

INSPECTION REPORT

WOOLLEY WOOD SCHOOL

Shiregreen, Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107180

Headteacher: Mrs M Holly

Reporting inspector: Michael McDowell
(OFSTED No: 1405)

Dates of inspection: 25 – 28 September 2000

Inspection number: 223630

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	3 to 10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oaks Fold Road Shiregreen Sheffield
Postcode:	S5 0TG
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Ann Kilby
Date of previous inspection:	14 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael McDowell (OFSTED No: 1405)	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it?
			How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements.
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Marvyn Moore (OFSTED No: 11041)	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
John Baker (OFSTED No: 23411)	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils taught?
		Information technology	
		Music	
		Religious education	
Helen Maskew (OFSTED No: 21822)	Team inspector	Science	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Geography	
		History	
		English as an additional language	
		Equal opportunities	
Trevor Watts (OFSTED No: 19386)	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art and design	
		Design and technology	
		Foundation stage	
		Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woolley Wood is a mixed primary special school for pupils aged 3 to 11 who have severe or profound difficulties or profound and multiple learning difficulties. There are 61 pupils, 11 of whom attend part-time while they are in the nursery. The official accommodation number is 75 but because the ground floor of the school is inaccessible to wheelchairs or pupils with mobility problems it cannot be used and the maximum number of planned places is in reality 58. Most pupils enter the school at the foundation stage. Recent entrants have more complex and profound needs than was formerly the case and a high proportion have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Most pupils are white. A small number of pupils with Asian heritage attend and there are three refugee pupils. About half of the school's population is eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average for schools of this type and, while there is a tendency for them to come from less advantaged circumstances, generally, pupils are drawn from families with a broad range of social and economic circumstances. The senior unit mentioned in the previous inspection report has been closed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very well led. It is particularly effective in enabling pupils to develop their communication skills and where necessary to extend their ability to move purposefully and to use their limbs and hands. Very good teaching enables pupils to learn readily and to develop confidence in themselves as learners. Pupils are very enthusiastic and in lessons achievement is generally good and frequently very good. Over time, achievement across the curriculum is predominantly good and is never less than satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is excellent, as are the relationships they have with each other and with the adults who teach and help them. Overall, the school is very effective. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching of very good quality strongly promotes pupils' ability to learn and enables them to make very good progress towards their personal goals and to develop their communication skills
- Strategies for teaching literacy are very effective. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils result in great enthusiasm for school, very good attendance and attitudes and excellent personal development
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal development including that for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The curriculum is greatly enriched by opportunities for inclusion and the very full programme of educational visits
- The school is very well led and management is effective
- Procedures for ensuring child protection and pupils' welfare are excellent and parents have a very high opinion of the school

What could be improved

- In some subjects assessment is inconsistently recorded and this limits its usefulness in setting precise individual targets and planning further learning
- Too few lessons are allocated to the teaching of mathematics; this results in pupils making less progress over time than they should

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

Since the school was last inspected in October 1996 improvement has been good. Achievement is higher in reading and writing and more consistent in mathematics. In science achievement, formerly satisfactory, is now good. There has been notable improvement in physical education, history, geography and information and communication technology. The quality of education has improved. Teaching is of a higher standard and more consistent and the curriculum is more coherent. Leadership is more effective and staff have an increased understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Pupils'

learning has improved overall. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the last inspection.

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

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

Achievement is generally good. The school acknowledges that because of their learning difficulties pupils will not reach the statutory targets at age 11. It sets realistic targets for the whole school that are based on pupils' achievement against a finely graded scale in English, mathematics and in personal and social development. The targets for 1999-2000 have been substantially achieved. Achievement is best in personal social and health education by age five and age eleven and in reaching the personal targets set at annual reviews. There is good achievement by age five and age eleven in speaking and listening, writing and reading and, generally, the development of communication skills is very good. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory because while there is good achievement in lessons, over time, because insufficient mathematics lessons take place, good learning is not sufficiently reinforced.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils and skilful management of the learning environment combine to promote very positive attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; there is good behaviour in classrooms and there have been no recent exclusions. Pupils behave very well out of class and in their visits within the local area.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent; pupils make substantial progress towards their personal targets and they have excellent relationships with all adults in the school and with one another.
Attendance	Very good; rates of absence are low for a school of this kind and unauthorised absence is infrequent, reflecting the very effective measures taken by the school to promote attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils	Aged up to 5	Aged 5 - 11
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good. Of lessons observed 10 per cent were excellent, 35 per cent were very good, 52 per cent were good and 3 per cent were satisfactory. No teaching was unsatisfactory. There were some excellent lessons, in the foundation stage, and in English, mathematics, religious education and personal social and health education in both infants and juniors. In English, teaching is very good overall and it is never less than good. In mathematics teaching ranges in quality from good to excellent but on balance is very good. In science, teaching is good. There is some excellent teaching in motor-communication groups in the infants' groups. Very good teaching across the age range promotes acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding effectively in lessons. Pupils respond to the very good planning of teachers and work hard. They reward the high expectations that teachers have of them by making good gains. Teachers' deep knowledge and understanding of their pupils enables them to select methods that stimulate their interest and strongly motivate them to succeed. A major contribution to pupils' learning is made by the support staff who work hard to ensure the involvement of all pupils and to maintain their pace of learning. While there are good procedures for assessing and recording what pupils do and teachers are very well informed about their progress, the best use is not always made of these because recording is inconsistent. The school meets the needs of all its pupils including those with more complex learning difficulties very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the curriculum is both broad and relevant placing a proper emphasis on developing pupils' personal and communication needs. The frequency of lessons in mathematics and the timing of opportunities to learn in science both need to be adjusted to give the curriculum proper balance.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; the school makes effective use of a small grant to support pupils by engaging part – time support assistants who speak the first language of the pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; pupils gain in confidence and begin to learn to do things for themselves. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of very high quality.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; procedures for child protection and welfare are excellent and those for promoting good behaviour and attendance are very good.

The school works well in partnership with parents who have a very positive view of it. The information given to them is of high quality and is valued by them. Home/school diaries are well used and e-mail is used in an innovative way in some cases to maintain the link between home and school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; the head provides very effective leadership that has led to improvements in provision and performance. Good support is given by senior staff members and those with leadership roles in the curriculum.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good; the governors carry out their statutory duties well and support the school. The governing body is beginning to develop a sharper focus to their work and to act more as a critical friend of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; a performance management strategy is being developed. Teaching is monitored and targets for development are set. Targets, appropriate to pupils' attainments enable the school to accurately measure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good; resources are used well and in accordance with planned priorities. The school strives to get the best possible value for the money it spends.

There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers to meet both the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. They are supported by a sufficient number of well-trained support assistants. Accommodation is of good quality and adequate in size for the numbers in the school. Resources are of good quality and are sufficient in quantity to support the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress and like school • The teaching is good • The school helps their children and works closely with them • The school has high expectations of their children • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More homework should be given • There should be more out of school activities

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by the parents. Most parents are satisfied with the nature and quantity of tasks their children are given to do at home but individuals are not. The inspectors judged this aspect of the school's work to be satisfactory. The circumstances in which homework is given are generally clear to most parents. The inspectors noted that the school provides many opportunities for pupils to have their learning enriched by visits during the school day to compensate for lack of after school activity which transport considerations make difficult to arrange.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Achievement by both age 5 and age 11 is good, including that of pupils who have English as an additional language. Pupils who enter the foundation stage with very limited capabilities learn to communicate, to join in activities with others and to move purposefully. They make progress towards their early learning goals and within the subjects of the curriculum to a greater extent than could be expected.
2. By age 5, communication by appropriate means is established. For some this is eye pointing and responding to talk with facial expressions. For others signing is emerging as a channel for conveying needs, wants and ideas. Speech develops well as teachers use a wide range of technological aids or simple artefacts to bring stories to life and stimulate pupils to respond. Progress in the early stages of reading is good; pupils come to know that pictures and print convey meaning. Early writing skills are encouraged as children draw lines on paper or, in response to a story, learn to make the shape of a letter.
3. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress in their early encounters with number, space and shape. Their knowledge and understanding of the world develops well and they enjoy opportunities to experiment with materials, to listen to and to respond to music and to develop control and purpose in their movements.
4. Throughout their time at the school, pupils continue to make good progress. By age 11 pupils' achievement in English is good. Their speaking and listening skills improve well, and for those who are reliant on signing, understanding of sign and signing in reply increases and they gain confidence. Reading develops well. Pupils are familiar with individual words and can read these from a "Big Book" in their literacy sessions. A few can read short phrases. Writing emerges over time. By the time they leave the school pupils achieve well. They are able to trace over dots to form letters and some can write the letters of the alphabet without help. They practise on the white board on which they write their own names or short phrases.
5. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils make progress in developing their concepts of number, shape and space but there are too few lessons in mathematics to enable pupils to consolidate their gains and to move forward more quickly. By the age of seven higher attaining pupils can count to 11 by rote or count up to 5 real objects. They can copy-write numbers to 9, some independently. Important concepts, such as "more" and "less" are beginning to be established and pupils are starting to make comparisons of height and length. They recognise some shapes and know their primary colours. In play learning they exchange money for goods. Higher attaining pupils by eleven can recite numbers to 30, count on in 2's, add 2 and take away 1. Some can divide groups of real items. "More" and "less" are established, as are "higher" and "lower", "taller" and "shorter" and some directional and positional terms. They can add money to 10p using 1p, 2p and 5p coins and they know the shapes "square", "triangle" and "circle". Lower attaining pupils are still developing very basic awareness, for example, giving items one by one.
6. In science, there is good achievement and pupils make good progress. In the infants, pupils, including those with severe motor difficulties learn very practically about materials. They enjoy squeezing jelly to make it change shape, while higher attaining classmates note that a sponge that has been contracted springs back to its original shape. In the junior years pupils learn to measure heat and they come to know about the sun and planets using material accessed by using the Internet.
7. In most other subjects of the curriculum achievement is generally good. In geography in the infants very good progress is made. In art, design and technology and music at junior level achievement is satisfactory. Achievement has improved since the last inspection, particularly in

English and mathematics in the infants. Progress in science and in the other subjects of the curriculum is now more consistent and pupils achieve more highly. There has been sufficient improvement in pupils' information technology skills.

