food rules that individual religions observe. Pupils visit a Pentecostal church and, with the help of a Greek Orthodox Christian member of staff, study icons used in the Greek Orthodox church. Pupils have recreated Islamic designs such as stamps and imprints. Pupils also emulate washing rituals that Muslims must do before prayers. Pupils show great enjoyment in the sensory approach to Religious Education, and they take a full part in department and whole school assemblies.

203. The role of the co-ordinator is insufficiently developed and needs to be improved to ensure monitoring and evaluation of provision for religious education. The co-ordinator must ensure there is sufficient time allocated for pupils to study religious education. This is particularly important for pupils in Reception and at Key Stage 1, where there is not currently a formally planned religious education programme, and at Post 16. The quality of teaching must be monitored and steps taken to prepare for a standardised recording of progress, such as the nationally recognised performance criteria ('P' Levels – which the school is at present evaluating). The co-ordinator must also monitor and ensure that the time for religious education represented on the timetable is taught fully.