INSPECTION REPORT

ST GILES SCHOOL
Croydon

LEA area: London Borough of Croydon

Unique reference number: 101852

Headteacher: Jackie Thomas

Reporting inspector: George Derby
25349

Dates of inspection: 30 October – 2 November 2000

Inspection number: 223693

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	3 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed

School address:	Pampisford Rd South Croydon Surrey
Postcode:	CR2 6DF
Telephone number:	0208 680 2141
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Paul Norman

Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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> Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Giles is a mixed day school for pupils aged three to 16 with physical disability. Most pupils live in Croydon or nearby boroughs such as Merton, Wandsworth, Sutton, Lambeth and Lewisham. Many pupils have additional difficulties such as visual and hearing impairment. The school has facilities to support deaf-blind pupils, managed by Croydon's communication support service. There are 104 pupils on roll, an increase since the last inspection, and seven children are taught in the Foundation stage. Pupils in the secondary department are taught in key stage groups, set by ability. Just under a half of pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds which reflect the ethnic mix of the Croydon area: 19 pupils have English as an additional language and four of these are in the early stages of learning the language. Pupils' attainment on entry falls into a very broad range, but is generally below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Giles is a very effective school which is very well led and managed and which gives very good value for money. It creates a very good ethos in which pupils succeed both academically and personally. The quality of care for pupils is very high and their physical well-being is of the highest priority. The work of the highly skilled support staff adds much to pupils' learning in lessons. Pupils achieve very well, mainly as a result of very good teaching. This is strongest in the secondary department, where there is a very good range of learning opportunities, and also in the Foundation stage, where a very good start is provided for children. Every pupil gains some form of external accreditation just before leaving the school, many attaining passes at GCSE. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection; there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of very good and excellent teaching has significantly increased.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The headteacher leads the school very well and is strongly supported by a very capable senior management team and governing body.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall and support staff make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning in lessons.
- Pupils' achievements in art, aspects of English and information and communication technology (ICT), and the way ICT is used across the curriculum to promote learning in other subjects are very good.
- Pupils' relationships are excellent. They give a high level of support to less able peers. Their enthusiasm and interest in their work is exceptionally good and older pupils work very well together. The opportunities pupils have to develop personally are very strong. Pupils throughout the school act responsibly and very maturely.
- The very good provision in the Foundation stage, especially the way pupils' progress is assessed and recorded, enables children to learn very well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The links between pupils' targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) and other target setting procedures the school has; the use of diagnostic assessment to identify targets, so that learning priorities are sharper and lesson planning and individual pupils' programmes are informed by these.
- The ways in which some pupils are helped to communicate and to access the curriculum, and the match of activities in lessons to the differing needs and abilities of pupils.
- The breadth of provision for design and technology at Key Stage 3, including improving pupils' progress in the areas of resistant materials, pneumatics, hydraulics and electronics, areas not presently sufficiently covered.
- The school's way of checking on its standards and quality so that staff are better informed of the outcomes and are able to plan for improvement more efficiently and effectively.

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

There has been a good improvement since the school was last inspected in November 1996. Reports to parents are now informative and subjects are all reported separately. The school has worked hard to develop its assessment procedures; these are now excellent in the nursery and good elsewhere. The school keeps data gained from a specific number of tests carried out on pupils and is able to track pupils' progress in relation to these very well. However, its use of diagnostic assessment is more limited. The school monitors the budget well and co-ordinators are clear on budget allocations for their subjects and the bidding process, which is tied to development planning and school priorities. Governors have considered their role in monitoring the standards and quality in the school, although the timescale for this has been rather long. They have now produced a very good monitoring and evaluation policy which sets out a clear rationale and priorities, a timetable and success criteria. Governors have monitored aspects of the school's management and work, such as the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, and have received good quality reports from the headteacher about the school standards. The school's range of accreditation has improved, allowing all pupils to leave with a variety of awards. The school is very well placed to continue to improve, and the headteacher, senior management team and governors are strongly committed to further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 16		Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	A		Excellent	A*
reading	A	A	B		very good	A
writing	A	A	B		good	B
mathematics	A	B	C		satisfactory	C
personal, social and health education (PSHE)	A*	A	A		unsatisfactory	D
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A*	B	B		poor	E

