

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST ANN'S SCHOOL**

Morden Surrey

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102698

Headteacher: Mrs Tina Harvey

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jacque Cook  
2351

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 2 March 2000

Inspection number: 900356

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:	Severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties
Age range of pupils:	2 – 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bordesley Road Morden Surrey
Postcode:	SM4 5LT
Telephone number:	0181 648 9737
Fax number:	0181 640 5185
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Ashcroft
Date of previous inspection:	18 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jacque Cook	Registered inspector	Under fives	What sort of school is it?
			The school's results and pupils' achievements
			How well are pupils or students taught
			What should the school do to improve further?
Suzanne Smith	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils or students?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Rosa Blunt	Team inspector	Science	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Design and technology	
		Information and communications technology	
		Music	
Kate Burton	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		Physical education	
		Further Education Unit	
Glyn Essex	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
		Modern foreign language	
		Special educational needs	
Bill Robson	Team inspector	Art	
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	
		English as an additional language	

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>THE FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Ann's is a large, mixed, day school for 90 children, pupils and students aged between 2 and 19 experiencing severe and complex learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection there were 80 on roll, including 11 children in the nursery, six of whom were part-time, and 12 students in the Further Education Unit. About a third of the pupils have an ethnic minority background and there are 15 pupils for whom English is an additional language. Since the last inspection the number of pupils with more complex needs has risen, notably in the 2 – 11 age range. A significant number of pupils have an additional diagnosis of autism and a further group has multi-sensory impairments. The level of attainment on entry is very low. Throughout the report, the term pupils will often include children aged under five and students over the age of 16.

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

St Ann's is a very good school where pupils' achievements are good and often very good. Children and pupils make better progress than would be expected in most areas of the curriculum. Standards are slightly lower for students in the Further Education Unit but their progress is sound overall. Attitudes, values and personal development are very good and relationships excellent. These, together with the high quality of the teaching overall, promote high standards successfully. The school is led and managed very well. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school is on course to improve further. In consequence, St Ann's is a very effective school. Even though expenditure for each pupil is higher than average in comparison with other similar schools, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Progress of pupils is good overall and often very good, which is largely due to the high standard of most of the teaching.
- Progress is particularly good in art, music and physical education and for the under fives.
- The high quality of the teaching is safeguarded by rigorous induction procedures and well-planned staff training.
- Support staff are very effective. They play a key role in helping pupils make progress.
- Relationships between the pupils and the staff are very good indeed.
- Cultural development is excellent, spiritual, moral and social development are very good. This provision leads to very good attitudes and behaviour amongst the pupils.
- An outward looking school, links with other schools are excellent and links with parents are very good.
- Leadership, management and planning for development are very good. Monitoring and evaluating teaching and the curriculum are strong ensuring a high quality of education, which helps pupils learn.

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

- Teaching in the Further Education Unit.
- Amount of teaching time, particularly at Key stage 2, but also at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Punctuality. Following a recent change a number of buses arrive more than twenty minutes late at the start of the day.
- A few targets on individual education plans are not specific enough.
- Provision of speech and language therapy.

*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 November 1996 and has made considerable improvements since, which have caused standards to rise and the quality of teaching to improve. Schemes of work are now in place in the majority of subjects and the role of subject co-ordinators has been clarified and developed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly effective in monitoring curriculum planning and teaching to ensure pupils are taught what they should learn. Each subject has been

checked to ensure there is continuity between one year and the next in what is taught. The number of support staff has increased. Bathrooms have been modernised with due regard to pupils' dignity and privacy and are well equipped. The lack of punctuality at the beginning of the school day had been addressed and improved radically. Just before the inspection, however, transport arrangements were changed and some pupils again began arriving too late. Cultural development is now outstanding. The level of physiotherapy has been increased but there continue to be difficulties in the provision of speech and language therapy despite the best efforts of the school. Links with other schools have increased. The governors have successfully introduced procedures to establish best value in purchases. The school is constantly reviewing its strengths and weaknesses and is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school sets targets in conjunction with the local authority in a joint annual review. It has set specific targets for literacy, numeracy and for the number of pupils who work with their peers from other schools and is making good progress towards achieving them. Children in the nursery achieve very well and make very good progress in improving communication skills, mathematics, physical, personal and social development. Pupils achieve very good standards and make very good progress from age seven to 14 (Key Stages 2 and 3) due to the very high quality of teaching at these key stages. They achieve good standards and progress between ages five and seven (Key Stage 1) and 14 and 16 (Key Stage 4). Standards and progress are sound overall for students aged 16 to 19 (Post-16). They make excellent progress and achieve high standards in music and their achievements in art are good. They improve their communication skills well. However, students' progress is unsatisfactory in mathematics. Pupils achieve highest standards and make very good progress in drama at Key Stage 4, information and communications technology at Key Stage 3, art at Key Stages 1, 3 and 4 and in music, physical education and personal and social education at all key stages. In other subjects pupils always do at least as well as they should. Due to the quality of the teaching pupils with additional special educational needs achieve and make progress at the same rate as their peers, although they may have different targets. Those with English as an additional language make good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They improve their concentration and have a desire to get things right.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Although some pupils have challenging behaviour, it improves as they successfully meet targets on their behaviour plans.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. Personal development is very good.
Attendance	Good in relation to other similar schools. Some pupils are late getting to school because transport arrangements have been changed.

Relationships are a real strength of the school and do much to give pupils the impetus to want to do their best and develop very positive attitudes and behaviour. Lunchtime behaviour is particularly good because mid day supervision is very good. A significant number of pupils are late arriving to school due to unsatisfactory transport arrangements. Levels of authorised absence have risen slightly but this is due to illness.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5	Aged 5-11	Aged 11-16	Aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good overall; often very good at Key Stage 2	Good overall; very good at Key Stage 3	Too many unsatisfactory lessons

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, but in a substantial number of lessons, the teaching is very good or excellent. In a small number of lessons, the teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching is excellent in 8 per cent of lessons, very good in 25 per cent, good in 45 per cent, satisfactory in 17 per cent and unsatisfactory in 5 per cent. There is a considerable increase in the amount of high quality teaching since the last inspection.

In the Further Education Unit, in two thirds of the lessons teaching is at least satisfactory. There is excellent teaching of music and good teaching of communication skills, art and personal social education. However, there are too many lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, particularly in mathematics where students do not do as well as they should.

During all key stages, teaching is good in English and science. It is sound overall in mathematics although good at Key Stages 2 and 3. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy are taught well and are having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. Communication skills are taught very well. There are particular strengths in the teaching of music, art drama and physical education. Teachers ensure the needs of all the pupils are met well, particularly those with an additional diagnosis of autism, those with multi-sensory impairments and those with English as an additional language. Learning is good overall. Pupils enjoy their work and usually concentrate and try very hard during lessons. They improve their communication and numeracy skills and increase their knowledge in other subjects. In some subjects, for example physical education, they strive to improve their performances. Very occasionally a few pupils with challenging behaviour find it very difficult to learn but usually this is managed well by staff.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides good learning opportunities, which are highly relevant to the needs of the pupils. The quality of links with other schools is exceptionally good. Individual education plans are used very well although a few targets are too imprecise.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is good support and provision for pupils with English as an additional language and this helps them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to experience their own culture and those of other countries.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a strength of the school. Pupils are helped to improve their behaviour. Achievements and progress are monitored well which helps to raise standards.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has a very good partnership with parents and provides good levels of information.

The curriculum is good overall and very good for children in the nursery. It is broad and balanced but there is insufficient time to teach art at Key Stage 2, the humanities and design and technology regularly. This is because the teaching day is shorter than that recommended and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies take up more time than previously. The curriculum for students in the Further Education Unit is good overall. It is based on the Diploma of Vocational Education and enriched by a range of off-site activities. However, there are weaknesses in some of the teaching of the school-based provision. A number of very effective initiatives have been developed in the school, including Sherborne Movement, Teaching and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH), Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) and sensory and mealtime passports. These help to provide high quality provision for those with additional special educational needs. The curriculum for music, art, information and communications technology, physical education and drama are very good. Curriculum weeks are very effective.

Pupils' attendance, progress, personal development and behaviour are monitored very well to ensure standards are maintained and improved. Assessment information is used very well to ensure appropriate work is studied. Additional provision from therapists is very effective overall, but there is insufficient targeted speech and language therapy.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good, strong leadership. The school has a very clear direction, which is well defined through very effective planning. There is very good consultation and delegation of roles to staff.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. They are very active and effectively involved in monitoring the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very aware of its performance through very good monitoring and evaluating procedures.
The strategic use of	Good overall and very good in many areas. The food technology

resources	rooms, however, are under used.
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Staffing levels are good and the expertise of staff is very good. This is maintained through high quality induction procedures and staff training programmes. Accommodation is spacious and has a number of very good features. Resources are very good. The high quality of decoration and display is stimulating and encourages pupils to achieve high standards. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team provide very strong leadership and they are supported by a very active and effective governing body. The monitoring of teaching is very good and has improved the standards of teaching considerably. Finances are managed very well and the application of the principle of best value has been applied well to save money without lowering standards.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching staff with concerns.</li> <li>• Positive attitudes and values are promoted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements for homework</li> <li>• A wider range of extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Speech and language provision</li> <li>• Communication where pupils are in respite care</li> <li>• Individual education plan targets</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views and shares parents' concern about the speech and language therapy provision. A new policy on homework seeks to clarify arrangements. Whilst reading and home/school books are sent home to almost all pupils, other homework is not set on a regular basis. The team found there was a lack of clarity in a few targets on individual education plans and the school is taking steps to remedy this. Similarly, the school is ensuring that letters for those pupils in respite care get home to parents. Whilst there are no extra-curricular activities after school, lunchtimes are used well with very good opportunities for organised activities in the playground.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. It is inappropriate to judge the standards of the pupils for whom this school caters in relation to the National Curriculum or any other national benchmarks. The report does, however, report on the achievement of the pupils and on what they know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement take account of information in their statements, annual reviews and individual education plans.
2. Children achieve very well during their time in the nursery and make very good progress in acquiring communication skills, mathematical, personal and social and physical development. They make good progress in all other areas of learning and are very well prepared to join the next class in the school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, where progress was at least satisfactory. This is largely because of the high quality of the teaching by the team of teachers and non-teaching staff that work in the nursery. The consistent approach, meticulous planning of lessons and clarity of organisation ensures children make very good progress towards meeting the explicit targets on their individual education plans. Children learn to use an appropriate range of skills to aid their communication. By the time they are five, most appreciate books, often turning pages. They explore shapes and begin to recognise numbers. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world increases as they visit various places in the school including the colour room and hydrotherapy pool. They use touch screens on computers to make things happen. Physical achievements improve and children become more flexible through Sherborne Movement classes and physical education lessons. Their creative abilities develop well. They make music, play imaginatively and paint.
3. Pupils' achievements and progress in the rest of the school are now good overall and often very good, which is an improvement on the sound levels noted at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 4. A number of pupils in Year 11 are making good progress towards a Certificate of Educational Achievement in lifeskills, mathematics, art and in drama. Pupils tend to achieve higher standards and make very good progress during Key Stages 2 and 3. This is largely due to the high proportion of very good teaching at these key stages. The adoption of the National Literacy Strategy has also raised standards considerably for all pupils.
4. Standards for students in the Post-16 unit are sound overall and they usually make appropriate progress in the subjects and courses they study. Occasionally students do not do as well as they should in mathematics because the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. However, some good and some higher quality teaching in music, art and at college balance this. Students make good progress in improving their communication skills, particularly speaking and listening, and sound progress in improving their reading and writing skills. In the Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) lessons they learn to make good eye contact, speak clearly and pay attention to others. They increase the number of symbols they recognise and use the computer to write their personal statement for their Record of Achievement. In mathematics they make slow progress increasing their understanding of the practical use of mathematics. This is partly because time is wasted in some lessons and resources are not appropriate for their age. Many students learn about coins and money and some use it to purchase drinks from a machine and pay for their lunch when they are on college link courses. They use calculators to sequence numbers one to 20 and learn to classify tall and short objects. Students make very good progress indeed in music. They play instruments with increasing confidence and become familiar with music of different composers. Their work in art is of a good standard. Students use sponges to print interesting patterns or use ink to make effective screen prints. Last year, by the time they left school, all of the students had gained credits as part of the Diploma in Vocational Education. They also gained levels in the Adult Stamina Skills (ASA) award and were presented with certificates of achievement from the Further Education College they attended.

