

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HATTON SCHOOL

Woodford Green

LEA area: Redbridge

Unique reference number: 102881

Headteacher: Linda Richardson

Reporting inspector: Mark R. Evans  
20999

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 194203  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 to 14
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Roding Lane South Woodford Green Essex
Postcode:	IG8 8EU
Telephone number:	020 8551 4131
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Sue Solomons
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hatton School is situated in a busy residential and light industrial area of Woodford Green, in Essex. It provides daily education for primary age pupils with moderate learning difficulties: at the moment, the school also has a small group of secondary age pupils. The pupils live in all parts of the London Borough of Redbridge: a few attend from other boroughs, such as Barking and Dagenham, Essex and Waltham Forest. The school is about to be redesignated to reflect the increasing complexity of the pupils' educational and social needs.

There are one hundred and thirty-one pupils on the roll of the school, ninety-four boys and thirty-seven girls. This is above average for a school providing for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. All have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Just over twenty-nine percent of pupils speak English as an additional language and the same proportion is eligible to receive free school meals: both these figures are above the national average.

Since the last inspection, the school has changed in many ways. It has grown from providing for one hundred and eight pupils, an increase of nearly a quarter. The structure of the school has changed: pupils are divided into one of two provisions: those who have moderate, general or specific learning difficulties, and those who are on the autistic spectrum or have communication difficulties. At Hatton, they are known as "LD" and "Bridge" pupils - as in "learning difficulties" and those needing help to bridge the communication gap. The management structure has also changed, to match more closely the new school organisation. Pupils admitted now have a wider spectrum of special education needs, including a few with very challenging behaviour. Many more pupils have complex additional difficulties, such as autism, dyspraxia, dyslexia, emotional, speech and language difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is low, as one would expect.

Outreach teachers work with over one hundred other pupils, in over forty mainstream schools.

The school has as its main aims to extend each individual's knowledge, experience and creativity; to enable each individual to develop skills relevant and necessary for their personal fulfilment and role in society; to provide an environment within the school where care and compassion is exercised by all, for all; to encourage respect for individuals and the environment; and to establish and maintain positive relationships within the immediate environment and with the local community.

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

Hatton School is a good school, with some very good features. Teaching is of a good standard: there are some very good teachers and all are committed to the safety and wellbeing of the pupils. The efforts of the headteacher, senior managers, staff and the governing body combine to generate strong and effective leadership and management. Pupils leave the school knowing and being able to do more than when they entered it. The school staff are often involved in innovative initiatives and strive to improve the work of the school, for example by seeking (successfully) accreditation as an Investor in People. However, there are some areas of the curriculum offered that require development. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The pupils are safe, happy and well cared for: they demonstrate good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and obviously love being at school;
- The Outreach Support Service is an excellent feature of the work of the school and is highly regarded by mainstream schools - this is also the case for all the joint projects run with local schools and businesses;
- The monitoring of the work of the school is very good: cross-referencing teachers' planning and the moderation of targets set for individual pupils is very effective. In all, it constitutes a well thought-through system;
- The quality of teaching is good: teamwork is of a very high standard;
- Staff development, both on a personal and a professional level, is very good: staff are valued and supported sensitively.