8. The school acknowledges that none of its pupils are able to reach the levels required in the statutory targets but it sets more realistic targets based on finely graded scales of achievement in English, mathematics and personal and social development. Pupils have successfully achieved most of the targets set for 1999 – 2000. These targets were sufficiently challenging at this early stage of the target setting process. The process for setting further targets will need to be informed both by these outcomes and by the local and national data now becoming available about achievement among pupils with similar special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development continue to be a very positive feature of the school. All parents responding to the questionnaire reported that their children like coming to school. The majority felt that behaviour in the school is good.
10. All pupils, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, respond well to the stimulating and caring learning environment which the school provides. The majority are positive and enthusiastic both in lessons and around the school. Excellent relationships continue to develop between staff and pupils. The atmosphere is purposeful, but calm. Pupils from an early age are encouraged to listen to and respect each other and to co-operate in their small groups.
11. Behaviour around the school at break and lunchtime is good. The school is an orderly place and pupils' safety is paramount. There is no bullying or aggressive behaviour towards each other in the play areas. Most pupils know the other members of their group and can also identify them through photographs. Sometimes pupils with complex behavioural difficulties impact seriously on the learning and progress of other pupils. Management of these situations by staff is very good. For example, in one religious education, (RE), lesson a pupil found difficulty in coping with the different format of the lesson and had to be taken out early on. Just before the end of the lesson, however, he was brought back in to share some of the experiences the others had enjoyed. He left the classroom with the other pupils showing obvious pleasure that he had been included again.
12. Personal development, whether formally in personal, health and social education, (PHSE), lessons, or indirectly through adult interaction with the pupils is excellent. Communication between staff is very effective and ensures the progress of all pupils continues as pupils transfer from class to class. Some are able to carry out small tasks in the classroom like helping to clear up after drinks and snacks. Staff encourage all pupils to take some responsibility for themselves, particularly with dressing and undressing themselves for swimming and physical education, (PE). They allow the pupils to indicate choices through a variety of stimuli such as picture cards and signing. Recording of assessment of personal development is well documented in individual education plans and reports to parents.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and the impact it makes on pupils' learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and are now a strength of the school's educational provision. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in over nine out of ten lessons it is either good or better. In just under a half of all lessons the quality of teaching and learning is very good or excellent. Teaching is very effective because it strongly supports pupils' learning and achievements.

14. Teaching and learning in the foundation stage is consistently good or better and provides well-structured opportunities that enable children to achieve their early learning goals. Within each session the focus on promoting communication and personal development is paramount. This is exemplified in a session where music was used to excellent effect to stimulate and promote each child's achievement in making sounds, using and responding to Makaton signs and listening purposefully. Here the sustained teaching was of excellent quality.
15. Infant teaching was good or better in every lesson observed. In almost three-quarters of lessons it was very good or excellent. Teaching and learning is very good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and geography. In music and religious education the quality of teaching and learning is either very good or excellent. In the junior classes the quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to excellent, with just over a third of all lessons being either very good or better. In English, mathematics, geography in the infants, and religious education, teaching is very good. In other subjects it is good overall.
16. Teachers throughout the school have a very good knowledge and understanding of the very wide-ranging special educational needs of their pupils. They use their knowledge and also targets in individual education plans, where these are clear and precise, to prepare interesting and stimulating lessons with specific learning objectives and activities for all the pupils in their care. This ensures that high quality and relevant teaching and learning occurs. However, assessments are not always recorded in the way that the good procedures set up by the school make possible and targets in individual education plans are sometimes vague. This sometimes leads to confusion when targets need to be set.
17. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects of the National Curriculum and teaching is most effective when the teacher combines this understanding of the subject with an ability to adapt and teach it to the full range of pupils in the class or group. For example, in one English lesson a pupil with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), with the help of a learning support assistant, turns the pages of his copy of the book which the teacher is reading to all the class and successfully eye-points at the pictures on the pages. Higher attaining pupils in the same lesson repeat key words from the story, such as 'shoes', 'uh-uh' and 'mud', responding very positively to the teacher's voice and signing. Again, in a music lesson, the very effective teaching ensures that all pupils learn at a level appropriate to their needs. Most pupils as a consequence can sing and sign with help or move with the music, and higher attaining pupils are able to beat rhythmically on a drum.
18. The quality of teaching and the frequent use of praise and encouragement consistently promote very good behaviour from the majority of pupils in the school. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed effectively and, as there are clear procedures for the occasions when disruptive behaviour occurs, the quality of teaching and learning is usually not adversely affected. For example, the behaviour plan for one pupil who has challenging behaviour is for him to take part in the first five minutes of the lesson and then he is allowed to go to soft play. This worked very effectively, and the pupil was clapped when he achieved this target and was taken to one of his favourite activities as a reward. Teachers regularly provide instant feedback to their pupils on how well they are doing, using phrases such as 'good looking' and 'good signing'. This reinforces learning very positively, promotes good behaviour and is a feature of many lessons.
19. There is very good teamwork between all staff in the school. In one mathematics lesson the learning support assistants (LSAs) work very closely with the teacher, ensuring that very good learning by the majority of pupils takes place. The LSAs throughout the school are skilled in communicating with the pupils using Makaton signing. Through this means of communication, pupils' learning is consistently and very effectively promoted, and as a result the quality of teaching is strongly supported, especially in the area of pupils' personal and social development. The school clerk often accompanies music lessons on the piano or keyboard. This enhances the quality of teaching and learning in music quite significantly and is a very good use of her skills.
20. The good range of resources in most subjects supports teaching and learning and is used effectively. When ICT is used, especially the "Big Mac", (a device which enables pupils without

speech to emulate speech), this enhances pupils' ability to communicate. For example, one pupil in a religious education lesson used the "Big Mac" to say "Thank you". Computers, with a range of switches, mouse devices and keyboards, are sometimes used in lessons, but availability of suitable programs or software to support teaching and learning across all subject areas is not yet sufficient. The school has adapted a room for use as an ICT room and this has improved the quality of teaching and learning in this subject. The school is currently planning to purchase a new set of personal computers for each class base and the ICT room, linked together by cabling to enable access to the e-mail and the Internet for all users. The sensory room, recently adapted and fitted out, is beginning to provide excellent opportunities for teaching and learning for pupils with more profound learning difficulties.

21. The basic skills of communication, speaking and listening and early number development are strongly supported in every area of teaching and learning and are a central part of the school's 'Developmental Curriculum'. For pupils whose first language is not English, support is given where appropriate which enables them to have full access to the teaching and learning opportunities provided by the school. Daily lessons following the National Literacy Strategy framework for teaching have been successfully introduced and they are having a significant and positive impact on teaching and learning across the entire school. Similarly, the National Numeracy Strategy informs teaching in mathematics. Homework tasks are given in some cases and are tailored to individual needs
22. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, which was raised at the last inspection as an area requiring improvement, is now done very effectively and regularly by members of the senior management team, and this is having an impact on improving teachers' skills and as a consequence the quality of the pupils' learning experiences.

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

23. The curriculum is good. It offers a broad range of activities, subjects and experiences for the children in the foundation stage, and also for the pupils up to the age of 11. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, and there are sound schemes of work. The curriculum is relevant to the pupils throughout the school, from the least able to the highest achievers. Aspects of the allocation of time to subjects are unsatisfactory. Mathematics is not taught as frequently as it should be, and pupils' progress is limited as a result. Science is largely taught through themes or topics or as an aspect of lessons where the main focus is on literacy. This limits the time available and makes it difficult to ensure that the programmes of study are fully covered. Personal and social education receives a good allocation of time, and has very good balance and spread of aspects, but some of this is unstructured. Information and communication technology is used in support of many subjects, and is particularly effectively employed in general communication development.
24. Literacy has a sound allocation of time each day, and the National Literacy Strategy has been very effective in raising standards. The National Numeracy Strategy has not been in place as long as the Literacy Strategy, and mathematics is only taught for three days each week, instead of the recommended five. Although the teaching and learning in lessons is very good, because of the limited time given to mathematics the Numeracy Strategy has not yet been fully effective in raising standards of achievement.
25. The school's extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum very well. Most classes have an out-of-school visit each week. Visits are well planned to support a specific lesson or a cross-curricular topic, and they lead to much in-class work after the event, as well as some preparatory work beforehand. Pupils have, for instance, visited garden centres, farms and pet shops, for science; the supertram, parks and the ski village for geography; a museum, castle and heritage centre for history; an art gallery, and the sculpture park for art; and local churches, mosques and the cathedral for religious education. Visitors to the school have included a brass band, an African

drum workshop and a storyteller, as well as live music and drama groups. There is a lunchtime club for the least able and mobile pupils, and another after school for swimming.

