

INSPECTION REPORT

THE PARK SCHOOL

Woking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125461

Headteacher: Ms J Nettleton

Reporting inspector: Mary Last
17171

Dates of inspection: 31st October – 2nd November

Inspection number: 231535

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	7 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Onslow Crescent Woking Surrey
Postcode:	GU22 7AT
Telephone number:	01483 772057
Fax number:	01483 740976
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Ray
Date of previous inspection:	June, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17171	Mrs M Last	Registered inspector	Music	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils' taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9779	Ms S Smith	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4787	Ms S Pearse	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	
2512	Mr B Emery	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
23300	Mrs L Evans	Team inspector	Science Art and design	
17530	Mrs M Cureton	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15021	Mr N Watling	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
10676	Mr M Sutton	Team inspector	Mathematics	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Ltd
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham on Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN
Tel: 01278 795022

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Park School is situated near the centre of Woking and caters for up to 95 pupils with moderate learning and/or language and communication difficulties. At the time of inspection there were 69 boys and 18 girls on roll ranging from eight to sixteen years of age. Twenty-seven of these pupils have significant difficulties with speech and language and are directly enrolled into the ICAN resource *. Here they receive a high level of support for their more severe communication, speech and language difficulties through specialised teaching, increased speech therapy and the regular use of signed speech to aid communication. All pupils have statements of special educational need and eleven pupils have English as an additional language. Nineteen pupils are entitled to free school meals which is above average for this type of school. Whilst numbers in the school remain constant, the ICAN resource has increased numbers fourfold since the last inspection as the original pupils have moved up through the school and others have been admitted each year since. The ICAN pupils learn in discrete groups for some lessons including those known as the 'core' subjects (English, mathematics, science) but for other subjects are taught alongside pupils with other learning difficulties. The pupils frequently enter the school after early communication problems have affected their learning but, after a short time, they make good progress particularly in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. By the time they leave school at Year 11, aged sixteen, pupils achieve a good number of nationally recognised qualifications including GCSE, the Certificate of Achievement and the Youth Award Scheme.

**The ICAN resource runs as a department of the school and is part of provision by a national charity for pupils with language and communication difficulties. Pupils are enrolled into the ICAN resource after assessment to identify the severity and complexity of their needs by the local authority.*

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Park School is an effective school where pupils make consistently good progress as a result of good and often very good teaching. Pupils enter the school with a range of learning and communication difficulties and make good progress so that by the time they leave at Year 11 they are confident in speaking or signed speech. Good, challenging teaching, with skilled support from teaching assistants in all lessons, enables pupils to make good progress in relation to their prior learning and towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils enjoy their learning within an environment which encourages all to do their best. The headteacher and other key staff provide good support to minimise the effects of staff changes. The strong leadership provided by the headteacher and governors has raised standards of teaching and learning and improved progress. The governing body spends its money wisely and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good throughout the school and enables pupils to make good gains in learning and personal development through enjoyable and challenging activities
- All pupils work effectively towards developing their language and communication skills, this is a particular strength of provision for the ICAN pupils
- Procedures for pupils to assess their own work and understand the progress they have made are very good
- Teachers are skilled and knowledgeable in specific teaching and signed speech techniques to ensure that all pupils, whatever their backgrounds, needs or interests, make good gains in learning
- A good curriculum enables pupils to gain nationally recognised qualifications in relevant subjects
- Pupils and staff enjoy very good relationships which result in a supportive, harmonious and positive learning environment
- The headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership and management and work in partnership with very well informed and committed governors

What could be improved

- The accommodation, assessment and the quality of report writing in music
- Procedures for undertaking risk assessment throughout the school

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1997 and has successfully addressed the issues identified then. The school has successfully provided for the increase in ICAN pupils and the improved emphasis on signed speech helps all pupils to improve their communication skills. The curriculum now includes sufficient time for pupils to study all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and has significantly improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Older pupils study for an increased number of subjects at GCSE, Certificates of Achievement and the Youth Award Scheme. The headteacher and governors continue to make very good progress towards identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their work.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 6	by Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	A	A	Very good	A
Reading	B	B	Good	B
Writing	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	A	A	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