5. Pupils achieve good standards in English overall. They make very good progress in improving their speaking and listening skills at all key stages. Pupils become more able to communicate effectively, some using alternative or additional communication aids. Throughout the key stages they increase the number of words they know and understand. Teachers are skilled at asking questions and pupils respond increasingly appropriately. Pupils make very good progress towards developing their reading skills. They make a sound start during Key Stage 1 and this improves to good throughout the other key stages. Their progress is very good in response to literature at Key Stage 4. Most will share books and many love the sensory stories and participate in reading big books. Higher attaining pupils know words from their reading books and begin to sound out unknown words. Writing skills are developed effectively at all key stages. Pupils make marks on paper and some start to form letters. Older pupils use a symbols program on the computer to assist their writing and a few write sentences.
6. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactory standards and make sound progress in mathematics. Pupils' achievements and progress are good at Key Stages 2 and 3 because the standards of teaching are good at these key stages. Also the National Numeracy Strategy is proving very effective where it is being piloted at Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievements and progress are sound by the end of Key Stages 1 and 4. Pupils develop an understanding of 'more' and many learn to identify preferences for colours and shapes. They learn to measure and weigh objects. Higher attaining pupils learn to count and show information on graphs.
7. In science pupils' achievements and progress are good overall. By the time they are seven, pupils show an awareness of light and darkness and respond more positively to a range of sounds. Many can name sources of light and a few learn to make simple electrical circuits. Lower attaining pupils with adult help construct circuits by the time they are 11. Most pupils explain what happens to light up a bulb and higher attaining pupils are beginning to make predictions about materials. They decide which are stronger, harder or more flexible. Throughout Key Stage 3, many pupils develop their ability to predict what will happen when materials change and a few give reasoned explanations for the changes. They also start recording their work using charts and worksheets, some independently. By the time they are 16, pupils have learnt about the physical world, exploring the solar system and many can name the sun, moon and stars on a model. Higher attaining pupils are aware of the differences in size of the earth, sun and moon and link the movement of earth with day and night.
8. Pupils achieve very good standards and make very good progress in personal and social education. This marks a clear improvement since the last inspection when standards were sound. The subject permeates the life of the school as well as being taught in discrete lessons, which reinforces high standards. Pupils acquire good social skills. During drinks and circle time they learn to relate well to each other and to behave appropriately. Their independence increases as far as possible through making choices and decisions. Pupils learn about keeping safe and healthy living. Older pupils investigate work places and develop insights into different roles. They improve their ability to ask questions appropriately and think about the relevance of the answers to their lives.
9. High standards and very good progress are achieved by pupils in music and physical education at all key stages, in art at Key Stages 1, 3 and 4, drama at Key Stage 4 and in information and communications technology at Key Stage 3. Pupils' achievements and progress are good in drama and information and communications technology at other key stages, and in design and technology at all key stages. In history and religious education pupils' achievement and progress are sound and some pupils achieve well and make good progress. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about achievements and progress in art at Key Stage 2, geography and modern foreign languages. Since the last inspection pupils' achievement and progress have improved in most subjects. Music and swimming remain strengths. Particular improvement is evident in English, science, art, design and technology, information and communications technology and physical education. In mathematics achievement has improved notably at Key Stage 2.
10. There is no measurable difference between the progress of pupils with additional special educational needs including the additional diagnosis of autism and multi-sensory impairment. There is good provision for these pupils ensuring they make a similar rate of progress as other

pupils in the school. Those with sensory or multi-sensory impairment benefit from high quality support in the classroom and from the good range of high quality alternative communication devices and strategies which the school has developed. Those with the additional diagnosis of autism also receive effective support through the use of signing, symbols and objects of reference. Staff are very aware of the needs of these pupils and ensure these needs are met through careful planning of lessons. In the same way the needs of those whose first language is not English are well met and their achievements and progress are good. They make very good gains in acquiring communication skills. Although there are more boys than girls in the school they all make similar progress.

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

11. The quality of relationships between all members of the school community, children, pupils, students and adults is excellent. This together with the very good attitudes, behaviour and the development of personal skills is a strength of the school, which confirms views expressed by parents. These very high standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection.
12. Children in the nursery quickly develop very good attitudes to their work. They build excellent relationships with the staff and want to do their best for them, smiling and laughing when they are praised. Their behaviour is very good. Those children with behaviour management plans make good progress towards improving their behaviour. All children increase their level of independence, learning to make choices and responding to staff.
13. Pupils are very keen to come to school, they happily greet the senior members of staff who meet them at the front door each morning and this sets a very good tone for the day. In the classrooms all pupils take part in activities that include opportunities to greet their peers and staff and share experiences. Pupils show great pleasure in meeting and sharing with their friends especially after a holiday period. When moving around the school pupils are considerate, waiting for those in wheelchairs and responding to those they meet, including visitors, politely and pleasantly.
14. Pupils are eager to play a full part in the life of the school. They often offer to bring things from home to add to school displays and to show others, for example a pupil at Key Stage 1 brought some sweets to add to the display celebrating Holi. It was noteworthy that senior staff made the effort to go to the pupil's classroom to thank her and share with her friends her thoughtfulness. This is a good example of the very high standard of relationships that exist throughout the school and the value that the school places on the traditions and cultures that the pupils bring with them. The pupils also take part in a wide range of links with the community and mainstream schools. They take great pleasure in meeting new people and during assemblies they recall the friends they have made.
15. Some pupils in the school have very challenging behaviour; even where this is so, pupils make considerable efforts to manage their own behaviour. They are given very effective help by the staff that have high expectations of them and calmly and carefully help them to improve their self-control. Pupils are aware of their targets on their behaviour plans and gradually make good progress towards meeting them. Overall, behaviour is very good throughout the school day. Behaviour is very good in most lessons. In the playground and in moving about the building from activity to activity most pupils are calm and self-assured.
16. As pupils get older, they take appropriate levels of responsibility for example, returning registers to the office and taking messages. Pupils in Key Stage 2 can share out drinks and biscuits in their groups. They are confident and polite, offering biscuits to visiting inspectors! Taking part in a variety of work related visits and in work experience enhances older pupils' personal development.
17. Pupils play and learn together co-operatively. They develop a range of communication skills including eye pointing, signing, using switches and vocalising. This ensures that they all, whatever their level of difficulty, can develop meaningful relationships with their peers and the

adults who work with them. As they grow in confidence they begin to appreciate the effects of their actions offering to help or apologising if they have hurt another.

18. Pupils' attendance levels are good when compared with similar schools. Very few have unauthorised absence. The level of authorised absence has risen since the last inspection; however, this is clearly a result of the very significant medical problems suffered by some of the pupils and does not reflect a problem in attendance.

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

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is high. In 78 per cent of the lessons the teaching is at least good and in 33 per cent of lessons teaching is very good or excellent. This is one of the most important factors contributing to the effective learning of the pupils. Teaching is satisfactory in 17 per cent of the lessons, but there are weaknesses in five per cent. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching by the senior staff have made a real impact on improving the quality of teaching in the school since the last inspection.
20. In the nursery, teaching has improved since the last inspection and it is now consistently at least good. In 40 per cent of the lessons teaching is very good or excellent. This ensures children have a very firm basis on which to build by the time they are five. The teaching of communication skills, mathematics, personal and social development and the Sherborne Movement Programme are particularly good. In these areas, children make great strides.
21. Teaching is very good for pupils during Key Stage 3 and is often very good for pupils at Key Stage 2. Overall, teaching is good for pupils at Key Stage 1, although occasionally teaching is unsatisfactory. Staff are usually very alert to the need to provide pupils, particularly those with an additional diagnosis of autism or challenging behaviour, with the security of a well-rehearsed routine. However, in one instance disruption occurred when pupils were taken to the colour room five minutes into a lesson which upset the class. In consequence the behaviour of the other pupils prevented them from learning and the teacher did not have sufficient strategies to remedy the situation. Teaching is good for pupils at Key Stage 4. The teaching of students aged Post-16 has weaknesses. About a third of the teaching is unsatisfactory and slows the progress made in these lessons. However, 44 per cent of the teaching is at least good with some examples of very good teaching. This helps students to achieve satisfactory, and at times, good progress.
22. Overall the quality of teaching is of a very high standard in music, art and physical education. Teaching is of excellent quality in drama at Key Stage 4 and very good in information and communications technology when it is taught as a discrete subject. Teaching is good in English, science, and design and technology. Overall in mathematics, history and religious education, teaching is satisfactory. In mathematics at Key Stage 2, where the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented, teaching is good.
23. A major contributory factor to the high quality of the teaching is the meticulous planning of each lesson, which is firmly based on medium and long-term planning. Teachers ensure all the pupils in the class have appropriate learning objectives based on what they have learnt before and targets set on individual education plans. For example, in music lessons all pupils participate and make very good progress indeed because the teacher is clear about what each member of the class will learn. Higher attaining students play the violin, those with more complex needs pluck the chords and feel the vibrations. Planning for literacy and numeracy sessions follows the National Strategy at the appropriate level and is very good. Objects of reference, signs, symbols and books are chosen to help pupils make gains in their learning, which is built on carefully each lesson.
24. The methods used to teach are very effective. Teachers ensure that learning is fun for the children and pupils because activities are interesting and exciting. In the nursery, children learn through play, often gaining knowledge and understanding from exploring toys and responding to careful questioning from staff. Pupils enjoy handling artefacts in history lessons and searching for information using a computer program. Going down a list of numbers turns into a game in mathematics as pupils try to see how far they can get. Teachers' specific

expertise is used well. There are specialist teachers of art at Key Stage 4 and of music and swimming. This is reflected in the high standards pupils achieve in these subjects. Most teachers are skilled in managing difficult behaviour, in ignoring what is not important, often diverting attention and following the behaviour management plan. Elements from the 'Teaching and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children' (TEACCH) approach are used very effectively, where appropriate, for pupils with an additional diagnosis of autism. The use of individual work trays to schedule activities, and attention to structure and routine in the classroom, give pupils the security they need to learn. Staff are also skilled in breaking down learning into small steps and in using a range of sensory stimuli to help those with more complex and multi-sensory difficulties ensuring these pupils meet targets on their individual education plans. For example, pupils respond to differences in light in the colour room by turning their heads. Some reach out and touch the bubble tube, feeling the bubbles move. The Sherborne Movement Programme is taught particularly well which helps children in the nursery and pupils at Key Stage 1 to develop communication, social and physical skills effectively. Teaching, classroom support and planning for pupils with severe speech and language difficulties are of good quality and these pupils are making good progress in achieving individual targets such as their use of signing and their listening skills. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught well. Staff ensure vocabulary is carefully introduced and reinforced. Very good use is made of displays that show multi-cultural aspects. Photographs of family groups, some in traditional dress, help children in the nursery learn words, including, for example, baby, brother and sister.