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

Pupils achieve very well. They have achieved particularly well in art (where two pupils achieved a GCSE A grade), and in some aspects of English and ICT in GCSE examinations. The school has developed a very good range of accreditation to flexibly support and celebrate pupils' achievements. In 2000, twenty per cent of pupils gained five passes at grades A* to C and all gained at least one A* to G grade. This is a significant achievement when compared to similar schools, although any data must be regarded with caution because cohorts are small. The school's statutory targets are appropriately challenging and founded on information from their very good assessment database. However, whole-school targets, while representing a good attempt at identifying areas for raising achievement, do not include all pupils and some are not sufficiently challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils really enjoy school and concentrate for long periods of time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very polite and act maturely. One pupil said that he had been bullied in his previous school 'but everyone is very nice here'.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are very friendly and readily help one another. The school's ethos strongly cultivates pupils' personal responsibility and mutual trust and respect. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Given the need for many pupils to attend frequent medical appointments, the attendance rate is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and has significantly improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. All the teaching in this inspection was satisfactory or better and just under a half was very good or excellent. Eight tenths of the teaching was good or better. Teaching is strongest in the Foundation stage and the secondary department, where 66 per cent of the teaching was very good or excellent. Teaching was good in the primary department, and in some classes, it was of very high quality. However, there are occasional weaknesses in matching work to pupils' needs and in the pace of teaching and learning. Across the school, more challenge for higher ability pupils and a wider range of activities planned for pupils of different abilities would help to achieve even higher standards. The school does provide a good range of ways to help pupils' access to the curriculum, such as signs, symbols and ICT, although some pupils need more opportunities to use ICT, or augmentative communication, to enable them to be more independent in their work and communications. The quality of teaching in English (including literacy) is very good overall in both primary and secondary departments. In science it is very good overall; it is good in the primary department and very good in the secondary department. In mathematics (including numeracy), the teaching is satisfactory overall, being good in the primary department and satisfactory in the secondary department.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The quality of the curriculum is excellent. The curriculum is particularly strong for children five years and under. For all pupils there is a very good range of opportunities outside lessons, which promote pupils' personal development very well, as does the very good range of accredited courses for pupils in Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3, the accommodation and, to some extent, teachers' knowledge, restrict the range of learning opportunities in design and technology.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school uses a good range of ways to help pupils learn English including symbols and signs. Pupils and families are well supported by the school's work with staff from the local education authority's service.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual development is very well promoted through assemblies, religious education, music and art. Opportunities for pupils to develop socially are excellent and include the school's caring and supportive ethos, and clubs, outings and residential visits. Pupils are very clearly taught right from wrong and the school's behaviour policy effectively outlines what is expected of pupils. A wide range of visits to artistic venues, participation in performances, and good multicultural opportunities, all enhance pupils' cultural development very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very good level of care is provided for pupils. This is a very supportive school where child protection, health and safety and the monitoring of pupils' personal development are good. Assessment is similarly good but a more diagnostic approach to assessment would improve the accuracy of the targets set for pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school ethos is very strong and a clear view for the development of the school is shared by all. The headteacher's style of leadership is positively inclusive. It ensures that all staff are included in decision making and that ideas are tested before being fully implemented. This means that some features of the school's work take longer to implement than necessary.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The high calibre governors have a good, broad understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and act well as a critical friend to the school. They have a high commitment to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The ways the school has for checking how well it is doing are good. However, some work needs to proceed with more pace and rigour and subject co-ordinators need to be involved in a broader range of monitoring activities, so that improvements can be speedier and more focused.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finances are well planned against the priorities identified in the school development plan.

The school has begun to apply the principles of best value and is actively seeking ways of comparing itself with other similar establishments, although it knows the inherent weaknesses in this. Governors have a good understanding of the importance and place of competitive tendering and always seek tenders when necessary.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
• That they feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • That behaviour is good. • That teaching is good. • That the school is well led and managed. • That the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.	• The amount and the appropriateness of homework set. • The information they receive on their children's progress.

