

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MANDEVILLE SCHOOL**

Northolt, Middlesex

LEA area: London Borough of Ealing

Unique reference number: 101968

Headteacher: Ms S Blee

Reporting inspector: Mr M G Whitehead  
21061

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 192438

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	School for pupils with severe learning difficulties
Age range of pupils:	5 to 12 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Eastcote Lane North Northolt Middlesex
Postcode:	UB5 4HW
Telephone number:	020 8864 4921
Fax number:	020 8423 1096
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms S Vaux
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M G Whitehead	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages Religious education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mr T Hill	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Geography English as an additional language	
Ms D Drury	Team inspector	English History Equality of opportunity	
Mr M Little	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	
Ms M Last	Team inspector	Science Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Mandeville School is a day special school for 80 pupils. There are 52 boys and 28 girls on roll, whose ages range from five to twelve years. The school makes provision for children under five although there were none on roll at the time of the inspection. Pupils come from all parts of the Ealing Education Authority area and there are two pupils from outside the borough. All pupils have severe learning difficulties and many have profound and complex learning difficulties. Since the last inspection the number of pupils on roll has remained static but there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils on the autistic spectrum. All pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. For over half the pupils, English is their second language. There are 21 pupils of white ethnic background and the remaining 59 pupils are of Black Caribbean, Black African, Indian or Pakistani background. Due to their severe learning difficulties, the attainment levels of all pupils, on entry to the school, are very low when compared with the national average. Pupils come from families whose socio-economic circumstances are wide and varied. Forty-one per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

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

Mandeville School is a good school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The excellent leadership of the headteacher and her deputy provides very clear direction for the school. The governing body and key staff are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. The overall quality of teaching is very good, with a high proportion of excellent teaching in Key Stage 1. Taking these factors and the cost per pupil into account, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Very strong leadership of the headteacher and key staff.
- Creates a supportive and caring community in which everyone is valued and respected.
- Promotes very good relationships between pupils and their peers, and between all pupils and adults. This is reflected in the very good behaviour of the pupils.
- There is a total commitment to improvement which is a clear reflection of the school's aims and values.
- There are very good links with parents.
- The very good quality of teaching is a strength of the school, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- The approach and success in developing the communication skills of all pupils is a strength of the school.

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

- Opportunities for developing pupils' initiative and personal responsibility.
- Arrangements to ensure consistency in assessment in order to identify small steps for learning across the curriculum to aid identification of pupils' progress.
- Curricular opportunities in music.
- Skills in the delivery of the sensory curriculum.

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

#### **Other areas for improvement**

- The quality of computers and software in the school office.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. There has been good improvement overall since the last inspection. All key issues raised in the last inspection have been addressed. There has been very good improvement in teaching and learning in mathematics, English and science. The curriculum now meets statutory requirements by including a modern foreign language for pupils in Year 7. There has been good improvement in the use of time and the curriculum to ensure that all pupils make good progress. There has also been significant improvement in the formulation of effective behaviour management plans for pupils with challenging behaviour and an increased focus on sensory work for pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties. There has been good improvement in arrangements for the arrival and departure of pupils despite the very cramped parking area available to the school. There has been good progress concerning health and safety issues that were raised and statutory requirements are now met. The school has good capacity to deal with weaknesses that are present and may arise in the future.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 11	by age 12	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	A	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

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

The excellent progress that pupils make in mathematics results from the high quality of teaching and the excellent work with the multidisciplinary team who use number work as an important element to their individual plans for pupils in the mobilisation and mathematics' programme. For example, most of the exercises planned for pupils involve counting the different movements and increasing pupils' spatial awareness. Small groups of pupils attend local primary and infant schools for half a day each week and another pupil attends a local secondary special school to help his transition next year. These arrangements are very successful for the pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, both in and out of the classrooms and whilst taking part in school visits.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between pupils and their peers, and between all pupils and adults.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good or better in 86 per cent of lessons, the positive nature of pupils' attitudes is a strength of the school. The very good behaviour of pupils and the very positive relationships between all pupils and staff are also strengths of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-12
76 lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good

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

The teaching of English is very good and is promoted well through the National Literacy Strategy. This complements and increases the development of pupils' communication skills and is carefully planned to meet the individual special needs of all pupils. In mathematics the quality of teaching is very good. The blending of physiotherapy and numeracy through the 'mobilisation and mathematics' programme is a strength of the provision for pupils with additional and complex special needs. The teaching of science is very imaginative and outstanding in quality. The excellent use of resources enables pupils to experience and understand scientific concepts and principles. The quality of teaching throughout the school is a major strength. Ninety per cent of the teaching observed during the inspection was good or better, 51 per cent was very good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good, broad and highly relevant curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision of specialist staff and resources is good and enables all pupils to study all subjects. Specialist staff also guarantee clear communication between the school and all parents for whom English is an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good as the school promotes this as central to the whole curriculum. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good, the curriculum is enriched with a wide range of visits, visitors and experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for all pupils and provides for all aspects of pupils' needs, involving both the parents and the health authority. However, there is a weakness in assessment procedures in religious education.

The breadth of the curriculum and its relevance to the pupils of Mandeville School is a strength. The curriculum is designed to take into account all the special needs of the pupils and is suitable for all. The provision of staff with very special training to meet the demands of the pupils is also a strength of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The excellent leadership of the headteacher and her deputy provides very clear direction for the school. The management of the headteacher and key staff is very good.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in fulfilling its responsibilities and has a very positive influence on the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance are very good.
The strategic use of resources	The use of the school budget and special grants in appropriate ways for the benefit of the pupils is very good. All spending is monitored carefully.

The excellent leadership of the headteacher and her deputy, along with the very effective management of the governing body ensure that the standard of teaching, the quality of the curriculum and the progress that all pupils make are improving. The school applies the principles of best value rigorously through consultation on financial matters, challenging discussion before spending, comparison with spending in other similar schools and take into account any competitive elements that may arise.

There is an adequate number of well-qualified teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory and the general provision of resources is good.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>▪ The teachers are good and they are an enthusiastic team.</li> <li>▪ They feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>▪ The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>▪ The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The children take care of each other and show genuine concern.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are no significant issues for improvement.</li> </ul>

The team of inspectors support the parents' positive comments about the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. All pupils have severe learning difficulties, for this reason it is inappropriate to make judgements and comparisons with the national average. Pupils' attainment levels when they join the school in Year 1 are very low. However, pupils' achievements are very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stages 2 and 3. All pupils make very good progress and many pupils at Key Stage 1 make excellent progress due to the excellent standard of teaching they receive. This is also true of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The high levels of achievement and progress made by pupils as they pass through the school from Year 1 to Year 7 are a direct result of the very high quality of teaching. Despite the excellent and very good progress that pupils make, it is important to note that overall levels of attainment for pupils when they leave the school are still low. This does not reflect badly on the quality of education pupils are receiving, it highlights the severity of the learning difficulties of the pupils. For this reason the report will not be focusing on standards achieved but will be highlighting the things that pupils know, understand and can do.
2. The school is very successful in helping pupils to improve their communication skills. As pupils move through the school many progress from speaking simple words to speaking in sentences. By the time pupils reach Key Stage 3 some read and write simple sentences. Pupils who are unable to speak make good progress in their ability to communicate through signing and make themselves clearly understood by pupils and staff. The school's approach to the National Numeracy Strategy is equally good and involves very successful work in the 'mobilisation and mathematics' programme which combines intense individual physiotherapy programmes with active practical mathematics. Such programmes help to develop skills in counting and the understanding of size, shape, movement and general spatial awareness. These two very effective programmes ensure that all pupils in all classes are achieving standards that are appropriate to their ability levels.
3. Pupils make very good progress in science as they develop an understanding of the classification of materials and the structure of the human body. Good progress is made in art where pupils learn to mix colours, increase their awareness of texture and tone, and study the work of famous artists by copying their styles. Pupils make very good progress in design and technology as they make puppets from a variety of materials and also prepare a picnic to take with them on an excursion later in the day. Pupils' learning is good in geography and history as they study their environment and the events of past times. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology, each according to his or her need and ability. Very good progress is made by Key Stage 3 pupils as they begin to study French as their modern foreign language, they learn very well and are able to take part in some basic conversation. Pupils' learning and progress in music is satisfactory as they learn to sing songs and play different rhythms using percussion instruments. Physical education in the school enables pupils to make good progress as they work on the trampoline, swim and take part in team games. Pupils also make good progress in religious education as they learn of major world faiths.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