25. Support staff are very effective. Virtually all are qualified nursery nurses and have a vital role in pupils' learning. Some work closely with a particular pupil, others are assigned to a class. All are very well briefed by teachers, know what they are expected to do and do it well. It is noticeable that staff work in teams ensuring a common approach, which helps to develop a feeling of security for the pupils. Procedures for dealing with behaviour difficulties, for example, are consistently applied which improves behaviour through setting clear boundaries. Staff that work with pupils at lunchtime also apply the same consistency. They are very effective in helping pupils to make the best use of this time. Pupils enjoy their lunch breaks and many improve their skills. They indicate preferences, including choosing the swing or the hammock or using the slide for the first time. Support staff also contribute towards the maintenance of a good pace in lessons. Time is used well and lessons move smoothly from one activity to another. For example, in the nursery support staff and teachers work with groups or individual children. One support assistant is in the soft play area, two are on the mat with cause and effect toys, a teacher and two assistants work with individual children and the remaining teacher is in the play areas outside. This provides a range of interesting activities and increases knowledge and understanding. The one-to-one work also improves concentration.
26. Staff use praise and encouragement very effectively to draw out the best in pupils. For example, in a physical education lesson pupils were delighted to be asked to demonstrate their skills in controlling a ball. This encouraged them to try harder. In a drama lesson, the teacher went over what they had each learnt from previous sessions encouraging them with prompts to remember details from Romeo and Juliet and praising them for their achievements. In this lesson, pupils were pleased to be set homework individually to learn suitable quotes from the play in preparation for their next lesson. As parents indicated at the parents' meeting, additional homework is not set regularly for pupils. However, book bags go home each week with many children and pupils. Parents are asked to read with their children and this has helped to improve standards in reading.
27. In the Further Education Unit lessons are not always as well planned as in the main school to ensure the needs of individual students are met. In two lessons, there was clearly insufficient planned to fill the time. These lessons lacked pace and too many students were not engaged in an activity. For example, one worksheet showing coins in a purse was completed by one student then handed to another to do and a third student looked for coins of the same value on dice. The lesson finished very early. Students do not respond as well as they should when work is not appropriate to their age, including showing height using unifix blocks. Work set too often requires direct teacher support for all students, for example, when comparing sizes of items. Support for a student with English as an additional language, provided by a specialist

assistant, is very effective in the unit. However, because the other support assistant works with an individual elsewhere there is no additional support during their mathematics lesson to assist in keeping those students with short concentration spans involved. The teacher has to spend too much time establishing where students have gone and returning them to the group because they are not sufficiently involved in the lesson. This prevents others from learning adequately.

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

28. The school provides a good range of relevant learning opportunities, which are effectively planned to meet the needs of pupils. One of the best features of the curriculum is the emphasis given to equal opportunities. The school has given careful thought and consideration to this aspect of its work and the achievements in this area are noteworthy. Individual education plans are comprehensive and used well to plan and monitor the progress of learning across the curriculum. There are plans to develop these further by improving their format and making those targets that are too broad, more specific. Every pupil is helped to access the curriculum through a wide range of initiatives. These include the effective use of signing and communication aids for non-verbal pupils. Teaching and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) strategies are employed successfully when working with pupils with the additional diagnosis of autism. Individual sensory programmes and activities in the colour room help pupils with sensory impairment. These pupils carry special 'passports' so that all the adults support them in a consistent way. Behaviour management plans are used well for managing pupils with challenging behaviour and careful grouping for the Literacy Strategy is assisting pupils to make good progress. Sherborne Movement lessons successfully enhance pupils' physical development and the school's collaboration with physiotherapists is very effective. The needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language are addressed successfully. These pupils are helped enormously by the constant reinforcement of communication skills in all their lessons.
29. The curriculum for children under 5 is particularly strong. It is appropriately based on the desirable learning outcomes for children by the time they are of compulsory school age but is enriched by a wide range of additional elements. For example, the Sherborne Movement Programme is very effective in building confidence and dexterity. Children learn effectively through structured play and well taught sessions on targets from their individual education plans. A well-developed topic cycle helps to ensure a sufficiently broad curriculum. Clear long, medium and short-term and individual planning ensures the curriculum is balanced and all children have equal access.
30. At all key stages the curriculum meets statutory requirements. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are included. Some subjects, for example music, art, information and communications technology and physical education, are very strong, providing exciting learning opportunities, which are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. At Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 teaching time is below that recommended and shorter than the majority of other similar schools. Therefore some of the foundation subjects, in particular art, history and design and technology at Key Stage 2, have insufficient time to consolidate learning in these subjects. The number of subjects accredited by the Certificate of Education award is increasing for pupils to study during Key Stage 4.
31. The curriculum for students in the Further Education Unit is good overall. It is effectively planned using Diploma of Vocational Education case studies, which also offers external accreditation. There are valuable opportunities for good quality off-site activities such as work experience, college links and leisure options. Despite the quality of the curriculum, however, students only make sound progress overall because of weaknesses in some of the teaching in the unit provision. Students are well supported through the careers programme to make choices about future pathways and they are prepared for transition to the next stage through good links with colleges and day centres.
32. The Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The Numeracy Strategy is being piloted in Key Stage 2

and, although it is too soon to have been formally evaluated, it is proving to be effective in raising standards.

33. The school's provision for all aspects of pupils' personal development is very good. Ample opportunities exist for pupils to reflect and develop spiritually. In many lessons teachers encourage pupils' feelings of wonder through the reverent manner in which resources and artefacts are passed around the class for handling and exploration. In music lessons there is often a palpable atmosphere of awe and appreciation among pupils when they create a successful piece of music. In art, pupils are enthralled by their creation of printed designs on polystyrene tiles and through wax rubbing. Daily collective worship for all pupils is well planned and organised and provides regular opportunities for quiet reflection on carefully chosen themes. During additional weekly assemblies teachers encourage pupils to relate what they hear to their own experience. For example, during the inspection week the theme of 'Special People' allowed pupils to identify people who are special to them and to celebrate their achievements at the end of each day.
34. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Teachers draw their attention to class rules that are displayed on classroom walls in Rebus form. In nearly all lessons they ensure that pupils are clear about what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Teachers provide excellent role models by treating all pupils with evident respect and encouraging pupils to do the same. They encourage pupils to consider the needs of others by responding to special appeals, such as collecting money for the people of Kosovo and providing food parcels for the elderly at Christmas.
35. A particularly strong programme of personal and social education is provided which includes aspects of sex and drugs education. It is very well planned giving pupils relevant experiences to help them understand. Work on citizenship, for example, includes visits to the Town Hall where pupils can ask their own questions about the role of those who work there including the mayor, the mayor's secretary and the person who looks after the mace.
36. A wide range of activities and experiences helps pupils' social development at all ages. Teachers encourage good relationships as soon as pupils arrive at school in the morning by welcoming them warmly and helping them to greet each other during form time. Most lessons help pupils to develop their skills of communicating with each other. In music, for example, they are often encouraged to play music as a group or team. The Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) improves the social interaction skills of pupils with complex needs. Drinks time, lunch and playtimes are well structured to develop both co-operation and independence.
37. Pupils further develop their confidence and social skills by meeting and working with children from other schools through a valuable inclusion links scheme. The school has an impressive range of links with other local mainstream schools. Teachers are very aware of the value of this programme to the pupils and always set specific targets, which are carefully monitored and evaluated. All links now have a curriculum focus and are never arranged during literacy or numeracy lessons. If pupils do miss any significant areas of learning, they are helped to catch up. There are also a number of good reverse links when pupils from other schools join lessons at St Ann's. Consequently pupils have worthwhile experiences which have very positive effects on their self-esteem.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. The school provides pupils with a rich variety of experiences to develop their awareness of different cultures, especially through religious education, history, art and music. Displays around the school reflect its multicultural population but the western cultural tradition is also emphasised more than at the time of the last inspection. For example, pupils listen and respond to extracts from Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' in English, to 'Zorba's Dance' in music and present their own adaptation of 'Romeo and Juliet'. Teachers draw on the skills of local artists, workers and residents to enhance pupils' experiences. An art week last year and a forthcoming humanities week provide outstanding opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of the food, art, music, stories and clothing of different cultures.

39. It is difficult to provide extra-curricular activities after school, which some parents indicated they would like, due to the demands of transport arrangements. However, there is a real effort to engage pupils in meaningful play activities during lunchtime breaks. Supervisors teach pupils to play, using the exciting range of large and small apparatus that is available. The school's commitment to this important aspect is demonstrated by providing training and allocating funds to the supervisor for the purchase and maintenance of play equipment. There are also plans to introduce music and other clubs during this time.
40. A well-planned programme of careers education and guidance gradually introduces pupils to the world of work. In the early years, pupils look at the jobs people do within school. At Key Stage 3, pupils begin to reflect on their personal strengths and at Key Stage 4, a number of industrial visits enable pupils to consider job skills. In the Further Education Unit, students take part in mini-enterprise activities, work experience and prepare for the next stage, college or day centre. Records of Achievement are completed by the time pupils are 16 and updated when they leave school at 19.
41. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Schemes of work are developing in all subjects and the quality of long term and daily planning continues to rise through the careful monitoring of the headteacher and deputy. The subject co-ordinators are more confident and they are beginning to play a role in monitoring the planning and delivery of their subjects. The school's innovative approach to curriculum design and delivery is exemplified by the development of curriculum weeks. The normal timetable is suspended and the whole week is devoted to one particular theme or subject. The school is currently planning for humanities week and a previous dance week won a curriculum award.

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

42. The care of pupils is a strength of the school. Very good arrangements are made to ensure their health, safety, wellbeing and protection. The designated person responsible for child protection has been suitably trained. Procedures followed, together with the training and briefing of all staff, fully meet locally agreed guidelines. Pupils receive suitable guidance about how to protect themselves from harm, for example the dangers associated in talking to strangers. The school liaises with, and uses, most support services effectively where needed. Concern for the health, safety and welfare of pupils is given high priority and supported by a suitable policy. Issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. All members of staff are vigilant in their care. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised with suitable frequency. Members of staff are aware of safety issues relating to lessons and take suitable steps to ensure safe procedures are followed. For example, in a design and technology lesson the teacher explained the correct and safe way to use a saw. Risk assessment procedures are conducted by the school and result in high standards. Some basic hygiene requirements in the food technology room have been overlooked.
43. Relationships are consistently excellent throughout, ensuring pupils to feel confident, secure and happy. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils are thorough and ensure they settle well. All pupils are assessed effectively for the care they need when starting at the school and subsequent care plans provide very good guidelines to ensure these are met. They are regularly reviewed and updated. Mealtime passports are very effective in ensuring a consistency of approach in school, at home and in respite care. There is a nurse on duty throughout the school day providing high standards of care as needed. Bathroom and changing facilities have been greatly improved since the time of the last inspection and the school places a high degree of importance on the personal dignity of pupils. Toileting procedures are planned with care and, where needed, liaison with parents results in a consistent approach at both school and in the home. Information exchanged in the home/school books supports the monitoring of pastoral care very well, though less consistently so for students in Post-16 provision. All aspects of life and work at the school are monitored effectively for equality of opportunity through a suitable policy and regular staff meetings led by the relevant co-ordinator.
44. The school continues to maintain excellent standards for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour. Clear procedures and high expectations are consistently re-enforced by all staff,

helping pupils to understand and meet expectations. Where there are specific difficulties with behaviour, parents are fully consulted in the writing of behaviour management plans. These are used effectively to support improvement and regularly reviewed and updated as needed. As a result of this, and very effective classroom management, the school maintains a very positive learning environment that is rarely disrupted. Some classes have their own agreed rules displayed. Pupils value the principles expressed in these and will say if they are broken. They are well motivated by the system of awards presented each week during assemblies.