Inspectors agree strongly with the positive views that parents have. Inspectors' judge homework to be good. Homework is set very regularly and is reasonably well organised so that pupils do not get too much at once. Teachers expect pupils to complete homework properly and to the best of their ability. Many of the activities give scope for pupils to answer in a variety of ways. For older pupils there are good opportunities for research and to work independently. However, the work is not always planned according to pupils' differing needs and, occasionally for some, it is too easy. Reports give very good information on what pupils know, understand and can do, and the school publishes their attainment levels when they reach the end of a key stage. The school could do more to keep parents informed of their children's attainment levels from year-to-year, and its aims could be more explicit.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The headteacher leads the school very well and is strongly supported by a very capable senior management team and governing body.

1.   The headteacher, appointed shortly after the last inspection, has done much to raise standards in the school and ensure that every pupil's efforts are valued. An increased range of accreditation means that every pupil is able to leave school with a recognised award and enjoy a sense of pride in achievement. Standards in the school have risen since the last inspection and there is a general trend of more pupils achieving GCSE passes, although this varies according to the make up of the cohort in any one particular year.

2.   The headteacher has built a strong high calibre staff team, as is evident in the very good quality of teaching and pupils' learning. She has strongly considered the role that all staff, including support assistants, need to play in supporting the pupils, and staff are very well deployed as a result. Their work is very effective and the team spirit in classes and the school is very strong. Morale is high amongst the whole staff. They work very well together under the very strong leadership of the headteacher, for the good of the school and to enable the pupils to achieve as much as they can. The senior management team is very strong cohesive group, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a very strong commitment to their work. The headteacher and senior management team are strongly supported by governors, many of whom bring a high level of expertise to the school. They are reflective in their approach and think critically about the work of the school. They are committed to the school's continued improvement and have a good broad understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

3.   In order to raise standards and improve the quality of the curriculum, the headteacher and governors have taken a decision to appoint teachers, wherever possible, with a strong mainstream curriculum background. This approach has been highly successful. However, the monitoring of the impact of these new mainstream teachers' induction programmes needs more rigour, to ensure swift and direct support when there are weaknesses in the match and pace of the work to pupils' levels and needs.

4.   A clear agenda for school improvement is shared by the whole staff, and development planning is very well supported by clear action plans and targets for individual staff. The school's broad long-term vision and plans are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the work undertaken and use the analysis to fine-tune further planning. The school has started to look at the success of its actions in terms of pupils' learning and progress but this needs now to be taken much further. The school is aware of the limitations of the ways in which it currently analyses pupils' achievements because of the very small groups of pupils involved. It now needs to pay greater attention to the strengths and weaknesses of individuals' learning, through more use of diagnostic assessment and the analysis of progress in and response to the teaching programmes.

5.   The headteacher's inclusive leadership style and determination to 'get things right' are valued by the senior management team and by staff. Very careful consideration is given to any new development in the school. Decisive action can be taken where this is needed but sometimes actions do not always proceed with sufficient pace and rigour. For instance, the school's monitoring strategy has taken a long time to develop and at present not all elements are fully in place.

The quality of teaching is very good overall and support staff make a significant contribution to quality of pupils' learning in lessons.

6.   The teaching is strongest in the Foundation stage and the secondary department. In the latter it is very good because of the teachers' excellent knowledge of the subjects they teach, of the special educational needs of the pupils and of best way to help them learn. Teaching in the Foundation stage is highly effective because the teachers and support staff have an excellent understanding of the areas of learning and of pupils' individual special educational needs. They work very effectively together and their detailed planning and very good use of resource means that pupils are always motivated and interested and challenged in their learning. Teaching is good in the primary department, largely because of teachers' curriculum knowledge and the really positive way they have responded to the challenge of teaching pupils with physical disability, despite a previous lack of experience in this area. Their knowledge of pupils' special educational needs is developing well, but some teachers need more help than they are presently receiving.

7.   Lively, interesting teaching by enthusiastic teachers, and lessons which proceed at a vigorous pace, maintain pupils' interest and motivation. The majority of teachers expect a great deal from their pupils, in terms of both their behaviour and the quality of their work. Pupils' respond very well to these high expectations and try their hardest.

