

INSPECTION REPORT

SHENSTONE SCHOOL

Crayford

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101486

Headteacher: Linda Aldcroft

Reporting inspector: Dr D Alan Dobbins
27424

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th February 2002

Inspection number: 230092

Full 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
Age range of pupils:	2 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	94 Old Road Crayford Kent
Postcode:	DA1 4DZ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Ron Passey
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27424	Dr D A Dobbins	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Music Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9079	A Moss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
15021	N Watling	Team inspector	English Design and technology	
19946	R Baker	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23733	A Anderson	Team inspector	Personal, social and health education Science Religious education	
13101	M Kell	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Shenstone School is part of the local authority provision for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties and increasingly for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. It provides for 60 full time pupils and two part time pupils from ages 2 to 11 years. Forty-three pupils are boys, 16 are girls. Two pupils attend the Foundation Stage part-time, and nine boys and two girls attend full time. The agreed maximum number of pupils is 57. All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupils are admitted from the London Borough of Bexley or the London Borough of Lewisham. All travel to and from the school by minibus or taxi. Ten pupils are from ethnic minorities. Six pupils are learning English as an additional language. Twenty pupils (32 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, a slightly higher percentage than in many equivalent schools. As a consequence of their learning difficulties, the attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below that expected for their age. Since the last inspection, the range of provision has been reduced from the Foundation Stage, the four key stages and Post-16 to the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. Nevertheless, the range of learning difficulties presented by pupils has broadened as the school is increasingly admitting pupils with the most complex of difficulties. The extensive refurbishment programme that began after the last inspection has been recently completed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Shenstone School is a good school. Very good leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, good teaching and the excellent relationships staff have with pupils foster pupils' very good attitudes to their work. Routinely, they behave well in lessons and work hard at their learning. This results in the standards they are achieving and the progress they are making being good in most of the subjects and in their personal and social development. The cost per pupil is higher than for many equivalent schools. Nevertheless, because of the good quality of learning achieved over a time of changing provision, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Helps pupils achieve well in many subjects and in their personal and social development.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good or better in four lessons in ten.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She receives excellent support from the deputy headteacher.
- Links well with parents and provides them with very good information on their children's progress.
- Promotes very good behaviour and helps pupils achieve good standards in most of the subjects.
- The relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent. This helps pupils be confident as learners. The standards they achieve benefit from this.

What could be improved

- The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making in art, geography, history and music.
- The procedures of the governing body for recognising the quality of the work of the school.
- The way in which learning in subjects is reinforced in lessons in the other subjects.

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

It is difficult to judge the extent of improvement since the last inspection (January 1997) because of the change in the school's provision. The key issues for action identified then focused more on the provision for secondary aged pupils and not for those for whom the school now provides. In other areas, there has been good improvement. The curriculum has improved. Pupils are better at their learning because the quality of teaching has improved. As a consequence, pupils are making better progress against their learning targets. The good progress reported last time for English and physical education has been maintained.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 2	by Year 6	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	B	Very good	A
Reading	B	B	Good	B
Writing	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

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

Children at the Foundation Stage achieve good standards and are making good progress over all of the early learning goals. The school's statutory targets are appropriate. Pupils' individual targets, set at the annual review, represent good challenges for their work for the next year. Individual educational plans provide good help in the planning of many lessons and in promoting the good gains pupils are making in their personal and social development. The standards achieved in speaking and listening and in reading are good and reflect the primary focus of the curriculum, which is the development of communication skills. In mathematics, they are also good. Pupils achieve very good standards in religious education. They achieve good standards in science, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and in physical education. In art, geography, history and music they achieve satisfactory standards. There are no differences in the progress made towards the learning targets of boys and girls, pupils with different levels of learning needs or those from ethnic minorities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Staff work hard to instil good attitudes in pupils. As a consequence, pupils work hard at their learning and enjoy achieving success.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are courteous and respectful. In lessons, they behave very well. At break and lunchtimes, they socialise very well with each other. Only rarely is there a need for teachers to remind pupils of their responsibility as learners.
Personal development and relationships	Teachers, learning support assistants (LSAs), lunchtime supervisors, the premises staff and the administrative staff have developed excellent relationships with pupils. The school is a caring establishment and as a result, pupils are friendly and confident. They work hard to please.
Attendance	Very good; better than in many equivalent schools.

The ethos is for learning in a friendly and considerate environment. The expectancy is that pupils will work hard at their learning. The excellent relationships between all staff and pupils make pupils feel valued. As a result, they are happy and enthusiastic learners who work hard in their lessons and take pride in doing their best. This contributes to the good progress they are making in most of the subjects.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In four lessons in ten, a substantial proportion of lessons, it is very good or better. In most of the lessons it is good or better. The good quality of teaching in English and mathematics has benefited from the implementation into lesson planning of the principles of the National Strategies. In science, teaching is good, as it is in lessons in personal, social and health education. Teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils learning needs and their very good planning for lessons, contribute to the good quality of teaching. The contribution of the LSAs is considerable. They are very competent and work well with their teachers. Most subjects are well resourced with equipment that matches the specific needs of pupils. The good use of specific strategies to teach educationally and communicationally challenged children (TEACCH) and picture exchange procedures helps teachers meet the needs of pupils with the severest of learning difficulties. In this, they are helped by the speech and language therapists and the physiotherapist and occupational therapists who provide good quality advice and support.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and relevant and meets pupils' needs. It is not as well balanced as it should be. The weekly allocation of time for art, geography, history and music is too little. Also, for these subjects, the use of commercially available modules does not promote learning sufficiently well over the full range of the relevant Programmes of Study, especially for the highest attaining pupils. Opportunities for extending learning in one subject into the lessons in other subjects are not well planned. The curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Through signing, and through the very good use of the LSAs, teachers make sure that pupils learning English as an additional language are fully involved in all lesson tasks and make equivalent progress against their learning targets, as do other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. It continues to be a strength. It makes a very positive contribution to the school's caring and supportive ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Pupils are safe and secure at school. Provision, as it is outlined in their statements of educational need, is met in full. Assessment information is very well used to guide lesson planning and to judge achievement against targets in IEPs. Pupils' progress benefits from this.

The school links very well with parents. They are kept fully informed of the academic and personal progress their children are making. Many take a full part in decisions about new targets for learning at termly and annual reviews. The curriculum appropriately focuses on literacy, numeracy and the development of personal and social skills, but includes too little time for learning art, geography, history and music. There are too few planned opportunities for reinforcing learning in one subject in lessons in

the other subjects. Visits to the local community and visitors to school from the community beneficially extend the curricular experiences for pupils, more so than is the case in many equivalent schools.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work of the school and the commitment to translate this into action. She, with considerable support from the deputy headteacher, manages the school very well. The changes since the last inspection reflect the shared commitment of all staff to improve.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactorily well. The governing body, and especially the Chairperson, is very supportive of the work of the headteacher and committed to the school's success. Nevertheless, the procedures for receiving reports on the work of the school are too informal for governors to fully meet their role as 'critical friend'.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The procedures for monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and learning are very good. They have made an important contribution to the improved standards pupils are achieving and the better progress they are making in most of the subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of specific grants, including the Standards Fund that has been primarily used to increase staffing levels to meet the needs of pupils with the severest of learning difficulties. The good communication skills of these pupils are in part attributable to this.

The good number of teachers are very experienced in dealing with pupils with special educational needs. The very good support of LSAs, nurses and therapists allows the National Curriculum and religious education to be presented effectively and the additional needs of pupils to be met. Overall, the accommodation is very good. The swimming pool is excellent and is very well used. The library, multi-sensory teaching room, designated classroom for TEACCH strategies, music room and soft-play room are very good. The very good soft-surface outside areas help limit the disadvantage of the small hall and what can be presented in lessons in physical education. Very good procedures ensure that the school's money is spent well.

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 like going to school. • The good quality of teaching. • The ease with which they can approach the school for information, advice and guidance. • The high expectations for learning and behaviour. • The good way the school is led and managed. • The progress their children are making in the subjects and in improving their behaviour. 	