45. Staff work well to promote good attendance and there is effective monitoring to identify and deal with any problems that occur. This results in good standards of achievement. There are occasional inconsistencies in the marking of registers. The frequent late arrival of school transport in the mornings leads to some initial sessions being disrupted. Teaching time is shortened and pupils do not learn as well as they should at the beginning of the first lesson of the day.
46. Monitoring of progress and personal development has improved since the time of the last inspection and is very good. The in-depth knowledge that class teachers have of individual pupils results in high levels of personal support in lessons. Individual education plans are reviewed each term. Parents at the parents' meeting indicated that plans sometimes offer broad aims rather than specific targets, which makes it difficult for them to see sufficient progress. There is some justification for the concern as targets are sometimes too broad. However, inspection findings show that pupils make good progress overall. Broad targets are often supplemented effectively by specific and achievable targets, set and monitored well by class teachers. This process is less effective in humanities. The marking of pupils' work is usually very effective, identifying clearly what has been achieved and where further work is needed. It plays an important role in short-term planning as does the ongoing daily assessment of progress as it occurs. The link programme with other mainstream schools is given high priority and is well organised and managed to promote pupils' personal development. Achievements are monitored rigorously and show they make good progress during these shared lessons. The well-presented Records of Achievement are the result of careful assessment and review of work done and individual successes. This is carried out with the involvement of pupils. Monitoring of personal development during the very well-planned personal and social education programme and work experience is very effective and supports planning well. During the last school year, pupils at Key Stage 4 started a comprehensive, five term, accredited, Life Skills course.
47. The educational and personal support and guidance given to pupils are very effective in raising the achievements throughout the school. Since the time of the last inspection the assessment and recording policy has been reviewed. The school has done a full audit of assessments used and the resulting procedures promote very good practice and a high level of consistency. There are regular meetings with various support specialists to agree realistic targets and monitor progress against these. This liaison results in a coherent approach to the support and guidance given. The annual review process is very well managed and ensures parents have every opportunity and encouragement to be fully involved. The subsequent reports usually provide a comprehensive assessment of the progress made in all aspects of life and work at the school. They are routinely reviewed after six months. Throughout the school, staff make good use of the full range of assessment procedures to inform their planning, this is particularly so in the nursery.

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

48. There are very good levels of satisfaction overall amongst parents with what the school provides and achieves. Parents say their children like school, they feel the teaching is good and that positive attitudes and values are promoted well. Inspection findings support these views. Parents are confident about approaching staff to discuss their concerns. A few are concerned about the arrangements for homework and the school is reviewing its policy for this.
49. The school has not made sufficiently clear its very valid reasons for changing the arrangements for pupils arriving after registration. This has led to a small number of misunderstandings when parents expected to take their children to the classroom. At the

parents' meeting strong dissatisfaction was expressed about the effectiveness of speech and language development through the input of therapists. Inspection findings support the view that there is not sufficient speech and language therapy provision and it is not always as effectively used as in other similar schools. The many improvements made since the last inspection are acknowledged and valued by parents; these include improvements to the premises, equipment, play arrangements, lunchtime organisation, curriculum initiatives such as literacy, numeracy and the introduction of an accredited course in French. They regard the school as forward thinking and value the willingness of staff to try new things to support improvement.

50. The school has developed very good links with parents. There are effective arrangements to familiarise them with the school before their children's entry. These are supported well by a recently produced booklet 'Working with Parents' and one about the nursery. The range of information included in the prospectus and the governors' annual report is comprehensive and has improved since the time of the last inspection. There is no separate booklet to highlight more adult arrangements for students in the Post-16 provision, although one is planned. Parents receive a lively and informative newsletter each half term that keeps them up to date with school events and reminds them of diary dates. The home/school books are usually used particularly effectively to exchange information, though less consistently so for Post-16 students. There are regular information sessions focusing on areas of learning, for example literacy and sign language. These support parents' understanding of what their children are learning well. For parents whose first language is not English the school provides translation services where needed. Some parents do not receive letters when their children are in respite care. This is because letters are usually taken home via their children's escort at the end of the day. Steps are already being taken to ensure parents do not get left out in this way. The parents' room is used regularly for coffee mornings and other events including, for example, sign language courses for parents, carers, relatives and friends. Parent governors are available to deal with queries and concerns.
51. The arrangements to report on pupils' progress are generally very good. Parents are always invited to annual reviews. The school liaises with parents about suitable dates and re-schedules where necessary, resulting in good levels of attendance. Reports from specialists contributing to the review are sent to parents well before the meeting, enabling them to reflect on these and to put their own views. A new development where staff present 'exhibitions', displays of pupils' work, including annotated photographs for the review meeting, effectively highlight achievements during the year. The resulting reports are well written and usually lead to a very good understanding of work covered, attitudes and progress made. In some instances, particularly in the humanities, the content of lessons is reported rather than what pupils know, understand and can do. Suitable arrangements are made for parents to comment on and discuss the draft report. Individual education plans are reviewed each term and parents receive copies of these for comment before they are finalised. They are invited to planning meetings about transition arrangements and are involved in agreeing the final report.
52. The involvement of parents has a very positive impact on the work of the school. They take an active interest in the progress their children make in all areas of their lives. This results in good attendance at school events and a positive response when they are consulted. For example about the home/school agreement, where their active interest has resulted in a very useful document. This supports a full partnership in helping their children to get the best from their schooling. Parents have also been involved in the recent review of the homework policy. Few parents help in the school on a regular basis, although there are always willing volunteers to help where needed. The 'Friends Association' receives high levels of support and holds a good range of social and fund raising events. Monies raised support the work of the school very well.

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

53. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. A very clear sense of direction informs the work of the school. Governors and staff are very actively involved in the process of development and raising standards. A significant factor in the success of the school is the way in which responsibilities are delegated. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and staff

work together as a very effective team. The headteacher, with very strong support from her deputy, makes very good use of communication and consultation to promote team spirit and to motivate staff. A full programme of meetings and discussions, whether involving the whole staff, faculty groups or working parties, is skilfully co-ordinated and the positive outcomes of this work are clearly seen in the many wide-ranging developments, which have been implemented since the last inspection. These include improved curriculum planning, the systematic monitoring of teaching through the teaching and learning policy, the computer networking of all classrooms through the National Grid for Learning initiative and major improvements to the toilet accommodation for pupils. The school development plan benefits from the contributions of all staff at every stage. As a result, it contains very realistic and appropriate targets. Responsibility for each task, timescales and criteria for success are very clearly defined and the plan does much to enhance the commitment to improvement shared by staff and governors. However, whole-school targets for improvement, in levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy, for example, are only partly developed as they are newly implemented.

54. The monitoring of teaching is carried out on a regular basis and together with a very well managed system of staff appraisal has done much to promote the high quality of teaching which is a strength of the school. The headteacher is very aware of any areas of weakness in teaching and works closely with staff to build on strengths and eliminate weaknesses. There are also very good arrangements for the professional development of staff. Records show a wide range of training opportunities made available for and utilised by staff, both on an individual and whole-staff basis. The training plan has very clear links with school priorities such as literacy and communication skills developments. It is very effectively co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher who also has responsibility for the excellent programme of induction of new staff. The senior management team and governors rightly regard this as a very valuable initiative and have allocated a substantial sum of money from the school budget to establish it and to pay for specialist distance-learning courses for new staff. Recently appointed staff, including two temporary teachers, talk appreciatively of the support that they have received through the system of mentoring. The school's very good practice in staff training and development has been reflected by the award of "Investors in People" status.
55. The governing body is very well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has a very clear view of both medium and long-term development priorities. Minutes of their meetings record detailed discussions of priorities for development with searching questions, in particular on the financial implications of proposed developments. Governors also play a very active role in the monitoring of the quality of provision. They visit classes, for example, and the resulting reports to the governing body contain very constructive comments on what they have seen. Governors are closely involved with the development planning process. The training that they have received has provided them with much useful knowledge, for example of pre-National Curriculum scales, for their discussions.
56. The school budget is very well managed. It is effectively linked with the school development plan and careful budgeting has enabled a series of important developments to be funded. Good quality financial information, including monthly monitoring reports, is produced by the school's finance officer to inform financial planning. Governors are aware of the importance of seeking value for money from the school's expenditure and have achieved savings in areas such as grounds maintenance and supply cover without diminishing the quality of provision. The most recent external audit of the school's financial procedures found that they were satisfactory. Action has been taken to correct some shortcomings in the arrangements for ordering supplies and for petty cash. School administration is efficient and makes good use of new technology in its systems.
57. The number, qualifications and experience of both teaching and support staff are well matched to the needs of pupils and the demands of the curriculum. Significant improvements have been achieved in the levels of classroom support and in the subject expertise of teachers since the last inspection. The provision of speech and language therapy, however, is still insufficient to meet the needs of pupils for that service as specified on their statements. Priority for the available time has been given to those pupils with more language skills at the expense of

those with more severe needs. The problem is compounded by the lack of therapy targets for the latter group of pupils and by the absence of joint planning with teachers.

58. The accommodation is good and has seen major improvements in the quality of toilets and changing facilities since the last inspection. High standards of cleanliness and of display of pupils' work and other materials greatly enhance the learning environment. Accommodation is used efficiently apart from the facilities for food technology of which limited use is made, both in the main school and Further Education Unit. The quality of the provision in the playgrounds is very good. There is extensive play equipment and covered areas in both the nursery and main playgrounds. Learning resources have benefited from significant and well-targeted investment since the last inspection. The quality of resources for information and communications technology, music and communication skills in particular have done much to extend the range of work in those subjects.

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

59. The governors, headteacher and staff of the school should:

Improve the quality of teaching in the Further Education Unit, notably in mathematics, in order to raise the standards of students' achievement in line with the rest of the school. *(Paragraphs: 4, 21, 27, 31, 64, 82, 85)*

Increase the amount of teaching time:

- In line with dfee (Department for Education and Science) recommendations for pupils over the age of seven, particularly those at Key Stage 2 in order to give more time to teach art, design and technology, history and geography; *(Paragraphs: 30, 93, 100, 102, 105)*
- At the beginning of the school day by working with the local education authority to deal with the recent re-occurrence of the late arrival of transport for some pupils to ensure they start lessons on time. *(Paragraph: 45)*

Ensure targets on all individual education plans are specific to enable pupils' progress to be more easily seen by parents. *(Paragraphs: 28, 46, 73, 88, 104)*

Work with the Health Authority to improve the provision of speech and language therapy in order to increase the amount of time available for working with pupils. *(Paragraphs: 49, 57, 80)*

60. The governors, in drawing up their action plan, may wish to consider the following minor weaknesses identified in the report:

- The food technology rooms are not used as much as they could be, taking account of the imminent refurbishment of the room in the Further Education Unit. *(Paragraphs: 58, 100)*
- There is not sufficient attention paid to the storage of food and cleanliness of the food technology room in the school. *(Paragraph 42, 100)*
- There is a lack of consistency in setting homework. A draft policy has been written. *(Paragraphs: 26, 48, 52)*

### **The further education unit**

61. Provision in the Further Education Unit is satisfactory. The curriculum is well designed and includes relevant learning opportunities. A good structure and external accreditation are provided by the use of Diploma of Vocational Education case studies. These involve students in studying and completing work to the necessary standard on topics such as the use of money, law and order, getting about in the community and designing and creating an end of year production. Schemes of work are also in place for creative activities such as music, printing and bag making. In mathematics some students follow the syllabus leading to the Certificate of Achievement. In English the Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) has been adopted by the school and is used effectively to enhance communication and social

skills. The careers programme supports students as they make decisions about future pathways and the Record of Achievement highlights their successes.