8.   Written planning is good but not as good as teachers' practical planning, which is very well thought out. The school's new planning format provides teachers with a better format for planning for pupils' progress over time and helps teachers to think more critically about their planning and children's responses. The section for the assessment of individual pupils is helping teachers collect better information about pupils' learning and progress. A weakness is that there is no place for teachers to write evaluations of their lessons and what they might need to do to improve. This new approach to written planning is working well in the primary department but needs to be developed further, and implemented at a faster pace, in the secondary department.

9.   Teachers use a good range of ways of helping pupils learn. A particular strength is the use of multimedia presentations in ICT and French; pupils respond superbly to these and concentrate very well. Teachers' careful planning and very good awareness of each others' work, in addition to the many different and interesting ways they help pupils learn, enable pupils to link what they have been taught in one lesson with work in another. For example, pupils learning about databases and field descriptors in ICT were helped to apply these skills to interrogate a census database in history.

10.   Support staff, including technicians, are a considerable asset to the whole staff team. They make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. They know when to stand back and when to intervene, giving pupils the maximum opportunity to be as independent as they can be. Their knowledge of the pupils is considerable, and their sensitive handling and very good relationships with pupils mean that pupils respond very positively. Support staff are

well versed in the positioning of pupils, in how to use particular technology such as roller balls, different keyboards and simple communication aids. In some practical subjects, such as science, support staff's work could be better focused, or more efficient, if they had greater knowledge of the subject and were used to teach small groups. In ICT, where the technician has a high degree of knowledge and expertise, this works extremely well, but in science it is less effective because a variety of non-specialist support assistants work with the pupils. Occasionally, support staff are not used well in long introductions to lessons such as in literacy lessons in the primary department. Although some do make notes on pupils' responses for assessment purposes, this aspect of their work is under-developed. In the Foundation stage, support staff are always effectively deployed in supporting individual pupils and they support children's learning further through high quality observation of children in lessons.

11.   Homework is used well by teachers to further support pupils' understanding, learning and independence. It is provided regularly and pupils are clear about what is expected of them. This provision is very well developed in the secondary department where pupils are working towards awards and are enthusiastic about completing the work. Their 'gilofax' information (St Giles information file), and the home-school file in the primary department all give clear information about the work they should do at home. Homework is usually sufficiently challenging and gives scope for the pupils to complete it according to their different abilities. Sometimes, however, it is not always well matched when specific tasks are given, and for some it is too easy.

Pupils' achievements in art, aspects of English and ICT and the way ICT is used across the curriculum to promote learning in other subjects.

12.   In art pupils achieve very well. They produce very high quality work, much of which is well displayed around the school. They achieved particularly well in their GCSE examinations in 2000, when the range of the grades was from A to C. Teaching and support by all staff are of the highest quality. A highly skilful specialist teacher teaches art in the secondary department. Support is carefully planned to give all pupils maximum involvement in the lesson and build progressively on their knowledge and skills. Lessons explore all aspects of the subject effectively. The teachers' deep understanding of the breadth of the subject, as well as their clear vision of how to support all pupils' access to and practical skills in the subject, ensure that pupils make very good and sometimes excellent progress. Really good use is made of other artist's styles, which are appraised and incorporated into the pupils' work. Pupils take great care with their work, think carefully about how it could be improved and are quick to celebrate the work of each other. They are proud of their achievements and set themselves high standards.

13.   In English, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection, particularly in writing for different purposes across the curriculum and for different purposes. This has had a strong influence on standards, particularly for pupils in the secondary department. The literacy strategy is clearly impacting well at Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are developing word level skills and knowledge of texts well, including the ability to use a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening at all key stages, whatever their means of communication; they are confident communicators who are interested in what their teachers and others have to say. They become increasingly skilled in presenting their point of view and offering reasons for it. Their achievements in reading and writing are very good in the primary department, and good by end of Key Stage 4 in the secondary phase. There are some excellent examples of pupils, across the range of ability,

exploring a range of literature and writing high quality assignments in response to it for their accredited courses. Progress in Key Stage 3 is stronger as a result of the systematic support given for the literacy strategy and the impact of very good and often excellent teaching. The school has developed a very effective response to the literacy initiative; teachers in areas such as food technology and design and technology teach elements of the literacy strategy within their lessons. This helps pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum and ensures that literacy is effectively addressed as a whole-school issue. An excellent range and use of support materials, challenging literature and very good interactive marking also make a strong contribution to pupils' progress in English. For some pupils, their progress in English could be better if the links between the information from speech and language, or augmentative communication, assessments and pupils' learning targets and lesson planning were clearer. There also needs to be more use of diagnostic assessment to identify those pupils who are making particularly slow progress, and the reasons for this.