4. Pupils' attitudes to learning are always at least satisfactory and are good or better in 86 per cent of lessons. This represents a considerable improvement since the last report when there was a small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour in some lessons observed. The positive nature of pupils' attitudes is now a strength of the school.
5. Pupils are keen to come to school and arrive with smiles on their faces. There is good communication between school and parents. Pupils are well known by their bus drivers and escorts who take an interest and show concern for them. Because of the high standard of teaching, pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to be involved in all activities. Despite their difficulties they concentrate well and try hard.
6. Pupils with profound and multiple difficulties respond well to the sensory curriculum as well as to physical activities such as swimming. Some pupils are able to take responsibility for certain aspects of their learning. In particular a small group of pupils on the autistic spectrum are able to use computers to achieve a degree of independence in some areas of their learning. Some other pupils in different classes throughout the school show initiative and take responsibility for small tasks such as taking the register to the school office. In one class a pupil with complex learning difficulties reliably counts up to three, and is responsible for cueing songs and other activities. This is commendable. However, the school has not created sufficient opportunities for pupils to take on greater responsibility and to develop their initiative as they progress through the school.
7. Behaviour is very good. This too is the result of motivating and stimulating teaching. A small but significant number of pupils do present challenging behaviour, but this is almost always well managed by the skilful staff who follow well thought out behaviour management programmes. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour such as bullying or racism. In such a diverse school community this is a tribute to both the staff and pupils. The more able pupils understand the impact of their actions on other people and are keen to help their peers in practical ways and to celebrate their successes.
8. Parents are pleased that the school helps their children to develop a positive image of themselves and that they are encouraged to help other people in, for instance supporting a school in India. Pupils are encouraged to develop respect for the feelings, beliefs and values of others, particularly by visits connected with their work in religious education to the places of worship of numerous different religions represented by pupils. The pupils' respect for property is also shown by the lack of damage and graffiti around the school.
9. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and all staff show a warm, caring yet professional attitude. Relationships between pupils are very good, many pupils form positive relationships with each other. The excellent use of Makaton signing has played a significant part in this and during the inspection two pupils were observed conversing with signs.
10. Pupils' attendance is good and shows an improvement on the levels recorded at the time of the previous inspection. Attendance is recorded accurately but, as absence symbols are not consistently completed, it is difficult to analyse the reasons for absence, which are generally associated with medical reasons. The high levels of attendance have a positive effect upon standards of attainment and progress. Attendance levels have increased over the last full academic year and are continuing to increase.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

11. The quality of teaching overall is very good and is a strength of the school. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. Ninety per cent of the teaching is good or better and over half the teaching is very good or excellent. There has been excellent improvement in teaching since the last inspection when 22 per cent was less than satisfactory. The way in which pupils learn is in line with the teaching and is clearly a result of the very professional and effective work of all staff.
12. The teaching of English is very good and is promoted well through the National Literacy Strategy. This complements and enhances the development of pupils' communication skills and is carefully planned to meet the individual special needs of all pupils. Frequent use is made of drama as a teaching method including role-play and make-believe. Drama is strongly linked to the English curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. All staff offer consistent support for those who require signed communication and have high expectations of communication from all pupils.
13. All teachers and support staff work effectively in meeting the individual special needs of all pupils. They ensure that pupils for whom English is an additional language are able to understand and take a full part in all lessons. Boys and girls have equal opportunities and equal access to all activities. This equality is achieved by the conscientious work of the support staff, many of whom work with individual pupils to ensure that they are able to participate fully.
14. The teaching of literacy is very well addressed. Teachers have a designated session each day in which they teach in very carefully planned sessions as prescribed through the National Literacy Strategy. In some cases the teaching sessions have to be modified to meet the needs of the pupils. For some pupils, their learning difficulties or medical conditions limit the time that they are able to concentrate fully, or mean that they are unable to respond in an ordinary way. In these situations the teachers and support staff are excellent in the ways in which they help pupils to take part. This often includes sign-supported speech and individual support for pupils.
15. In mathematics the quality of teaching is very good. The blending of physiotherapy and numeracy through the 'mobilisation and mathematics' programme is a strength of the provision for pupils with additional and complex special needs. Most of the exercises and movements planned by the physiotherapists for individual pupils, is supported by number work, through counting and also through the increasing awareness of the space around them and their relative position within that space. These programmes are planned for individual pupils of all ages. The work of the learning support staff and nursery nurses as part of the teaching team generates very high standards of teaching for the pupils, especially those in Key Stage 1.
16. The teaching of numeracy throughout the school is very good. All staff work very effectively in developing the numeracy skills of the pupils. This is also true in many lessons other than mathematics. For example, in science through measuring and counting, in technology through measuring and drawing and in food technology through measuring, weighing and timing.
17. The teaching of science is very imaginative and outstanding in quality. The excellent use of resources enables pupils to experience and understand scientific concepts and principles. The wide range of practical activities, provided by teachers, helps them learn very effectively. Activities include experiments with the light from a torch, practical tasks of sorting objects in order to classify them as being hard or soft. Teachers take due care of health and safety issues.

18. The teaching of art is good at all key stages. The teaching of design and technology in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good and in Key Stage 3 it is very good. The quality of teaching in geography is at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers plan well for the lessons, linking plans to previous work to ensure the progressive build up of skills and knowledge. The teaching of history in Key Stage 1 is good and in Key Stage 3 is very good. History is also integrated into the whole curriculum. Topic work on the Tudors involves English, reading and writing, art, drawing and painting and model making of houses and other buildings.
19. Teaching of information and communication technology in Key Stage 1 is very good and in one lesson observed it was excellent. Teaching of information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 is good. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 3. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the pupils' needs. French is taught to pupils in Key Stage 3 and is very good. The subject is made appropriate to the individual needs and interests of the pupils through role-play and excellent use of every day vocabulary that pupils may need when visiting a French speaking country. Teaching of music is satisfactory overall and is good in over half of lessons. In one lesson the teaching was very good for pupils in Key Stage 2 where expectations were high. Pupils identified the rhythm patterns in their own names and responded well to the demands made by the teacher.
20. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is very good. Pupils benefit greatly from this outstanding quality of teaching, which is a strength of the school. The main strengths in teaching lie in the excellent lesson planning and the excellent management of pupils. In the very best lessons teachers give pupils a choice of activity and allow them to take responsibility for their own work. Teachers have a very good understanding of the individual needs of the pupils and, taking these into account, make sure that all pupils are taking a full part in the lesson and are giving their best. In the lessons that were judged to be satisfactory, the pace was rather slow or there was a lack of variety of activity to excite and motivate the pupils. The Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Achievement Grant (EMTAG) teacher enables pupils with English as an additional language to make good progress.
21. The school has schemes of work for all subjects which are effective in guiding teachers' planning. The school monitors these well and as a result of this monitoring has recognised the need to increase the flexibility in the intended learning outcomes to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged by the learning activities. Teachers are rigorous in ensuring that targets set in individual education plans (IEPs) are addressed in lessons and monitored regularly with progress reported and recorded each half term.
22. The very good teaching throughout the school has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. All pupils make very good progress in all subjects. Their skills in communication increase, for some these include signing and eye pointing.

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

23. The school provides a good quality and range of opportunities for learning for all its pupils throughout the school. The curriculum is good at all key stages. The school makes provision for children under five who were part of the school last year, although there were none on roll at the time of the inspection. Their curriculum prepares them well for entering Key Stage 1 at the age of five. The school has invested much time in reviewing and modifying its curriculum since the last inspection and has made good

progress. It now meets statutory requirements, including provision for French at Key Stage 3 which was not taught at the time of the last inspection. However, the music curriculum does not effectively promote opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills and knowledge.

24. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education. The school uses its curriculum flexibly and very effectively to meet the needs of each of its pupils and to help them make very good progress in all subjects. A multi-disciplinary team, including two speech and language therapists, a physiotherapist, two occupational therapists, two music therapists, medical staff and an educational social worker, provides full and part-time specialist help. The good work of this team is very effective in ensuring that pupils are able to take part in all lessons; for example, the physiotherapist links her work to the pupils' learning targets and many pupils start the day with the masseuse preparing them for a calm approach to lessons.
25. The needs of pupils with autism are very effectively met in two specialist classes where the 'treatment and education of autistic and related communication handicapped children and adults' (TEACCH) methodology helps them to focus their attention and make good progress in academic and social skills. Pupils with challenging behaviour benefit from good quality behaviour management plans, which identify and apply consistent strategies to be employed by all staff. These plans are a major feature of the curriculum and help pupils modify their behaviour and consequently understand what is required of them in lessons and around the school. Pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties are also well supported by the curriculum which, for them, includes an extra focus on sensory work enabling them to make more meaning of the world around them. The changes in arrangements for autistic pupils represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially for pupils with challenging behaviour. There were particular concerns about one pupil at the time of the last report.
26. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are now a strong feature of the curriculum at all key stages. They are having a positive impact on pupils' understanding and use of basic skills. Communication skills are strongly emphasised for all pupils and a particularly specific emphasis is placed upon the use of signs and symbols to extend their understanding and interaction with those around them.
27. There are clear connections between the schemes of work, the intended learning outcomes and the targets on pupils' IEPs. The curricular needs of the pupils as set out in their statements are met fully and targets in their IEPs are generally well written to enable pupils to make small and steady steps of learning.
28. The school day is well organised to meet the needs of the pupils. Lessons begin on time and teachers make good use of teaching time during lessons. The balance of time allocated for subjects is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils take part in regular assemblies and there are additional opportunities for them to reflect on their lives and the cultures of those around them. Good opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The school makes very good arrangements for all to take part in all activities and study all subjects. The school's commitment is enshrined in a clearly written equal opportunities policy which gives clear guidance to staff and which they follow well. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