### **What could be improved**

- The current status of provision for the small group of Key Stage 3 pupils is unsatisfactory: although the school provides for them as well as can be expected and teaching is good, they are not appropriately placed within a primary-age setting;
- Some statutory requirements are not met: religious education is not well established in the curriculum, there is no modern foreign language for Key Stage 3 pupils, the place of subjects like music and design and technology is not secure and there is no daily act of collective worship;
- Monitoring of in-class teaching by senior staff is underdeveloped;
- The current organisation of the school into three relatively distinct parts, inhibits staff cohesion and hinders their ability to work with the full range of special educational needs;
- The provision for pupils' spiritual development is not as good as that for other aspects of pupils' personal development.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1997. At that time, key issues for the governing body to address were to [1] extend the more able pupils, particularly those at Key Stage 2; [2] give more opportunities for independent learning; [3] improve access to and use of information technology; [4] formalise the arrangements for personal, social and health education; [5] comply with statutory requirements re: a daily act of collective worship and the publishing of attendance figures in the prospectus; and [6] ensure suitable arrangements for pupils to arrive at school promptly. The school has improved well since the last inspection, especially when the changes that have occurred to the intake of pupils have are considered: higher attaining pupils are usually challenged suitably, they now have more opportunity to learn independently, information technology is well organised and used increasingly throughout the school, the programme for personal, social and health education is much better programmed, attendance figures are published in the prospectus and pupils are now seldom late. The provision for collective worship has improved, but it still does not meet statutory requirements, as applied to this school.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 14	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	B	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B		

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

There is some particularly high attainment in English and art at the end of Key Stage 2, linked to the high expectations of the teachers.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved, for nearly all of the time: they are polite to one another and to staff. Exclusion from the school is very rare indeed and for those pupils whose behaviour does give cause for concern, management plans support them and help to bring them back on track.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils take a keen and active part in school life: many form good relationships with one another and the quality of relationships with staff is high, too. Many pupils demonstrate that they care for one another, for example when in the playground, helping when a friend falls over.
Attendance	At 92%, attendance is satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence. Not all registers are completed in accordance with agreed guidelines.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-14
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching was particularly good in English and mathematics, where curriculum development in line with the national initiatives on literacy and numeracy have had a positive effect on



teachers' confidence and subject knowledge. The skills of communication are taught well. Personal, social and health education is also well taught, although occasionally these lessons are not as well focussed on what the pupils should be learning as they should be. Overall, teaching is good: examples of unsatisfactory or poor teaching were limited to a very few specific examples. Of the lessons seen, 92% were satisfactory or better and 8% were unsatisfactory or poor. Satisfactory teaching was seen in 34% of lessons, 37% were good, and 21% were very good: the main weaknesses in the weaker lessons were the unimaginative presentation of activities and the lack of sufficient pace, so that pupils were not fully engaged in their learning. Particularly positive features of many of the lessons were the calm patient approach of the teachers, the enthusiasm for learning demonstrated by staff and the very good quality of teamwork between teachers and skilled assistants.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum focuses very appropriately on communication, literacy and numeracy. There has been some careful but innovative work making the learning relevant for all pupils. However, required subjects are missing for some pupils. For example, there is no provision for the teaching of a modern foreign language for Key Stage 3 pupils, and for all pupils, the teaching of religious education does not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The balance of learning for individual pupils across the different subjects of the curriculum is not secured by explicit monitoring of classroom practice.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Over a quarter of pupils at Hatton speak languages other than English at home - in particular, Urdu, Punjabi and Turkish - but there is no evidence of this being a barrier or a brake to their learning. The few pupils needing support to access the teaching provided, are supported appropriately through the Borough Service.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school helps pupils to understand how to live in a community and the importance of accepting group rules. Adults provide very good role models, for example in being courteous, polite and treating the pupils and each other with respect. The provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good: there are some very good aspects to the support provided for pupils' cultural development, for example the visits to local churches and the regular residential visits, including travelling overseas. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory, but has not been a high priority in the school: there are opportunities to extend pupils' ability to reflect of their own experiences and learn about others' feelings, that are not taken up by staff.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils' welfare, health and safety are secured by careful supervision by staff and by the systems and procedures in place: the school's arrangements for child protection are good. The school is clean and tidy, both inside and out.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership, ably supported by the senior managers of the school. There is a potent mixture of the innovative and the prudent administration of well thought out systems within the school, which results in a management team that has a clear vision of how it wants to improve the school and is secure in day-to-day management. There is a discernible and positive ethos in the school which includes all staff, and is demonstrated by the calm but busy atmosphere that pervades the buildings. The management of a whole school curriculum and the in-class monitoring of teaching are not as secure as it should be.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Given that the governing body is newly reconstituted and more than half the governors have been attached to the school for less than 6 months, there is a good understanding of what needs to be done. Governors are actively seeking assistance in how best to carry out their statutory duties, which is in itself a positive forward step. Particular areas where further work is needed to meet its obligations are (1) in the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum and (2) in long term strategic management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Hatton School uses a range of external mechanisms to evaluate its effectiveness as a school. Investors in People and the local education authority's Performance Partnership monitoring process are central features, but it is clear that senior management and team meetings also focus on how to improve the school.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well: the day-to-day organisation and management of them is exemplary. Administration and routine financial management is of a very high standard. The school applies that principles of best value well: it seeks tenders when buying in services, such as for redecoration, consults widely amongst staff and pupils about priorities for the next year and increasingly challenges itself by comparing itself to other schools.