Inspectors agree with all of the positive views expressed by parents. The high expectations of teachers and LSAs contribute to the good quality of teaching and the good and very good standards pupils achieve in most of the subjects and in learning to behave well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against national age-related expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and references to attainment and achievement take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews.
2. Overall subjects, the standards pupils' achieve and the progress they are making are good and compare favourably with those of similar pupils in equivalent schools. Children in the Foundation Stage are achieving good standards over each of the early learning goals.
3. Procedures for evaluating the standards achieved by different groups of pupils are good. For example, close attention is given to the standards the minority of girls achieve, which do not differ from those of boys. Also, a good effort is made to compare the standards achieved by pupils with the severest of learning difficulties with those of pupils who attain at much higher levels. The very good use of the 'P' scale levels for those with the severest of learning difficulties and the levels of the National Curriculum assessment procedures for the highest attaining pupils, show little difference when achievement is set against pupils' own targets. Similarly, pupils who are from ethnic minorities achieve the same good standards when judged against their targets.
4. In speaking and listening and reading pupils achieve good standards and are making good progress. In writing they achieve satisfactory standards and are making satisfactory progress. The excellent relationships between pupils and their teachers and LSAs encourage pupils to talk freely and to listen attentively. This, and the focus given to communication in the curriculum, benefits the progress they are making. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to communicate well, using the communication system best suited to their needs. The highest attaining pupils initiate conversation by asking simple questions. They explain their previous learning well, including retelling accurately stories which they have followed in big books. The lowest attaining pupils, through a combination of speech and signs communicate their needs, such as needing to use the toilet or wanting a drink. By the end of Year 6, the most fluent speakers greet visitors politely and answer questions accurately and promptly. They recall very well visits they have made to the local community. For example, they talked excitedly about a recent visit to a fair. The lowest attaining pupils continue to use symbols, but now more precisely when indicating the type of toy they wish to play with. The highest attaining pupils leave school speaking and listening at Level 2 of the National Curriculum. In reading, the best readers attain the same National Curriculum level. The books they know, they read with fluency and good intonation and have a very good understanding of their reading. However, they do not have sufficient word attack skills to read new words quickly and, because of this, they are able to read only the simplest of books for pleasure. The lowest attaining pupils continue to be at the beginning stages of reading. They know the rules of reading, that books are read from front to back, that words are written in straight lines and that these are 'read' from left to right. By the end of Year 2, the best writers accurately trace the letters of their names. By the end of Year 6, they attain at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. They write simple sentences with most letters well formed and some of the most common words spelt correctly. The lowest attaining pupils are not yet able to trace letters. They 'write' their sentences with the aid of symbols.
5. Pupils are making good progress in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils have made a good start over all aspects of the subject. For example, they count to 12 and identify the number on a number line by its sound. They show a good understanding of order by recognising the second and third person, for example in a queue. The lowest attaining pupils rote count to three and classify into groups based on colour, shape or size. By the end of Year 6, the best mathematicians reach Level 2 in each of the attainment targets. They have a good range of mathematical vocabulary and beginning to understand how mathematics may be used in the real

world, especially through their knowledge of time. The lowest attaining pupils are now rote counting to ten and match the number to its sound on a number line.

6. Even though the weekly lesson time for the subject is less than that seen in many equivalent schools, pupils are making good progress in science over all of the attainment targets. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils are at National Curriculum Level 1. The lowest attaining pupils remain at the lower levels of the 'P' scales. The highest attaining pupils have a good vocabulary of scientific terms, which they use well in explaining their learning, for example when they explain the effects of heat on jelly. Teachers regularly provide pupils with opportunities to find out for themselves. As a consequence, the highest attaining pupils are beginning to ask questions and to think carefully about the possible answers. They are beginning to realise what constitutes an experiment, but have not yet grasped the notion that collecting information to gain answers is an important method in science.
7. In the other subjects, pupils achieve very good standards and make very good progress in religious education. They achieve well and are making good progress in design and technology, ICT and physical education. They achieve satisfactorily well and make satisfactory progress in art, geography, history and music.
8. It is difficult to judge the extent of improvement in the standards pupils are achieving since the last inspection because of the considerable difference in the range of provision. Nevertheless, it is clear that standards in mathematics and science have improved. They are no longer unsatisfactory in geography and history. The good quality of work in English and physical education has been maintained. The standards in religious education have improved from the good level recognised last time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and have fully accepted their role as learners. Parents report that pupils like coming to school. When they arrive at school they are happy and look forward to their day. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages them to work hard and to do their best. Despite their learning difficulties, they achieve both in most lessons. They listen to instructions very well and concentrate and persevere to complete tasks quickly. They know that they are valued members of the class and enjoy the companionship of their peers. They are quick to celebrate their successes and those of others and are willing to join in as fully as they can in all activities, for example in an assembly when they helped to act out a story, well supported by the playing of percussion instruments. They also enjoy the special assembly on Friday when their good effort or good work is warmly celebrated.
10. Behaviour in and around school is very good, including in the dining hall at lunchtimes, outside at break times and when pupils are moving around the school between lessons. In eight lessons in ten, behaviour is good or better. It is satisfactory in the other lessons. The expectations are for courtesy and respect at all times during the day. These are adhered to consistently by all staff, who act as very good role models in promoting pupils' personal and social development. Only rarely do staff need to remind pupils of their responsibilities as learners. When required they do this well, most often according to the procedures agreed in pupils' IEPs. There were no exclusions in the previous year.
11. Those who are able to show initiative and very willingly take responsibility. For example, pupils take turns to return registers to the office and help to collect the milk. Self-confidence is well promoted through the frequent opportunities pupils are given in lessons and at lunch and break times to make choices. The quality of the relationships between all staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves is excellent. This helps them be confident as learners. The standards they achieve and the progress they are making benefit from this. Regular visits to the facilities and shops of the local community and the camping trips for the older children also make a significant contribution to promoting self-confidence and the development of social skills.

12. Attendance levels are very good. They are better than seen in many equivalent schools. Registration procedures are properly documented and effectively implemented. They meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good or better in 42 per cent of lessons, good in 41 per cent and satisfactory in the other lessons. The changed provision since the last inspection does not allow a specific judgement on whether teaching has improved or not. However, in comparison with equivalent schools the quality of teaching is strong and reflects the competences and the commitment of teachers and LSAs to promote the best rates of progress in their children and pupils.
14. The wide range of learning difficulties seen in most classes poses a particular problem to teachers in selecting lesson tasks that match pupils' objectives for learning over the full duration of each lesson. They do this well. Firstly, they know their pupils very well, the levels at which they work and their learning needs. Secondly, they deploy their LSAs very well. They are very competent, work well with their teachers and are very effective in helping all pupils achieve success on the lesson tasks, despite the severity of their learning difficulties. This is especially so in English lessons when they take pupils as individuals or as small groups in the main section of each lesson. Thirdly, in most subjects the procedures for assessing the work of pupils provide very good information, which is well used in planning future lessons. The targets in pupils' IEPs also help. They are formed well and are stated precisely with easily recognisable learning outcomes. Each makes a significant contribution to the good match seen between the lesson tasks and pupils needs and abilities and, consequently, the good and better standards they achieve and the better progress they are making.
15. Other factors also contribute to the good quality of teaching. Planning for lessons is good. Increasingly, ICT is providing good support for teaching and learning. For example, in one English lesson it was used very effectively to help a pupil match the first letter of a word against the target letter. This was a task that exactly matched with his learning need. Teachers and LSAs manage their pupils well. Only rarely is lesson time taken up in reminding pupils of their responsibilities as learners. Homework is well managed and contributes to the good and better progress many pupils are making, especially in English and mathematics.
16. Most subjects are well resourced with special equipment, adapted worksheets or artefacts. Teachers use these well. For example, in lessons in music, the good range and quality of untuned instruments acts to motivate pupils to learn about rhythm. In lessons in the excellent swimming pool pupils' learning is supported by the very good use that is made of flotation devices and of music to move and swim to.
17. The good quality of teaching motivates pupils to do well as learners. They settle quickly to their work, listen carefully to instructions, accept the advice of teachers and LSAs and most often produce their best work, which they enjoy showing to visitors and explaining. They gain from being regularly praised in lessons for their good work and effort and especially so in the celebration assembly on Fridays. Overall, learning is good. In four lessons in ten, it is very good or better. In eight lessons in ten, it is good or better and is satisfactory in all the others. Routinely pupils work hard and make a considerable intellectual effort to learn. In lessons in swimming, and when they take gymnastics in the hall, they make a considerable physical effort.
18. For many pupils the home-school book is effective in helping to continue the work of the school at home. It informs parents of the events of the day and what may be followed up at home.
19. Since the last inspection, the improved quality of teaching has led to improvements in pupils' attitudes to their work, their better behaviour in lessons and the better progress they are making in most of the subjects.