26. The school makes very good efforts to ensure that all pupils have a good access to as full and relevant a curriculum as possible. The lower attaining pupils attend lessons in the highest priority subjects such as mathematics and literacy; and at some other times they attend intensive motor-communication groups that are specifically designed and organised for their particular needs. Pupils whose behaviour causes them to have learning difficulties are mainly taught in the classes with their peers. This can cause some disruption at times, and there is need to keep under review strategies in pupil management or curriculum delivery for a small minority of them. No lessons are specifically for girls or boys, and no pupils are excluded from any lessons. The school makes a great effort to ensure full entitlement to a good and relevant programme of education.
27. Pupils' personal and social education is very well provided for in many different areas and ways, both informal and specific and structured. They include such activities as learning how to eat and drink properly at lunch and snack times and to clean teeth and wash faces and hands afterwards. Pupils are encouraged to help themselves with dressing and undressing, when swimming or having P.E. The "Developmental Curriculum" for the pupils, who need a very basic education in living skills, as well as early physical and motor skills, is very good.
28. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered through a range of activities and experiences, in particular, in the prayers, which are sung each day, and in assemblies and acts of collective worship and religious education (RE) lessons. These are often rich in meaning and significance for all the pupils, regardless of ability and cultural or social background. During the week of the inspection, for example, moments of awe and wonder were experienced in one assembly on the theme of food from the sea. The pupils stand beneath a large sheet decorated with seaweed and jellyfish being waved gently by the staff, listening to 'mood' music being played on the compact disc player. It was a lovely moment for everyone. The lighting of candles is also a feature of many assemblies and RE lessons throughout the school, and was used very effectively in an assembly in the foundation stage classes. In an RE lesson for infants they experienced some 'golden moments' on the theme of birthdays. They saw and touched a 5-week old baby who was brought into school especially for that lesson, and listened to beautiful music sensitively chosen by the teacher. Other opportunities are provided in trips out of school, looking at patterns in nature and the wonder of trees and butterflies.
29. The moral development of pupils is reflected in the very good relationships in the school and is promoted in many settings. For example, class circle times are used very effectively in raising issues in personal, health and social education (PHSE) lessons, and pupils are encouraged to distinguish between right from wrong in practical situations and to be sensitive to other people and their property. Their self-esteem is promoted when they receive praise in class or in assemblies and this fosters and encourages their moral development. Pupils, depending on their age and ability, are encouraged to take initiative and to begin to take a measure of personal responsibility. Lunchtimes provide very good opportunities to develop these skills, with 'family service' providing a choice of meals and the pupils making their own selections.
30. In a similar way, lunchtimes and playtimes enable pupils to develop their social skills in real-life situations, and the "Kids Plus" playgroup provides an ideal setting for promoting the social development of very young children in the school. Trips to the shops and into the wider community and educational visits to places of interest, all provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. These take place weekly for most classes. The lunchtime club for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties offers them appropriate experiences to meet their developing social needs.

31. Cultural development is fostered within the school and with the links the school has in the community. Most subjects contribute, but work in RE, art and music strongly promotes pupils' cultural development. For example, pupils learn about the Jewish festival of Sukkoth and hear about the Islamic festival of Eid ul fitr. They visit Sheffield Cathedral and local mosques and go to art galleries, cinemas and theatres. One such visit was to the Crucible Theatre to see Postman Pat. They experience on a regular basis 'Live Music Now', involving musicians performing in school, and take part in an African drum workshop. Since the previous report the school has made significant improvements in the way it provides for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this aspect of provision, especially pupils' spiritual development, is now a strength of the school.
32. Class assemblies, key stage assemblies and whole school assemblies provide high quality experiences for all the pupils to take part in at a level appropriate to their wide-ranging special educational needs. There has been a very significant improvement since the last report, and the school now fully complies with statutory requirements regarding acts of collective worship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The arrangements that the school makes for the health, welfare and safety of its pupils are excellent. Excellent procedures ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular checks are carried out by staff to ensure that all areas of the school, including the hydrotherapy pool, are safe and secure and detailed records are kept by the caretaker of all necessary works. The environment in which the pupils work is enriched as a result.
34. The child protection policy, which has been devised by the school, is extremely well detailed and regular training and updating ensures that both teaching and non-teaching staff are fully aware of the detailed procedures and adopt them. The very caring teaching and non-teaching staff give a very high level of care and support to pupils and as a result pupils relate extremely well to them. Their pastoral and academic development is enhanced as a result.
35. The school keeps detailed records of accidents and has the benefit of a full-time qualified nurse at the school who is able to monitor pupils physical development and give emergency treatment whenever appropriate. In addition there are a number of appropriate qualified first aiders amongst the staff, who support the school nurse in her work.
36. Attendance is monitored regularly and as a result, is extremely good. Each class's register is completed neatly and accurately by teachers and is monitored by the school clerks who report to the headteacher any unexplained absences. The school has very sound procedures for following up of absences and as a result, the attendance at the school is good. Regular liaison takes place with the education welfare officer and the school has full and effective liaison with the appropriate agencies for any matters of child welfare or non-attendance.
37. The school has a very comprehensive policy for dealing with pupil behaviour and staff are fully aware of it and vigorously apply the policy. The challenging behaviour presented by some pupils is dealt with in a very appropriate manner by staff and the atmosphere in school is calm and relaxed and pupils are able to learn and benefit from their education. During the inspection week very little oppressive behaviour was noted and staff deal with any minor incidents in an efficient and professional way. The school has detailed individual behaviour plans and the improvements proposed in the last inspection report have been carried out. The care assistants and lunchtime assistants are fully trained and they are able to relate extremely well to the pupils, which has a very positive effect on their behaviour management and welfare.
38. The school has very efficient transport arrangements with the local authority drivers being efficiently trained to deal with the children. The training proposed in the previous report for escorts has been carried out, enabling them to deliver a very caring service for the pupils, which the parents much appreciate.

39. The assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. All teachers know the school's clear procedures for assessment but they are carried out inconsistently. On entry to the school in the foundation stage a national assessment scheme is used to identify their strengths and weaknesses. From this information an individual programme for their education is set up. Each child's progress is measured against the targets within their individual programme. Similarly, at seven or at eleven, pupils are formally assessed against a different national assessment scale. The results of these assessments can be compared with those of pupils in other schools, to see how well they are progressing. This system has not been in place long enough to be able to do this effectively.
40. Annual reviews of statements are carried out correctly, but targets set for pupils are often insufficiently specific and the review of targets sometimes lacks critical detail about the pupils' performance. The targets in these cases are unrelated to the previous ones, especially those that were not achieved. Some individual education plans, (I.E.Ps), have too many targets and do not serve to set priorities for learning. On occasions, targets specify the responsibilities of staff rather than the achievement of the pupils.
41. Practice in noting down pupil achievement as it occurs is weak and teachers and staff tend to carry information about pupil performance "in their heads" to too great an extent. This limits their ability to make use of recorded information about what pupils know, understand and can do when reviewing planning. Formats and schedules for recording pupils' performance are, however, available in most subjects.
42. While assessment is inconsistently and insufficiently recorded, teachers and classroom staff have a very clear and accurate picture of their pupils' individual needs and of their strengths and weaknesses as learners. They know, generally and sometime precisely, as in English, swimming and mathematics, what they can do and understand. Therefore, the support that pupils receive from teachers and support staff is sound. The headteacher and senior management are aware of the need to ensure that assessment is well recorded. Good practice in this area is a target for teachers' professional development.
43. Staff are very aware of pupils' personal developments and difficulties, and they use this information well to adapt procedures and activities for pupils. This might be, for instance, in the dining room, at snack time, or within the developmental and motor communication sessions, or with regard to behavioural matters. The support of outside agencies is sought promptly when it is considered necessary, including a range of therapists and medical staff. Many outside specialists make good and specific assessments of particular difficulties that pupils may have, such as visual or hearing problems, behavioural matters, speech, or mobility difficulties.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents are extremely pleased with the work that the school does for their children and partnership with them is extremely well developed and very successful. Parents are fully aware that the school provides for their children a safe, secure and happy environment and are well aware that the arrangements made by the school for the protection and security of their children are of a high standard and greatly benefits them. The school ensures that parents know that they are able to visit or contact the school whenever they feel they wish to discuss problems or items of a general nature and particularly appreciate the caring attitude of the headteacher and both teaching and non-teaching staff towards them.
45. The school has provided a room for the exclusive use of parents and a useful notice board is provided at the entrance to the school to give parents full details of any information or news that may be beneficial to them. A small number of parents help in school with lunchtime for external activities and the school is constantly encouraging new parents to give assistance.