## 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>• The standard of work achieved by their children;</li> <li>• The way that their children come to school happily;</li> <li>• The information that they receive about what their children have done in school;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework;</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities;</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by parents. On the matter of homework, the school does set work to be carried out as a part of the home programme, but should clarify this procedure with parents. Any activity outside the normal run of the day is limited by the need for pupils to be transported home. The school has a very good range of local and residential trips out of school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

**The pupils are safe, happy and well cared for: they demonstrate good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and obviously love being at school**

1. From the moment one steps into Hatton School, it is clear that the pupils are well cared for and valued by staff: during the week of the inspection, all staff spoke to and about the pupils with respect and with a genuine concern for their welfare. On the odd occasion that a pupil becomes distressed for some reason, teacher and assistants will act quickly and patiently to calm the situation and to re-motivate the pupil. Pupils who have marked behavioural difficulties are often assisted by two or more members of the staff at any time when they become distressed: this encourages and ensures a secure and appropriate intervention.

2. The school has policies to ensure the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils: but more important than the policies, the actual practice of staff is effective in ensuring good behaviour and supporting a happy, learning environment. Staff provide support and advice for all pupils, and this support is informed by the continual monitoring of their academic progress, their personal development, behaviour and attendance.

3. Because they sense the respect of the staff, the pupils respond very positively. They are eager to come to school in the morning and are happy while they are there. They behave well in lessons and around the school, and are courteous to each other and to visitors. They are encouraged to respect property, and do so, whether it is the school's or a friend's. All demonstrate genuine interest in school life, whether playing football in the playground, counting dolphins on a computer screen, swinging around in the adventure playground or painting pictures of seaweed in the classroom.

4. The pupils form positive relationships with one another, and with staff. There was no evidence of unkind or oppressive behaviour, such as bullying: to the contrary, although a few pupils do occasionally become angry and frustrated, this is only rarely aimed at anyone other than themselves.

**The Outreach Support Service is an excellent feature of the work of the school and is highly regarded by mainstream schools - this is also the case for all the joint projects run with local schools and businesses.**

5. The Outreach Support Service provides excellent support for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools. It is managed by two dedicated senior managers at Hatton and has grown considerably since it began seven years ago. There are now 12 teachers in the team. The service has several different functions that, together, allow a wide range of pupils' individual needs to be met. For many of them, it is the support that allows them to remain successfully in their local school.

6. Some pupils in local schools have support from the service specified on their statements of special educational needs. This generally takes the form of some input from a service teacher, typically one session a week, and varying amounts of additional support from a special support assistant. The work of such assistants is overseen by the relevant service teacher, although they are not members of the service's staff. At times, additional support is specified on a statement, but the school has the option of choosing where to purchase it. This includes the option of buying in the Hatton Outreach Service, and if

chosen, a package of support is created that meets the needs of both the school and the child. Schools can also purchase other forms of input from the service, such as assessments of pupils over whom they have concerns, or help with creating individual educational plans. Sometimes, a service teacher will teach a group of pupils with difficulties for one session a week over a period of one or two terms, to help them overcome their problems.