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

20. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It is broad and relevant to the needs of pupils but not as well balanced as it might be. The time allocation to art, geography, history and music is too limited to provide effective learning experiences for pupils over the full range of these subjects. The curriculum for Foundation Stage children is very good and covers each of the early learning areas very well.
21. Since the last inspection, commercially available modules have been imported to form the base of the curriculum in many subjects. Given the change in provision and the increasing severity of the needs of pupils, this was a good idea. In many subjects, the modules provide a good match with the content of the relevant Programmes of Study and act as good quality long and medium term planners. In art, geography, history and music they match less well and provide too few opportunities to extend the learning experiences for the highest attaining pupils; although they match with the learning needs of pupils with the severest of difficulties. It is to the credit of the leadership that this has been quickly recognised and the modules are being supplemented by the exemplar schemes of work from the QCA. However, art, geography, history and music work remains to be done to produce planning documents that fully reflect the relevant Programmes of Study and secure continuity and progression in learning for all pupils over the duration of each key stage.
22. Subjects are taught as discrete elements on the timetable. But in reality this is not the case. For example, in the swimming pool pupils have opportunities to appreciate music as a medium that can create moods and can be responded to in actions. In the lessons in mathematics, pupils are practising their skills in art when they present information visually. However, planning documents and the assessment procedures do not recognise cross-curricular experiences and so pupils' achievements in these additional areas are not planned for and not recognised. The absence of procedures to recognise cross-curricular links, and to plan teaching and learning to emphasise these, results in pupils not gaining credit for the progress they make in the other subjects.
23. Timetable arrangements result in the length of some lessons being very long for some pupils. Also, for some subjects, for example science, the duration between the lessons is too long for pupils to adequately recall previous learning. It then becomes difficult for teachers to build new learning on that achieved previously. Nevertheless, in general the curriculum matches satisfactorily well with pupils' entitlement and through additional features such as the work of the speech, physio and occupational therapists, helps meet pupils' special needs very well. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders spend each morning being taught through TEACCH procedures. The very good presentation and management of this specialist teaching approach matches well with their learning needs.
24. The literacy curriculum is very well structured to meet both the requirements of the National Strategy for Literacy and the needs of individual pupils. A good system of sign and symbols is operated well by teachers and LSAs. Sign supported communication is a good feature of the school and this gives good help to the development of speaking and listening and reading skills. The principles of the National Numeracy Strategy have also been implemented well into lessons. Routinely, lessons contain an appropriate balance of oral and mental, group and whole class activities. Regular routines establish the language of mathematics and ensure that pupils make good progress in counting and in the recognition of number.
25. It is difficult to provide a programme of after-school activities because nearly all pupils travel to school on transport provided by the local authority. Nevertheless, the very good links with the community, which help foster a good range of activities that extend and enhance the curriculum compensate, in part, for this. These include visits to nearby shops, parks and woods, the local library, the Bexley Music Centre, the zoo, Dartford Bridge and Hall Place Historical Centre and to places further afield such as the seaside at Margate, the National Art Gallery and the London Dome. These visits are well planned to link with pupils' learning in lessons. For example, a visit to the local woods extended learning about mini-beasts in science. Appreciation of music is very well fostered by a visit to the special children's concert in London performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Visitors to the school also help. Dance, music and theatre groups and the frequent visits of local clergy help increase pupils' awareness of spiritual and cultural matters.

The theme weeks, for example Book Week where classes choose a book, act out some of the events and produce art on the topic, helps pupils focus their thoughts of others. Local police and firemen are welcomed visitors. Older pupils gain from experiencing a night under canvas or, alternatively, from sleeping over at school. Pupils are justifiably proud of the awards gained for gardening from the London Children's Flower Society and Bexley in Bloom. Children at the Foundation Stage are excited by and enjoy patting and stroking dogs from 'Dogs for Therapy' and in experiencing the feelings of well being that they gain.

26. Staff ensure that all pupils are included in all activities. Targets in IEPs help lesson planning and LSAs are very good at supporting pupils in the completion of their work. The integration programme, though small in size, is well established and provides more opportunities for pupils to visit and to take lessons in mainstream primary schools than is the case in many equivalent schools. Children at the Foundation Stage integrate well during their weekly visits to a local playgroup. These links are in line with the philosophy underpinning recent national guidance as provided by the Code of Practice (2001) and all who take part gain considerably in self-confidence and in other personal and social skills.
27. The links with partner institutions are well established. These include very good handover arrangements from Portage workers, who have worked with some of the pupils before they come to school and also visits from the staff of the nursery from which many children enter the Foundation Stage in order to fully brief teachers about the incoming children. The excellent links with a number of local primary schools have resulted in classes joining with mainstream pupils, for example for country dancing sessions and to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The very close links with the receiving secondary school allow Year 6 pupils to move seamlessly into secondary education. Last year the good relationship with another special school helped support the transfer of a small number of pupils who had made very good progress and were able to benefit from closer links with mainstream education.
28. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Lessons including topics on sex and drug awareness are well dealt with, as are issues to do with hygiene and general health. Statutory requirements relating to these topics are met.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It remains a strength from the last inspection.
30. Pupils are provided with many good opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness. For example, by taking part in Christian Activities in the Bexley Schools programme. Moments of awe and wonder are gained by pupils who take part in the laser show as part of science week. Lessons in religious education help, as does the Christingle service, the end of year services in a local church and visits to the religious centres of other faiths. Within lessons pupils develop their spirituality as they appreciate, often with delight and amazement, the growth of plants such as daffodils from such small bulbs. Assemblies are very well used to increase pupils' awareness of different faiths, the ways of others and how they might think and feel. Time is given for prayer and personal reflection as well as hymn singing. Signing and picture symbols are very well used in assemblies to ensure that all pupils take a full and active part. The daily act of collective worship acts as a focus for ending the day. Once a week, classes have their own act of worship. Assemblies and the act of worship in classes make a very good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development as well as increasing their spiritual awareness.
31. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong in many ways. For example, great care is taken to ensure that expected behaviours are reinforced very positively. In assemblies, stories with a clear moral message are purposefully chosen and good presentation helps pupils understand their significance. The provision of achievement certificates and their public presentation in the celebration assembly provides a clear demonstration of what is good within the context of the school. All staff treat pupils with respect so that they gradually learn what is appropriate by observing and copying the way they act. Good behaviour, good effort and good learning are praised and complemented. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively in such a way that improvement is encouraged without loss of self-esteem. Teachers

and LSAs are quick to praise the return to good behaviour, for example by commenting on 'Good sitting', as soon as a pupil sits down again after an outburst.

32. Every opportunity is taken to use the wider community as a learning base in which to practise social behaviour and activities. Regular visits to a wide range of local facilities help support learning in the subjects but also help promote social skills in a real and meaningful fashion. Pupils recognise the needs of others through supporting charities at home and overseas, for example Red Nose Day, Children in Need, Food Aid at Harvest Festival and when they help fill Christmas Shoe Boxes. They themselves benefit from charitable gifts. Staff make a real effort to ensure that pupils enjoy giving as much as they enjoy receiving.
33. Pupils' cultural awareness is very well promoted in a number of ways. One class has developed close links with a school in Prague from which they receive photographs and drawings. Pupils are now preparing to send their photographs to Prague as well as information about their school. Opportunities are frequently taken in assemblies and within lessons such as English, art, food technology, music, religious education, history and geography to increase pupils' awareness of their own culture and that of others. Visits to school by Scottish bagpipers and dancers, drama groups such as the Barking Dog Company and a jazz band, as well as visits to churches and temples of different faiths and theatre shows help promote cultural awareness very well. Assemblies celebrate religious and cultural events such as Shrove Tuesday, Burns Night and Chinese New Year. Finally, the school library has an adequate selection of appropriate multicultural books and good quality displays reflect pupils' increasing awareness very well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The safe, secure and supportive environment identified during the previous inspection has been maintained. Pupils are respected and are cared for very well. The welfare and dignity of pupils are important to all staff. For example, pupils' privacy is well protected as they change for swimming lessons in which appropriate hoists are used, with only trained staff lifting and handling, even though the parents of some pupils' will be helping in the lessons. The procedures of the very good policies for anti-bullying and appropriate behaviour are operated consistently by all staff and are well supported by the excellent relationships all staff have with pupils. Examples of unacceptable behaviour are infrequent, but when they do occur they are recorded accurately and in detail in the incident - accident book.
35. Pupils' health and safety are considered in other ways. The site is safe and secure with controlled entry to the building. Effective risk assessments are carried out, including those for individual pupils. Nurses ensure that medication is stored securely and dispensed correctly. In addition, all staff have received first aid training. The highly organised and supervised arrangements for transport at the beginning and end of the school day ensure pupils' safety in a congested and busy area.
36. Speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists all make significant contributions to helping teachers and LSAs meet pupils' needs in lessons and around the school. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very effective. Non-attendance is followed up quickly. Escorts report any absence, which is then pursued by telephone. The school works with the Education Welfare Service to improve the attendance of individual pupils, although this is an infrequent requirement. The effectiveness of these procedures is evident in the very good levels of attendance. When additional guidance is required in supporting the development of pupils, the multi-disciplinary team very effectively identifies particular strategies and procedures.
37. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress they are making work very well. Very good use is made of IEPs, in-lesson assessments, 'P' scales, end of unit expectations, recording sheets and photographic evidence. In addition, assessment documentation contains very detailed records of behavioural incidents. The use of the adapted assessment procedures of the commercial modules for the lowest attaining pupils, 'P' scales for most of the pupils and the QCA assessment procedures for the highest attaining pupils results in the quality of work of all pupils being recognised in the most meaningful way, irrespective of the levels at which they attain. Now

that the IEP targets are good and 'smart' and much improved since the last inspection, they offer considerable help, as do the end of module assessments, in supporting the planning of lessons. In addition, very good use is made of the home-school books to inform parents of their children's progress, their attitudes and behaviour and in reinforcing the partnership between home and school.