62. Students are able to gain confidence as they participate in a number of off-site activities. Some students attend courses at a local College of Further Education. These courses are specially designed and give students a good taster of what college has to offer. Students are required to move about the large campus and meet socially with others in the refectory. They cope really well and when the time comes are able to move successfully onto full-time courses at the college. For some students work placements give them first hand experience of the jobs people do. A wide range of placements include supermarkets, small shops, offices and maintenance depots. Leisure options enable students to go into the community, for example to go bowling or ice skating, and this helps them to try new things and to think about their own use of leisure time.
63. Students with more profound and multiple learning difficulties also have good opportunities to extend their learning, for example work on communication skills, hydrotherapy sessions in the school pool and through the effective support from classroom assistants and some teachers. Thorough planning ensures they are well prepared for the next stage and before leaving school good links are established with appropriate day centres.
64. Although the quality of the curriculum for students aged Post-16 is good, their overall achievement and progress is only sound. This is because teaching in the Further Education Unit is unsatisfactory overall. Teaching in one third of lessons is unsatisfactory, a significantly high proportion, which is lowering students' achievements and is in contrast to the high standards maintained in the school. These lessons are inadequately planned, activities are not appropriate for their age, worksheets are of unsatisfactory quality and time is wasted with lessons often ending early. Satisfactory teaching (about one fifth of lessons), good teaching (one third of lessons) and on occasion excellent teaching are also provided and this does help to redress the balance. The best lessons are very well planned with an interesting variety of activities and skills for students to master. As a result students become absorbed in their work, show initiative and work independently. One student, for example, completed a number of screen prints in an art lesson with little support from the teacher. Good explanations help students to understand difficult concepts. In a personal and social education lesson on community, students were able to suggest facilities in their community which they shared with their neighbours.
65. The accommodation for the unit is spacious and there are plans to redevelop some areas. The fitness room contains a good range of apparatus and is used well for lessons for pupils as well as a popular resource for students during break times. A good system of hoists ensures that students are moved safely and with dignity. At the time of the inspection the food technology room was awaiting refurbishment so it was not possible to observe students in this setting. This, together with the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, is having a negative impact on the overall quality of provision and the progress students make. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been improved by an increase in the number of case studies written for the Diploma of Vocational Education.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	25	45	17	5	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	19

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	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	6

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	9.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1

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**

It is inappropriate to report on attainment as measured against national standards at the end of Key Stages because of the small number of pupils involved and the nature of their special educational needs.

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4**

#### **Adult Stamina Skills Award (ASA)**

4 pupils from Year 10 have gained level 2

2 pupils from Year 11 have gained level 3, and 3 have gained level 1

### **Attainment at Post-16**

#### **Diploma in Vocational Education at foundation level**

4 students gained awards in the units Self and Environment at level 2

4 students gained awards in Arts and Media at levels 1 and 2

#### **Carshalton College Certificate of Achievement**

4 students gained these awards

3 students from Year 13 have also gained these awards

#### **Adult Stamina Skills Award (ASA)**

2 students gained level 4, 1 level 3 and 1 level 2

1 student in Year 12 has also gained level 1

2 students from Year 13 have also gained level 2

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	3
Indian	5
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	47
Any other minority ethnic group	3

### **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: YN – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5
Average class size	6.7

#### **Education support staff: YN – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	631.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998-1999
	£
Total income	975,454
Total expenditure	916,741
Expenditure per pupil	10,418
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,192
Balance carried forward to next year	86905

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	78
Number of questionnaires returned	17

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	88	12	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	35	0	6	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	41	12	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	25	0	0
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	88	6	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	12	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	19	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	18	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	29	6	0	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	35	18	6	6

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents expressed concern about the adequacy of the speech and language therapy provision and questions raised about how the time is used in school. Parents do not always receive letters sent home if their child is staying in the respite care facility as letters are sent home with pupils' escorts. Parents commented that some targets on individual education plans were on going and this made it difficult to see children's progress.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

66. The quality of the provision in the nursery is very good overall. Most children have received support before joining the nursery from a pre-school service that helps parents of children with special educational needs begin to develop their children's responses and skills. Most have considerable communication difficulties and many have additional physical and sensory impairment. They achieve a great deal by the time they are five. They make at least good, and often very good, progress in lessons and very good progress over time towards meeting targets on their individual education plans. They make the best progress, as at the last inspection, towards improving communication skills. The focus on gaining communication skills helps children for whom English is an additional language do well. A major factor in children making such good rates of progress is the high quality of the teaching and the very effective organisation of the nursery area. It is a bright, stimulating and welcoming environment where children feel safe and want to do their best to win praise and encouragement from the staff who work with them. The two teachers and the very effective support staff form a cohesive team. This ensures children learn equally well whether taught individually, in a group, or as a whole class. In consequence very little time, if any, is wasted and the children always have something interesting to do, which consolidates or increases what they know, understand or can do. A very good start is made when they arrive in the morning. The tone is set for the rest of the day. Children are greeted warmly by all staff. There are at least three, sometimes more, activities and they are immediately drawn in to participate. They work on objectives identified in their individual education plans, often looking at books and pictures, exploring textures or making marks on paper as part of the development of early writing skills. Lessons are very thoroughly planned to ensure that learning is fun for the children.
67. Children make very good progress developing personally and socially. It is very clear that they enjoy school and have quickly made very good relationships with staff. Their faces light up when they enter the room and see their teachers and support assistants for the first time each day. They develop an awareness of the other children in the class and work happily alongside others. A few learn to play co-operatively, for example on the rocker. One child during attendance at a local school plays with the other children in the cars. By the time they are five, many children drink from cups, most have learnt to tolerate a range of foods and will attempt to feed themselves, with assistance. They develop their concentration, looking intently at photographs or exploring different textures. Children begin to appreciate the work of others as they watch and applaud good performances in physical education lessons. Although many children find it difficult, staff insist they take turns and many will share toys and wait patiently for others to finish. Where it is appropriate, successful toilet training strategies are introduced. Most children behave very well. A few have behaviour management plans, which help them to improve their behaviour and to learn what is acceptable and unacceptable. These plans are effective because parents agree them and all staff consistently apply the procedures. Throughout their time in the nursery, children become used to making choices, for example, which toy to play with, book to look at and song to sing. This helps to develop their independence.
68. Language and literacy development are very good. Children make great strides in improving their communication skills partly because they are reinforced at every available opportunity. Staff are skilled in encouraging children to use signs and symbols and develop language. Objects of reference are carefully selected with photographs to help children make links between words and activities including an armband for swimming and a mug for drinks. Those children that use switches enjoy contributing 'good morning' during circle time. Children learn to vocalise and make meaningful noises, for example expressing excitement before the weekly music lesson. Many children improve their vocabulary and clarity of speech. A few put several words together and begin to use expressive language. Staff talk with children constantly as they work and are very skilled in asking questions to draw out responses. When in the soft play area, they encourage children to role-play going places on a train, or being a

shopkeeper. Children's listening skills improve in response to the need to listen to verbal instructions or to discover what will happen in a story. The teaching of reading is very good. Children enjoy sensory books. They touch the 'window', reach out for the shiny ball and react to the smell of grandma's perfume. Many children handle books independently. They turn pages and sometimes look at the pictures. A few recognise characters from stories and remember initial letter sounds associated with names. Children's writing is at a very early stage. A few make marks on paper but without meaning. They improve their control of writing and drawing implements but many will continue to receive help to apply appropriate pressure.

69. The development of mathematical skills is very good. Children play with shapes and discover some are easier to hold than others. They explore size and position, becoming more able to follow instructions, for example to place an item in a container. They learn to make towers of bricks, counting or listening to the teacher counting, 'one-two-three' and get pleasure from knocking them down. Higher attaining children can match shapes and know their names. They begin to sort by colour or size and to count by rote. Children's learning is helped by the frequent use of counting songs and careful support from the staff. During the inspection one child demonstrated sorting by type by discarding any figures other than a certain make rather than returning them to the container.
70. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop well. They learn to distinguish between textures and investigate materials closely. When playing with rice or shaving foam, they move it through their fingers and make patterns. They sample ingredients when they are cooking. In the colour room one child held a fibre-optic and looked very closely and intently at it. Children explore different materials used in the construction of homes and buildings. They learn about different roles in the community, for example, about Postman Pat and Fireman Sam. Higher attaining children name different types of food. Many children use a touch screen on a computer successfully to make things happen on the screen. They know about the geography of the school and explore the local community including visiting the shops. A few children learn about a wider community through attending local schools on links. They learn about the work of artists, for example imitating the style of Richard Long. The current topic on home and families helps the children develop an understanding of their immediate and wider families. Staff have prepared books of photographs for each child and a few children identify relatives accurately.
71. The physical development of children is very good. The Sherborne Movement Programme is implemented extremely well and children who participate become more supple and responsive. Most stretch out to touch the floor when on the big ball, and learn to rock, trying hard to do their best and often supported by staff. A few learn to roll across the floor with a minimum of help. Through singing songs, children learn about parts of their body and how to move them. Children enjoy their time in the swimming pool and gain certificates as they make progress. They learn to move around the pool, to float and kick their legs with support, for example from armbands and rings. A few begin to swim. The highest attaining child swims widths of the pool. In physical education lessons, children reach out and grab rings and balloons hanging from bars. More mobile children walk along a form and are beginning to climb. When playing with the large toys they propel cars with their feet and they enjoy the swing. A few learn to pedal trikes. The outdoor area is used well to encourage physical development. There is a good selection of fixed equipment including a slide, hammock and swings as well as large toys and a little house to play in.
72. Children's creative development is very good. They all enjoy their music lessons, which are taught exceptionally well by a specialist teacher. Most learn to play instruments, for example the drums or the maracas, and begin to join in, vocalising and moving to the tune of well-known songs. Children increase the techniques they use in art sessions. They draw, paint, and use paper and material to make collages. They make splash paintings and handprints. They press shapes from play dough and make prints from patterns made with coloured foam or sponges. Higher attaining children learn to cut and stick card and boxes to make models. Children gain a great deal from imaginative play. They improve their vocabulary and their understanding of the world. They go 'shopping' using the cars in the playground and stop to pretend to buy an ice cream. The pig is given a wig and talks to children asking for their opinion of the hairdo causing great amusement.

73. Since the last inspection the teaching in the nursery has improved considerably. Teaching is now all at least good, and a large proportion is very good or excellent. The curriculum has been enhanced, for example by the inclusion of Sherborne Movement Programme. Links have been made between the curriculum in the nursery and the provision at Key Stage 1 ensuring children's learning continues smoothly to the next class. Assessment strategies have improved. They include a baseline assessment on entry to the nursery; process observations, which record and analyse children's actions and responses in particular situations and therapist reports. These all help teachers to plan what children will learn next. In consequence children's progress has increased. Targets on individual education plans are used very well to focus what is taught although a few targets are insufficiently clear. Lack of clarity sometimes results in targets being repeated.
74. The leadership and management of the early year's provision are very good. Regular meetings are held with staff and developments are carefully thought through and implemented successfully. Care is taken to monitor effectiveness, which ensures children's achievements continue to rise.