46. The school has provided an extremely good prospectus, which not only contains all statutory information but also gives parents full information regarding school procedures, staffing and the school's policies and organisation of the education of their children. Parents receive a regular newsletter, which gives full information about activities provided by the school and additional information about planned future events. Parents' formal evenings are held twice a year. They are asked to contribute to individual education plans and are fully consulted at a pre annual review meeting and at annual reviews and other appropriate times about updating, target setting and other matters related to their child's welfare.
47. The views expressed by parents in their response to the questionnaire totally support the work done by the school and all parents are confident that the school provides outstanding care for their children with a very good level of support for them.
48. The school makes a positive effort to involve parents in the pupils' transition to secondary school, involving them in discussion, arranging for parents to visit the chosen secondary school and setting up introductory interviews with secondary school staff.
49. The school's very positive attitude towards parents contributes substantially to the good progress pupils make.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher is a strong leader who has brought about a broad range of positive improvements since the last inspection. Leadership is very effective and by strategic planning, good management of staff and resources and the development of a sense of purpose that is shared by all provision has been developed. The quality of education has been improved. Teaching is more consistent, the curriculum is more coherent and staff have an increased understanding of their roles and the responsibilities they carry. The headteacher is well supported by her deputy and her senior teacher. In addition, other staff in leadership roles, such as curriculum co-ordination, carry out their duties well. The school has faced up to the need to change. There are now far more pupils with more complex needs than formerly and this has led to the development of new skills. The consistent and good use of sign, a reported weakness at the time of the last inspection, indicates how effectively the school has been moved forward. Good arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching are in place and these build on the previous arrangements for appraisal; the school is developing a strategy for performance management and its policy will be in operation by the end of the year, as is statutorily required.
51. Those leading the school share with all the staff a will to succeed in giving pupils education of a high quality and the curriculum and other policies fully reflect the school's aims. Presently, not all policies and guidelines are fully implemented, for example, those on assessment and recording of pupils' achievement. The headteacher and senior staff are, however, aware of this, and full compliance with policy is set as a target in measuring teachers' performance.
52. The governors fulfil their statutory duties. They are interested in the school and attend meetings regularly. They are developing their own views of the school's relative strengths and weaknesses through planned visits, discussion of policy and meetings with staff. They have set up appropriate committees to oversee the work of the school and are mindful of the need to ensure good standards. They have, in conjunction with the headteacher, set performance targets for pupils' achievement. At present, they tend to scrutinise and evaluate policies and budget making proposals that originate with management rather than taking a lead themselves. This is an area for development in their practice.
53. The school uses its resources well. A significant proportion of the school income comes as grants additional to its budget share. These funds are used appropriately, as in the recent use of standards funding to support pupils with English as an additional language. General financial controls are good and the school is diligent in attempting to ensure best value for what it spends. The school budgets prudently to have a small underspend at the end of each year. Unexpected

“windfalls”, such as the recent grant by the Department for Education and Employment to all schools, may, however, temporarily increase the sum of money carried over from year to year.

54. Staff are well and appropriately qualified to meet the requirements of the curriculum. Most have specific special educational needs qualifications. Professional development for all staff is well-organised and regular contact maintained with mainstream schools through subject co-ordinators' support meetings. However, there are continuing difficulties recruiting qualified teaching staff locally. Assistants are well trained and qualified. Some take on extra qualifications at their own expense. The contribution of those in specialist roles, for example, in ensuring safety in the pool and in helping to teach swimming, is of very high quality. They make a significant contribution to the overall personal and academic progress of the pupils. The office administration is very effective.
55. The accommodation continues to be appropriate, effectively used and good overall. However the flat pitch roof continues to leak, there is no covered-way between the dining room and the main building and the hall houses the PE equipment and soft play area which greatly reduces its usefulness for physical activities. The outside appearance is enhanced by the sensory gardens opened in 1998 and the multi-sensory room and dedicated IT area are valuable additions since the last inspection. The building is very well maintained by the caretaker and there has been a significant reduction in the cost of vandalism because of his vigilance. The hydrotherapy pool continues to be an asset.
56. Resources are very good overall. There is an appropriate supply of books in the library and in classrooms. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have contributed to a significant increase in the supply of a variety of resources. All other subjects are well supplied with books and resources.
57. There have been positive developments in management and leadership since the last inspection. The school has improved the quality of education it offers and the pace of change is appropriate. By setting targets the school has put in place a means by which performance can be measured and improved. It gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to improve further the school should address the following issues for action:
 - Improve the recorded assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do within subjects and ensure that this information is used to help teachers' planning and in setting individual targets that are few in number, prioritised in order of importance, specific, achievable and measurable; (paragraph numbers 39,40, 67, 98, 105, 111, and 116).
 - Improve achievement in mathematics by increasing the amount of time given to the subject. (paragraph numbers 5, 23, and 24).
59. The following less important matters are referred to in the text of the report and should be taken into consideration by the governors in drawing up their action plan:
 - The hall is cluttered with play apparatus and provides an unsuitable environment for PE lessons; (paragraph numbers 55, 138 and 139).
 - The approach, and the time allocated to science does not ensure sufficient coverage and effective delivery of the programme of study. (paragraph numbers 23, 87, 92 and 93).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	35	52	3	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	61
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.50%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.01%

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	48
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: Y F – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.6
Average class size	7

Education support staff: Y F – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	521

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	717,153
Total expenditure	723,564
Expenditure per pupil	12,476
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,452
Balance carried forward to next year	9,041

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	95	5	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	50	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	45	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	40	15	0	5
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	30	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	20	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	40	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	70	30	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	30	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	20	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	35	0	0	10

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

60. Children achieve well and make good progress towards their early learning goals and very good progress towards their targets and in their personal, social and health education. The teaching ranges from good to excellent, and is very good overall. This high standard of teaching, especially in the more structured lessons such as language, literacy and communication leads directly to the good and very good pace of learning.
61. Teachers plan their lessons soundly in a rolling programme of activities that gives children high motivation and interest. There is a theme each week that gives general direction to activities. This generally works well, giving children a good mix of fairly free activities to choose from and some more formal lessons to give them more structure in their learning. Local toddlers join with foundation stage children to play games, sing, join in activities, use soft play equipment and have a snack and a drink. This is a very good social occasion for the children, and it is very well managed by staff. Staff relate very well to the children in more structured sessions. Individual activities such as building blocks, drawing, using the computer, or playing with water, give opportunities to develop very positive relationships with the children. Such activities encourage good learning of the target skills and involvement in purposeful activities. The good relationships also give children security, comfort and confidence to try different things. Teachers and support staff make very good opportunities to communicate clearly with children; they use signing very well, and very consistently and confidently. This is valuable in developing children's understanding of language, and as a consequence they are beginning to express themselves. Children find the structured lessons exciting, and they are well challenged to try hard and to be involved. Activities are well organised, and the children are very well managed.
62. Children's achievement against all the early learning goals is very good, especially in the development of their communication and social skills. Children are beginning to respond to the very good teaching in a positive way, with some spoken answers to questions, joining in some songs and rhymes and anticipating the next words in some games. They are beginning to understand clear speech and signing, and are able to make marks on paper with crayons, brushes and pencils. They can look at pictures and point to animals, or to photographs of themselves and their classmates. They show good development in self-confidence in moving around the unit, the PE hall and the swimming pool. They are beginning to relate to each other as well as to adults and they happily work, eat and play alongside each other. They behave well and comply with requests to do things, interacting positively with adults. They help to dress themselves when possible, and are becoming increasingly independent in eating and drinking at lunch and snack times.
63. In mathematics very good teaching and careful planning lead to children becoming familiar with the names of some numbers and are starting to count. They play with different shapes, colours and sizes of table-top apparatus, and are becoming familiar with capacity and volume through water and sand play. They are developing understanding about measuring and about things being long or short, big or small.
64. In their knowledge of the world around them, children play with mechanical toys and building bricks, and with sand and water, investigating these materials purposefully when encouraged to do so by the teaching which is of a very high quality. The concept of time begins to mean something to them as the day is often well structured, and they are beginning to control things such as the computer, with touch screens and simple switches. They are learning to find their way round the unit, and are learning about some living things, such as the pet rats that are visiting the unit.
65. Physical development is very well promoted by very good and occasionally excellent teaching. Children play in the hall, the outdoor area, and on the soft play equipment with joy and

excitement, getting good exercise as well as improving their skills in crawling, rocking, sliding, climbing and so on. On a smaller scale, they are starting to handle toys, play dough, building blocks and brushes with increasing sureness.

66. In creative activities they begin to learn about colours and shapes, to paint and stick things together and to print with corks and sponges. They respond well in the singing and rhymes and the most able will ask for their next choice of song. They can handle instruments with some assistance and may anticipate the next line or word. They enjoy stories that are told and acted out imaginatively and some will spontaneously join in with the actions. Very good teaching brings excitement to creative activities and strongly promotes learning.
67. Staff work very well together as a team, both in the planning of themes for the week and for each half term. The curriculum is good. It is currently based on the Areas of Learning for young children, and the children's own individual targets, and it leads towards the lower levels of the National Curriculum. Not all individual targets are as precise as they should be, and others discuss what staff will do, rather than what is wanted from the children. Recording of the children's significant gains is carried out but at present this lacks immediacy. When children's targets are reviewed termly, imprecise targets decrease the benefit that should be obtained from this good practice. The baseline assessments when children arrive in the unit, and again when they depart, are good and they lead to good reports to parents at appropriate times of the year. Relations with parents are very good, with home/school diaries, and reports on what children are doing each week, with daily communication if necessary.
68. Assemblies in the unit are very good; they are a very positive mix of periods of reflection and togetherness, being sociable together, singing and using instruments. There is good encouragement for all children to join in as actively as they can. The accommodation is very good, with three rooms, toilet and changing facilities, outdoor play area and access to the swimming pool and the hall. A wet-weather covering over part of the outdoor play area would help to allow children to use the equipment during the break times and scheduled playtimes.
69. The resources are good and are used very well by teachers and the supporting staff, especially in lessons such as story time. The use of the swimming pool and the soft play area in the hall is particularly good.
70. Practice and provision in the foundation stage continues to be as good as was previously reported with many good features being consolidated.