14.   In 2000 the school entered its Year 11 pupils for the ICT GCSE examination for the first time; pupils achieved very well in this. Their achievements across the school are very good because the subject is very well taught. Computers are used well in lessons to support pupils' ICT capability, to record the results of their practical work, to write accounts, and generally to aid learning in other subjects. Great effort has been put into ensuring that coursework is appropriate for all levels of accreditation, so that pupils have maximum opportunity to take the examination or assessment that they are capable of doing.

15.   The use of ICT is well embedded in the curriculum and integral to the work undertaken. ICT is also used well to support pupils' access to the curriculum. However, the school could go further to improve provision and pupils' progress. It could ensure that all teachers are aware of the basic features of the software that is available to help pupils, especially for writing and recording, and make more efficient use of it in lessons, for example in science. Pupils with limited literacy skills copy work because they do not have 'word banks' on screen from which to choose words for use in their own texts.

Pupils' relationships are excellent. They give a high level of support to less able peers. Their enthusiasm and interest in their work is exceptionally good and older pupils work very well together. The opportunities pupils have to develop personally are very strong. Pupils throughout the school act responsibly and very maturely.

16.   Pupils' ability to concentrate for sustained periods of time is impressive and relates to the high quality of the work that is provided by teachers. Pupils are very keen to learn and their interest in activities and in their lessons is excellent. The oldest pupils show a very mature attitude to school, and are able to express very clear opinions about how the school has helped them, and how they are being very well prepared for their next placement and future life. One deaf-blind pupil, using finger spelling, was able to identify the personal assessment procedures he has undertaken in preparation for residential college. Others are able to express a good knowledge of their strengths, their own limitations and what they realistically hope to achieve. Pupils demonstrate a high level of awareness and are at ease with their disabilities and those of others. They are empowered to deal with other people's responses to their disability, and some are able to express how they put people at ease who are uncomfortable in their presence.

17.   Pupils show mutual respect for staff and each other and form excellent relationships. Their friendships are strong. They naturally help each other where they can. When it comes to work, they relate in a collaborative manner, showing great respect for each other's views

and ideas. No one pupil tries to dominate, and those that need support value this greatly. Pupils show a good awareness of each other's needs in the way in which they instinctively adjust their approach to communication, or their positioning, when talking with each other. This is done in a totally unassuming and non-patronising way.

18. Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. They move around the school in an orderly manner, and quickly and quietly from one lesson to another. They play well with each other in the playground. Lunchtimes are pleasant and orderly times and pupils are very well mannered and polite. They discuss a wide variety of topics with each other and older pupils show a growing capacity to express a wide range of well-considered opinions on topical events. In discussion, pupils say there is no bullying, although some had been bullied in their previous school.

The very good provision in the Foundation stage, especially the way children's progress is assessed and recorded, enables children to learn very well.

19. The quality of education in the Foundation stage is very good with excellent features, particularly the way in which pupils' progress is monitored, assessed and planned for. Very strong systems are in place for their identified special educational needs. Clear objectives are devised for each area of learning for children and checklists of progress are clearly annotated and dated, with the outcomes clearly identified. Excellent records are kept, which are very comprehensive and well organised and provide very good evidence of progress. Children's work and their levels of attainment are clearly annotated. The quality of teaching is very good and there is a uniformly high response by all staff to all children's needs. Teamwork is excellent between support staff and teachers. Support staff know children's targets very well and they make a very strong contribution to the children's learning. Particularly strong support is given for PSHE and for children's communication skills. All staff build up very strong relationships with children who quickly establish trust and therefore are prepared to try out new activities and experiences.

20. High quality learning experiences are carefully devised to cover the Foundation stage curriculum and to meet children's individual needs. The teacher works effectively with external services and a range of personnel to ensure children's programmes are not fragmented, and that their priority targets are incorporated into all elements of curriculum. This means children get clear messages about what they should be concentrating on and how they should be approaching their work. In addition, Foundation stage staff work closely with parents, establishing very good relationships with them and keeping them involved in their children's learning through contact books and coffee mornings.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

21. The links between pupils' targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) and other target setting procedures the school has. The use of diagnostic assessment to identify targets, so that learning priorities are sharper and lesson planning and individual pupils' programmes are informed by these.