7. The service monitors certain pupils who need a "professional check" from time to time, to ensure that they are making suitable progress. It also enables some pupils from Hatton to re-integrate back into mainstream school over a long period, usually a year.

8. The leadership and management of the service are very good indeed. The organisation of input, and the input itself by the staff, takes full account of the needs of the mainstream school. Pupils are assessed and supported with rigour and purpose, and documentation and record keeping are meticulous. These all contribute to making this a highly effective service.

9. Feedback from parents, schools and pupils is all highly positive. Schools particularly value the professionalism and support of the service staff as they provide class staff with training, advice, practical and administrative support as part of their role. Parents are kept very well informed by termly reviews at which new targets are agreed for pupils' individual education plans. Relationships between the service teachers and pupils, support staff and pupils and between all adults are excellent. Pupils are mainly supported within their mainstream classes. Service teachers are skilled at developing and adapting class work, and giving and suggesting well focused support and behaviour management techniques. This helps class staff manage the pupils and meet their needs successfully so that they learn and make progress on the same level as their peers. This does much to develop their self-esteem.

10. The Service manages a small budget, which is used carefully. The "agency" part of its work, which can be purchased, funds most of the staffing, which is obviously good cost-effective management. Resources are good, but there is only limited financial scope to develop them further.

11. Overall, this is a forward-looking, efficient and effective service and is a real strength of the school.

12. The school's latest project, managed as part of the increasing partnership with local schools, is to provide *Mainstream Opportunities and Partnership (MOPS)* where pupils at Hatton are given the opportunity to join a class in a local primary school for one session a week, supported by their own assistant. This is proving valuable and popular: the partnership is being extended to two further schools. It is one of many projects that take the expertise of the Hatton staff, out into mainstream schools, including re-integration work and joint curriculum projects.

**The monitoring of the work of the school is very good: cross-referencing teachers' planning and the moderation of targets set for individual pupils is very effective. In all, it constitutes a well thought-through system;**

13. At the time of the last inspection, the school was moving towards a coherent system of target setting and assessment. The practice current at that time was good, but inconsistent. It is now improved and much more consistent.

14. The school also used a wide range of monitoring techniques to evaluate its systems. External evaluation is carried out by the local education authority's primary advisors team, which examines the school's curriculum. Hatton takes part in the Partnership Performance Monitoring run by the authority, which also examines the curriculum, along with the system of assessing pupils' work and progress. The school has recently been awarded accreditation by Investors in People, which focuses on the development of staff's professional and personal expertise. There is also less formal feedback, given on an on-going basis by the many external agencies involved with the school: speech and language support, occupational therapy, educational psychology and a large number of local primary and secondary schools.

15. Internally, the school has a coherent system of checking on the work planned for pupils and the learning completed by them. Beginning with each pupil's statement of special education needs, targets are set in individual education programmes. The targets set in these are almost always precise, suitable and attainable. Parents are consulted, as are pupils, wherever possible. The pupils with higher attainment sit the nationally administered standardised assessment tests, with teachers carrying out the correlated tasks. Each pupil's class teacher is responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of progress, using portfolios of work and records of achievement to detail key pieces of work and important steps in learning. Recently, there has been particularly suitable emphasis on pupils' work in literacy and numeracy, in line with national initiatives: there has also been a marked improvement in the system for monitoring pupils' work in information and communications technology.

16. The crucial part of this network of monitoring, is the amount and quality of moderating and cross-referencing carried out by provision managers and their deputies. For each of the Learning Difficulties, Bridge and Outreach Support departments, teachers' planning and recording is checked on at least a termly basis, with written reports copied back to staff. The system is a particularly effective way of evaluating the written work, the procedures and the practice of the school.