ENGLISH

71. Pupils' achievements in the infants and juniors are good. This included pupils who have English as an additional language.
72. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties work on programmes to stimulate eye contact, focusing, grasping objects, looking at pictures, following and copying with help important Makaton signs, making sounds with their voices and maintaining and extending their concentration. This is frequently done through a multi-sensory approach, with the use of sounds, light, smell, touch and 'cause and effect' resources, and by using more traditional aids such as Big Books, musical instruments and a wide range of objects and artefacts. The Sensory Room, which is used by staff for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, provides a superb setting for pupils to explore and develop their sensual awareness. This excellent facility could be used more to promote the attainments of pupils with more profound learning difficulties.
73. In infant classes pupils listen with concentration to stories during the literacy hour lessons. "We're going on a bear hunt" is a favourite and pupils repeat key phrases from the story when asked to by the teacher. They communicate effectively with the teacher and the learning support assistants by either Makaton signing with help, by using symbols that represent objects and actions or by speech. Higher attaining pupils choose their name from a choice of two printed

names and copy the letter 'b' on a prepared worksheet. They practise sounding the initial 'b' sound and reading 'bear', 'biscuit' and 'boat'. Lower attaining pupils try to focus on two photographs and eye-point or touch their own likeness. One pupil, with help, turns the pages of the Big Book from left to right and eye-points when the LSA asks him where the picture of the bear is on the page. Higher attaining pupils can open a book correctly and turn over the pages without help. One pupil can identify words such as 'apple', 'orange' and 'banana' and look at the pictures.

74. In junior classes higher attaining pupils can read from a simple storybook and build words from letter sounds. Lower attainers in junior classes, with help, use a crayon to make marks on the paper, and select the symbol of a biscuit at the end of the session. They sign or say "Thank you". In a literacy lesson on "A dark, dark tale", pupils listen to the story and watch a video. They touch objects carefully prepared by the teacher to experience the "sun" and "strawberry". Some pupils' work on the "Maude and Claude" programs on the computer to write over letters of the alphabet, or use a talking storybook program. Others used a word processor to copy some "s" sound words on the screen. In reading, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties begin to identify pictures using symbols and signing. Some finger point and read words in a book called "Farmer Duck". Others repeat simple phrases such as "No, not here" with a little help from learning support assistants. Pupils show high achievement when they read simple books from the school's reading scheme and copy in their own handwriting under a sentence written by the teacher. They begin to use the school library for short periods of time to read their own choice of book.
75. Pupils' attitude to work ranges from good to very good. They enjoy English, especially the literacy hour lessons which have become an excellent feature of the school's provision. In every lesson pupils sit quietly when required and listen carefully to the stories or to the teacher speaking to them. They respond very positively to praise and want to do well and are eager to please their teachers. Pupils' interest is sustained through the very effective use teachers make of Makaton signing and through the high quality support they receive from the LSAs, who also are able to use Makaton signing very effectively to communicate with the pupils. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are always involved in all appropriate activities and their attention and interest is heightened through lessons which use a total communication approach involving signing, symbols, objects and speech. "Tactile Talk" also helps pupils with profound difficulties to know what is happening to them (being lifted, having the brakes put on the wheelchair, being given a drink, etc.) and as a consequence they are able to engage in the activity and feel part of it.
76. Teaching is never less than good and in two thirds of the lessons it is very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the special educational needs of the pupils and they use this knowledge to adapt the National Curriculum and the Literacy Strategy framework to meet the needs of the pupils in their classes. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and they set objectives that are challenging but achievable in their lesson planning. Activities are clearly planned for three ability groups within each class to ensure that all pupils have full access to the teaching and learning at a level appropriate to their needs. For example, in the planning of one lesson higher attaining pupils work on word processing skills whilst another group works on their individual education plan (IEP) targets using letters of the alphabet which they can hold and feel. A third group work on IEP targets, writing finger patterns in sand trays. Pupils are very well managed, and for the small number of pupils who have challenging behaviour strategies are in place to meet their complex needs. Lessons usually follow the Literacy Strategy framework, with an introductory session often based around a story read from a Big Book or other activity. All the pupils take part in this session and this is followed by group work that is often based around IEP targets. A final session concludes the lesson when the teacher shares with the class what everyone has been doing and to praise the work of individual pupils and to celebrate particular achievements. Resources such as books, Big Books, objects to support the storytelling and Big Macs for pupils to communicate with are used in many lessons. Signing is used very effectively by teachers and learning support assistants to support individual pupils' learning, and the very good quality of teaching ensures that all pupils make progress in line with their special educational needs.

77. The management of the subject is very good with clear targets identified in the school development plan to raise the quality of teaching and learning in English. Resources, although satisfactory, are being improved, especially for drama, and area of provision where the school is hoping to develop further. There is a school library, with an adequate stock of picture and other books. This is also used as a music room and geography resource base, but careful timetabling ensures that the room is fully utilised. The school has introduced a consistent whole school approach to Makaton signing, which was raised as area of concern in the last inspection, and dramatic improvements have been seen in the quality of teaching and learning as a consequence. All staff have undergone regular training, and its use has enabled both teachers and LSAs to communicate effectively with the pupils, ensuring that learning of a high quality takes place. The school, furthermore, has adapted the National Literacy Strategy framework extremely well into its lesson planning. This too has had a significant impact, not only on raising the quality of teaching and learning in English throughout the whole school, but on raising the quality of teaching and learning in many other subjects as well.
78. The skills of speaking and listening, and to a lesser extent reading and writing, are used across all subject boundaries, and positively augment and support teaching and learning throughout the school. Information and communication technology is used in English and its impact on the quality of provision is good. This will extend and improve the range of ways for pupils of all abilities to communicate within the classroom and with the wider community and beyond.

MATHEMATICS

79. Pupils' achievements and rate of progress are satisfactory throughout the school. The good learning in lessons is a result of very good teaching but over time progress is held back by the subject being taught on only three days each week. The fairly recent introduction of the Numeracy Strategy means that the good effects of the teaching have also not yet had time to fully be effective throughout the school.
80. After a satisfactory start in the foundation stage, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in the infant class. By the age of seven the more able pupils can count to ten with help, and can count a very small number of real objects. They are beginning to copy write some numerals, and can recognise some shapes such as a circle, square and triangle. They are starting to understand the meaning of words such as "under", "behind" and "on top". Many are learning about comparisons such as more and less, longer and shorter. The less able pupils are learning to make choices by eye-pointing or reaching towards something. They can handle objects such as a single touch switch to operate a computer screen, and are aware of number songs and rhymes that are being sung to them and around them in a group.
81. By the age of eleven, pupils are progressing satisfactorily across a wider range of topics, and their skills are learned better so they need less prompting and help. The higher attainers can count in a chanting way up to 20 or 30; they can add one or two to a given number, and can take one away. They are beginning to learn how to sort things into sets, such as five ladybirds and two leaves make seven things altogether. And that there would be several ways of dividing the ladybirds between the two leaves. They can sort coins into their denominations, and are starting to use them in exchange for goods, both in class exercises and in local shops. They are learning how to measure in different ways, and some can tell the time to the half-hour. The lower attaining pupils are continuing to learn about object permanence – that a thing still exists when it is out of sight and about long and short, big and small.
82. Pupils try hard to achieve better, and are often excited and enthusiastic, trying to be the first to come up with the right answer. They apply their number skills in other lessons such as art, design and technology and science. Behaviour in lessons is good.

83. Teaching and learning are very good overall and the quality of teaching ranges from very good to excellent. The National Numeracy Strategy is very well planned and followed, with good structure in the lessons and a high level of confidence and competence from the teachers. Teachers differentiate their work for different groups of pupils, and for individuals, although the ongoing assessment is inconsistent through the school, and some pupils have too many individual targets for teachers to focus on them effectively. There is a need to concentrate on properly assessing pupils' progress towards a select few targets.
84. Teachers make very good use of some good resources, sometimes using them extremely well to motivate pupils and retain their interest and a high level of challenge through a long and intensive lesson. Many table-top games, toys, items of small equipment, displays, and some worksheets are used, as well as the computers, and single-touch switches for the less able pupils. Pupils are praised for their work in positive ways, and lessons proceed at a good pace, with a variety of approaches in each lesson. This might involve, for example, some whole class work, small groups, individual work with a member of staff, and back to a whole class review at the end to reinforce what pupils have learned during the main part of the lesson. Behaviour is generally managed well, often with the necessary firmness as well as understanding of pupils' difficulties in some instances. The teaching enables very good learning to take place and all pupils are thoroughly involved.
85. The management of mathematics is good. There is a good policy in place, and a good plan for what is to be taught to the pupils as they develop through the school. The teaching has been very well based on the National Numeracy Strategy and this has been very successful, with teachers receiving good and effective training and having good confidence in delivering the lessons well. The need is for the teaching of mathematics to be extended each week. The co-ordinator monitors the teaching, and has built up a good resource base to support the teaching and learning of mathematics. The new subject development plan sets out targets for pupils' progress.
86. Since the last inspection, teaching and learning have improved considerably, and the Numeracy Strategy is now well embedded in class teaching. This is beginning to have a good effect on progress.