## **ENGLISH**

75. Pupils' achievements in English are good. The good standards found in the last inspection have been maintained and in some areas they have been improved. Speaking and listening skills, for example, continue to be a strength but there have also been significant developments in pupils' ability to communicate in other ways. They are using symbols, objects of reference, signing and resources such as one-step communicators with growing competence. These strategies have been developed very successfully by the school since the last inspection and their effective use by staff is a very positive factor in the good progress made by pupils, particularly those with complex learning difficulties. Most pupils make good progress with their reading and writing. Good progress is seen in both skills when pupils use writing with symbols programs on their computers. The good all-round progress made in the basic skills is clearly evident in other subjects of the curriculum. Very good listening is seen in all subjects, for example, in physical education and music where pupils follow instructions to throw, hit or roll balls and respond to mood in pieces of music. Teachers improve pupils' vocabulary and understanding of words through using very good questioning techniques in all lessons. Pupils' reading is improved through reading worksheets in science, mathematics and design and technology. Older pupils read and write when using the computer in information and communications technology.
76. The introduction of the National Literacy Framework has been very effectively managed by the school. Teachers are using the structure of the literacy hour to very good effect. There is high quality planning of these sessions and as a result the need for more closely defined targets in reading and writing which was noted in the last inspection report has been largely met. Pupils take reading books home on a regular basis. Parents are thus enabled to make a very positive contribution to their children's progress in reading. Older pupils are set homework when appropriate in other areas of their English work, for example, they enjoyed learning short passages from Shakespeare.
77. The 'Social Use of Language Programme' (SULP) is used effectively to teach some students in the Further Education Unit to focus on others and speak clearly when taking part in conversations. Others are encouraged to communicate with communication aids, eye pointing, signs and objects of reference. Students recognise a number of symbols and read these alongside text on worksheets for their Diploma of Vocational Education work. They learn to copy write from a model and with help use the computer to write their own personal statement for the Record of Achievement. They learn to recognise and write their own personal details such as names and addresses.
78. Overall teaching is good. It is very good in Key Stages 2 and 3 and good at Key Stage 4, with excellent teaching of drama at this key stage. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Some pupils in Key Stage 1 display very challenging behaviour and when this is not managed well by staff progress in the key skills of listening and of following instructions is less than satisfactory. Generally, however, these pupils take part well in activities such as greetings songs at the start

of sessions, taking turns and listening to stories. By the time they are seven, pupils are showing better levels of co-operation and eye-contact, they enjoy sharing books with adults and have started to make marks with pencils and crayons in a more controlled fashion.

79. During Key Stage 2, pupils provide evidence of rapid improvement in their ability to communicate within a group. Pupils with complex learning difficulties, for example, were observed during circle time making very good gains in their individual targets such as making eye-contact with questioners and making signs for “please” and “thank you”. They reach out for the objects being passed around the group, turning their heads and smiling at staff and other pupils. They show good levels of awareness of the activity in response to the very effective use of prompts, reinforcement and praise by the staff. By the time they are 11, higher-attaining pupils show increased participation in the reading of a “big book” in the literacy hour and are making appropriate improvement in the control and accuracy of their copy-writing.
80. Pupils’ written work during Key Stage 3 includes evidence of some pupils making good progress from copy-writing to independent writing. Their folders show a steadily increasing range of tasks and materials. Staff provide a good variety of interesting subjects for discussion and reading and written tasks are linked very effectively with these. Good use is made of information and communications technology to further stimulate pupils’ interest but opportunities are sometimes missed for the higher attainers to extend their skills, in the use of reference books in the library, for example. By the end of this key stage, higher attaining readers have established a useful sight vocabulary of the names of characters in their reading schemes and are beginning to use phonics more consistently, in sounding out combinations of letters with increasing success, for example. Pupils are also introduced to the works of Shakespeare in this key stage. Staff use symbols and objects of reference very skilfully to aid understanding and to add to the fun of these lessons. High expectations are a feature of the teaching of English throughout the school and in both Key Stages 3 and 4 these are reflected in the very good progress pupils make in their response to literature. Work done by pupils during Key Stage 4, for example, on ‘Romeo and Juliet’ shows very good development of their understanding of basic plot and character. The use by lower attaining pupils of the writing with symbols programme to record their feelings in their own words, such as “ Juliet died sad” and “audience happy. Clapping”, provides clear evidence of this response. English makes a very strong contribution to the cultural development of pupils through drama, which is very well taught indeed. Pupils’ social development and communication skills are also very well promoted through the Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) during Key Stages 3 and 4. In this, as in all areas of pupils’ work in the subject, classroom support staff provide very effective support. The amount of time available for specialist support by a speech and language therapist, however, is inadequate, and despite efforts to improve matters, the use made of the time that is provided is inefficient.
81. The extent of the improvement in standards in English since the last inspection reflects the very good leadership and co-ordination of the subject. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Framework, very effective investment in new learning resources and the re-writing of the scheme of work have all helped staff to achieve the subject’s targets for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82. Pupils achieve appropriate standards in all areas of mathematics. Progress is satisfactory throughout Key Stages 1 and 4 and good during Key Stage 2, where the National Numeracy Strategy is having an impact, and at Key Stage 3 where the quality of teaching is good. Progress in the Further Education Unit is unsatisfactory due to the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Where pupils are making good progress, they achieve the numeracy targets on their individual education plans.
83. By the time pupils are seven they sort and match objects according to size and colour. Higher attaining pupils learn to count and sing along to number rhymes. By the time they are 11, higher attaining pupils complete addition to 10, calculate single digit subtraction and learn to tell the time recognising half past and o’clock. Lower attaining pupils learn to sign “more” when

playing with sand and recognise small, medium and big bears. By the time they are 14, higher attaining pupils use graphs to illustrate their investigations. They draw triangle patterns with the aid of computers and can add and subtract numbers up to 30. They begin to use calculators to investigate number patterns and to add up to three digits. Pupils working in the colour room respond to the fibre optics when they are switched on and off and identify colour. By the time they are 16, higher attaining pupils are making repeating patterns for wallpaper designs, they count the number of sides and faces on shapes and learn to count in French. They use rulers for measuring and estimate which objects will be the heaviest. They do shopping surveys and record their data using graphs. Lower attaining pupils explore objects using switches to interact and operate equipment. Students in the Further Education Unit begin to learn the value of money. They work out how much money will be needed to have sufficient to buy biscuits. Those that go to college use coins to purchase drinks from a vending machine and they all go on shopping expeditions. Many continue to use calculators to help them with their work. They compare sizes and lengths and, for example, are able to understand, and where appropriate sign 'more' or 'same'.

84. Pupils' numeracy is practised and improved in other areas of the curriculum. In form time, for example, they count the number in the class and give out the right number of cups for drinks. In English pupils sharing a big storybook are asked to estimate the number of zebras in the picture and together count up to 25. In physical education they learn directions such as forwards, backwards, over and under. They keep the score in games of hockey and learn to move slowly and quickly.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is also satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 4. There is, however, clear improvement at Key Stage 2 where teaching is good in two thirds of the lessons and very good in the remainder. This is attributable to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in these classes. Teaching is also good at Key Stage 3 where lessons are planned well. In the Further Education Unit teaching is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons teachers know the subject well, plan thoroughly and include activities which will interest and help all pupils in the class to learn. Counting songs and rhymes, for example, are much enjoyed and in one lesson pupils sang 'Ten in the Bed' with gusto. Individual education plan targets are used as a focus for the work and pupils achieve them. In one instance a pupil achieved a target of counting to five without missing out four. Lessons are lively, varied and fun. No time is wasted so pupils behave well, remain on task and persevere even when they experience difficulties. Learning is reinforced at the end of the lesson by a plenary session where pupils are praised and rewarded for their efforts. Pupils show their work to peers with great pleasure and others respond well to their success. For example, one pupil successfully eye pointed at two puppets, another earned a certificate for counting to four and a third selected two of three toys. Teachers keep accurate records of pupils' progress and use this information effectively when planning future work. In lessons where teaching has weaknesses, in the Further Education Unit, the work is undemanding and boring. Teachers' expectations are low and lessons finish early. In consequence, students in these lessons become easily distracted and do not learn as fast as they should.
86. The co-ordinator has supported teachers very effectively in the introduction of the numeracy hour. He has carefully monitored teaching and learning and provided teachers with opportunities to observe their colleagues and share good practice. The school set a substantial budget for the initiative and it has been used wisely to purchase new equipment and to provide time for nursery nurses to make appropriate materials for the different age groups. The careful planning of this initiative has been invaluable and is now resulting in improvements in pupils' progress. Planning is now underway to extend the initiative in other key stages.
87. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. Schemes of work have been developed and the Certification of Achievement has been introduced at Key Stage 4. It is now being extended into the Further Education Unit. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced at Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator is now monitoring teaching and learning more effectively.

## **SCIENCE**

88. Standards of achievement in science are good overall. They are satisfactory by the time pupils are seven, but because of the improved quality of teaching at Key Stages 2 and 4, they are good by the age of 11 and 16. Each pupil has targets set in their individual education plan, which are evaluated regularly. This allows progress to be evaluated effectively. Occasionally targets are too broad and describe what pupils will experience rather than learn and in these cases progress is more difficult to assess.
89. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn about light and, by the time they are seven, lower attaining pupils can indicate an awareness of light and dark while higher attaining pupils can name sources of light such as the sun, light bulbs and candles. They find out about their bodies and most can use action rhymes and songs to name parts of their bodies. Some pupils can construct simple electrical circuits with help. By the time pupils are 11, the higher attaining pupils can make predictions about the strength, hardness or flexibility of materials and are learning to make good predictions, for example, about which materials will float or sink. The majority of pupils can group objects by their characteristics.
90. During Key Stage 3, pupils predict what will happen when materials change and they begin to justify their predictions. Pupils with additional special needs can watch changes and express preferences. Higher attaining pupils explain events and record findings independently using charts and worksheets. By the time they are 16, higher attaining pupils have learnt about the solar system. They know about the differences in the size of the sun, the moon and the earth and can link the movement of the earth with day and night. Most pupils can name the sun moon and earth on a model and those with additional special needs can identify the symbols for night and day. Pupils consolidate their work in the colour room. They react to light and movement, following objects with their eyes and indicating when a light is shining on to them.
91. The teaching and learning of science throughout the school are good overall and always at least satisfactory. During Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Where teaching is satisfactory the pace of lessons is adequate and pupils have a range of opportunity to complete various tasks, however, some explanations are not clear enough and sometimes pupils carry out tasks with little understanding. Where teaching is good, pupils are stimulated effectively by their tasks, they try hard to be as independent as possible and remain focused on what they are doing. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good and is characterised by careful planning and the use of a range of appropriate methods to encourage pupils to explore and find out about things. The teachers use a range of simple scientific terms and use careful questioning to ensure that pupils have understood points they have made. Resources are chosen carefully and are simple yet effective. Pupils have opportunities to explore seeds, fruits and flowers. They enjoy the sensory experience of touching and smelling. After careful explanations by the teachers some pupils can say that apple pips are seeds. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide them with appropriate challenges. They improve the pupils' understanding of literacy and numeracy by emphasising information carrying words and asking questions such as "can you put the seed in the jar?" "Put the water on the tissue." "Can you find two?" and "Match the colours". Pupils respond by trying hard to complete their tasks. They are keen to answer questions, behave well and show pleasure in the results of their work. The teaching of pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 is also good. Detailed planning sets out clearly the objectives of the lesson. Teachers use a good questioning technique to draw out information from pupils. Appropriate specialist language and scientific equipment, for example test tubes, are used and a range of methods and resources are employed to ensure that pupils' understanding is improved. Teachers use humour and praise to motivate and maintain good order among the group. Pupils respond by trying very hard to describe what they see and understand. They work hard and enjoy the practical tasks gaining both in knowledge and self esteem.
92. The co-ordinator for science is overseeing the subject, as the previous post holder has not yet been replaced. Even so, the subject is not being neglected. Schemes of work are being rewritten to ensure work is at an appropriate level and a new project for subject monitoring will be piloted in science. Resources are good, well catalogued and carefully stored. Since the last inspection, there has been improvement in the provision of schemes of work linked to the

national curriculum and in the provision of appropriate resources. This has helped raise standards and improve pupils' progress in science