38. The provision to meet pupils' learning difficulties, as outlined in their Statements of Educational Need is being met, including provision for pupils' dietary and medical needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. They are happy knowing that their children like attending school and that they are making good progress. They are very appreciative of the close links with the receiving secondary school, which helps minimise disruption in their children's learning over what for some can be a difficult time.
40. The partnership with parents is working very well. Parents are kept very well informed of academic gains and the development of their children's personal and social skills. The mechanisms for exchanging information between school and home are numerous and effective. These include opportunities for parents to provide information about their children, through messages carried by the escorts, telephone calls and through the home-school book. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents provide very good quality information on all matters required. Regular newsletters tell of upcoming events, chart pupils' successes and tell of other relevant matters. Parents take a full part in annual reviews and in the discussions on targets for the following year. The homework programme provides ongoing opportunities for parents to support the work of the school. Some feel that they would like more information in the home-school book on their children's experiences over the day. This is understandable but, in the main, comments in the home-school books are comprehensive and useful. Parents gain information on topics that are relevant to them, such as sleep and play, through well-attended workshops organised by the school.
41. The headteacher, and other staff, are easily contactable. Parents are very appreciative of this. They routinely show their support for the school by attending the Christmas performances, sports days and acting as governors. Some volunteer their help, for example in lessons in swimming and on visits to the locality. The Friends of Shenstone is very active and meets monthly to organise fundraising and social events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff, especially the deputy headteacher are very good. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has demonstrated a clear direction for the work of the school. She, and the deputy headteacher, have worked very hard and successfully in establishing the new provision to match the entitlement of children and pupils and to meet their learning needs. She has also established her style of leadership and management, which includes valuing the contributions of others in decision-making. This has been affirmed through gaining Investors in People status in March 2001. The developments seen since the last inspection reflect the shared commitment of all staff to succeed. Day-to-day this is seen through the very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. For example, those for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, for judging the quality of target setting and in the extent to which staff have taken part in training, especially in TEACCH and picture exchange procedures in order to meet increasing challenge of pupils. The capacity of the headteacher and the senior management team to further develop the work of the school continues to be very good.
43. The three primary aims, clearly identified in the prospectus, are sensible and appropriate. The objectives in the development plan, which match well with the aims, are clearly stated with good criteria to recognise success.

44. The headteacher delegates responsibilities very well and confidently. The deputy headteacher is very effective in discharging her duties, especially those to do with annual reviews and the performance management for teachers and LSAs. Co-ordinators are beginning to work well in further developing provision in their subjects. The senior management team through the procedures for monitoring the curriculum have a very good understanding of the need to further develop the provision in some subjects, especially in art, geography, history and music.
45. The chairperson of the governing body is committed to the success of the school and is wholehearted in his support for the work of the headteacher. Since the last inspection he has worked tirelessly and effectively in helping to establish the new provision and in promoting the programme of refurbishment. He is a frequent visitor and has a good knowledge of the day-to-day working of the school. The very close co-operative relationship that exists between him and the headteacher has contributed to the arrangements for receiving reports to judge the work of the school being very informal. This limits the governing body from fully meeting its role as 'critical friend'. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the expenditure of money are very good. They are not as well developed for judging the quality of work in other areas, for example the effectiveness of the headteacher and members of the senior management team, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, pupils' academic, personal and social progress and their behaviour and attendance. As a result the governing body is not in the best position to judge the effectiveness of the provision or to identify directions for further development.
46. The strategy for appraisal and performance management is very good. The headteacher's targets have been set for the second time. The deputy headteacher, and all other teachers, have annual targets that follow the model of the headteacher. These are linked with the areas for further development identified through the procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. For example, the analysis of teachers' planning documents and the observation of their lessons have resulted in whole school in-service training (INSET), such as that in ICT. Teachers have taken part in INSET activities offered by outside providers and by the local authority, for example in TEACCH and picture exchange procedures. The programme of performance management works well, in part because of the commitment to provide ongoing training for teachers to a budget level of £5,000 for last year. This is greater than that allocated to training in many equivalent schools.
47. Induction procedures are satisfactory in preparing new teachers and LSAs to become effective in their roles. New appointees quickly recognise who is the named person for issues to do with child protection, but they would benefit from gaining more details on the procedures and strategies for recognising and securing the safety of children and pupils.
48. The school's statutory targets have been appropriately set. Targets for individual pupils, written in their IEPs are better than at the time of the last inspection. They work well in informing the planning of lessons and in promoting progress in personal and social skills. They are well presented at annual reviews. They are well known to parents, who feel pleased that they have the opportunity to discuss them at the annual review and to contribute to forming the targets for the following year.
49. There are a good number of teachers and LSAs to present the curriculum and to meet pupils' additional needs. All teachers are experienced in dealing with pupils' learning needs and more than half have a specialist qualification in special education. Learning support assistants have considerable experience, work well with their teachers and make a valuable contribution to the good and better teaching that is most often seen. This is especially so in lessons in English and mathematics. In these, they take responsibility for teaching individual pupils and small groups of pupils in the middle section of the three-part lesson. The advice and support of the physiotherapist and speech therapists benefit teachers when they plan their lessons to match with the needs of individual pupils.
50. The accommodation is very good. The recently completed programme of refurbishment has resulted in a number of very good quality specialist facilities. These include the library, a multi-sensory teaching room, a designated classroom for TEACCH strategies, a music room and a soft-play room. In addition the rooms for physiotherapy, the nurses, 'time-out' and for the preparation of

resources are very good. The swimming pool is an excellent facility. The small size of the hall restricts what can be taught in lessons in physical education, but the very good outside soft surface area helps make up for this. The outside play equipment, the field with the trim-trail and with permanently positioned balance and up and over beams also help. The sensory garden is a very good feature. The lack of facilities for teaching food studies in design and technology limits the range of work that pupils can experience. The toileting inadequacies identified last time have been significantly improved.

51. Generally, resources to support teaching and learning are good. In most subjects the quality of pupils' learning benefits from the good use teachers make of the wide range and good quality of resources. For children at the Foundation Stage, they are very good. In English, physical education and religious education, they are very good. They are good in mathematics, art, ICT and for personal, social and health education. They are satisfactory in science, geography, history and music and unsatisfactory in design and technology because of the serious lack of resources to support the teaching of food studies.
52. Priorities for educational development, identified in the school development plan, are very well supported through very good financial planning. The governors have a clear overview of expenditure through regular termly reports to the finance committee and onward to the full governing body. These include predictions, out-turns and variance in spending. The very clear priorities for extending and enriching the curriculum are appropriate. The systems for day-to-day administration of finance are very efficient and support the staff well in performing their tasks. Very good use is made of ICT in streamlining financial procedures. All teachers are aware of the procedures to do with finance through information in the staff handbook. The last audit report was favourable overall and the few issues raised have been addressed. The school makes very good use of specific grants including the Standards Fund that is primarily used to increase the staffing levels to best meet the learning and additional needs of all pupils. This has been very effective, as is demonstrated by the good standards achieved by pupils with the severest of learning difficulties. The procedures for ensuring that money is spent for best value are good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governing body should:

- i. initiate and operate more formal procedures to evaluate the work of the school, especially the:
 - targets for the headteacher and members of the senior management team;
 - quality of teaching and learning;
 - curriculum; and
 - the academic, personal and social progress of pupils, and their behaviour and attendance at school.

(Paragraph 45)

The governing body and headteacher should:

- ii. improve the standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making in art, geography, history and music by introducing
 - schemes of work that fully reflect the relevant Programmes of Study for all pupils and by increasing the teaching time;

(Paragraphs 21, 86, 91, 96, 109)

- iii. initiate and operate a planned programme of links across subjects that enables achievements in all subjects to be recognised, assessed and recorded.