29. The 43 pupils who speak English as an additional language have the same opportunities as all other pupils. They are well supported by a bi-lingual classroom assistant and by specialist input from the EMTAG teacher. This teacher also provides useful advice to other staff on ensuring full involvement of these pupils within lessons. When necessary the school makes good use of its bilingual support staff to speak to pupils in their first language, for example in Punjabi or Urdu. The combination of these strategies results in excellent progress for these pupils with good arrangements to keep parents informed of their children's progress.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal and social education (PSE) both in lessons and in other social occasions such as lunchtimes and breaks. The provision for personal, social and health education has improved since the last inspection, it is now much more clearly aligned to literacy and numeracy and makes better use of the time to promote pupils' learning.
31. There is a culture in the school of valuing every individual and positively emphasising achievement. This is reflected in the wall display in the dining area that declares that 'everybody can do something'. The scheme of work includes detailed arrangements for drugs awareness and sex education. The development of social skills and maturity is central to the ethos of the school and to the whole curriculum.
32. Pupils undertake small tasks of responsibility within classes, such as taking the register to the office. Some act as register monitors and others fetch their own schedules. When a swimming lesson is due pupils are encouraged to check if all the equipment they need is in their bags. They are thoughtful and considerate of each other; for example, one pupil was seen helping another detach a sticker from the wall when it proved difficult. In one class two pupils held a short but significant conversation in Makaton signs. As they get older pupils undertake tasks within the classrooms, including helping with materials and equipment for the lessons. The school gives due recognition to pupils' achievements and personal effort through a weekly 'praise' assembly in which good work and endeavour are rewarded with certificates and badges. Despite these very good arrangements the school does not have a formal structure for recognising the roles of the Key Stage 3 pupils in the school by assigning them special responsibilities and privileges.
33. The school day starts with pupils greeting each other in groups. This reinforces the concept of lessons beginning and helps pupils, particularly those who are lower attaining, to understand their change of location and recognise their friends. Teachers use this time well. They make good links with literacy and numeracy by expecting pupils to read their names and those of others, to read the daily schedule or timetable and to help by counting numbers of people present for the register.
34. Pupils are given choices about matters such as the lunch menu and what to prepare for a picnic. Reminders about basic daily hygiene are integrated into the day and pupils know to wash their hands after a visit to the toilet and before eating and drinking.
35. Photographs in the Records of Achievement provide evidence of a range of activities that promote personal and social development. The school has invested in support from a specialist group 'Image in Action' that provides a structured programme of sex education. The staff are fully involved in this programme so that they gain the confidence and expertise to deal with further elements and answer questions. Parents have been fully informed and consulted about this work.
36. An experienced senior teacher co-ordinates personal and social education with the assistance of another teacher. There has been a review this year of the policy and

programme as part of the school's development planning process. Training has been made available to staff. New policies and initiatives such as the 'Image in Action' work has been reported to the governors.

37. The school makes good use of the local community to enrich the curriculum; for example, pupils visit the Natural History Museum and the local community police officer visits the school regularly to help pupils learn about road safety. Pupils from two classes attend local mainstream and special school son a part-time basis. These opportunities to work alongside other children are proving very effective in developing the pupils' understanding of others.
38. Provision for spiritual, moral, and cultural development is good, provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their feelings concerning their work, the events of the day and any other issues that may arise. In a religious education lesson they listened to calm music and then shared and appreciated their experience of lunchtime activities. In another lesson pupils considered the importance of water in their lives by experiencing the smells, sounds and feel of the seaside. In one assembly pupils scattered 'love' in the form of confetti to encourage pupils to treat one another with consideration. Assemblies also offer a time to listen quietly to music. Each morning and afternoon session gives time to reflect on the day's activities. The celebration of a range of religious festivals, the introduction to many faiths and attending a carol service with the local secondary school support the spiritual development of pupils. They respond with wonder and joy when they are hidden and revealed by a scarf or sit on the 'magic chair'. Trampoline activities generated delight in pupils from all key stages.
39. There are regular and plentiful visits to local facilities like the park, swimming pool and fire station. Mandeville School welcomes students from other schools and colleges, and student nurses on work experience. Literacy resources are varied and rich. A range of music is played in lessons and experiences such as a performance of African drummers are a regular feature of the school. Pupils enjoyed a religious education lesson that promoted their appreciation of the wonders of the world and a wall display shows evidence of studying the work of Joan Miro. The school is involved in the local community arts project. There are regular performances like the 'Oily Cart' company presentation of 'Dreams and Secrets'. There is a good mix of staff and speakers of other languages. A French cafe project enhances the modern foreign language work.

### **Equal Opportunities**

40. There is no evident discrimination in the provision made by the school. Provision, to support access to the curriculum for all pupils, is very good. Staff understand clearly the individual needs of pupils and plan effective provision. Effective use is made of the EMTAG service and staff. Specific programmes, resources and equipment are made available including detailed behaviour management programmes, personal care, specialist seating and one-to-one support. The priority given to developing communication skills supports second language learning as well as learning difficulties. Information and communication technology developments increase opportunities for some pupils to take a full part in all lessons, especially one autistic pupil who chooses to 'talk' only to a computer.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. The school provides a happy environment, which functions as an orderly, caring community in which every member is valued and respected. Relationships between all

staff are very good, they exhibit very high standards for pupils to learn from and act as very good role models. They have a good understanding of pupils' progress, both academic and personal, and are effective in promoting good standards of discipline and behaviour.

42. Since the previous inspection, all health and safety issues have been rectified and health and safety procedures are very good. Staff take great care to ensure safe practice and take the time to reinforce safety to pupils when, for example, a group of Years 2 and 3 pupils explored the local environment, pupils were involved in looking and listening when crossing roads and in understanding why they should stop, look and listen before crossing. The school has very good procedures for carrying out and recording risk assessments, involving all staff in identifying potential risks. Equipment is regularly tested and any defective item is taken out of use immediately. Fire evacuation procedures are very good and the school conducts these each term, having consulted with the fire brigade to ensure that assembly points and procedures meet requirements.
43. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and the governing body has adopted a policy since the previous inspection with planned reviews to ensure that current best practice is incorporated. The school uses the local authority guidelines and the school complies with these requirements. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has undertaken training. All adults working in the school, including any supply staff, are aware of the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns. The school has a very good policy for the use of positive physical handling to protect pupils from harming themselves or others and staff have received training. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities.
44. The arrangements for providing first aid and administering medication are very good and there are two named first-aiders in the school. External agencies provide very good support for pupils' personal development and regular visits by the audiometrist, optometrist, dietician and dentist are all co-ordinated and very good records are maintained for each pupil. In addition to the full-time school nurse, who is funded by the Health Authority, eight members of staff hold current first aid certificates, this ensures that throughout the day a qualified first aider is available to deal with any emergencies. Pupils are looked after very well and first aid supplies are very good and readily accessible. Accidents are properly recorded and the headteacher is made aware of all accidents, enabling any potential risks to be identified and addressed.
45. The physiotherapy and occupational therapy support available for pupils is funded by the Health Authority and provides very good support for pupils and, where possible, is integrated into daily routines and activities. Records are very well maintained. The support provides very successful links with the Health Authority, parents and the school to the benefit of all pupils. Interpreters are available to support the work with parents and, during the holidays, home visits reinforce the ongoing work with pupils.
46. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor attendance, and involves escorts in helping the communication between home and school. Any information brought by escorts concerning pupils is recorded carefully in the school office. Whilst attendance is recorded accurately, the completion of registers is inconsistent and reasons for absence are not always recorded. Parents are encouraged to ensure that pupils' attendance is good and that they are not withdrawn from school for annual holidays. At the time of the previous inspection, a key issue was that the arrangement for the arrival of pupils in school should be reviewed and improved and the times pupils wait for transport should be reduced. Arrangements for the arrival and departure of pupils

are now good and there is great emphasis on safety where, for example, a large number of vehicles park in a very small area at the front of the school adjacent to a busy road. Drivers and escorts are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils, displaying a great understanding of their needs and the importance of reliability and stability in the service which they provide, recognising that some pupils spend up to an hour in travelling to school. Relationships between drivers, escorts and pupils are very good.

47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. Teachers and support staff consistently apply very effective behaviour management plans for those pupils with challenging behaviour. These help pupils to be successful in changing their behaviour by understanding what is required and therefore take an active part in lessons because their attention is improved. Recent in-service training on positive physical handling is proving effective in calming pupils down when they need physical intervention. Staff treat pupils with dignity at all times and manage incidents of challenging behaviour very well. The strategies used ensure that disruption to other pupils' learning is minimised. Some pupils have behavioural targets written into their IEPs and they make good progress overall because these are regularly addressed in lessons.
48. Teachers promote good behaviour as soon as pupils enter school at the start of each day. Pupils sit in circles, listen to each other's plans and understand that they have to wait their turn. Most pupils are cooperative in this respect and overall behaviour in and around the school is good. There are procedures to ensure that the children learn in an atmosphere of harmony and support. There is no oppressive behaviour and parents report that they are happy with the standards of behaviour in the school. All staff are trained in the monitoring and evaluation of behaviour as part of their induction to the school.
49. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good and have been reviewed this year by the headteacher and senior management team. The system now enables staff to identify pupils' progress more clearly than was possible previously. There is a range of processes to plan and assess the steps of learning which pupils make within the curriculum. These include individual intended learning outcomes, which are designed to link together the statement, the annual review, the IEPs and targets so that pupils' learning throughout all subjects of the curriculum can be clearly identified. The system is working effectively but staff have already recognised the need to look again at the individual learning outcomes. This is to identify those pupils who progress more quickly so that teachers may extend pupils' achievements by identifying the next stages.
50. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is part of a procedure throughout the school and teachers follow the scheme consistently and write detailed records. Teachers are aware of the problems associated with the assessment of the minute steps of progress made by pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties. The senior management team is currently considering the procedures for assessing pupils' work and how to recognise clearly the progress that pupils make. Most targets in IEPs are effective in this way. However, in a small minority of cases, targets are unclear. This has been a focus of the management team's current work and they rightly continue to consider it a high priority. In lessons the teachers make good use of information from these assessments to plan their lessons and to ensure that pupils move forward through the curriculum, though there is some inconsistency in some lessons. There is no established method for assessment in religious education.