## **ART**

93. Standards of achievement in art are very good overall, with pupils making clear gains in confidence, accuracy and dexterity over time. By the time they are seven, higher attaining pupils can draw recognisable human figures and colour them accurately with crayon. With help from the teacher they attempt to reproduce the colours of Goldsworthy's "Maple Patch", using paper of different textures and colours. Pupils with more complex needs improve their concentration when observing Turner's sunset paintings and many develop greater control over the marks they make on paper with sponges, paintbrushes and crayons. Key Stage 2 pupils have just begun to study art this term because there is insufficient teaching time for the subject to be taught each week. This is too long a break from the time they studied it during Key Stage 1. In consequence there is very little evidence of work and inevitably standards are difficult to maintain at such a high level if a subject is not on the timetable for extended periods. During Key Stage 3 pupils experiment with a range of techniques. They make prints and collages and use clay for modelling, developing greater accuracy and confidence. By the time they are 14, higher attaining pupils begin to evaluate their own work and that of other pupils, at a basic level. They produce prints from polystyrene tiles to depict trees and flowers. Pupils with more complex needs can press shapes on to the tiles with the help of support assistants. Throughout Key Stage 4, pupils continue to develop their confidence and dexterity. By the time they are 16, they use the printing skills that they have learned in previous years in a realistic context. They can, for example, design and print attractive invitation cards to a forthcoming school performance of 'Romeo and Juliet'. They make glazed and unglazed ceramic vases and ornaments. Their sketchbooks contain a range of work including sketches of pottery, which show their increasing interest in detail and good progress in developing observation skills. Students in the Post-16 unit make good progress. They develop skills in cutting, tearing and manipulating materials and use shapes to make prints. A few higher attaining students make screen prints demonstrating good attention to composition.
94. It was only possible to observe a few art lessons during the inspection but teaching and learning in these lessons, at Key Stages 3 and 4, were very good overall. Teachers provide clear explanations and demonstrate techniques carefully so pupils feel secure about what they need to do. These explanations also enthuse pupils as, for example, when pupils at Key Stage 4 were enthralled to observe a pupil with complex needs create a printed design with the teacher's help. They promote pupils' independence in more creative aspects of the work by encouraging them to choose the colours and materials they wish to use. Teachers show high, but appropriate, expectations of older pupils by encouraging them to evaluate each other's work. They plan lessons well and take into account the needs of all pupils so that they are able to make progress at their own level. Resources are always well prepared.
95. The art co-ordinator has written very detailed schemes of work, which are complete for Key Stage 1, part of Key Stage 3 and much of Key Stage 4. They link well with National Curriculum requirements and allow teachers to set specific targets for pupils. A clear timetable has been identified for the completion of remaining schemes. The art curriculum is further enhanced by the involvement of visiting artists and the opportunity for older pupils to visit the National Gallery and, in Key Stages 1 and 2, Kew Gardens. The art co-ordinator provides very good leadership and practical guidance for non-specialist teachers, enabling them to teach the subject effectively and confidently. A wide range of appropriate resources is well managed to ensure their availability for all teachers as required.
96. Since the last inspection, good standards of achievement in art have been maintained and teaching has improved. Assessment is now more closely linked to the National Curriculum and schemes of work have been further developed. In particular an appropriate scheme of work at Key Stage 4 has been developed towards a Certificate of Achievement.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97. Very few lessons of design and technology were seen during the inspection, therefore judgements are based on these lessons, the evidence available in pupils' files, photographs, past work and teachers' planning. Pupils' standards of achievement and progress in design and technology are good. Throughout the school pupils undertake a wide variety of tasks in food technology, designing and making artefacts, working with wood and plastics and in using textiles.
98. By the time they are seven most pupils can use scissors and hole punches to make model animals and skeletons with moveable limbs. They learn to use a range of large construction toys, joining units with bolts and screws and making models. Lower attaining pupils work with adults using assist scissors to practice their cutting skills. During Key Stage 2, pupils use tie and dye techniques to make patterned material, which is then made into swimming bags. They also develop the ability to use a range of tools, for example, a vibro saw to cut wooden shapes and create printed designs on them before adding a clock mechanism. By the time they are 11, they can make drinks and simple snacks choosing flavours and practising mixing and spreading. Older pupils visit the workshop in the Bridge Unit. They learn to use a vice on a workbench and a range of hand tools, saws, tackers and staplers to make units to create a model of the Globe Theatre. By the time they are 16, higher attaining pupils can mark and measure and cut independently while lower attaining pupils are helped to exert sufficient pressure to operate a tacker. They develop their skills in food technology and make snacks and meals using toasters and microwaves independently. The older pupils are given a clear idea of working as a team and higher attaining pupils understand the need for their team to produce parts of the correct size for others to use in the construction process. This opportunity ensures the development of understanding about working practices.
99. Teaching and learning in design and technology are at least satisfactory and more often good. Evidence from teachers' planning and the lessons seen indicate that teachers have sufficient knowledge of the subject and plan carefully to ensure that all pupils can learn at a level suitable to their needs. Targets set for pupils are evaluated and progress made is noted and reported upon at annual reviews. The assessment process is recognised as requiring improvement and there are plans to use annotated examples of work so that teachers can use them as a benchmark when assessing pupils' work. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is good. The teacher challenges the pupils to work as a team and co-operate. Appropriate terms such as 'assembly line' are used and carefully explained to pupils. Tasks are presented in a way that is appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas, which enhances their speaking and listening skills. They also have good opportunities to practice numeracy skills measuring and marking wood ready for sawing. Pupils respond well to the approaches and resources used and their behaviour is mostly good. Teachers manage any challenging behaviour well and pupils realise that they should conform to requests and quickly return to their tasks. Pupils try hard and maintain a good work rate even when they find the tasks difficult. They are very pleased with their results.
100. The leadership of the subject is good and there are plans for further improvement. The curriculum and scheme of work are being effectively developed, these are linked to a unit of in-service training being undertaken by the co-ordinator. There is a good level of resources, which has improved since the last inspection, a wide range of equipment and some specialist areas. The timetabling of the subject does not, however, allow pupils to have a continuous experience. During Key Stage 2, for example, this year pupils are only timetabled to use the food technology room periodically. This is because teaching of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy take up more time and the teaching day is too short to enable food technology to be taught more regularly. The specialist spaces of the food technology rooms are not well used and cared for. At present the storage and monitoring of foodstuffs and equipment are unsatisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

101. Geography is taught to pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 but there were no opportunities to observe geography lessons during the inspection. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' assessments shows that standards of achievement are satisfactory by the end of each key stage. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn how to find their way around the school and

at Key Stage 2 they develop an awareness and understanding of the local environment through visits to the local park and to Morden. By the time pupils are 11, those with more complex needs explore differences between the seaside, countryside and towns and can press switches to create appropriate sounds in the different environments. Higher attaining pupils can answer questions about these differences and identify typical physical features of a town by circling pictures of them on a worksheet. Some can sign for most types of weather. During Key Stage 3, pupils study environments such as rainforest, and by the time they are 14, they can make their own observations about its physical features after watching videotapes.

102. Plans for a forthcoming humanities week are near completion. An impressive range of events is designed to widen pupils' experience of both geography and history. Visits to Japanese and Chinese restaurants and the Japanese embassy are planned. Pupils will have the opportunity to explore artefacts from Africa, India and China and to make African pottery. Visits from a West Indian storyteller and an Indian artist are also planned. The week allows teachers and pupils to make links between geography, history and art. Pupils would benefit from the development of further links between the subjects, especially at Key Stages 1 and 2 where, as in history, the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours and lack of sufficient teaching time limits the opportunity to study geography. Since the last inspection, the new humanities co-ordinator has made considerable progress in developing schemes of work so that National Curriculum requirements are met.

## **HISTORY**

103. History is taught to pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Standards of achievement and pupils' progress are satisfactory overall and at times pupils do well, notably when the teaching is good. Throughout Key Stage 1, most pupils have a very limited awareness of chronology. In lessons they listen to stories about famous people from the past, such as Guy Fawkes. They look at photographs of children from the past and present but find it difficult to identify differences. They explore historical artefacts such as old kitchen utensils but there is little evidence that they develop an understanding of the passage of time or know the difference between old and new. By the time they are 11, many pupils can recognise pictures or objects of reference depicting their daily timetable and can point to them when asked. One or two higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of the passage of time and can identify the day of the week and the month on flash cards. By the time they are 14, nearly all pupils are aware of some differences between past and present. Some higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of the passage of time, can sequence events and answer questions using historical sources. Through looking at pictures of the present day, Victorian and medieval times they identify differences in the countryside and the way buildings change inside and outside.
104. There were few opportunities to observe the teaching of history during the week of the inspection. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Whilst there is some very good and good teaching, one unsatisfactory lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 when the teacher was unable to gain the attention of some pupils with challenging behaviour which prevented them from learning as well as they should. Some of the most effective teaching of historical concepts takes place during form time at the beginning of the day. Teachers use this time well to develop pupils' knowledge of their daily routine and to help them recall past events. They provide a range of suitable resources to broaden pupils' experience and increase their understanding. One teacher, for example, uses big books, videotapes, a time-line and various artefacts effectively to highlight differences between life today and in the Middle Ages. Another teacher uses Rebus symbols and photographs of old and new houses in a display to consolidate pupils' understanding of key concepts such as old, new, now and long time ago. Teachers usually give clear explanations and instructions but occasionally whole-class teaching continues for too long. As a result, pupils cannot learn at their own level and the teacher does not assess how much they understand. The targets that they set for pupils usually outline what they will experience, rather than what they should achieve, because they are not sufficiently clear about what they expect individual pupils to learn.
105. Since the previous inspection, a new subject co-ordinator has made considerable progress with developing schemes of work. Some further development is required at Key Stage 1 and this is

identified in the school's action plan. There is a lack of continuity in the teaching of history between Key Stages 1 and 2. It is now not taught throughout the year at Key Stage 2. This is because of the lack of time caused by the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the lack of sufficient teaching time in the school day. Despite this, the position of history in the curriculum is more secure than previously and National Curriculum requirements are now met. The school is planning to ensure pupils benefit from the development of further links between the humanities subjects, especially at Key Stages 1 and 2.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

106. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson that focused on information and communications technology, however, such technology was seen in use in other subjects and many pupils used communication aids and switches. A scrutiny of pupils' files and records, including evaluations of individual learning plans, switch use assessments and reports at annual reviews, indicate that pupils achieve well. This is despite some targets set for pupils being very broad and continuous making progress more difficult to track. Pupils' progress seen in lessons is good overall and at times excellent.
107. By the time pupils are seven, they use a variety of switches and computer programs often accessing the programs using touch screens or jellybean switches. Pupils with additional special needs receive detailed assessment of their communication needs from the occupational therapist and subject co-ordinator. These pupils often use programmable switches and respond well, making good use of the enabling technology. Many pupils can use the touch screen to access programs that encourage them to recognise symbols and make choices. By the time they are 11, pupils can use the digital camera and with help import their own stories to the computer, creating and printing good quality pages of work. Pupils with additional special needs in this key stage are observed making very good use of communication switches joining in appropriately with songs with repetitive lines, for example, when the group sing 'Ten in a Bed' the switch user can add 'roll over' in the correct sequence with no help. By the time they are 14, higher attaining pupils use word processing packages, changing font sizes and colours and can add graphic images to their work. Older pupils make good use of switches and of CD-ROMs during literacy sessions. In lessons focusing on information and communications technology, older pupils practise their keyboard skills and use the mouse. Lower attaining pupils can use simple cause and effect programs using the mouse, while most pupils can key in their names. Higher attaining pupils can use the Encarta program very well, choosing icons and understanding how to use the mouse to move around the program. They enjoy choosing sections they wish to use and print them off independently. Information and communications technology is used to support other subjects with a particular emphasis on literacy.
108. Overall teaching and learning are good. Teachers have satisfactory skills to support their present level of use of information and communications technology in lessons. It is acknowledged, however, that the pace of change in the subject means that further in-service training and support are needed to ensure that teachers feel confident to extend their work, for example, where teachers wish to make more use of the Internet and of e-mail. Teachers encourage pupils to use information and communication technology to find out about and explore a range of things as well as to record their work and manipulate images. Where switches are used, the careful assessment of need and review of use ensures that pupils have good access to the help they need. All the staff promote pupils' independence using technology. Pupils' response to this is very positive and they show their pleasure in having their contributions recognised and valued.
109. During Key Stage 3, where teaching focusing on using computers takes place, the quality of teaching is very good. Very clear objectives are set out for the pupils. High expectations coupled with very good methods of working ensure that pupils are able to learn very well indeed and consolidate new skills. The level of interaction between staff and pupils is excellent. Pupils work very hard and have a very clear idea of the tasks they must perform. They obviously enjoy their work, persevering even when programs initially do not perform as expected! Because of the very high quality of this teaching pupils are able to describe their

learning clearly and evaluate their levels of success. They become independent and confident in their use of technology.