(Paragraphs 22, 86, 90, 99, 109, 114)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3.0	16.0	19.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percentage	6.5	34.8	41.3	17.4	0.0	0.0	0.0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	62
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0

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	2
Black – other	3
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	41
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.25
Average class size	7.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	30
Total aggregate hours worked per week	997

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	857621
Total expenditure	902427
Expenditure per pupil	14471
Balance brought forward from previous year	49996
Balance carried forward to next year	5190

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	59
Number of questionnaires returned	25

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	92	8	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	88	13	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	25	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	64	32	5	0	0
The teaching is good.	96	4	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	84	16	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	96	4	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	92	8	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	84	16	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	92	8	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	77	23	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

53. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is well below that expected for their age in all areas of development. The range of their learning difficulties is considerable. Most have little or no speech; others have only a very small vocabulary. All find it very difficult to express their views and ideas. Many are not yet toilet trained and are in wheelchairs or buggies. Some find it hard to sit and listen for all but very short periods of time.
54. Overall, the provision for children in the in the Foundation Stage is very good. It has improved since the last inspection when it was considered to be sound. Children achieve good standards and make good progress against each of the early learning goals, although, because of the severity of their learning difficulties only a few reach some of these by the end of their time at the Foundation Stage.
55. Teaching is good overall and occasionally excellent. Teachers know their children very well and are sensitive to their needs. The relationships between all staff and children are excellent. Learning support assistants are very effective and work very well with their teachers. They and their teachers sign clearly and use symbols well. Both help promote the skills of communication and of learning. The balance of activities is good and results in children having regular opportunities to be directed in their learning, but also to make choices. Each of the above contributes to the good quality of teaching and results in children wanting to do well as learners. Assessing the attainment of children is very well done. This results in clear targets in IEPs, which are very well used to plan lessons so that they match well with the needs of pupils. As a consequence, learning is ordered, well controlled and progressive. Routinely children try very hard and enjoy the successes they gain. Their dignity is carefully protected when they are, for example positioned in standing frames, toileted or fed.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. The base for the Foundation Stage is attractive and welcoming. It provides a stimulating, friendly and safe environment in which children respond well and grow in confidence. The consistent routines and the excellent relationships between staff and children, allow them to feel confident and safe in exploring as they become increasingly independent and when they begin to be aware of the needs of others. Children have regular opportunities to take turns, share equipment and work as a small group. Each helps promote confidence and self-esteem. Some, because of their difficulties with movement, have learning targets for self-help skills such as drinking and eating, fastening buttons when dressing/undressing for physical education and in toileting. They are making good progress against these targets.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Work in this area is mainly focused on speaking and listening often with the aid of augmentative strategies, such as sign, symbols and picture exchanges. A minority of children are beginning to read their names. Many have learned a range of symbols and by the end of the Reception Year they are able to communicate their basic needs and to make choices, for example of their preferred drink. Good support and emphasis is given to opportunities to develop the early writing skills of mark making, scribbling and colouring within small areas. The highest attaining children hold a crayon or paintbrush well enough to form dots, lines and circles. Good planning by teachers results in lesson tasks matching children's needs and their levels of attainment. Teachers are very good at interesting children in books, stories and the pictures that help explain stories. Speech and language therapists provide good support for teachers, through direct involvement with pupils and by giving advice on appropriate strategies for individual pupils.

Mathematical development

58. Using a wealth of colourful materials and resources, children explore objects by size, weight, colour and texture. Counting strategies are encouraged and the concepts of shape and position introduced. Most children show an interest in number and respond to familiar number rhymes and songs. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the highest attaining children are beginning to show an understanding of number by using their fingers when they rote count. They use words such as bigger and longer and positional words such as in front, behind, side and top accurately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. This early learning goal is developed, primarily, through pupils taking part in a wide range of physical and sensory activities. Good links are made with science when seeds are planted in jam-jars and bulbs are planted in the outside play area. Natural and man-made objects are explored by touch, smell and taste, including a wide range of fruits. Children are able to describe the weather for the day through the use of simple words, sounds, signs and symbols. Some confidently control simple computer programs through using the touch screen or switches. The highest attaining children identify birds as different from animals. They build structures from large blocks, crawl through plastic tunnels and play on the good quality large play equipment. They learn to ride tricycles and explore the sounds and sensations associated with the soft play area and the ball pool. Through this very wide experience of the world around them, they are making good progress towards achieving this early learning goal. The highest attaining children are well prepared for their work in this area when they enter at Key Stage 1.

Physical development

60. Children's progress in this early learning area benefits from the good sensory areas within classrooms, the good outside play area and the very good use that is made of the swimming pool and the soft play area. It also benefits from the good work of the physiotherapist, who develops special programmes for those who are unable to walk, so that they learn to walk upright through the use of walking frames or with support from staff. In lessons in the hall, children are shown how to move in different ways and some learn to adjust speed, direction and body shape easily and smoothly. The lessons in the swimming pool are enjoyed by all. They respond well and quickly become confident in the water. The development of fine motor skills is promoted in all lessons, through hand-over-hand support, then modelling before pupils complete their tasks without support. Lunch and break times are used well to promote independence and the development of fine motor co-ordination when children are encouraged to feed themselves.

Creative development

61. Children are given many opportunities to work creatively in a number of different ways using a wide variety of materials and equipment. Activities are often based upon their experiences such as a seaside visit or a visit to the supermarket. Through cutting, tearing and gluing they produce a representation of their visit. They explore pattern making with different shapes, colours and textures and with a use of different materials for painting and for making collage and three-dimensional structures. Music is used a great deal to create different moods and to attract and maintain pupils' attention. Children make good progress when they develop skills of cause and effect by playing percussion instruments and when they activate the sound beam.

ENGLISH

62. The quality of provision is very good. At both key stages pupils achieve good standards and are making good progress in speaking and listening and in reading. They achieve satisfactory standards and are making satisfactory progress in writing. The National Strategy for Literacy is well developed. The principles have been well incorporated into lessons in all the subjects and this benefits the development of language and communication skills.
63. By the end of Year 2, in communication, the highest attaining pupils ask confidently for what they want, for example 'Please may I have ...thank you'. They speak clearly about what they want to

do and use picture exchange procedures well to communicate their needs more precisely. Facts from previous lessons are easily recalled and signing is well used to indicate the difference between objects, for example a big book and a small book. The lowest attaining pupils use a combination of speech, signs and picture exchange to identify their needs, for example to go to the toilet or to choose their favourite food or drink. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils speak easily and clearly, for example when they recall a visit to a fair. In one lesson Year 6 pupils enthusiastically discussed the need for class rules, such as 'don't push others because we might hurt them', a topic which was discussed after reading the Big Book 'My Buddhist Faith'. The lowest attaining pupils continue to use picture symbols, which they hand to staff to identify, for example the toy they wish to play with.

64. In reading, by the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils read the high frequency words from their reading scheme and identify key characters from popular stories. They touch or gesture to the initial letter of their name. The lowest attaining pupils identify words and symbols with support. They match real objects to pictures, for example to a fruit or to a doll when reading about Little Red Riding Hood. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils read simple books with some support. They name parts of a book unaided, including the title and author. They develop a good technical vocabulary and know about capital letters, full stops and sentences and their use. The lowest attaining pupils recognise and match objects, such as tiger and cup to their names. They know that books read from front to back, that text is written in straight lines and that the title of the book will be on the cover.
65. In writing, by the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils trace their names legibly using letter tunnels or through joining large dots. The lowest attaining pupils hold a pencil and are aware of making marks on paper. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils write simple, creative sentences with most letters correctly formed and some high frequency words correctly spelt. The lowest attaining pupils make marks with intent using a pencil and use symbols instead of words to construct simple sentences.
66. The quality of teaching is very good and occasionally excellent. Lessons are very well planned and include activities that match very well with pupils' needs so that all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of the lessons. Teachers and LSAs know the learning needs of their pupils very well. This helps them motivate and engage pupils and helps make lessons enjoyable events. A very good range of class management skills ensures that behavioural difficulties rarely escalate to disadvantage the learning of others. Very good use is made of positive reinforcement and the emphasis is on what is good behaviour, for example 'good sitting and listening', rather than 'that is not good listening'. When reading a big book, teachers make very good use of key words, for example 'front', 'back', 'author' and 'pictures'. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is excellent. This contributes to a learning environment in which the achievements of all pupils are recognised and valued. Consequently, their attitudes to their work and to their behaviour are very good. Pupils enjoy lessons and are supportive of each other, respect each other's views and listen to each other. Lesson time is very well used and lesson activities are broken into small steps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. The end of lesson plenary sessions are well organised and teachers make good use of open-ended questions to reinforce learning. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is very good. This is based on a combination of 'P' scales, the assessment procedures of the commercial modules and QCA procedures. This combination allows the progress of all pupils, whatever the level of their attainment, to be accurately recognised. Teachers make very good use of this information in planning their lessons, especially for improving reading and communication. Homework is well used and makes a good contribution to the progress pupils are making in reading.
67. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The programme for monitoring teaching and learning is working well and is contributing to the good standards pupils are achieving. Assessment information is regularly analysed and the regular formal discussions with staff provide good directions for developing provision. The schemes of work are of good quality and match with the relevant Programmes of Study. Staff have been well trained in the national strategy, which has boosted their confidence and improved the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers and LSAs make very good use of signing and picture exchange.