**The quality of teaching is good: teamwork is of a very high standard.**

17. Overall, teaching is good: examples of unsatisfactory or poor teaching were limited to a very few specific examples. Of the lessons seen, 92% were satisfactory or better and 8% were unsatisfactory or poor. Satisfactory teaching was seen in 34% of lessons, 37% were good, and 21% were very good: the main weaknesses in the weaker lessons were the unimaginative presentation of activities and the lack of sufficient pace, so that pupils were not fully engaged in their learning. Particularly positive features of many of the lessons were the calm patient approach of the teachers, the enthusiasm for learning demonstrated by staff and the very good quality of teamwork between teachers and assistants. The very good standard of support offered by the support staff is a real encouragement for pupils' learning and is a strength of the school. In the best lessons, the teachers had set challenging targets for pupils and learning was of a very high quality because of these high expectations. All staff work very hard to meet the needs of the pupils: for example, when

the occasional pupil is just too distressed to remain safely in the classroom with his or her peers, sufficient adults will accompany and work with the pupil to calm them, allowing in most cases, a speedy return to the class. Targets set for individual pupils' learning are often of a very high standard: challenging but attainable, specific and appropriately linked to the pupil's prior learning. In these circumstances, the pupils are productive and work at a good pace, concentrating hard and showing real determination to succeed.

18. Teaching is particularly good in English and mathematics, where curriculum development in line with the national initiatives on literacy and numeracy have had a positive effect on teachers' confidence and subject knowledge. The skills of communication are taught well. Pupils benefit from a high standard of support from speech and language therapists and from additional support assistants. Personal, social and health education is also well taught, although occasionally these lessons are not as clearly focussed on what the pupils should be learning as they should be.

19. Provision for the teaching of information technology was a key issue arising from the previous report. The school has taken very good steps to improve the situation. In post for only a couple of terms, the new joint subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic, knowledgeable: they have worked with commendable speed to enhance and support the work of their colleagues. The file in each classroom encourages and provides for appropriate planning and assessment of pupils' learning. There has already been a steady training input, both on a formal and an informal basis. The useful scheme of work will be improved further with the addition of goals and skills suitable for pupils in the youngest classes of the school.

**Staff development, both on a personal and a professional level, is very good: staff are valued and supported sensitively.**

20. The headteacher holds staff development as a key priority. There is a well organised system which includes examining personal aspirations. The formal one-to-one interviews which take place each year are not a substitute for appraisal (the system for this is currently being reviewed), but includes all staff on permanent contracts, including administrative staff. The system is popular with staff, in particular as it gives easy access to senior managers, including the headteacher.

21. The product of the formal individual meetings are collated and inform the school development plan. This in itself promotes staff development, because it is prepared through wide consultation, including with all staff, the pupils and the parents. Thus staff consider what their needs are and how they fit with the perceived needs of the school.

22. Informal one-to-one meetings also take place throughout the year. These might focus on, for example, a member of staff who needed support in particular area of the work, as in preparing for pupil reviews or managing challenging pupils. These meetings take the form of mentoring, rather than adopting a target setting approach.

23. Recently, seven staff have been able to study for an advanced diploma in special education. This both encouraged personal development and brought in a good deal of up-to-date information and expertise for the school.

24. The Investors in People accreditation was sought by the school in order to have externally validated recognition of its strong commitment to staff development. The managers of the school recognise that through it, the quality of teaching and learning on offer to the pupils can be enhanced.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

**The current status of provision for the small group of Key Stage 3 pupils is unsatisfactory: although the school provides for them as well as can be expected and teaching is good, they are not appropriately placed within a primary-age setting;**

25. The small group of secondary aged pupils at Hatton are provided with a good day-to-day education and attention to their care and well-being, as for all the pupils, is assiduous. The senior managers at the school, governors, staff and parents have campaigned vociferously for appropriate placement, and after a number of false starts, it appears that a joint provision with the neighbouring secondary school will be set up shortly. There are already effective links with the school. Nevertheless, because of the previous and current uncertainty about the future education for these pupils, there are aspects of their current provision which should be tightened up. There is some confusion as to where the overall responsibility for managing the curriculum for the pupils lies: this needs to be clarified and their access to all subjects needs to be assured.