110. The leadership in the subject is good with the co-ordinator working with a range of other professionals and staff in the school to ensure that staff feel confident and supported in their planning and use of the technology available. Further in-service training is planned and some individual support has been offered. Very good use has been made of the National Grid for Learning initiative. This, together with a very significant level of funding over the past two years, has ensured that the school is very well provided with both hardware and software. This is an improvement from the last inspection. The school is well placed to make further improvements in the use of information and communication technology particularly involving the use of the Internet.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

111. It was not possible to observe lessons in French during the inspection week. Scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that they are making appropriate progress in the accuracy of their copying of the language and that by the time they are 16, there has been good development of the range of vocabulary and areas of experience with which they work. Planning is good and provides evidence that the school now meets the National Curriculum requirements for the subject, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. A consistent scheme of assessment has not yet been established. A good range of resources has been built up for the subject. The subject's co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of information and communications technology in the subject.

### **MUSIC**

112. Music is a strength of the school. Pupils' achievements in music are very good and this is largely due to the high quality of specialist teaching. The use of a specialist teacher ensures that the quality of subject knowledge is very high. During Key Stage 1, pupils play instruments that are hit or shaken and begin to follow instructions. Pupils with additional special needs begin to anticipate their turn in action songs while higher attaining pupils respond to musical cues and are able to sing the 'Hello song'. By the time they are 11, pupils can play a range of instruments including the African drum and begin to understand that music may be faster or slower and have an appreciation of rhythm and tempo. Pupils with additional special needs vocalise to music and work with staff to play a range of instruments.
113. Throughout Key Stage 3, pupils can play a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. The higher attaining pupils can sing a scale and pitch the voice well. Others work very effectively together to compose and play music with a theme, for example 'dragon' music. They play with control and thought for the overall sound of the piece. Pupils with additional special needs are beginning to play with more control and improve their listening skills playing with the group. By the time they are 16, pupils have improved their skills of composition and use simple forms of notation. They are beginning to develop preferences for different musical styles. Pupils with additional special needs make clear choices using eye pointing. Higher attaining pupils extend their experiences of playing a range of instruments, trying out stringed instruments and keyboards. Students in the Post-16 unit make excellent progress. They learn how to get sounds from stringed instruments. They improve their skills of using notation, for example, using chimes to pick out notes from Pachelbel's Canon. By the time they leave school, they enjoy composing pieces, know about a range of instruments and appreciate a wide range of classical and modern music.
114. The teaching of music is very good. It is always at least good and on occasions excellent. Lessons are very well planned and clear assessment is part of each session. Detailed reports are available at annual reviews and these clearly describe levels of skill. Pupils are challenged to work hard and react to a wide range of musical experiences. They respond very well to this high expectation showing excellent behaviour and attention. Pupils concentrate and give their

full attention to the tasks set for extended periods of time. The very effective methods used in teaching ensure that all the pupils have opportunities to improve their skills of listening, playing, turn taking, and expressing preferences and feelings. The teacher plans to ensure that older pupils have work that is appropriate to their age.

115. Where teaching is excellent, there is a very effective use of a range of methods and strategies together with careful planning and management of resources to ensure that pupils have the best possible chances to do their best. When pupils create musical pieces of their own, there is a very great sense of awe within the group and all involved are able to show their pleasure in achievement. The teacher makes very good use of time and staff resources. Pupils' efforts are praised and careful questions are asked to extend learning. Pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their work and are encouraged to think about and say how the music makes them feel. This may be achieved verbally or by using a selection of symbols and signs or by body language and facial gesture. All these forms of communications are encouraged and accepted as valid by the teacher. Pupils respond appropriately to the teaching they receive and to the music they create and listen to, sometimes with noisy good humour and at other times with a reflective quietness, which shows considerable maturity.
116. The leadership in music is very good and the co-ordinator has clear plans for the continued improvement of the subject, for example, working with the physiotherapist to provide music for movement and therapy sessions. Present arrangements for assessment are good and there are further plans to ensure that pupils receive recognition for their work. Certificate of Achievement in Music is being piloted at present and is proving successful. The resources for music are excellent. There is a dedicated music room and a wide range of good quality musical instruments is available. The instruments have been carefully chosen to ensure that pupils have access to them. Additionally there are large musical instruments in the playground; these are well chosen to allow pupils more musical experiences. The high quality of music has been maintained since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

117. Standards of achievement in physical education are very high. Pupils do particularly well and make the best progress during Key Stage 3 and in swimming lessons. This is directly attributable to the high quality of teaching. In other key stages progress is at least satisfactory and often good. There is a correlation between the progress pupils make and the effectiveness of the teachers.
118. By the time they are seven, higher attaining pupils swim five metres on their front and back. They are confident in the water and kick their legs strongly as they paddle across the pool. Lower attaining pupils float happily in the water supported by buoyancy aids and adults. Some pupils can run or walk on the spot and move in time to music. They slide along apparatus on different parts of their body. Lower attaining pupils, helped by physiotherapists or assistants, join in the lesson by moving and stretching their bodies in time to the music and follow prescribed exercises.
119. By the time they are 11, higher attaining pupils improve their swimming strokes and learn to play tennis. They hit balls with bats developing control so that they can do this successfully several times. Lower attaining pupils hit balloons with their hands. By the time they are 14 pupils know the importance of warming up and cooling down after exercise. They are familiar with the routine of warm up exercises and participate skilfully with serious concentration. They learn hockey skills and participate in mini games. Lower attaining pupils are helped to participate fully in all activities with the support of assistants and through the careful planning of the teacher. By the time pupils are 16, pupils are developing their stamina, suppleness and strength by continuing to use the apparatus in the school's fitness room. They go swimming and sample a variety of leisure options, for example, skating.
120. In over half of the lessons teaching and learning are very good or excellent. They are good in one quarter of lessons and in all remaining lessons they are satisfactory. A qualified swimming instructor teaches pupils to swim in the school pool very successfully. This is due to a combination of expertise, careful planning and the support given in the water by other teachers

and classroom assistants. Pupils are given encouragement and confidence through an exciting range of floats, toys and buoyancy aids, which are expertly used.

121. Each class is taught physical education by their teacher and although they do not all have subject expertise they help pupils to make good progress. This is achieved through detailed schemes of work and lesson planning and through the support and advice given by the subject co-ordinator. The most striking features of the excellent teaching during Key Stage 3 are the skilful coaching, explanations and demonstrations to develop skills. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to participate fully. Careful planning and organisation ensure pupils have the support or space to be able to move safely. All pupils are praised for their efforts and asked to demonstrate their developing skills to their peers. Consequently they are very enthusiastic and enjoy physical education lessons. They work hard to improve techniques and demonstrate their understanding in their thoughtful answers to the teacher's questions, for example, a pupil suggested the class should aim to be more accurate and keep the ball under control in order to be more effective in the game. There is a praiseworthy attention to detail, which includes teaching pupils to play by the rules, respect the decision of the referee and be a good sport. For example, in a game of beach hockey two opposing teams competed fiercely to score the most goals but at the end of the game they shook hands with their opponents and thanked them. In this way physical education makes a significant contribution to the social and moral development of pupils.
122. The curriculum for physical education has been carefully planned. It includes all required elements and other exciting additions, for example, fitness training, horse riding and leisure options at Key Stage 4 and in the Further Education Unit. Progress is carefully assessed and recorded through the school's effective systems of individual education plans and annual reviews. In addition pupils gain certificates and awards including, for younger pupils, Teddy Bear awards for swimming. The co-ordinator is highly effective and is keen to raise the profile of the subject and to celebrate the success of pupils. The good progress of a pupil with profound and multiple learning difficulties, for example, was recognised and rewarded with a sports bursary to buy a more suitable riding hat. Groups of pupils represent the Borough in sporting activities.
123. The high standards identified in the last inspection have been exceeded. Ways are continually sought to make the curriculum more dynamic, for example, a physical education curriculum week was arranged with a focus on dance. This was highly successful and gained a curriculum award. Since this event, teachers have more confidence when teaching dance and it is now a strong feature in the learning programme.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. There were only two opportunities to observe the teaching of religious education during the inspection, but these observations and analysis of pupils' work and teachers' assessments show that standards of achievement are at least satisfactory and a few pupils achieve well at all key stages. By the time they are seven, pupils are able to listen to stories about important people in the Bible. They explore artefacts from different religions, although some need support when handling these. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils extend their experience of other religions to include an awareness of ways in which followers of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism worship and celebrate festivals. By the time they are 11, they mirror typical religious ceremonies with obvious pleasure by ringing bells, banging drums and lighting candles to represent different forms of worship. Higher attaining pupils can remember key words and facts about different religions. By the time they are 14, several pupils can name significant characters from well-known Bible stories. Pupils develop their knowledge of the Sikh religion so that many pupils know about gurus and remember that the Gurdwara is a holy place for Sikhs. During Key Stage 4 pupils develop an understanding of ways in which all religions encourage people to help each other. By the time they are 16, most can explain how people should care for each other and give examples from their own experience.
125. The teaching and learning of religious education are satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they use a range of appropriate resources, especially artefacts from different religions, to interest and enthuse pupils. Pupils pass these to each other carefully and reverently and wait excitedly until it is their turn. Good class management, based on good relationships between teachers and pupils, ensures that pupils remain as attentive as possible and listen carefully to each other. However, some teachers are not sufficiently clear about what they expect individual children to learn. The targets that they set for children usually explain what they will experience rather than what they should achieve. Teachers therefore miss opportunities to help pupil to relate what they learn to their own experience. At other times, pupils with more complex needs are not sufficiently involved because the teaching is only aimed at higher attaining pupils.
126. Since the last inspection satisfactory standards have been maintained. Schemes of work have been revised to link more closely with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In the Further Education Unit, religious education is taught through a case study entitled 'Cultural Differences'. Though adequate for this year, it requires extension to ensure adequate religious education is taught in subsequent years. A programme of daily collective worship to enhance pupils' religious education is efficiently managed by the subject co-ordinator. The subject co-ordinator also provides good support and advice for non-specialist teachers and manages a very good range of appropriate resources effectively, to ensure their availability for all teachers and classes as required. The use of these resources and religious education lessons do much to reflect and support the range of ethnic groups within the school.