SCIENCE

87. Improvements since the last inspection are good. Planning and resources are now very good. However, the balance of science in the curriculum and the quality of recording and assessment remain as areas for improvement. All pupils, including those with additional special needs, are working within levels appropriate to their abilities. Discussion, signing and sensory experiences play a large part in lessons. By these means pupils improve their communication as well as their scientific skills.
88. Pupils make good progress in the infants' class. They take part in an experiment to show how a variety of material can change shape. Pupils with severe motor difficulties show pleasure in being helped to squeeze jelly to change its shape. Higher attaining pupils can indicate what a sponge is and show how it resumes its original shape after being squeezed. Pupils experience aspects of wind power, including setting up experiments to demonstrate its force and flying kites.
89. Pupils are making good progress in the juniors. In an experiment to discover the insulating properties of different materials high attaining pupils can distinguish various grades of heat by touch and measurement using a simple forehead thermometer. They can predict accurately that the bottle covered by woolly material will keep the water warmer than one wrapped in paper. Scrutiny of their previous work shows how, with help, some have downloaded photographs of planets from the NASA web site. Pupils with complex difficulties succeed in picking up metal objects with a magnet and handle warm eggs from an incubator.
90. All pupils enjoy science. They show enthusiasm in a variety of ways. Relationships between the teachers and all pupils are very good and pupils communicate their pleasure to them

enthusiastically. The practical aspects of lessons enables all pupils to increase their sensory experiences and confidence in experimenting with a wide variety of materials. Opportunities exist for them to show independent learning, to make decisions and to support each other. Some pupils are able to help the teacher find and set out equipment. A small number of pupils exhibit extremely difficult behaviour which does distract other pupils. Skilful management by all the staff ensures that this disruption is kept to a minimum.

91. Teaching is good and pupils learn well. Lessons are very well prepared with every pupil's needs provided for. Imaginative use of familiar objects to demonstrate basic scientific principles is a strength of the lessons seen. Expectations of pupils are good and pupils rise to meet these with enthusiasm. They work hard and produce outcomes that are good in relation to their capability. High attaining pupils are challenged to think independently and teachers make good use of all available communications resources to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils with complex difficulties and provide a good range of tactile and sensory experiences. Recording and assessment of pupils' work is not always adequate to show progress and set targets for future learning.
92. The breadth and appropriateness of the science curriculum is good, but the balance is not secure. The single lesson of science each week is too long for some pupils to sustain concentration. The science integrated into the rest of the curriculum is not always clearly identified as such, and it is difficult to assess whether consolidation of learning always take place. For example, pupils are given torches to look at in the literacy hour as a visual and tactile experience, but it is not made clear to them that this follows on from a previous lesson on light. Overall, the time devoted to science on the timetable is barely adequate for pupils' curriculum entitlement.
93. The management of the subject is good. Planning of units of work based on the National Curriculum is also good. Clear schemes of work are in place and are very appropriate to the needs of all the pupils. Resources are very good and enable all pupils to participate in a wide range of scientific experiences. The integration of science into the whole curriculum could be improved through a greater emphasis on science in the school development plan.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory. By the age of seven the more able experiment with colours and patterns, and use different tools to produce a desired effect. They understand the purpose of an activity, and some of them use their initiative to try out new techniques for themselves. Many pupils print using, for example, sponges, corks, the edges of rulers, or the wheels of toy cars. They decorate items such as a cloth gingerbread man or a fancy biscuit. Pupils learn skills and develop their ideas over a satisfactory range of topics, including three-dimensional work such as using clay and play dough.
95. By the age of seven pupils have developed their skills and understanding soundly across a range of topics. In painting, they have used different sized brushes, mixed glue with paint, seeds and sand for different textures and colours, and have experimented with mixing colours and getting different tones of the same colour. They have also learned to paint on different textures and colours of paper such as sandpaper and corrugated card. They have made three-dimensional models in clay, including coil and slab pots, small figures and animals, and have decorated clay tiles with patterns. They have experienced collage work, sticking pieces of different papers and materials onto a background to make a pattern or picture. This work does not, however, sufficiently express the individuality of the pupils as artists because it follows a formula for its completion. Pupils paint in the style of famous artists such as Monet, Picasso and Lowry, and in the style of other cultures, such as Chinese paintings at the time of Chinese New Year, and Rangoli patterns after a visit to a mosque. Whilst on visits out of school, pupils draw in pencil into their sketch books, for example, trees and flowers, a climbing frame and a pedestrian crossing.
96. Pupils really enjoy art lessons and are enthusiastic printers, painters and modellers. They show

great interest in the way that masks alter their appearance and appreciate each other's work. They behave well.

97. The teaching is at least satisfactory, and is sometimes good, and this enables pupils to learn new skills satisfactorily across a range of topics. Teachers plan lessons well, with good differentiation for individuals or small groups of pupils. Lessons are conducted at a good pace, with a sound level of challenge to the pupils. Lessons include a range of activities and skills, and pupils are well encouraged to make choices as part of the design aspect of the subject, for example, which colour, size and shape they would like to use when producing a piece of work. The use of clear signing and repeated words helps pupils to understand what they are doing. Teachers make good use of their resources, and the classroom support staff are well deployed in supporting pupils, or taking a whole session. They are very competent and are able to guide pupils without being over-helpful. The teaching helps pupils to learn to use a brush, to mix colours, to use a glue spreader and take pleasure in the work they have produced. All staff have pleasant and positive relationships with pupils, and they are able to motivate pupils well in trying new things and remaining on task for a reasonable length of time. Teachers and other staff manage pupils well in their behaviour.
98. The management of art is good, with a co-ordinator who has good subject knowledge, a clear policy and a sound scheme of work to guide teachers' own planning. The co-ordinator has sound plans to develop the subject, including the development of resources to include more artefacts from cultures outside Europe for the pupils to see and draw. The resources are good overall, especially in the range and quality of consumable materials, and several computer programs which pupils have used to create pictures of faces and "doodle" pictures on the screens and printouts. The curriculum is well supplemented by visits out of school to places such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and art galleries. The standard of teaching in art and design is not monitored by the co-ordinator now, although it has been in the past. The intention is to assess pupils' progress against the termly planning schemes, which is quite frequently enough but this is not carried out sufficiently consistently through the school.
99. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, although the resources have developed well. The co-ordinator has done well to consolidate this subject during a period when there is increasing pressure on the timetable and resources from other subjects such as literacy and numeracy.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. They are making appropriate progress across a good range of aspects with this subject, with good opportunities for making things and also some opportunities for designing them. However, there is some over-helping of pupils and sometimes there are not enough opportunities for pupils to help to design their own models in some way. These factors hinder pupils' progress.
101. Pupils' learning of basic skills is often good in individual lessons because the teaching is always at least satisfactory and often good. Infants make satisfactory progress across a range of skills and practise them with a selection of materials and tools. Many pupils successfully handle scissors, brushes and glue spreaders; they choose what colour they want a model to be and choose some of the materials they want to use and where to place different parts of a model. They have made a good range of items such as models from recycled materials, building blocks and construction kits, papers and card. They have joined things together using a range of fastenings such as sellotape, glue, split pins and treasury tags. Some pupils have made "real" models from the construction kits, such as a farm, a vehicle and a church.
102. Juniors make sound progress across a wider range of materials, and with more tools such as a hammer, saw, and brushes of different sizes. Pupils tend to need less help and instruction, and their handling of scissors and the components of kits is more assured. Pupils undertake more food technology, and are learning to mix ingredients and knead them. They are beginning to

understand the need to cook the things they have made, such as pizzas, spaghetti, apple pies, cheesecake and a tuna pasta bake. They have made a variety of things such as bead necklaces, paper windmills, plaster casts of their hands; card and balsa pictures of boats and a tractor; and done some weaving in making wall hangings. Satisfactory use is made of the computers, and there are good links with other subjects, such as making Victorian-style cakes as part of a history project.

103. Behaviour is generally good in lessons and pupils are well motivated. Because of their individual special needs pupils sometimes challenge the boundaries of expected behaviour but this is exceptional and most enjoy their work.
104. Teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. Lessons are planned soundly, so as to include all pupils in the making aspect of each project. Good efforts are made to include the pupils and staff use signing and clear speech well so that pupils understand what is required, and to ask questions to check pupils' understanding. Teachers and support staff encourage pupils well, giving them good praise for their efforts and getting them well motivated. The teaching is particularly effective when the teacher is enthusiastic; it is providing a high level of challenge, involving pupils and successfully encouraging them to think their way through a problem. Pupils' behaviour is managed well, despite some pupils having very disruptive and violent behaviours at times. Opportunities for pupils to be more involved and challenged are sometimes missed, especially with regard to the design aspect. For example, in one lesson all the pupils made one large biscuit and one small one: they could have *chosen* which size they wanted. In another lesson, the lighthouse that pupils were making a lighting system for was a plastic, clip-together one: when it would have been better design and technology for the pupils to design and make the actual building, as well as fitting an electrical circuit. Pupils do not always wear appropriate clothing during lessons, especially in food technology, where appropriate dress is related to hygiene.
105. The management of design and technology is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has clear plans for developing the subject. The improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection, with all the aspects of design and technology now well integrated in one scheme that the co-ordinator has created for teachers to follow. Resources have been developed to their present good standard. The assessment of pupils' progress is carried out but this is recorded inconsistently.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Since the last inspection geography has developed well.
107. Pupils' achievement in geography in the infants is very good and it is good in the juniors. Pupils are making good progress. Geography makes a good contribution to the development all pupils' communication skills.
108. Infants begin to orient their way around the school successfully. They locate areas of the school such as the swimming pool and the dining room. Opportunities are made available for them to visit the city centre, local airport and a farm and as a result they become familiar, not only with their immediate environment, but also with localities further afield. A photographic record is kept and higher attaining pupils make contributions to very good wall displays. In a lesson on the weather all pupils can sign for 'snow' and respond appropriately to feeling cold. One pupil recognises a toboggan and sits on it correctly without help. Another pupil works out for himself how to put on a pair of ski mittens. They all know how and why various types of clothes, especially hats, gloves and scarves, are worn.
109. Juniors make good or satisfactory progress in map work. In a lesson on mapping their journeys from home, most pupils can identify photographs of where they live. More able pupils recognise and say the name of their street. They also recognise and name many features they will see while being brought to school. A more able pupil copies some text about the Aborigines and

displays it with pictures he has cut out and labelled himself. Others successfully identify various forms of transport, including those seen at an airport.