26. Of equal importance, is the social aspect of their current educational experience. The school links with the secondary school effectively, and for safety as well as social reasons, the Key Stage 3 pupils have separate playtimes. But there are times when even the best efforts of the school still fall short of what the pupils are entitled to: they are, when all is said and done, secondary aged pupils in a school with a huge majority of nursery and primary age pupils. They lack suitable role models and have a very limited social environment in which to exist and learn.

**Some statutory requirements are not met: religious education is not well established in the curriculum, there is no modern foreign language for Key Stage 3 pupils, the place of subjects like music and design and technology is not secure and there is no daily act of collective worship;**

27. The place of religious education in the Hatton curriculum is too informal: although some staff have given thought to how to adapt the locally agreed syllabus to meet the needs of the pupils, there has been no practical or systematic development so far. At the time of the previous OFSTED inspection, there was a draft policy for religious education and a draft scheme of work in place, which was linked to the locally agreed syllabus. However, this has not been instituted: the subject co-ordinator has only been in place for a couple of terms, and a complete (and necessary) audit of current practice is planned

28. Pupils at Key Stage 3 do not receive their entitlement to a modern foreign language, taught at a level appropriate to their needs. Although the pupils are at the school on a "temporary basis", this entitlement remains nevertheless: no pupils have been disapplied from the subject.

29. The whole school curriculum has concentrated appropriately on the development of strategies for developing pupils literacy and numeracy, in line with national initiatives. This has had some very positive effects, such as the increased mental facility with arithmetical problems of higher achieving pupils. Over half of the available teaching time is devoted to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, which is entirely suitable, but the place of the other subjects is less secure. Information and communications technology is now much more a feature in most classrooms: a great improvement on the situation at the time of the previous report. Physical education is timetabled and taught by a specialist teacher, and the quality of the education provided is high, as it was at the time of the last inspection. But for subjects like art, design and technology, geography, history and music, it

is less clear that pupils are receiving a good and suitable balance, and although planning is well monitored, what individual classes and pupils receive is less securely balanced.

30. At the time of the previous inspection report, the school did not meet the statutory requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship, where practicable. Although the school does hold regular assemblies which could constitute an act of worship, they are neither held on a daily basis, nor do they consistently form an act of worship.

**Monitoring of in-class teaching by senior staff is underdeveloped.**

31. The provision managers monitor the work within their teams i.e. Bridge provision, Learning Difficulties provision and Outreach support provision. Senior staff and some curriculum co-ordinators on occasion observe in the classes and there is regular informal one-to-one feedback to staff. Local education authority advisors visit the school to monitor performance as a part of their Partnership Performance Monitoring. There is a good induction programme for all new staff and where a teacher requires more significant support, the provision managers appropriately provide this as part of their general management.

32. The school also has a very effective system of moderation and cross-referencing of planning and recording material. But the actual observation of teachers working in the classroom with their pupils, is much less developed. Where there are concerns about teaching, staff are supported very sensitively, but the evidence on which this support is founded, is not sufficiently detailed in terms of real day-to-day in-class teaching.

**The current organisation of the school into three relatively distinct parts, inhibits staff cohesion and hinders their ability to work with the full range of special educational needs;**

33. The school was reorganised after the previous OFSTED report, into the current three departments: Learning Difficulties, Bridge and Outreach Support. At the time that this occurred, the priority for the school was to prepare for an expected increase in the number of pupils who had speech and communications difficulties and/or where on the autistic spectrum. The school roll has indeed increased by over a quarter, the majority of which have been pupils attending Bridge classes.

34. There are now some difficulties being caused by the tripartite organisation. There is an understandable relative detachment from the day-to-day running of the school caused for the outreach teachers: infrequent visits and more limited time spent in the school is partly addressed by requiring dinner and playtime duties. But despite this, these teachers are bound to know the pupils less well and are viewed as being slightly distinct from the other two departments.