51. Most subjects have effective schemes of work which have been drawn up or reviewed since the last inspection. The management team monitors teachers' planning each term against the pupils' targets in their IEPs and against the teachers' records of pupils' progress. This is a good system. The result of this monitoring shows that the school's systems to support pupils as they move through the curriculum are working well. However, the staff are aware of some minor weaknesses and have imminent plans to rectify them.
52. The IEPs are effective in identifying suitable targets and the support that pupils receive from teachers and support assistants, in working towards such targets, is good. Physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, music therapists and other staff all make a valuable contribution to monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal progress. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem.
53. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very good. They are at the heart of the school's work and all staff are conscientious in completing the school records. Support for pupils' personal development is very good. The school has made good progress in this aspect since the last inspection when the support of pupils was judged to be satisfactory.

### **Integration**

54. The school's provision for the integration of pupils into mainstream schools is very good. Small groups of pupils attend local primary schools for half a day each week. This arrangement is well established and many pupils have benefited from this over the years. One pupil attends another special school for two days each week to help his transition to secondary education when he reaches the appropriate age. There are also excellent links with other schools, particularly for a pupil with hearing impairment. This gives great support to the hearing impaired pupil and her parents, although it would not be appropriate for any pupil to transfer to these helpful schools.
55. Parents are very pleased with the school's successes concerning integration of their children into other schools. The school is very careful to provide quality placements. The school ensures that integration is a positive experience for all the pupils who take part.
56. Detailed records are kept and the placements are very carefully monitored. Much of the success of this scheme is due to the dedication and hard work of the learning support assistants who work closely with the pupils and liaise very effectively with the receiving schools.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

57. The school's partnership with parents is very effective and is promoted through good communications. The involvement of parents in supporting pupils is very good and this partnership makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
58. Parents express very positive views of the school and all parents believe that the school works closely with parents, that teaching is good and that their children make good progress whilst being helped to become mature and responsible. Parents feel that they are well informed about their children's progress and are comfortable in approaching the headteacher or staff with any questions or problems.
59. The information provided for parents is good and they are fully involved in the annual reviews. The physiotherapist involves parents in programmes to integrate physiotherapy into everyday activities. Toys, which pupils may borrow from the toy library, are accompanied by useful guidelines for parents. Currently, these guidelines are only available in English but the school uses the skills of bilingual staff to ensure that this problem is overcome, usually through telephone conversations. In addition, the school is extending the range of documents that are translated, such as the home/school agreement which has been returned by about two thirds of the parents. Reports for annual reviews are written with care and sent to parents two weeks before the annual review, to form a basis for the discussion. Highly effective workshops that focus on issues such as signing and behaviour management are held regularly for parents and these are well attended. The home/school diaries are well used to support communication with parents. The school uses home visits very effectively to develop the partnership between school and home and is able to provide advice to parents who have concerns relating to their children's wellbeing. A strength of the school is the accessibility of the headteacher and staff to parents, to discuss any concerns.
60. Parents support the work of the Friends of Mandeville School although no parent currently serves on the committee that organises family evenings, race nights and other activities to support the work of the school. Through these events and support, which they have secured from local organisations and charitable trusts, the Friends have been able to help fund the recent purchase of a new minibus. This minibus makes a very valuable contribution to the opportunities available to pupils and is modified especially to take pupils in wheelchairs safely. The work of the Friends and the support which it receives from parents is very much appreciated by pupils.
61. Most parents have a good understanding of their children's targets and support them at home, reinforcing and developing their skills and learning. A small number of parents help in the school with activities such as horse riding. The support of parents has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

62. The excellent leadership of the headteacher and her deputy provides very clear direction for the school. They work extremely well together and strive to ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently. They encourage all staff and pupils to give of their best and maintain a very positive atmosphere within the school.
63. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties very well and is very effective in monitoring the school development plan. The headteacher and governing body ensure that there is full involvement by staff and parents in the formulation of the school development plan. This excellent strategy ensures that all have ownership of the

school and a part to play in shaping its future. The aims of the school are reflected in the work of the management team. Care is taken in ensuring that governors have planned roles, including responsibility for monitoring literacy, numeracy and the curriculum. Within the last year the governors have played a very influential role in the discussions and implementation of an upgrade in computers and other peripherals for use in the classrooms. Their skills and knowledge of this area, discussion with staff, and consideration of the grants and other funding available have resulted in a very good upgrade of computers and software throughout the school.

64. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas in need of development. Through its careful monitoring procedures, the governing body is able to take appropriate action to resolve issues that arise and ensure improvement throughout the school. The grants that the school receives are used for literacy, numeracy, self-improvement, staff development and performance management. Other grants obtained by the school are also used appropriately.
65. The headteacher ensures that responsibilities are appropriately delegated to staff, who have the skills to carry out those duties effectively. There is a very effective structure for staff development and monitoring of teaching. This is very successful and ensures that staff are able to improve their skills and develop professionally.
66. The school's procedures for financial control are very good. The recommendations made in the most recent auditors' report have all been implemented. The school office is managed very well and offers support to all staff as well as a friendly welcome to all visitors. The administrative officer and the clerical assistant work closely with pupils and parents, ensuring that their needs are met. They also support the staff and pupils in the work they do preparing reports, policies, and many other vital school documents. The responsibility for planning annual reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs is that of the deputy headteacher who is supported by the office staff. This is carried out very effectively and efficiently. All parties are kept informed and given the opportunity to make written contribution to all reviews.
67. The school applies principles of best value in comparing costs and seeks competitive tenders when ordering materials and equipment for the school. The school makes good use of new technology in the classroom. However in the school's offices the technology needs updating. The school is aware of this and the problem will be resolved within the next six months.
68. The number, qualifications and experience of both teaching and support staff are well matched to the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. The EMTAG teacher is working effectively, with a bilingual classroom assistant, to support pupils and their families. There is a good range of specialists including physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and music therapists, to support the wide range of special educational needs at the school. The local education authority is aware of the lack of support for pupils with visual impairment and is trying to rectify this issue. The physiotherapy service is particularly effective as it has National Curriculum targets built into its physiotherapy plans for pupils with additional and complex special needs.
69. The accommodation is satisfactory. Improvements have been made since the last inspection; for example, a separate therapy room has been provided and there is new accommodation for pupils on the autistic spectrum. The school office has been improved by reallocating space and a generous donation of furniture. A small library has been made available to the pupils in Years 3 to 7. There is now a new resources room for teaching and support staff. The playground area has been much improved by resurfacing and the provision of identified play areas for different groups of pupils and

different activities. Storage remains a problem as it was at the last inspection, because of the severe limitations on available space. This is being addressed through plans to relocate the school under local authority re-organisation of special education in the borough. Specialist accommodation such as the hall, hydrotherapy pool and therapy room is used well by staff and pupils. The sensory room is small and the skills to deliver the sensory curriculum are limited to a small number of staff.

70. The provision of learning resources is good and there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Resources for history, geography, information and communication technology, science, art and music are satisfactory. Resources for mathematics and design and technology are good and for physical education and English resources are very good. These are enhanced by an excellent spa pool, warm water pool and a library trolley for Years 1 and 2. There is also a small separate building that has been converted into an upper school library for Years 3 to 7. The library and trolley are well stocked and there are additional books available in each classroom. Staff have also made available a toy library for pupils' use. Most notable is the wide range of resources tailor-made by staff and some parents to meet the individual needs of pupils. These include several versions of the National Literacy Strategy 'Big Books' with large print and symbols, Makaton books and sensory boxes full of props and artefacts. The resources in these boxes are excellent, for example a giant beanstalk, a goose, golden eggs and a model of a cow's head to illustrate the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Resources are well organised and stored efficiently in a separate room.
71. Taking into account the very high quality of teaching that the pupils receive, the good progress that they make, the very strong leadership and management of the school and the cost per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

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

72. In order to improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and senior management team should:
- (1) provide opportunities for pupils to take initiative and personal responsibility as they progress through the school; (*Paragraphs 6, 32*)
  - (2) generate consistent good practice in assessment in order to identify small steps for learning to aid pupils' progress and the accurate assessment of their attainment; (*Paragraph 21*)
  - (3) broaden curricular opportunities in music to include opportunities for pupils to learn, hold and play musical instruments; (*Paragraph 23, 141*)
  - (4) provide further training to enable staff to make the very best use of the sensory room in order to meet fully the needs of the pupils. (*Paragraph 69*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	67

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
12	39	39	10	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	80
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	43

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data (National comparative)	9.34 (8.00)

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data (National comparative)	0.04 (1.00)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	17
Black – other	0
Indian	16
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	21
Any other minority ethnic group	7

### ***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 – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.8
Average class size	7.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	23
Total aggregate hours worked per week	779

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1,105,628
Total expenditure	1,080,128
Expenditure per pupil	13,173
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,472
Balance carried forward to next year	46,972

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	82
Number of questionnaires returned	15

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	53	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	53	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	27	7	0	13
The teaching is good.	47	53	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	27	0	0	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	40	0	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	20	13	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	40	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	20	13	0	13

Please note that rows of figures do not necessarily add up to 100, this is because some parents made no response to certain questions.