22. Since the last inspection, the school has improved in its assessment practices significantly. These improvements are mainly in the refinement and development of its procedures to help it identify individual and school targets, and to evaluate progress towards these. Annual reports include very clear evidence of what pupils have experienced,

understand and can do. Generally, they identify clear targets for pupils, particularly in mathematics, English and behaviour. These targets then form the basis of pupils' IEPs and the setting of short-term targets for pupils. In recognition of the need to track pupils' progress in all subjects and in all aspects of their development, the school also requires class teachers and subject teachers to set targets for pupils in all subjects. Although this is good practice, the current approach means that there is some confusion about what are the priority targets for pupils and how these are then shared with parents and pupils. In mathematics, for example, targets in teachers' files do not always coincide with those in pupils' IEPs. In English, pupils' IEP targets are written within the context of the school's literacy response and do not always take account of pupils' speech and language therapy assessments, or of their implications for supporting pupils' literacy needs. The quality of the actual targets set is generally good and pupils make at least good progress towards them. The school involves pupils and parents in target setting, but there is scope for them to extend this, and refine language that targets are written in, to make the practice more effective. For example, pupils are included in the target setting meetings and have copies of their targets, but some cannot read them or understand the language in which they are written.

23. The school has made very good progress in establishing systems for tracking pupils' progress on a year-by-year basis. They include National Curriculum and 'P' levels (*The Qualification and Curriculum Authority's differentiated performance targets)*, reading and vocabulary tests and mathematical assessments. It has established a database that allows it to analyse these as a basis for considering whole-school targets. The database provides a good reference point for the school to gather information about standards in basic skills and ICT generally. As in all things that it does, the school reflects seriously on the process of making comparisons and drawing conclusions from small samples. It recognises the shortcomings of setting targets and analysing progress in this way and is seeking to supplement it. Current procedures, for example, do not enable the reasons for a pupil's lack of progress or failure to meet a target to be analysed in any depth. The need to identify where pupils have specific learning difficulties requires a further extension of the school's use of diagnostic testing. Such testing already takes place, as in speech and language assessments and by external specialists, but the results and their implications for curriculum planning, target setting and curriculum delivery are not always fully understood by all staff or incorporated into their planning. This means that not all lessons have work and pace that are precisely geared to the learning needs of all pupils, and opportunities to reinforce learning are sometimes lost. There are already some excellent examples of good practice. For example, pupils' physiotherapy programmes are integrated into the whole-school day in some classes in a way that does not dominate or disrupt the lesson.

24. The school has tried hard to develop systems for self-evaluation and to set targets to raise standards. It is carefully analysing its examination and test results as a basis for this. The limitations of the group size and of some of the tests used have been recognised by the school, and senior staff are trying to move towards a more effective system. In addition, some target setting, for example in relation to reading standards, has been limited to too narrow a group of children. Whole-school target setting needs to be located more firmly, within a framework that is related to all pupils' outcomes and progress. The school is right to analyse data over time for this purpose and is able to use data from its database. It also needs to take into account information in pupils' IEPs and in those areas of the curriculum it has sought to raise standards in.

The ways in which some pupils are helped to communicate and access the curriculum and the match of activities in lessons to the differing needs and abilities of pupils.

25.   The school uses a good range of different systems and approaches to support pupils' differing needs in lessons. In the secondary department, the pupils are grouped by ability and this helps teacher plan activities that are closely geared to their capability. However, in both primary and secondary departments, activities within lessons are not always further adapted to the needs and abilities within each class. It is good in science in Key Stages 3 and 4, where the careful consideration given to the different age groups within the classes, as well as to their abilities, leads to high quality practical activities. As a result, pupils learn very well and are able to build on their previous learning systematically, because the teachers have carefully focussed on the programme of study for the particular age group.   There are some excellent examples of this being done well in the primary department. For instance, in the English lesson for Years 5 and 6, pupils used a variety of different ways of writing that were expertly planned.