35. Similarly, there is a natural, but now unnecessary, split between the Learning Difficulties department and the Bridge department. Although there is no animosity, it is understandably awkward when resources bought from the budget for one department, end up in classrooms of the other: all staff fully recognise the importance of working together, and the resourcing as far as pupils perceive is never hindered by the split, but the current school management structure does not in itself support coherent and combined approach to resourcing.

36. There are other important examples of areas where the split between the two most clearly school-based departments now has rather detrimental effects. As each department



has pursued its own more specific needs for staff development, so the perceived gap in skills has widened. In fact, it is not likely to be difficult to bring even up staff knowledge.

37. However, the growth of separate routines, procedures and practice within the departments has meant that classroom practice has started to diverge. Thus the education provided for pupils at classroom level has started to vary. For example, the successful development of innovative and personalised systems, like the Bridge Total Communication Curriculum and Profiling System for assessing pupils' progress, has been created predominantly through the thought and work of one department. They have psychological ownership of it and experience in its use. It is a useful development, but will now need to be made relevant to both or all departments.

38. Changes made in the organisation of the school will need to be supported by carefully negotiated job descriptions: these are currently being reviewed anyway,

**The provision for pupils' spiritual development is not as good as that for other aspects of pupils' personal development.**

39. In many classrooms, during the week of the inspection, opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual nature and understanding were missed by staff. Although the school promotes the principles that distinguish right from wrong, for example by talking to pupils about the occasional incidents of inappropriate behaviour, there is less emphasis on addressing pupils' own beliefs at a level appropriate for their needs. The staff encourage pupils to take responsibility through the planning of events and activities, for example carrying out jobs around the school like delivering registers or showing visitors around. But there is no similar planning for the development of pupils' ability to reflect on their own experiences in a way, which improves their knowledge of themselves.

40. This area for improvement also ties in with the continued lack of a daily act of collective worship, discussed above. The assembly observed during the inspection was broadly Christian in nature, being based as it was on an adaptation of the parable of the Good Samaritan, though there was no reference to God or to a Supreme Being of any kind. There was an opportunity for pupils to reflect on the story, but this moment could have been more strongly emphasised and then picked up by the class teachers and assistants later in the day.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. In order to build on the strengths of the school and develop the areas for improvements, the headteacher, governing body and staff should work together to:

- (1) (with the local education authority and parents) assure the future of the Key Stage 3 pupils as quickly as possible;
- (2) meet all statutory requirements:
  - ◆ by establishing religious education appropriately the curriculum;
  - ◆ regarding the provision of a modern foreign language for Key Stage 3 pupils;
  - ◆ by securing the place of subjects like music and design and technology in all classes;
  - ◆ by ensuring that there is a daily act of collective worship;
- (3) initiate a system of in-class teacher observations, to disseminate best practice, improve less good teaching and further the security of whole school curriculum monitoring;
- (4) review the current organisation of the school, seeking ways to extend staff cohesion and broaden their ability to work with the full range of special educational needs, in all settings;
- (5) improve the provision for pupils' spiritual development.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	37	34	4	4	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	131
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	38

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

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

### **Attendance**

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	7.86

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.14

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

## Attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2

As would be expected in a school that provides education for pupils with moderate and complex learning difficulties, the number of pupils attaining level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1 and level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2, is too small to report.

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	7
Indian	15
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	2
White	70
Any other minority ethnic group	8

### 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	1	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: N – Y8

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	31.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4
Average class size	7

#### Education support staff: N – Y8

Total number of education support staff	35
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1088

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	1 225 288
Total expenditure	1 209 853
Expenditure per pupil	*9 917
Balance brought forward from previous year	39 327
Balance carried forward to next year	54 762

*\*This does not take into account over 100 pupils supported through the Outreach Service.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	131
Number of questionnaires returned	41

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	15	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	32	7	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	39	2	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	41	22	2	2
The teaching is good.	59	32	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	27	2	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	22	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	34	7	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	66	27	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	24	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	27	0	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	17	15	5	12