110. Pupils' attitude and behaviour is very good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. Younger pupils thoroughly enjoy dressing up for the cold weather. They co-operate with each other by sharing the clothes and they show good degrees of independence by trying to dress themselves. This makes a significant contribution to their independent learning and personal development. Their behaviour is very good and they are attentive and co-operative with the staff. Junior pupils, while enjoying the lesson for the most part, become easily distracted. There are several pupils in the class with complex behavioural difficulties and they often cause disruption for the rest. While teachers and staff manage these situations well, time is taken out of the lesson to deal with such distractions and this does impact on learning.
111. Teaching of the infants is very good and for the juniors it is good. Planning and preparation of lessons are very good. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the individual needs of all the pupils and work is therefore personalised to those needs. For example, all pupils have an individual map on the wall of where they live and a photograph of the house and street they live in. A photographic record of all visits is kept and displayed around the school. Teacher and staff relationships with pupils are very good and contribute significantly to their personal and academic development. Recording and assessment of pupils' progress are in the process of development but at present these are weaknesses.
112. The management of the subject is good. Resources have improved and the use of information technology is expanding. Planning is good and appropriately follows the National Curriculum programmes of study. The subject is given a high profile around the school through some excellent wall displays. Parents are encouraged to borrow the school camera to take photographs of any places of interest they visit with their children – along with the school mascot Woolley Bear!

HISTORY

113. Pupils make good progress and achieve the objectives set for them. Infants have an appreciation of “now” and “then”, can recognise something as “old”. Celebration of birthdays assists them in relating to the passage of time. A good example of this occurs in a religious education lesson where local mothers brought in three young children of different ages, including a baby of five weeks. Pupils show awareness of the progression of children's development over a period of time. History makes a significant contribution to pupils' communication skills.
114. Juniors take part in a range of practical experiences, for example, a recreation of Victorian domestic life to show how housework has changed over time. In a lesson on Victorian washday all pupils participate in washing clothes in a dolly-tub, using starch, ironing with a flat iron and pegging out the clothes. All dress up in a range of relevant costumes. Higher attaining pupils are skilful in learning the technique of pounding washing, are aware that the flat iron must be left upright after use and can work out for themselves how to peg out the clothes properly. Other pupils mix starch to a thin paste and check that there are no lumps. In another lesson with the same Victorian theme all pupils mix porridge oats to a thin gruel. In a follow up lesson, where the same exercise is shown on a video on Victorian domestic life, higher attaining pupils remember their previous experience and express the view that the taste of gruel is not something they enjoyed.

115. In the majority of lesson pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Most are attentive and enjoy the hands-on experiences. Opportunities for personal development are very good. Most pupils are able to cope with a variety of tasks, and higher attaining pupils show good examples of independence. For example, at the end of the session on Victorian cooking three boys volunteered to wash up, wipe and put away all the utensils. This they did very efficiently and with minimal help and supervision. Behaviour is usually good, although pupils with more complex behavioural difficulties sometimes impact on the learning of others. In these situations staff intervene appropriately and reduce the disruption to a minimum.
116. Teaching in junior classes is good. The teacher has high expectations of what pupils will achieve and sets relevant objectives. Planning is very good, as is the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the pupils. Appropriate methods of positive behaviour management ensure that the more difficult pupils are fully engaged and do not disrupt other pupils to any great extent. The pace of lessons is good and time is used well. Homework is set as exercises in preparation for practical lessons and contributes well to extending the curriculum into the pupils' homes and involving their parents. Very good liaison exists between the teacher and the classroom care assistants and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Recording and assessment of pupils' progress are still developing and presently are insufficiently detailed.
117. The management of the subject is good. The curriculum is designed for continuity and progression within and between key stages. The co-ordinator is developing the use of information technology in the subject. Resources are a strength of the subject. A great deal of time and effort has been taken to assemble an eclectic mix of artefacts covering all periods, from Roman times to post-war. These include some very good Victorian domestic appliances and post-war photographs of the school. Visits to places of historical interest play a large part in enhancing the curriculum. These visits are well recorded by excellent displays of photographs in the classrooms and some written work by more able pupils.
118. Since the last inspection improvement is good. Resources are now very good.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, (ICT), is good. In individual cases it is very good
120. Lower attaining infants can 'paint' simple pictures using the roller ball mouse and one pupil can change the thickness of the 'brush' for his picture. Another pupil, with help, is beginning to use the mouse to 'paint' pictures. Other pupils can use the touch screen and the tracker ball to control movement on the screen. One higher attaining pupil uses the standard mouse to paint a picture unaided. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) can feel the vibrations when holding the Big Mac device which is used to record and play back simple speech immediately at the press of a pressure switch.
121. Junior pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties also use Big Macs and control switches such as the wobble switch and other pressure switches. One pupil successfully uses two switches to control the program on the monitor. Higher attaining pupils use the Big Keys keyboard to write their names and one pupil successfully finds the 'space bar' and the 'enter' key. Other higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 are starting to send e-mails and to receive replies and to enter data into a program to help complete a block graph. Some use a special program that enables them to click onto various icons to write their names and to hear what they sound like and to print photographs of different planets.
122. Pupils like using computers and other ICT devices and are highly motivated by the activities and interested in them. Their attitudes are positive and range from good to very good. Pupils with PMLD, with the support of staff, sustain their attention for up to a half an hour using the very wide range of sound activated switches and other devices in the Sensory Room.
123. ICT is not usually included on the timetable as a separate lesson but it is frequently included as

part of another subject, most often in English or mathematics or in the motor-communication groups. Teachers regularly use the computer to teach pupils early number activities and Big Macs are widely used in most English lessons to reinforce communication skills. In the lessons observed teaching was at least good and pupils' learning as a result of the teaching was good or very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. Pupils work on individual targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). The planning of lessons is good, with clear objectives adapted to meet the needs of all the pupils within the group. For example, in one motor-communication lesson activities are planned for the sensory room, with a small group of pupils working on switch control. In another group, pupils choose an activity by eye-pointing, gesture or with the use of the Big Mac. Pupils are very interested in computers and in one lesson some infants experience awe and wonder when seeing the computer working. Pupils' work in ICT is assessed through their IEP targets and printed work is kept on the pupils' Record of Achievement and Experience folders.

124. An outline scheme of work on ICT, drawing on published material enables all teachers to plan their work effectively and to assess pupils' skills in the subject. Pupils have ICT targets set in their IEPs and these are monitored regularly by member of the senior management team. At present there are just five computers for pupils to use throughout the entire school, but there are plans in hand to purchase a further nine computers and these will be networked to enable each classroom to be linked to e-mail and to the Internet. There are a very wide range of other devices and resources and these compensate for the present difficulty pupils may experience in accessing ICT on a regular basis using the keyboards and monitors. The new ICT room houses four computers and pupils may be withdrawn from their lessons to practise on these machines. The computers, however, are on trolleys and teachers are encouraged to take them to their classrooms as appropriate. One feature of the school's ICT provision is the sensory room. This excellent facility has a very wide range of equipment, most of which very strongly promotes pupils' ICT awareness and enables pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to access important skills in ICT by using devices such as sound activated switches, pressure switches and a wobble switch to activate light and sound.
125. Since the last report progress in the assessment of the subject and monitoring of its provision in the school has been considerable. Moreover, the school has dramatically improved the range of peripheral devices to ensure that all pupils have full access to all the ICT skills. Leadership in the subject is very good, and the co-ordinator is very skilled in the subject and has a clear vision about how ICT can be used to support pupils' learning throughout the school. In addition to the nine new personal computers planned for, there are plans to appoint a technician and to improve the training of staff in the use of the digital camera and other communication devices. There are also plans to increase the range of software for the new computers to enable pupils to access learning in most of the subjects taught in the school. Having machines based in every classroom with a suitable and sufficient range of programs will considerably enhance pupils' learning opportunities in the future.