68. The library is used very well to support teaching and learning. It is well stocked with a modern selection of books, fiction and non-fiction, as well as a wide selection on a good number of cultures and faiths. The selection of big books is good, as is the range of other books. Pupils benefit from choosing their own books, which they take home to share with their parents as homework.

MATHEMATICS

69. There has been good improvement in the provision of mathematics since the previous inspection. The standards pupils achieve are good as is the progress they make as they move through the school. The National Strategy for Numeracy has been adapted well to meet the needs of pupils and has contributed to the raising of standards since the last inspection.
70. The youngest pupils focus on the key areas of number, space and shape and measure. By the age of seven years, the highest attaining pupils count to 12 independently and match a card showing a numeral with the number on a number line. They show their understanding of ordinals by pointing to the first number on a number line or the second person in a row and know the meaning of phrases such as 'what comes next' when counting. They fit two-dimensional shapes such as squares and rectangles to match the outlines of pictures of, for example a house and point correctly to a square or rectangle.
71. Older pupils continue to focus on these key areas. The highest attaining 11 year olds have a developing understanding of mathematical vocabulary and they know the meaning of 'subtract', 'less than', 'add' and 'more than'. They name two digit numbers and when given random cards showing these numbers put them into the correct position on an incomplete number line. They write simple addition sums using single digit numbers with the correct use of symbols and carry out the calculations accurately. They experience different ways of handling data and are able to explain a pictogram showing different types of confectionery and say from a bar chart which number was the most frequently thrown by two dice.
72. Mathematics is well taught overall, with the older pupils benefiting from very good teaching. Pupils with the most complex learning difficulties are very well taught as a separate group each day. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject and well-planned lessons follow the three-part format of the national strategy. The oral warm-up sessions are very effective in promoting speaking, listening and watching skills as well as developing number abilities. The excellent and well-established relationship between staff and pupils, very well supported by an impressive range of communication strategies, encourages pupils' involvement and participation in all activities. Learning support assistants are very well deployed, very effective in their work and make an important contribution to the good quality of learning. Teachers have high expectations for learning and for behaviour. Computers are used well to support learning, especially for pupils who have difficulty in accurately recording their work. Work is assessed very well and teachers use this information well in planning lessons. Pupils enjoy the lessons in mathematics. As a result, they work hard at their learning, take pride in the presentation of their work and enjoy the success of gaining the correct answer.
73. Mathematics is well managed by a very committed co-ordinator. The monitoring of classroom practice across the school has ensured a consistent approach to mathematics teaching and to the promotion of numeracy skills through the other subjects.

SCIENCE

74. The provision for science is good and has improved since the last inspection. The standards pupils now achieve and the progress they are making are good. This is despite the allocation of lesson time being less than in many equivalent schools.
75. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils are at 'P' level 6. The lowest attaining pupils have less knowledge of science and are at the beginning of the 'P' levels. The highest attaining pupils are beginning to recognise time as they realise that it takes longer to prepare fruit juice by hand using a lemon squeezer than it does when a machine is used. They know that the skeleton is made up of many bones and that it helps us stand upright and not flop about. The lowest attaining pupils have learned that machines like toasters and blenders make nice things to eat and drink.

76. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils have progressed to Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The lowest attaining pupils have made equivalent progress against their targets in moving to the middle levels of the 'P' scales. The best at science compare the differences between babies, toddlers, children, teenagers, adults and old people. They describe these differences and correctly identify clothes and belongings used by people of different ages. They have learned that some materials change during experiments. For example, that jelly dissolves in hot water but not in cold water and sand and water mixed together both appear to change. The lowest attaining pupils continue to need support in recognising that a baby needs a nappy but an adult does not, and that a big 't' shirt will be worn by an adult but not by a toddler. They know if they like the feel and taste of raw jelly. As they progress through the school, they show an increasing ability to ask more precise questions and to think more carefully about the way things work. They develop knowledge of a wide range of topics, including about growing plants, testing the property of materials, studying what objects are made of and learning about their own bodies.
77. Pupils' good progress is a direct result of good quality teaching. Lessons are planned very carefully to ensure resource material is relevant to the topic and matches pupils' needs. For example, when studying the differences between babies, toddlers and children the teacher obtained photographs of each child from their home so that the pupils easily recognised how they had changed and grown up. Very good use is made of investigative science. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to experiment and compare. For example, when they made jelly all pupils were fully involved in stirring and registered surprise and wonder when the jelly 'disappeared' into the water and at the same time changed its colour. The high expectations teachers have for learning are shown in the good emphasis they place on using correct scientific terms, such as 'Petri-dish' and 'dissolve'. Signing is a strong element of good teaching as is the use of symbols representing scientific terms. Both help pupils with limited speech to succeed on lesson tasks and to help explain their learning.
78. The co-ordinator is absent from school. Leadership and management are being shared temporarily between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The quality of teaching is well monitored and evaluated. Pupils' progress is well-documented. Good records show what pupils know, understand and can do in all the attainment targets of the subject. Resources to support teaching and learning have improved considerably over the past year. Through specific training, the knowledge teachers' have of the subject has increased, as has their confidence in their teaching. Both have had a good influence on the overall good quality of teaching and on the better progress made at this inspection than was the case last time.
79. Lessons in science make a very good contribution to all areas of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

ART AND DESIGN

80. Only a small number of lessons were observed. Judgements on the standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are based on these, an analysis of planning documents, displays, recorded work and discussions with staff and pupils. The provision for art is satisfactory overall. The standards achieved and the progress pupils are making are satisfactory.
81. At the beginning Year 1, pupils mix powder paints with various amounts of water and using their fingers spread paint on paper. By the end of Year 2, they have experimented with mixtures of paint and glue and begin their understanding of three-dimensional work by making clay shapes. They tear tissue paper and make papier-mâché models and use crayons to make rubbings of various surfaces. Over these two years, they gain a satisfactory range of experiences. During Year 3 this work is extended and good use is made of the work of modern artists to encourage pupils to extend their design and making skills in three-dimensions. They decorate their sculpture and pottery by using brushes and sponges. The highest attaining pupils produce good quality work that is characterised by the great care they take in its completion. By the end of Year 3, they have learned about texture by exploring rough and smooth surfaces and by making models from clay, which emphasise rough and smooth. During Year 4, they begin learning about symmetry by making splatter patterns and by applying paint by pressing blocks and colouring around templates

of different shape. They reinforce their learning of patterns very well by exploring those that occur in nature, such as the circle caused by a raindrop on water and by the web of a spider. By the end of Year 4, they have created large outdoor structures, for example by solving the problem of suspending a hoop between two adjacent trees. In Years 5 and 6, all pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and use brushes and rollers more confidently. They apply their making skills very well to the creation of Viking shields in lessons in history and use fabrics to make collages in lessons in design and technology. Their understanding of patterns and symmetry is well developed through studying the work of William Morris and is shown in the good patterns they produce for wallpaper.