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

### **ENGLISH**

73. There has been good improvement in the quality of the provision of English in the school since the last inspection and it is good throughout the school. It underpins the school's strengths in developing pupils' communication skills. Much of this improvement is due to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.
74. Every class has a session each day that is devoted to literacy development. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stages 2 and 3 and overall it is good. In addition to the regular literacy sessions all staff working in the school promote speaking, listening, reading and writing skills consistently in all lessons and activities. The morning and afternoon 'Hello' and 'Goodbye' sessions particularly focus on developing literacy skills. Pupils match their names to signs, symbols and photographs. Planning and review of the day's activities similarly focus on developing communication. They make good use of a combination of speech, signing, vocalisation, gestures, expressions, body movements, eye contact, labels, pictures, photographs and props. Opportunities for language development are fully utilised during meal and break times and during trips such as the visit to the Natural History Museum. On this visit staff used every moment and experience whilst travelling, eating in the museum restaurant and on the tour itself to stimulate communication skills. They used constant dialogue well to stimulate response.
75. Teachers take great care to ensure that the methods and resources they use are adapted to meet the individual needs of each pupil. There is detailed planning and meticulous preparation of lessons. All staff understand the planned lesson objectives and display good knowledge of each pupil's needs. Teachers and support staff are deployed most effectively. They operate as a professional team in the classroom and with the other agencies working in the school. In a literacy session using the big book 'Temper, Temper', when one pupil could not cope with the exploration of such feelings, staff anticipated her reaction, followed her behaviour management plan and worked with her on alternative related activities. In another lesson two classes combined to enable staff to provide teaching that was appropriate to the different needs and abilities of the pupils. In lessons where teaching is very good, there is a rapid pace, lively presentations of stories and tasks, good use of varied resources, consistent repetition of vocabulary and a range of varied and challenging activities, pupils clearly achieve well. In a lesson where staff used singing games, 'musical chairs' and actions, pupils were able to identify by signs, language and gestures that they could understand and name the parts of the body. Staff organise a session at the close of each lesson to review, celebrate and formally record the achievements of each pupil.
76. Achievements in English are good at Key Stages 2 and 3 and very good at Key Stage 1. The pupils have complex learning needs and many have limited communication skills when they enter the school. At Key Stage 1 some are able to use switches to respond to greetings and simple questions. Others recognise and imitate animal sounds and the noises of a car, bike or siren. They indicate which is their photograph and some match their name to the picture. Some speak simple words or make themselves understood using signs and gestures. They sign the title of a book and the names of the main characters. Some construct and read a simple sentence with support. They recognise and place a full stop at the end of a sentence. Some read from the 'Big Book' during shared reading sessions using word cards as prompts. They understand how to turn the pages of books individually and follow the text when it

is read to them. At Key Stage 2 pupils recognise, sign or say the sounds heard on tape of different modes of transport. They choose and play appropriately with toys that match these sounds. Some respond to, sign or say the name of the 'Big Book'; one has learnt simple computer literacy games by trial and error, and by watching the actions of other pupils. Others remember and sing or sign the lyrics of familiar songs. Some match the word cards to the text, most know the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by heart and some remember the term cocoon, understand and explain its meaning. A few read independently. At Key Stage 3 pupils imitate the noises and expressions of the main character in the story and show some understanding of his feelings of anger. Some pupils read and speak key words from the book. They listen intently as the whole story is read to them.

77. All pupils in all key stages make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. This is also true of the progress that they make in reading and writing. These literacy skills are also well promoted by all teachers in all other lessons during the week.
78. Attitudes and behaviour in English lessons are good at all key stages. Relationships with staff are strong. Staff manage activities well to create a calm, planned and organised atmosphere in lessons – pupils respond positively. Behaviour management plans are regularly reviewed and consistently followed by all staff in collaboration with parents. Pupils are tolerant of the range of ability of their peers. There is an atmosphere of industrious working and pupils are on task throughout their English lessons. The ethos of co-operation is promoted through the consistent use of positive language. Pupils are referred to as 'friends' and the plenary sessions as 'sharing' time. The emphasis on developing communication skills supports personal development and pupils were observed signing a conversation with each other. Pupils are given choices of activities and resources. Praise is given at every opportunity. Achievements are recognised formally at the end of each lesson and recorded in the records of achievement. Clear expectations of behaviour are set and praise is given for good behaviour; for example, when a pupil is distracted by paper on a display and starts to tear at it, he is advised that this is not acceptable and praised when he stops. Lessons include regular opportunities to help others and take turns.
79. The focus in English lessons of developing the communication skills of pupils plays a key role in helping pupils to gain benefit from the curriculum as a whole. Literacy work pays due regard to pupils' home language and is supported by the EMTAG team and bilingual support staff. Additional support from staff and targeted programmes and resources ensures access for all pupils to the English curriculum. Library facilities have improved following the previous inspection with the establishment of a mobile lower school library trolley and a well-stocked upper school library. Reading materials are varied and rich, promoting cultural development through a range of literature.
80. Lessons observed reflected teachers' detailed planning documents for English. Termly literacy targets are set for each pupil. Progress in lessons is recorded against individualised intended learning outcomes for each pupil and reviewed with IEPs. The detailed and very full reading records combined with the home reading scheme enhance the effectiveness of the pupils' reading programmes. Wide ranging, high quality resources including books, 'Big Books', tapes and wall-charts are used effectively to promote literacy. In addition to the library facilities each classroom has boxes of materials linked to each book and activity. There are additional English resources, to support lessons and teachers' planning, stored in the school's resources room. There are multiple copies of all the major reading schemes that have been systematically coded so that staff and parents can match books to pupils'

abilities. Most impressive is the provision of sensory boxes linked to the 'Big Books'. These complement the published literature with tailor-made books with bigger text and symbols and artefacts to illustrate stories. A full day of learning support assistant's time, paid for from the standards fund, is used to provide support for individuals and groups. The English and information and communication technology (ICT) co-ordinators work very well together in developing ICT support for literacy. Much of this takes the form of interactive software to develop literacy skills and the very good use of word processing and desktop publishing to prepare and present pupils' and teachers' work.

81. The English curriculum is led with enthusiasm by an able co-ordinator well supported by the deputy headteacher who has overall curriculum responsibility. The school has used the National Literacy Strategy as a structure for the delivery of the English curriculum, adding initiatives like the Bristol LEA work for pupils with learning difficulties and a project with Cardiff University. They have focused on the use of phonics and the national assessment scheme. This work has been integrated with the Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum and the school's established approach of planning and assessment. The prime focus of the planning has been to promote the development of pupils' communication skills. The co-ordinator has undertaken specialist training. She has visited other special schools and is part of the borough's network of literacy teachers. She monitors the teaching of English by reviewing teachers' plans and timetables, checking progress on pupils' individual intended learning outcomes and IEPs, and visiting lessons. She is supported in these activities by senior staff and the literacy governor. The quality of teaching is monitored well by the headteacher and her deputy.
82. Areas for development have been identified by the co-ordinator in the school's development planning. These are to continue to work on the Bristol and Cardiff initiatives and develop further the literacy strategy for all pupils with severe learning difficulties. A teacher with expertise in working with nursery and reception pupils has been appointed to support the co-ordinator with a specific brief to work on materials for pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties.

### **Drama**

83. Drama is not taught in the school as a discrete subject. It is integrated into the curriculum and used as a means of developing communication skills across all areas of the curriculum. Staff make frequent use of drama as a teaching method including role-play and make-believe; using the sensory boxes and props to stimulate response. It is strongly linked to the English curriculum and the literacy strategy. There are also some school productions like the 'Millennium' performance and Christmas plays. Assemblies often include drama activities. The co-ordinator is new to post this academic year. She monitors drama activity through reviewing the teachers' schemes of work. She uses a 'Tac Pac' box to complement the sensory resources.
84. Developments in drama are identified in the school's planning for 2000/2001. The co-ordinator plans to access specialist training, particularly with a focus on the needs of pupils with autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties. She also plans to extend the opportunities for pupils to perform.

### **MATHEMATICS**

85. Overall, pupils' progress in mathematics is very good and their achievements are good. On occasion, in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, both progress and achievement are excellent. Progress is very good through Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage,

higher attaining pupils verbalise the numbers one to five correctly. They recognise colours and place them in colour sets of up to three. Pupils with additional and complex special needs sign correctly the numbers one to four, some needing co-active support. They match real objects from a group, for example cup, shoe and plate. They sustain their focus on a computer mathematics game and respond appropriately to visual and aural cues. Higher attaining pupils identify the written numbers one to three; they recognise zero and sign it correctly. They understand the concepts of top, bottom and underneath. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have learned about comparative length and all of them identify five shapes correctly and place them in size order. One pupil with complex special needs selects the correct order of shapes, arranges and glues them onto his worksheet, using only his feet. Pupils understand that connecting blocks together lengthens or heightens a constructed line. By Year 7, the pupils focus on the practical applications of mathematics, reinforcing their calculation skills using money and learning to tell the time. Higher attaining pupils read a television programme plan and identify the correct time of programmes on a clock face. They know the hour positions and are learning the correct way to indicate and verbalise the minute hand position. They recognise decimal coins and add and subtract numbers up to 20. Pupils with additional and complex special needs identify and match seven colours correctly and count to ten by rote.

86. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted effectively by the school and daily sessions of numeracy form the basis for mathematics teaching at all key stages. It has been incorporated successfully into the paediatric physiotherapy plans for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 with profound and complex learning difficulties.
87. Pupils respond well to lessons. Their behaviour is often very good and on occasion it is excellent. They enjoy the lessons and through the practical application of mathematics are learning to become independent as they grow older. They enjoy the good range of familiar number songs, showing good concentration and taking turns. They like to show others in the class what they can do and are pleased to show their work to visitors. Pupils on the autism spectrum learn to join in group activities and share the resources in use.
88. The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is never less than good and in two of the eleven lessons observed the teaching was excellent. A strong feature of the very good teaching is the sensitive teamwork of the nursery nurses and learning support assistants who work with pupils in all classes. All staff offer consistent support for those who require signed communication and have high expectations of communication from all pupils. Lesson planning is very good, a variety of activities are planned that use support staff effectively, to enable the full range of pupils' needs to be met. Staff make excellent use of the trampoline to support basic numeracy skills. The physiotherapy staff work well with teachers with combined physiotherapy and numeracy plans for pupils with additional and complex learning needs. The good knowledge and understanding that teachers have of the pupils on the autistic spectrum ensure the best use of lesson time so that pupils make very good progress in numeracy. Teachers establish a very good ethos for learning in their classrooms, which are busy, focused and interesting.
89. The mathematics co-ordinator has worked hard, with the support of the senior management team, to build a strong area of teaching and learning at the school. She has a clear sense of direction for the subject and is ready to implement the new curriculum and assessment system in September 2000. The subject has been reviewed this year and the extensive resources have been audited in preparation for the new curriculum. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to challenge higher attaining

pupils more effectively and is determined to promote a higher level of challenge for them throughout the school. The co-ordinator monitors the planning well and the headteacher and her deputy monitor the teaching.

90. The school has responded very well to concerns raised at the last inspection. The quality of teaching and the standards of achievement have improved greatly throughout the school. Pupils with additional and complex special needs are fully and effectively drawn into the teaching of mathematics. Nursery nurses and learning support staff are used very effectively in lessons that are well planned to sustain the interest and involvement of the pupils. The co-ordinator has a clearly defined role and links yearly planning to the full range of the National Curriculum in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

91. All pupils make very good progress in science in relation to the targets set for them in their IEPs. Pupils' achievements in science are very good at all key stages. These achievements are largely due to the wide and appropriate activities that are provided by teachers to help pupils learn; for example, the youngest pupils in the school extend their understanding of materials when they classify them as being hard or soft by handling and observing a large number of bright and exciting plastic objects. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand that objects change their appearance during darkness and look different under the light from a torch. They are able to benefit very well from this activity because of the dark and mysterious environment created by the teacher. This provides a truly spiritual session for pupils as they experience the awe and wonder of scientific discovery.
92. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils understand the human birth process and the enlargement of the abdomen. Others name correctly the legs, arms, hand and head when looking at a skeleton. By the time they reach Key Stage 3 the pupils deepen their understanding of recycling and learn to classify materials into plastic, glass, tin and aluminium. They show a very mature attitude to wearing protective gloves to handle the materials and respond very enthusiastically to the teacher's challenging task. In all classes pupils attend very closely to the teachers' instructions and the activities they undertake, such as exploring materials or looking closely at leaves or plants. All pupils make very good progress and because they are interested and absorbed in the activities provided, their behaviour is also very good. The very good standards achieved by the pupils represent a significant improvement since the last inspection when some pupils were making unsatisfactory progress.
93. The teaching of science is a strength of the school. Teaching is at least very good in all lessons observed and in one lesson at Key Stage 1 it was excellent. Because the teacher had planned a totally stimulating and motivating activity the pupils were fascinated from the outset of this lesson. Despite their learning difficulties, pupils understand that the blackout in the classroom represents a dark night. When the teacher starts to pick out things that people might see at night, pupils moved their heads to follow the beam of the torch and show their surprise and delight when it reveals a moon hanging from the ceiling and an owl sitting on the wall. Throughout this lesson, the teachers and support staff work as a well-formed team to guide and focus pupils' attention with the result that their concentration is absolute.
94. Teachers are rigorous in ensuring that pupils undertake relevant activities which help them attain their targets; for example, one pupil's science target reads '... explore and distinguish between light and dark' and the records show that he has held a torch in dark room and can say whether it is 'light' or 'dark'. In addition teachers plan a very

good range of activities in their lessons which they then match to the abilities of the pupils; for example, in the exercise on recycling, the teacher targets his expectations to the higher and lower attaining pupils within the group. The former are expected to find a 'green glass bottle' from the pile of rubbish whilst the latter select 'something glass'. This individualised approach ensures that all pupils are appropriately challenged during lessons because teacher's expectations are high. Teachers think about the whole child when planning their lessons and build in opportunities for pupils to develop their personal skills; for example, when distinguishing between hard and soft a pupil indicated that he did not like the sensation of handling soft, green jelly and preferred hard, green pasta shells. The staff duly noted and responded to this preference by changing his task thus ensuring his concentration and enjoyment.

95. Pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2 demonstrate their determination to succeed; when using straw to represent ribs in a picture, the pupils try different ways of sticking the straws across the spine before they are successful. At this key stage teachers sensibly encourage pupils to work independently as far as possible and, in this case, the pupils solve the problems with no additional help. The teacher's strategy is justified and the pupils' self-esteem rises.
96. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils behave well on a visit to the Natural History Museum. They take a clear interest in the exhibits and deepen their understanding of the birth process. One pupil recognises a steady beat as being a heart beat and another relates the enlargement of the abdomen during pregnancy with her own mother's pregnancy. Four pupils recognise a skeleton and point to parts of the body such as 'leg', 'arm', 'hand' and 'head'. Two pupils point correctly to muscles on a model. When looking at a picture of a mother giving birth in the prostrate birthing position, pupils point incorrectly at the mother's head when asked to locate the baby's head. When they are asked to look again, they recognise the baby's head in a position that is not familiar to them and point to it.
97. The teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the science curriculum and use this well to promote pupils' progress with the result that all take an increased interest in the world around them. Where pupils present challenging behaviour they are well supported by very effective behaviour management plans. These help pupils understand the behaviour expected of them and the efficient use of these plans means that pupils are able to participate more effectively in lessons.
98. A very stimulating and worthwhile addition to lessons was the practical activity day organised as part of the National Science Week. All pupils participated and were able to experiment with magnets, balloons, electricity, batteries, bulbs and motors. This very active and valuable day was useful in developing teachers' awareness of the science curriculum as well as providing worthwhile and creative opportunities for the pupils. The science curriculum is good and effective in providing a very effective method of developing pupils' knowledge and understanding. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed its science curriculum and now matches activities well to pupils' needs so that all pupils, including those on the autistic spectrum and those with profound and complex learning difficulties gain from the subject. The school has also invested money in buying extra resources to ensure that all pupils have good opportunities to take part in practical activities.

## **ART**

99. In lessons and work seen pupils' achievements and progress are good overall. In Key Stage 1 they are very good. Pupils are able to make their own choice of primary colour

paints and experiment with mixing them, showing good mixing skills. Work displayed in the personal areas of pupils on the autistic spectrum, shows that they are able to build patterns and pictures using collage, mono-print and multimedia techniques. Pupils with additional and complex special needs experience the texture of paint on their feet and press their feet on paper to create a personal print. They recognise the artwork they have done and concentrate well showing interest and pleasure. Pupils in Key Stage 2 see the brush strokes in a Van Gogh painting and learn to copy them using marker pen strokes to blend them as in the painting. Lower attainers lack patience and skill and scribble colour into areas of the outline, with little or no control. Pupils are able to study the colourful work of Joan Miro and produce three-dimensional constructions in plaster and papier-mâché, decorated with the strong visual symbols used by Miro. As they move up through the school and into Key Stage 3 pupils experiment with a variety of tools and techniques for drawing. They are aware of facial features and place them correctly on their portraits. Although the majority have poorly developed observational skills, higher attaining pupils add observed detail such as eyelashes, hair decorations and emotional expressions. They model clay masks, which show different emotions very effectively.

100. Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard to create patterns and pictures in an individually expressive way. Pupils on the autistic spectrum find choosing between art activities difficult, but the calm, reassuring manner of the teacher enables them to settle and work effectively through different media. They are proud to show the results of their efforts to each other and to visitors.
101. Teachers have a very good understanding of the individual special needs of pupils. They know when it is important to offer rich sensory stimulation and when it is inappropriate to do so. Their class management is very good and both teachers and support staff work well together to support the communication needs of the pupils. They are able to evaluate the work in progress and adapt the curriculum to sharpen teaching targets for the subject. Good use is made of secondary references to artists such as Van Gogh, Miro and Monet. This is a practice that is not adopted consistently, to foster an increased awareness and understanding of art and artefacts. Teachers and support staff use the subject to support the physiotherapy needs of pupils with additional and complex special needs; for example in foot painting, where limbs are flexed and stretched.
102. The qualified and experienced co-ordinator makes good use of visits to art galleries and museums and brings in very good visiting artists and craft workers to stimulate the pupils and raise their standards of achievement. Many classroom displays are rich, colourful and stimulating, but there is a lack of tactile displays in some areas. The work of important artists is not used to sufficient effect in pupils' work. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experiment and express themselves, using the work of artists from different times and cultures. Very good use is made of the therapeutic approach to art. The co-ordinator monitors the planning, and the headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the teaching.
103. There were a few concerns raised in the last report and the department has made a satisfactory response to them. Although there is no specialist accommodation for the subject, this does not impose limitations on the pupils' work. Any limitations are imposed by the present curriculum. A study of the artwork done by pupils in similar schools would do much to extend that range.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Pupils' progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good and at Key Stage 3 is very good. This represents a very considerable improvement since the last report when there was often unsatisfactory progress. Pupils at all key stages have the opportunities to develop their skills in designing and making, and to evaluate their own work. Pupils enjoy the subject. They are interested, well motivated and keen to learn.
105. At Key Stage 1 pupils were observed making puppets from a variety of materials including paper, foam rubber and wool. By the end of the lesson these had begun to take on their own individual identities.
106. In food technology at Key Stages 2 and 3, pupils of all abilities were able to participate fully in the lessons observed as tasks were skilfully matched to the individual needs of the pupils. A particularly successful lesson involved a sensory exploration of a large number of tropical fruits. Pupils explored them through touch, smell and, of course, taste, before setting to work to make a tropical fruit salad. Other pupils worked equally hard to produce biscuits decorated with cherries. Their concentration and perseverance was commendable and their enthusiasm even extended to washing up, cleaning the table and clearing away.
107. In another very successful lesson pupils at Key Stage 2 prepared a picnic to take with them on an excursion later in the day. Some could cut a bread roll with a minimum of assistance, while others explored the bread through their senses. Pupils were encouraged to make choices. They were also allowed to make mistakes such as spreading too much margarine on a bread roll. They learned from their mistakes and consequently modified their designs.
108. The quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching is good and in Key Stage 3 it is very good. This again represents a very considerable improvement since the last inspection when half the teaching was unsatisfactory.
109. Teachers possess good knowledge of both the subject and their pupils and are thus able to plan effectively for the differing special needs of the pupils. Planning is thorough and lessons are well structured. The management of pupils is good or very good. When pupils exhibit challenging behaviour, the staff skilfully defuse the situation. Support staff are used very effectively in lessons and add greatly to the success of design and technology.
110. There is a new draft policy for design and technology, but it has insufficient reference to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The co-ordinator has begun to look closely at the scheme of work and hopefully revisions may bring about greater systematic build-up of skills and a wider breadth of experience for all pupils. Assessment in design and technology is satisfactory.
111. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has undertaken some team teaching to support colleagues who often ask his advice. However he has limited opportunities to monitor the subject in other teachers' classrooms.
112. Resources are satisfactory and those for construction work are good. Staffing and accommodation are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and the food technology room is impressive in its furnishings and fixtures. This room enables pupils to develop skills in a real 'domestic' situation and develop also some independence as they take responsibility for their own work.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils comment on aspects of their journeys, including comments on weather, direction and time. They are able to recall a journey from photographic evidence brought back. Lower attaining pupils become familiar with different areas of the playground and walk, or use a bicycle to move between them.
114. Pupils' behaviour on field trips is good. Their relationship with adults is very good, enabling them to get the most out of their lessons. They concentrate well through the lessons and, with good teaching and support, they make good progress.
115. In lessons and work seen, pupils' achievements and progress are good over all key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1, when on local field trips, observe the sunlight playing through trees and listen quietly to hear the birds sing. They understand words such as 'birdsong', 'train', 'railway line', 'leaf', 'tree' and 'bridge', extending their range of understanding of their environment. In playing a traditional game they learned from a story, they begin to understand why water moves. They identify and compare features of their outdoor and indoor environment, using simple maps and photographs of the area. Both playground and school buildings are used well to support pupils' learning about their environment and ways to move within it.
116. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good and in one of the three lessons observed the teaching was excellent. Teaching in Key Stages 2 and 3 is satisfactory. It was not possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 3 (Year 7). From evidence in work seen, teachers' records and discussion with staff, the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory and more often good in that year. Teachers plan well for the lessons, linking plans to previous work to ensure the continuity and progression of learning. The best planning takes full account of the varied and individual special needs of the pupils. There is good knowledge and understanding of the subject areas and this is used effectively in questioning pupils about their work. The support for both verbal and signed communications is very good and staff have high expectations of good behaviour, especially when off the school site. All staff give an appropriately strong emphasis, in their planning and preparation, to health and safety issues that might arise during field trips and visits.
117. Good use is made of multi-ethnic, multi-faith celebrations to extend pupils' awareness of the wider environment. The co-ordinator is developing a new curriculum for next term, which has new scales of assessment that will allow more effective monitoring of the progress of pupils through very small steps.
118. The subject has made a good response the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and there is no evidence of unsatisfactory teaching. There has been good improvement in pupils' progress as a result of this. The better planning of teaching time ensures that pupils do not become restless and bored in lessons. The subject is effectively linked to the National Curriculum.

## **HISTORY**

119. During the inspection history lessons at Key Stages 1 and 3 were observed and elements of history in the morning 'Hello' sessions at all key stages. Pupils make good progress in all key stages. Pupils' achievements at Key Stage 1 are good. They look, listen and respond well throughout the lessons. They imitate the actions of staff telling the story and some use the sign for 'a long time ago'. Pupils use a sensory box and present a dramatised account of events from the past. They also take part in role-playing activities which illustrate times past and perform very well.

120. It was not possible to observe any teaching of history to pupils in Key Stage 2. However, during the greetings sessions there is emphasis on plotting 'yesterday', 'today' and 'tomorrow' and identifying what activities were undertaken at these times. During the day staff consistently emphasise that an activity has finished and that it is now time for the next element.
121. In Key Stage 3 pupils identify the differences between school life today and in the past. They recognise their teacher as a boy and indicate that he has changed. They describe, using speech, signs, gestures and pointing, how they have changed since the photographs in their Records of Achievement. In history lessons behaviour, attitudes and relationships are very good. Staff implement behaviour management plans consistently. Pupils show that they understand what is acceptable and, for example, treat each others' Records of Achievement with care and respect.
122. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers use the sensory box well in a dramatised approach to recount stories. These are presented with energy and humour, using a combination of signing, spoken language, gestures and actions. There is consistent repetition of key vocabulary and particularly the concept that these events happened a long time ago. Staff refer to events and people within pupils' experience such as family and staff to reinforce the idea of past events. Teaching in Key Stage 3 is very good. In lessons that compare schools today and in the past, there is a variety of active tasks to support the pupils in their understanding of the changes that have taken place. They see a photo of their teacher as a boy at school and note how his clothes differ from those worn at school today. They role-play standing stiff and straight like pupils in the picture of a school assembly in a Victorian school. The teacher manages activities with confidence and authority as pupils play 'musical chairs' to share Records of Achievement to compare their photos from past events to today. A range of stimulating books and materials enhance the lessons and staff are deployed effectively to manage the particular needs of each pupil.
123. Provision for history overall is satisfactory in the school. It has made satisfactory improvement from the previous inspection when it was difficult to identify the subject in teachers' planning. There is a history element in the topic planning. The teaching is integrated into the whole curriculum and taught in discrete lessons. The emphasis is on supporting pupils to understand the concept of time passing and the changes that this has on people and the world around them. Staff use a story approach illustrated by books, pictures, photos, props and artefacts.
124. The co-ordinator combines the leadership of history with geography. The current schemes of work focus on the cross-curricula delivery of the subject, using photos and objects of reference together with emphasis on the sequence of the day's activities. There is some cross-reference to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Progress is tracked through the school's established assessment system using individual pupil records. The co-ordinator monitors by reviewing teachers' termly plans. She has just begun to observe lessons.
125. There are some excellent tailor-made resources, particularly the sensory boxes of equipment to illustrate the history stories.
126. The school's planning documents identify developments in history as a priority for 2000/2001. The co-ordinator recognises the need to review the existing policy and to refine her monitoring process. Currently she is not able to identify accurately the allocation of time for history teaching. She also plans to extend the training and

resources available and to increase the opportunities for pupils to hear stories about historical events, characters and scenes.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

127. The progress of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good, but insufficient evidence is available to make a judgement about progress in Key Stage 3. There has been a considerable improvement in pupils' progress since the last inspection when, for some pupils, progress was unsatisfactory. ICT is taught as a discrete subject and also supports the other subjects of the curriculum.
128. In a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1 a pupil with profound and complex learning difficulties, focuses attentively on the screen and responds well to visual and aural cues. She touches the screen with support and reacts positively to the impact that this makes on the screen. Another pupil in Key Stage 1 uses a program to match colours. He finds this quite difficult but, due to the high quality of teaching, makes commendable progress.
129. A group of Key Stage 2 pupils who are in the autistic spectrum achieve some independence in their learning through the use of computers. They enter their user name, gain access and make selections. They use three workstations set up for literacy, numeracy and 'Living Books'. A pupil in Key Stage 2 who has profound and complex learning difficulties and who vocalises very little, successfully imitates sounds using a special program. Another pupil who used to find it difficult to concentrate for more than a few minutes at a time is completely absorbed by the 'Living Book' version of 'The Tortoise and the Hare'.
130. In the two lessons observed in Key Stage 1 the teaching was good in one and excellent in the other. All the teaching observed in Key Stage 2 was good. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 3. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their pupils' needs and of the available software to meet those needs. Their ongoing assessments are invaluable and enable them to select the right program carefully for individual pupils. Planning is good and lessons are well structured.
131. Teachers have high expectations of all their pupils. In an excellent lesson in Key Stage 1 a teacher works very hard with a pupil with profound and complex learning difficulties who at the beginning of the session is not interested in the program on the computer. By the end of the session the pupil is fully engaged with the task which is presented to her. Another element, which makes this and other lessons so successful, is the warm, caring yet professional attitude of the teacher who helps her pupils to relax and subsequently to succeed.
132. The ICT policy is a well-written comprehensive document focusing clearly on the elements identified in the National Curriculum. There is a draft scheme of work to aid teachers in their planning and to provide a systematic build up of skills and knowledge. However, this still has to be approved by the governing body.
133. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good. They try hard and are generally well motivated by computers, the programs that are chosen carefully and their teacher's attitude towards them. The high level of concentration of pupils at Key Stage 1 is particularly commendable.
134. Management of the curriculum is good. The co-ordinator works very hard and puts a lot of time out of school hours into his work on ICT. He is knowledgeable and has led

and arranged staff in-service training. He has worked alongside colleagues and has a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. He offers support in many practical ways. Teachers will be receiving New Opportunities Fund training over the next year, which will develop their individual ICT skills. The co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunities during the school day to monitor the work of his colleagues.