26.   The school considers a considerable number of alternative ways of helping pupils who are unable to use speech as their main method of communication. These range from low technology systems, such as signing and symbol use, to high technology facilities such as electronic communication aids. Staff have a clear understanding of the implications of the use of these. However, the way the pupils are assessed, and the provision and evaluation of the use of such equipment and systems need better co-ordination and management. Pupils should be enabled to be as independent as possible as soon as possible. Although this does happen to some extent, it could be further improved by more judicious use of electronic systems. At the moment, too many staff are involved with individual pupils with communication difficulties; equipment takes too long to be provided (following a long wait for external assessment), and there is not a continuum in this provision to meet pupils' developing needs. In addition, there need to be closer links with the ICT expertise within school and between ICT software and communication aid technology.

The provision for design and technology at Key Stage 3, including pupils' progress in those areas not covered adequately at present.

27.   The school has tried hard to ensure that all aspects of the Key Stage 3 design and technology programme of study are included in the school's range of learning opportunities. Many elements are included in art and design and in science. The school's food technology and textiles programme is very strong and pupils achieve very well. It is very well taught, thought out, and links with ICT and its applications are strong. However, because of limitations in the accommodation and equipment, very little work is undertaken in the areas of resistant materials, pneumatics, hydraulics and electronics. Teachers' knowledge of these areas is less well developed. As a result pupils are not able to make the progress they could in these areas.

The school's way of checking on its standards and quality so that staff are better informed of the outcomes and are able to plan for improvement more effectively.

28.   The headteacher, governors and school management team carefully consider the systems and procedures they put in place and the effect these will have on staff and pupils. The school is very reflective and strives hard to get right what it puts in place in order to improve the quality of provision and standards. Monitoring, at present, is mainly limited to the work of the senior management team. Although observations of teaching take place, little

information is gathered on the quality of provision within subjects by subject co-ordinators, and not enough information is being shared across the school. Co-ordinators need to take a more active role, especially now there is an agreement over the features to be evaluated through monitoring, procedures. Governors have considered the whole area of monitoring and a system of observations and designated responsibilities has now been agreed. The governors' policy for this is very good. However, this, and the school's response to monitoring, have taken a great deal of time to consider, and the pace of working has, in some instances, been slow. Monitoring of some newly appointed teachers would have been more effective in identifying areas for improvement, if the monitoring had been more rigorous from the outset.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

29.   In order to improve the quality of education, and management of the school, the headteacher governors and senior management team should:

- Ensure that pupils' targets in their IEPs make clear the most important aspects of what they need to learn and that:

  * where different sets of targets exist, there is a better relationship between them and the IEP targets;
  * information from subject assessments and individuals' targets is used to set targets for the whole school which are challenging and which relate to all pupils;
  * more use is made of diagnostic assessment to help teachers plan better to support pupils' learning and write sharper, better informed targets;

- Improve accommodation and facilities for design and technology and implement a full programme of study which includes work with resistant materials, electronics, pneumatics and hydraulics;

- Ensure that teachers improve further their planning of work and activities for different needs and abilities so that

  * pupils can learn more effectively;
  * those who need to use ICT to help them learn and/or who need to use ways of communicating other than speech have their needs systematically and efficiently assessed and addressed by a multi-disciplinary team who can provide a wide range of opportunities, including the use of communication aids;
  * any such provision is regularly reviewed, re-assessed and updated;
  * staff training needs are met;

- Develop more rigorous ways of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, and ensure that

  * all levels of management, including subject co-coordinators, are involved in this process;
  * information is shared with all relevant parties so that improvements can be more effectively planned.

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	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	41	34	17	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	104
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	11

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, 2, 3, and 4

It is not possible to report on pupils' results, as cohorts are too small.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:
YR– Y16

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	9
Average class size	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff:
YR– Y16

Total number of education support staff	24
Total aggregate hours worked per week	697

Financial information

Financial year	**1999/2000**

	£
Total income	1100631.00
Total expenditure	1073327.00
Expenditure per pupil	10126.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	27304.00
Balance carried forward to next year	75252.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	104
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	21	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	25	6	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	33	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	43	7	7	3
The teaching is good.	69	26	0	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	28	7	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	19	0	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	23	7	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	65	25	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	18	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	24	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	18	3	6	15