82. Teaching in art is satisfactory. Learning support assistants work very effectively with their teachers, especially in helping individual pupils and small groups of pupils to complete their work. Teachers are aware of the limited range of pupils' learning over the full range of the subject and extend pupils' learning experiences by the good use of local facilities to see sculpture and different architecture and to visit art galleries. Pupils also gain from and enjoy the workshops in art conducted in school by visitors from the local galleries.
83. Leadership is satisfactory and the subject is managed well. Commercial modules act as the scheme of work to direct short term and lesson planning. These work well for the pupils with the severest of learning difficulties. For others, the small steps planned into the learning and the paucity of experiences in some elements of the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum limits the range of their learning and the progress they are making. The absence of specialist facilities also limits opportunities to fully explore the subject, for example there is no kiln. The skills of art, such as drawing and colouring are practised in a number of subjects, including mathematics, science, religious education and English. This is not planned for against elements in the Programmes of Study in art and is not assessed. Nevertheless, over the duration of each key stage, pupils are gaining a considerably greater experience and more opportunities to practise the skills of art than they are getting credit for in lessons in the subject. This is especially relevant given that the weekly lesson time for art is less than that in many equivalent schools.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

84. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Whilst only one lesson was seen during the inspection, an analysis of pupils' work and their records, teachers' planning documents and their assessment procedures show that pupils are achieving satisfactory standards and are making satisfactory progress.
85. By Year 2, all pupils know about the characteristics of a satisfactory range of materials. They know that materials can be changed, for example by joining them together using glue or staples. They highest attaining pupils develop the necessary skills to design and make objects using construction toys, for example Lego. They comment upon the changes they have made, for example 'Look what I have done' and 'it's squashed'. By the end of Year 6, all pupils begin to show anticipation and awareness of what they must do to make changes when, for example they design and make a range of artefacts. The highest attaining pupils solve problems and have learned to evaluate and then to amend their designs for packaging food or when designing a playground. With support, they record what they have done and participate in a simple evaluation of their work, primarily by recognising if it works or not. They show that they have learned about the uses of different materials, when constructing a musical instrument. Their skills and knowledge in the subject have benefited from taking part in a project involving schools across southeast London in designing and making a bridge.
86. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have very good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs. They plan their lessons well to ensure that tasks are well matched to their needs and their abilities. Good use is made of questions to enable pupils to check on their learning, for example about basic food hygiene procedures. All adults treat pupils with respect and value their contributions. This increases pupils' motivation and encourages them to learn. Pupils are proud of the work they produce and are keen to show their work to others, including the headteacher to

gain a sticker reward. The quality of learning is good and is characterised by the good effort pupils make to produce their best work.

87. The quality of co-ordination is very good. Schemes of work are in place. Assessment and recording are very well used. Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to learning and are very well deployed. The subject is taught both discretely, but also in the lessons in other subjects. For example, in one lesson in history, Year 6 pupils designed and made dolls from wooden spoons just as children in Victorian times may have done. This was not planned for in design and technology and pupils were not credited for the gains they made in their designing and making skills. The good quality teaching and learning is not matched by good progress over all the elements of the subject. The lack of specialist equipment in food studies, for example mixing tools and cookers, limits the progress pupils are making in this element of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

88. At both key stages, pupils' range of learning experiences are too limited because of the commercial modules that make up the schemes of work. They guide planning for the pupils with the severest of learning difficulties satisfactorily well. However, the small steps, which define learning according to the modules do not extend the highest attaining pupils when learning about the more advanced skills and more complex ideas of geography. For example, in studying the weather pupils are not required to generalise their learning to link lifestyles to the predominant climate of an area. In lessons, pupils achieve satisfactory standards and are making satisfactory progress over the topics they are taught.
89. By the end of Year 1, pupils have learned to record the daily weather on a chart and tell the teacher if the weather is, for example, sunny, cloudy or if it is raining. The highest attaining pupils name clothing associated with different types of weather. For example, during the inspection the weather was raining and the wind was blowing and pupils choose suitable clothing to wear from the wide choice available. They have learned to find their way around the school and can identify their routes on simple maps. The lowest attaining pupils require a great deal of help and encouragement in matching the map to the journey itself.
90. During Year 2, this knowledge is built upon well when pupils are given frequent opportunities to explore the outside area of the school and the local community. They identify parts of houses and recognise those that are different in shape, colour and size as the first step to comparing the houses of those in different cultures and climates, which they do well in Year 3. In this, they are sometimes helped by the home videos of the parents of pupils in the class or by those of staff. For example, one lesson for Year 3 pupils was brought to life by the home video of a visit to India, which led to the making of a model of a typical house in India. Pupils in Year 4 develop their sense of direction and their ability to follow a map through visits to the nearby wood. They also develop an understanding of the habitats of small creatures, such as worms, spiders and beetles. The highest attaining pupils predict very well what creatures may be found in different types of microclimates. They are also good at identifying features such as lakes, rivers and hills on maps. In Years 5 and 6, the highest attaining pupils show they have made progress over time by being able to confidently recall the days of the week, the seasons in the year and a range of common weather types. Pupils understand that the world is round and that countries such as China are a long way away, reachable only by air or sea. However, their knowledge and understanding of maps and their usage is only satisfactory.
91. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and while some teachers make efforts to extend pupils' knowledge, they are disadvantaged by working closely with a scheme of work that does not match well with the needs, abilities and the aspirations of all pupils. The extent of pupils learning is also limited by the small time allocation given to this subject, which is less than in many equivalent schools. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory in range and quantity. These are very well supplemented by teachers who make good use of the Internet to download suitable material and who use their own belongings. Where lessons are carefully planned, as in the lesson on houses to Year 3 pupils, they make a least satisfactory progress.

The early morning routine that involves each class identifying the weather ensures that all pupils develop a good knowledge about this aspect of geography.

92. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. This interim arrangement needs to be formalised to further develop the provision to meet the needs of the highest attaining pupils especially by refining the schemes of work and increasing the range and quantity of resources to support teaching and learning.

HISTORY

93. The standards pupils achieve are satisfactory and they are making satisfactory progress. This represents satisfactory improvement in provision since the previous inspection. Even though history is well taught, opportunities for pupils to make good progress, particularly the older pupils, are limited by the amount of time devoted to the subject and by the use of commercial modules which do not provide a sufficiently broad range of learning experiences.
94. Only one lesson could be observed and there was little work to examine. However, planning and other documentation showed that pupils do develop historical skills and understanding through topics and through specifically designated 'history' days. The youngest pupils begin to develop a sense of chronology through considering the passage of time by learning about topics that are relevant to them, such as the family, toys and houses. They do this through daily routines that are identified by symbol timetables, objects of reference, and teachers' consistent and clear demonstrations that activities are finished and a new one is to follow. This helps pupils to gain a satisfactory vocabulary to do with the passage of time, so that by the end of Year 2 they understand concepts such as old, new, now, next and before. They know what day it is and understand the concept of yesterday.
95. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to recall details of Viking life, including those about their boats and weapons. They know the year is 2002 and that Queen Elizabeth is on the throne. They have increased their knowledge of a number of different periods of British history, such as the Tudors and World War II. They have developed some understanding of other societies from the past, such as the Ancient Greeks and the Egyptians. The highest attaining pupils put pictures and symbols representing the people of different times onto a time line, but need prompts to achieve this successfully.
96. History is well taught and the lessons are enjoyable learning experiences for all pupils. Carefully chosen activities provide pupils with tasks that interest them because they are hands-on and practical. These help extend pupils' learning and their imagination in a way that is relevant to them, and this helps in their learning. Resources are often used creatively and when this is so pupils become excited by their learning and their progress is good. This happened in a very good lesson on the Victorians. A good and lively lesson introduction encouraged pupils to recall previous knowledge as the teacher probed and extended their understanding by asking open-ended questions that required them to think about the differences between then and today. Photographs were used well to encourage pupils' literacy and observational skills. The LSAs helped to recognise differences between now and then by pointing out details, such as the style of dress and crown. This was followed by group activities that reinforced learning in history, but which used skills from design and technology and ICT. For example, in making spoon dolls of a type used by children in the Victorian times and finding out about features of Victorian times, such as the development of steam power and the growth of factories through computer use. These were not planned into the schemes of work for either of these subjects and pupils were denied credit for their learning.
97. History makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Two or three designated history days occur each year. Pupils enjoy these if only because they are expected to dress in appropriate costumes. These are very well planned with clearly identified learning outcomes and provide good support for learning that takes place in lessons. For example, over the most recent of these days, pupils have experienced a Victorian music hall and workhouse, made Egyptian mummies from plastic dolls and plaster and hidden in an air raid shelter when the sirens sounded during the World War II day. The local community is used well to support learning. For example, pupils have visited local churches and Hall Place when studying the Tudors. Similarly, visitors to school bring in interesting artefacts such as those to do with World War II.
98. The interim measures in place for managing history work satisfactorily well in supporting teaching and learning. To develop further the subject requires a more permanent structure for leadership and management.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection. Planning now ensures that pupils have more time working with new technology in both dedicated ICT lessons and in the lessons in other subjects. Pupils are now achieving well and are making good progress.
100. For the younger pupils, the main focus of teaching is to have them recognise that ICT is all around and that it can help them by making things happen. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils use a mouse competently to drag objects on the screen to the correct place. They click on icons as directed and use different tools in simple paint programs. Pupils with the severest of learning difficulties have a growing understanding of cause and effect through learning to use switches to operate devices like tape recorders and the bubble tower in the multi-sensory room. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned how to control a good range of different devices. Literacy skills are encouraged as they enter simple instructions into a buggy to move it forwards and backwards and some are developing an understanding of left and right. They also use their ICT skills and knowledge to help them learn in the lessons in other subjects. The highest attaining pupils know how to use programs in mathematics, English and history. They have sufficient co-ordination to manipulate the mouse correctly and sufficient understanding of the demands of simple programs to control them well. Pupils with less precise hand control use touch screens independently to manipulate the screen.
101. The quality of teaching is good. Only one ICT lesson was observed but there were a good number of examples of teachers promoting ICT skills in other subject areas. In discrete lessons in ICT, teachers have sufficient knowledge and there are suitable resources to enable them to give pupils activities that match their levels of understanding and meet their needs. Groups are well chosen and the resources, such as roller-balls or switches, are provided so that pupils have a good experience of using different elements of the new technology. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in one lesson for Year 3 pupils, they played a significant part in ensuring that good progress was made by the pupils they worked with, because they understood the programming requirements of the buggy.
102. The subject co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and of how it may be used to support and extend pupils' learning in other subjects. Resources are generally good and there is a sufficient range and variety to ensure that all pupils have access to facilities. Some resources are old, but the development plan for the subject identifies priorities that will help to quickly extend the provision.