MUSIC

126. Achievement in music is good. In performing, improvising on a range of musical instruments and in listening to music – both live and recorded - pupils' progress is always good. Opportunities for pupils to appraise or appreciate music are also good. Pupils love playing on the school's very wide range of musical instruments. They explore the way sounds are made by playing on the drum and feeling the vibrations. Some pupils can beat rhythmically on a tambour in common time, following either recorded or live music being played. Most pupils can listen quietly to music being performed on the keyboard or played on the compact disc player. Higher attaining pupils can use simple notation to play a tune with help.
127. Infants sing enthusiastically alongside the teachers and learning support assistants, who always set a very good example for the pupils to follow. They accompany songs using drums, shakers, tambourines, scrapers and cymbals. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties join in with help in all the activities and respond with gestures and sounds at the delight they are

experiencing. One pupil was able to perform 'Who built the ark?' in front of the other pupils. She could use Makaton signs to sign 'ark' at the appropriate time and everyone clapped her. Pupils are beginning to recognise and repeat the names for different instruments they play and can accompany the singing at a simple level. Pupils can clap, wave their arms and swing their legs. Some of the pupils can do this in time with the music, which shows very good attainment. Pupils in the foundation stage join the infants in the weekly singing lesson and benefit considerably from this experience. They listen to the music and move and make sounds as appropriate. Many pupils experience moments of wonder during these occasions.

128. Juniors sing and perform music enthusiastically. They play on a range of pitched and unpitched percussion instruments and on other instruments such as the mouth organ and whistle. One pupil with profound learning difficulties is able to raise his eyebrows to signal that he could 'feel' the sound on the drum. Another pupil uses a beater and is able, at times, to synchronise his beats with the rhythm of the music. Pupils are beginning to start and stop playing on their instruments at a given sign or command by the teacher. They use the chromatic glockenspiel, claves and woodblocks to beat in time with the music, and are beginning to perform capably as a group.
129. Pupils enjoy music very much. Their behaviour is good and they work well in class groups and in larger group settings. They respond very positively when listening to music and are sensitive to its changes in mood and tempo. Listening to music and making music, especially singing, plays a very significant part in pupils' personal development, enabling many to settle down into other activities and lessons across different parts of the school curriculum.
130. The quality of teaching and learning in music throughout the school is very good. Most teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of music and as a consequence pupils' learning experiences are usually very good and sometimes excellent. Where teaching is less effective it is because the teaching lacks breadth and depth of understanding, and a more limited range of musical experiences is offered to the pupils. Teachers set clear and realistic learning objectives in their planning and this ensures that pupils make progress. Teaching is almost always brisk and good fun. All staff, including learning support assistants (LSAs) use Makaton signing very effectively to augment and reinforce communication. The signing of songs is a common and special feature of teaching across the school and strongly supports pupils' learning, enabling all pupils to have full access to what is being taught.
131. The school has a detailed music policy, highlighting the place of music across all subjects and lessons and in supporting pupils' general development. There are weekly music lessons for all pupils and these take place in the classrooms, music room or main hall. This works very effectively. Each term pupils have the opportunity to hear live bands and musicians and at Christmas the annual Sheffield Children's Festival and the school's own Achievement Assemblies provide very good opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience. Resources are good, covering all types of appropriate musical instruments, including instruments from other cultures and countries. Links with information and communication technology are also good, supported by tape recorders, compact discs and the electronic keyboard and other devices. The work of the music therapist on Thursday morning each week is a very strong indicator of the school's commitment to the place and purpose of music, and its ability to underpin and augment the work of the school. The therapist mainly works with individual or pairs of pupils with severe and complex communication difficulties and with a small group of pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. The pupils who attend these therapy sessions benefit enormously by the experiences provided. Music plays a central part in most assemblies and is frequently and very successfully used in other lessons to support teaching and learning. Music also strongly supports pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The subject is effectively managed by the music co-ordinator who continues to provide informed and enthusiastic leadership.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with severe motor and communication difficulties make excellent progress in the infants.
133. Infants respond well to their lessons in dance. They learn simple rhythmic movements to match the mood and tempo of the music. They march with growing confidence to "The Grand Old Duke of York" and they bend and stretch, sometimes with adult help, to match the words "up" and "down" in the song. Pupils with significant mobility problems, who require the use of walking frames, join in the activity. They achieve very well in their swimming sessions. Higher achievers can undo their own shoes and remove their socks as they consolidate their dressing and undressing skills. They can float unaided in a number of cases, and they show great confidence and pleasure in the water. A small number can swim a short distance.
134. In a session for pupils with severe motor and communication difficulties, excellent standards are achieved. They stretch and press to work switches and are rewarded by a spoken message or the movement of a toy triggered by the switch. All try to stand and half succeed. They show a growing ability to make purposive movement.
135. Juniors work in their gymnastic lessons to build up their range of movement and travelling skills. They jump and balance with confidence. They learn to obey signals, for example, stopping when the music does. Gradually they learn to stop at the sound of the teacher's whistle. Higher attaining pupils roll and tumble on the gym mat. They enjoy the chance to go horse riding and with adult help they mount and ride ponies. By the age of seven, pupils help to set out and remove apparatus for balancing and jumping and they know that they get hot and have a faster heart beat when they exercise.
136. Juniors with severe motor and communication difficulties make good progress in developing control and extension in their movements. In their swimming sessions pupils make good progress as they build on the good start they have had earlier in their school life.
137. Pupils enjoy physical activity and their PE lessons. In some cases, however, individual children are dismayed by having to change for swimming, or are distressed by the exciting soft play area in the hall where they do their gym lessons. Nevertheless, their behaviour is generally good. Pupils in the water, in the gym or riding ponies are proud of what they can do and they try hard to do their best.
138. Pupils learn well because of the good quality of the teaching they receive. The hydrotherapy pool provides an excellent facility and the allowance of time given to PE is generous. Teachers know their pupils very well and this informs the approach of staff. Of the teaching seen some was excellent and none was less than good. It is generally very good. Work with infants with severe motor and communication difficulties is of the highest quality. The planning is extremely thorough, teaching is confident and assured about what should be achieved in each case and the goals set are challenging. There is imaginative use of a wide range of resources. In a very positive atmosphere the pupils gain confidence and blossom. They make great efforts to try things out and are delighted by their success. So, for example, a pupil with very restricted movement is encouraged to press a switch. She does, and is delighted (and is strongly motivated to try again) when her switch pressing moves an engine across the table into a pile of toy bricks which crash to the floor with a delightful clatter.
139. The pupils have a broad range of learning opportunities, including opportunities to take part in "competitive" and team games. Facilities are good and there are sufficient good quality resources. The hall that is used for gymnastics and dance is limited in its usefulness, however, by the fact that it is used for many more activities. A soft play area occupies about a third of the available space and toys for the toddlers' group are also stored there. This provides a distraction to some pupils in their lessons and also prevents the best storage of PE apparatus.

140. In the previous inspection progress in PE was satisfactory overall. It is now good and very good or excellent in some cases, particularly in work with the more challenging pupils. Teaching is now much more consistent, being at least good in all cases and very good or excellent in almost half of lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Attainment in religious education (RE) throughout the school is good. Pupils hear Christian and Jewish stories and stories from the Koran and touch and look at the Bible. They make masks for the Hindu festival of Diwali, make decorations for Holi and colour in the sacred symbol of Hinduism. They draw pictures of the stable where Jesus was born and of the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 people. From Judaism, pupils draw pictures of Benjamin when he went to Egypt and was accused of stealing a golden cup. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties touch religious artefacts, such as a Christian cross and join with other pupils on visits to the local church, seeing the font where people are christened. Pupils make good progress in religious education.
142. Infants celebrate birthdays and produce a lovely display for their classroom wall. They see a real baby in school and gently touch him. They sing "Happy Birthday" and clap and smile when they hear the tune. When they give presents to the baby, pupils experience moments of pleasure and wonder out of the giving. They hear about the harvest of the sea and make a beautiful display for all the pupils to share in.
143. Juniors explore their own feelings, which include being sad, angry and happy. They hear about harvest time and make a collage of food they like, which is carefully set out in the corridor with a field of wheat growing in a bowl. They celebrate the Christian festival of Advent, the Jewish festivals of Sukkoth and Hanukkah and the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-fitr. Pupils see photographs of families and reflect on the fact that they are members of their class. An examination of the school plans for RE shows that during the year they hear stories about Jesus, visit the local church and celebrate Easter. They also explore the artefacts and symbols of other major religions and hear how different people pray and worship God.
144. Teaching and learning is at least good and often very good or excellent. RE lessons often begin with the lighting of a candle and pupils are keenly aware of the nature of this lesson and sense its 'spiritual' atmosphere. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the pupils' special educational needs and how RE can be successfully taught in their school. Pupils' learning, as a result, ranges from good to excellent. They have high expectations of the pupils and plan and organise the activities to embrace the wide-ranging needs of all in their care. Learning support assistants (LSAs) in the main provide very good support in helping to meet pupils' individual needs. Sometimes their involvement may distract the pupils and this can affect the quality of learning as a consequence. All teachers and LSAs use Makaton signing and symbols very effectively in communicating with pupils, and this impacts very positively on pupils' learning. Teachers often give immediate and very effective feedback to pupils to promote good behaviour and to reinforce learning. One teacher, for example, frequently says to pupils, 'good looking', 'good following' (if they are following a particular activity), 'good focusing' and 'good talking'. The pupils love the praise and respond accordingly.
145. Since the last inspection the school has prepared a detailed RE policy and put into place an outline scheme of work. There is a good range of resources to support the teaching of RE throughout the school, with boxes of artefacts and posters for all the major world religions. Displays in the school, for example, Noah's Ark, the Sukkoth display in class 4, 'Which baby am I?' and other displays highlighted above, very positively reinforce and support the teaching of RE. The subject is well managed by the RE co-ordinator who has made far-reaching improvements in the way religious education is planned and taught. It is now a fully developed subject in its own right, contributing very significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.