135. The co-ordinator has set up an interesting school website which features photographs related to subjects of the curriculum as well as educational visits and events. This is a commendable initiative which is still developing. Resources are satisfactory and adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. The school has plans to purchase additional PC's as soon as possible through the 'National Grid for Learning' funding.
136. Pupils have some opportunities to use equipment such as tape recorders, video cameras, still and digital cameras and roamers. The school should consider using such equipment more in order to give pupils a greater breadth of experience. Pupils throughout the school make good use of touch screens. Assessment in ICT is satisfactory.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

137. There is one lesson of French taught each week to the Key Stage 3 class and it is of very high quality. The subject is adapted to meet the individual needs, interests and ability levels of the pupils. The teacher is very enthusiastic and has a good knowledge of the subject. She has the necessary skills to motivate the pupils well by making sure that lessons are interactive. Pupils take part in role-play exercises. They choose what they would like to eat for a meal, giving the French names of the items. Pupils speak the names 'baguette' and 'croissant' with a very commendable French accent. This is helped by the very good use of information and communication technology to record their voices, paying very careful attention to pronunciation. Despite the very limited vocabulary that pupils acquire and the difficulties that they display when speaking French it is very clear that all pupils make very good progress.
138. Pupils are very well motivated and work extremely hard to pronounce the simple French vocabulary. They greet adults and pupils with 'bon jour' as they meet and say 'au revoir' when they leave at the end of the lesson. The whole lesson is a very positive experience for all. Another teacher assists very well during the lesson and ensures that the vocabulary is carefully written on the board, to help pupils learn the new words.
139. The subject is very well planned and delivered in a manner that makes it very relevant to the pupils and very accessible to them. Lessons are designed to give pupils social vocabulary that they may find useful when in France. The subject also gives pupils experience of a different culture. Each year the Key Stage 3 class creates a French restaurant from which they serve a limited range of refreshments. This is very popular with the rest of the school and gives pupils the experience of 'living' the language. Relationships between pupils and their classmates are excellent and the relationships between pupils and teachers are also excellent.
140. The subject is well led and managed to ensure that the most appropriate lessons are planned for the pupils. Resources are satisfactory and there are some very good homemade resources. This subject completes the composition of the curriculum for Key Stage 3 pupils which now meets statutory requirements.

## **MUSIC**

141. Within a narrow curriculum, pupils make satisfactory progress overall and respond well to the range of activities provided by teachers. In Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress as they consolidate previous learning through singing and playing. In Key Stage 1 and some lessons in Key Stage 2 pupils make better progress when they are encouraged to develop their sense of rhythm and to adjust their tempo and dynamics when playing untuned percussion instruments. In all classes pupils enjoy music and behave well because teachers make their expectations of behaviour very clear. However, in some cases, the teachers do not give sufficient guidelines to pupils about how to hold and play instruments with the result that they make a noise rather than a musical sound.
142. Teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in almost half of lessons across the key stages. When teachers are creative in their approach to music and work closely with individuals or small groups of children, the communication between teacher and pupil is good and pupils extend their skills of musical interaction by responding to the teacher's voice or playing. However, in many cases teachers rely on pre-recorded music on disc or tape to accompany pupils' playing and singing at least for part of the lesson. Pupils enjoy these lessons which promote their social skills and group interaction and behaviour is almost always satisfactory or good. Nevertheless, teachers do not maximise their opportunities to further the pupils' musical skills or knowledge within such activities.
143. In good teaching, which occurs in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are appropriate levels of challenge and pupils respond well. They identify correctly the pattern of their own name; for example, pupils listen to the number of times the teacher plays on the drum and indicate their recognition of the number of syllables in their names by signing, speaking or by increasing body movement and eye pointing. Higher attaining pupils repeat the rhythm, sometimes with help from a support assistant by striking the drum the appropriate number of times. This more creative method of teaching promotes very good responses and communication from the pupils.
144. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those on the autistic spectrum benefit greatly from music. They enjoy playing the instruments and shaking and striking them. With good support from classroom assistants, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties play with hand on hand guidance and show their pleasure and response by increased smiling, body movement and excitement.
145. The teacher recently made responsible for managing the subject is not a specialist in music and realises the difficult task that she has ahead. The music curriculum is unsatisfactory and has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. It is very narrow and, although lessons generally include an appropriate range of activities, they are not linked to clear learning plans to enable pupils to develop their musical skills in line with their prior attainment and abilities. Resources for music are unsatisfactory. Whilst the school has a range of untuned percussion instruments many are not appropriate to the ages of the pupils and do not help the pupils make true musical sounds. There was no use of keyboards during the inspection. The school has recognised the need to review arrangements for the subject earlier than identified in the school development plan.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

146. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is very good and in Key Stages 2 and 3 is good. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
147. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were seen enjoying a first trampoline session. The instructor has very good subject knowledge and quickly gains the pupils' confidence using a variety of activities including the imaginative use of a shawl. Pupil's responses are excellent as they delight in the experience. Pupils also enjoy trampolining in Key Stage 2. Some are able to demonstrate a variety of jumps.
148. Progress in a swimming lesson in Key Stage 1 is very good for pupils of all abilities. One swims across the pool unaided, while others do so with varying degrees of help. All join in confidence boosting songs and games such as 'Ring a Ring a Roses' and 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. Progress in a swimming lesson in Key Stage 2 is also very good. Some pupils swim a width both on their front and their back and all make good progress in refining their skills and increasing their confidence. Sessions are well planned and keep the pupils interested and busy. Support staff contribute greatly to the success of swimming sessions.
149. In games lessons pupils at Key Stage 2 were observed making good progress. After an introductory activity, pupils went on to learn about how to grip a cricket bat, and practised underarm bowling. A partially sighted pupil did particularly well in this lesson due to the skill of the teacher who made sure that he was included in all activities. The lesson culminated in a game.
150. Pupils' attitudes in all lessons were good and were sometimes excellent. They were keen to participate and concentrated well. There were some instances of challenging behaviour, but these were very professionally dealt with by the staff.
151. Teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stages 2 and 3. All lessons are taken by specialist staff, usually supported by the class teacher. Subject knowledge is very good and all staff have a good understanding of the pupils' needs and of their abilities. Differentiation, based on sound on-going assessment, contributes significantly to pupils' progress. Expectations both of attainment and behaviour are high. Planning, assessment and evaluation of progress and achievements are very good. The staff work and plan closely with the physiotherapists.
152. The curriculum is well planned and co-ordinated. The breadth of the curriculum is very good. Some pupils are able to go horse-riding each week and this they do on a rota basis. Some days begin with several classes running around the playground. Pupils collect a certificate when they have completed a certain number of laps. The physical education co-ordinator has only been in place for two weeks and has so far had no opportunity to impact on the development of the subject. A sound policy for physical education is in place.
153. The accommodation and resources available for physical education are good despite the fact that there is no playing field and that the school hall is used as a corridor. The hydrotherapy pool is particularly attractive and the large trampoline is an impressive piece of equipment. Pupils also make use of the local swimming pool and adventure playground.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

154. Religious education is taught well across the school and is planned in line with the local authority's agreed syllabus. The overall quality of teaching is good and in Key

Stage 1 the teaching is very good. One Key Stage 1 class were absolutely enthralled by the story of Noah and the Ark as it was told and signed by the teacher. Pupils were excited as they were invited to take part in enacting the scenes as the animals entered the ark, two by two.

155. The excellent management of the pupils makes sure that all are able to take a full part in the lesson. The teacher is very aware of the individual very special needs of the pupils. One pupil who is extremely sensitive to sound is given ear protectors, but still encouraged to take a full part in the lesson. Another pupil, unable to move to the ark, has the ark brought to him by the teacher to enable him to help the animals into the ark.
156. The teacher and support staff sing with the pupils 'The animals came in two by two' and create a very spiritual experience for the pupils as they take part in the activity. The spiritual experience is enhanced further as the class has time for reflection at the end of the lesson. Pupils all sit round and sing their good-bye song to Noah and all his animals. The teacher uses a wonderful glove puppet of the ark and the animals to illustrate the song. All pupils are totally enthralled.
157. The curriculum is well planned and meets requirements. This enables pupils to make good progress overall. However, the monitoring of the progress made by pupils is unsatisfactory and systems for recording the attainment and progress of pupils are not established.
158. The teaching of religious education is also reinforced through school assemblies. On these occasions the school celebrates the festivals appropriate to the different religions of the pupils' families. There are pieces of artwork around the school showing studies of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. The school's celebration assemblies are well used to recognise the achievements of the pupils and also celebrate important festivals. Pupils are very well behaved during assemblies.