MUSIC

103. The provision for music is satisfactory. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are satisfactory over a curriculum that emphasises performing with untuned percussion and shaker instruments.
104. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils enjoy being active, for example when they beat drums, shake cymbals, tambourines and other instruments to an electronic rhythm. They start and stop on time, play fast and slow and loud and soft. They sing simple songs well, with good expression and enjoy making the associated movements. They know which music they like listening to, but have little knowledge of even the simplest techniques of composing, such as repetition. The lowest attaining pupils have less knowledge of rhythm but gain equal enjoyment from beating and shaking their instruments, often with considerable support from the teacher or LSAs. Most have still to learn how to clap their hands to rhythm or remember the correct movement. By the end of Year 6, the highest attaining pupils are good at following the movements for a good number of songs. They have experimented with electronically generated sound and are able to produce a number of rhythms from a rhythm machine. They tell which they like best and, using appropriate vocabulary, such as fast, beat and rhythm give the reasons for their choice. Their singing has improved. They sing well, with gusto and accurate phrasing. They

have learned to identify many instruments by their sound and know the roles of composer and conductor. When they perform as a group, they respond well to the conductor, beginning and stopping on command and making louder and softer sounds when required. They continue to have little experience of composing, but react well to symbol cards for fast, slow, soft and loud. Their musical vocabulary has grown, but they find difficulty in discussing the quality and characteristics of different types of music and in recognising music from different cultures. By the end of Year 6, the lowest attaining pupils play untuned percussion instruments with decent rhythm and have learned to start and stop on time.

105. Pupils' enjoy lessons in music and make a good effort to learn to beat and shake their instruments to time, as individuals and when they perform as a group. The quality and range of their learning is disadvantaged by the absence of any teacher with specialist training in the subject. The choice of commercial modules to form the curriculum also disadvantages pupils' learning. These do not reflect in full the relevant Programmes of Study for the subject, or enable pupils to experience in any depth aspects of music other than performing. Teachers, though, present the content of the modules satisfactorily well. Learning support assistants work hard so that lessons are active and energetic occasions. The music room is a very good facility and the type and range of untuned percussion instruments is good.
106. Within the constraints of the commercial modules, leadership and management are satisfactory. Assessment procedures satisfactorily recognise pupils' attainment at the end of each module. However, all pupils, but especially the highest attaining pupils, are capable of learning over a wider range of musical experience than is offered by the modules. Music, in the form of simple rhymes and songs is well used by teachers to promote learning in the lessons in many of the other subjects. This use of music is not planned into the scheme of work. Consequently, opportunities are missed to recognise the extent of learning in music that takes place in the lessons in other subjects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. Provision for physical education is good. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good over all the aspects of the subject, except for swimming. The swimming pool is an excellent facility. This and the weekly lessons for all help pupils achieve very good standards and make very good progress.
108. In gymnastics, by the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils are at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. They have learned to link together a sequence of up to ten movements that can include jumps, rolls and balances to a controlled finish. They explore their range of movement in the ball pool where they are able to stretch and flex to positions not achievable outside of it. In games, they propel a large ball with accuracy and control the ball well when they receive it. They have learned to take turns and have learned the rules of the simplest games, such as relays. They move with good rhythm to music in dance lessons. They stop and start on time and make the correct actions when, for example they walk up a hill pretending to be the Duke of York. In swimming, they are water confident. With flotation support, they swim on their fronts and backs across the pool. The lowest attaining pupils work well according to their movement capability. Their attainment is best judged against 'P' scales, from levels 4 to 6. Teaching and learning benefits from close links with the physiotherapist, who gives good advice on what pupils are capable of and what they can achieve.
109. In gymnastics by the end of Year 6, pupils' increased strength and their better co-ordination and balance allows them to move with good confidence and show more control. The highest attaining pupils perform good movement sequences, which include the use of mats, benches and boxes. These may start with a jump, followed by a roll to a moving balance over a bench, a pull-over across a horizontal bench and a moving balance up an inclined bench to a box, from which they jump to a controlled finish. They are good at moving to music and have a good repertoire of songs with actions and step sequences. In games, they have developed good competitive attitudes and enjoy the success of doing well and of winning, for example when they play adapted striking games such as unihoc. In athletics, their knowledge of the throws and jumps is good, even though

the distances they throw and jump are very limited. The best swimmers move forward on their front and back with ease and have learned to swim 10 metres without flotation support. The older pupils have lessons in outdoor activities. They are good at recognising directions and plot and follow a simple map to a point within the school grounds. Teachers and LSAs ensure that the lowest attaining pupils take a full part in and enjoy the lessons. The levels at which they attain in all aspects of the subject are limited by the complexities of their movement difficulties and not by their lack of desire or enthusiasm for the subject.

110. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and LSAs are routinely deployed very well. This is especially so in the lessons in swimming where there are as many adults in the pool as there are pupils. The co-ordinator is herself a very good gymnast and demonstrates exercises and skills very well. In her lessons, her high expectations for pupils' learning are matched by the efforts they make to do their best. Very good attention and good regard to safety rules is a feature of lessons, whether they take place in the swimming pool or in the small hall when pupils are climbing or moving at speed.
111. The subject is well led and managed. Physical education has been assigned generous timetable time at about 15 per cent of weekly teaching time. This is greater than in many equivalent schools. Through undressing and dressing, showering after sessions in the pool and learning to take turns in relays and team games lessons in physical education promote good development in personal and social skills. Through learning new songs and actions in dance lessons, the subject also contributes to pupils' experience of music. Whilst these links with other subjects do exist, they are not planned for and lessons in physical education are not as effectively used to promote gains or reinforce learning in other subjects as they could be.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be good. It was not possible to observe any lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but the analysis of teachers' planning and records, as well as the standard of completed work shows evidence of very good teaching.
113. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise the symbols for and know the difference between the holy books of Christianity and Judaism. They know that Shabbat is the Jewish Sabbath. Through their links with a school in Prague they are learning the meaning of friendship with people outside their immediate locality. By the end of Year 6, they have learned about and understand the major differences, between and religions of Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam. They recognise that different faiths have their own celebrations. For example, they have learned that the Hindu faith celebrates spring with Holi and Muslims celebrate the end of Ramadan with Eid. They know that God in Islam is Allah and understand the significance of Sawm. They remember how they felt one day when they missed their drink and biscuits one morning and empathise with Islamic children as they fast during Ramadan.
114. Pupils' very good learning is a direct result of the very good quality of teaching. Teachers are confident in their understanding of different faiths, are enthusiastic and prepare their lessons very well. Their confidence and enthusiasm rubs off on their pupils when they take part in various role play activities, for example the Islamic prayer ritual, with eagerness but with reverence. They remember what they have learned very well. One Year 6 pupil remembered what he had previously learnt about a mosque school when asked what a mosque was. Teachers and support staff know and manage their pupils very well because they have a very good understanding of their needs and abilities. As a consequence pupils feel confident when they ask and answer questions, which benefits the progress they are making. Displays of the different religions that are studied are of very high quality. They are very attractive and support learning very well.
115. The leadership and management are excellent. The commercial modules have been extended by QCA exemplar schemes of work to produce a scheme of work that is very relevant and accessible to all pupils. Resources are of high quality and good range. Each religion has a detailed information pack that greatly assists teachers in their planning. Very good use is made of the

Local Education Authority's artefacts as well as those that belong to the school. Materials which focus on religious topics are well used across lessons in other subjects, especially in lessons in English. For example, the topics of many big books have a religious theme. The daily act of collective worship also contributes to pupils' learning about religious topics.

116. Lessons in religious education make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through teaching the moral elements of faiths and through visits to the places of worship of many faiths.