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

All pupils are working overall at levels below those found in mainstream schools, especially when they enter the school. Despite the limitation placed upon them by their language and communication difficulties and their previous problems in learning they make very good progress in speaking and listening and in their personal development and maturity. Pupils work well towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans and are involved in assessing their own learning so that they understand how well they have succeeded. In English pupils make good gains in reading and communication but have more difficulty with writing although they reach satisfactory levels by Year 11. In mathematics pupils' achievements are good and reflect the work they undertake as part of the numeracy strategy. Pupils' gains in learning are satisfactory in art and in all other subjects they are good or very good. The pupils' best achievements are in physical education, ICT and science. In science ICAN pupils make particularly good progress in practical tasks and in music the pupils demonstrate their good performance skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils enjoy coming to school are interested in and pay good attention to their work and try hard to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: in almost all lessons the pupils' behaviour is at least good and often very good. Pupils understand what is expected of them and abide by the school rules. A very few, mostly younger pupils, have not yet developed sufficient maturity to take responsibility for their own behaviour but with support from staff they are able to take part successfully in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: by the time they leave school at Year 11 pupils have developed into trustworthy young people who have confidence in communicating and mixing with others. Throughout the school relationships are very good: staff and pupils work together harmoniously.
Attendance	Satisfactory: the level of unauthorised absence is above average but is affected by a small number of persistent absentees. The school day starts promptly, pupils arrive on time and ready to work.

The school operates as an orderly community where all adults are committed to promoting high standards of behaviour. Pupils are well behaved and speak courteously to each other and to adults and there are only occasional instances of unacceptable behaviour. Pupils enjoy mixing with each other and working and playing in pairs or groups and they work co-operatively, often helping one other.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

Teaching is a strength of the school. It is very good or outstanding in over four out of every ten lessons and good in almost five out of every ten. All remaining lessons are satisfactory. Outstanding teaching was observed in three science lessons and one ICT class. In these lessons the interest levels, pace of working and level of challenge from staff meant that pupils were completely absorbed by the lessons, worked hard, with determination to succeed and made very good progress. Teaching in English is consistently good and often very good. Teachers place a firm focus on the pupils' use of spoken or signed speech which particularly benefits ICAN pupils. In mathematics teaching is good with an emphasis on practical work. Teaching in science is good throughout the school and highly effective for ICAN pupils with excellent imaginative, practical tasks. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good in all other subjects. The skilled work of the support assistants and the speech and language therapists is a major factor in the provision of good quality teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: the school provides all pupils with a varied and interesting range of lessons which cover all National Curriculum subjects. A very effective and regular focus upon language and communication development is a major strength in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: the school's overall emphasis on language and communication also includes very relevant opportunities for the eleven pupils with English as an additional language to make progress in line with other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: the school provides good opportunities for the pupils' spiritual and moral development through its personal, social and health education programme and the quality of support in lessons and at informal times of the day such as break and lunchtime. Provision for social development is very good because the school's specialist social language programme helps the pupils communicate for a variety of purposes.
How well the school cares for the pupils	Good: the levels of support and guidance are high and pupils have good opportunities to discuss problems with an adult should they wish to do so. Assessment is very good with well kept, detailed records.

The curriculum is good and pupils enjoy learning through the good opportunities in good balance of subjects across each week. The staff organise a series of clubs and other activities during lunchtimes and a good range of visits are used well to promote pupils' understanding. The assessment of pupils' learning is very good and provides clear evidence of what the pupils know, understand and can do; in music however, assessment is not sufficiently well focused to provide such detail. The wellbeing of, and support to, pupils is given high priority. Monitoring the outcomes of different groups of pupils within the school, including their behaviour, attendance and progress, is good. The school now has a good range of accreditation at Year 11.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher sets high standards and provides strong leadership which ensures that the school is well organised and efficiently managed. The governors, senior management team and staff work closely together and ensure the pupils are well supported.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Very good: the governing body includes several members with long and valuable experience which is used well to advise and guide the school. The relationship between the school and the governing body is good and governors are frequent visitors to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: the school judges how well it operates in comparison with other, similar schools and has begun to gather and analyse data on attendance, achievement and progress by different groups of pupils. The school has established good procedures for performance management. Staff and governors are developing a stronger self-critical focus and are consistently striving for higher standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good: resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects. There is a small library and an appropriate number and range of books to meet the pupils' learning needs, to find information or to read at home. The provision for computers has significantly increased since the last inspection which has resulted in pupils greatly improving their skills.

The staff, governors and the parents all aim to equip pupils with enough skills to be useful members of society. There is a very positive environment for learning with sufficient teachers to meet all necessary requirements. The management of pupils is very good and ICAN and other pupils benefit from learning in separate and mixed groups. Pupils are well supported by experienced teaching assistants. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and used well, but there are few empty corners for staff and pupils to talk. The use of the staff room for teaching music limits the pupils' learning opportunities. The school does not yet carry out full risk assessments; the governing body is increasingly involved in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That pupils like school, work hard and progress well • The growth in confidence and personal development made by the children • The welcome given to parents and the strategies suggested to help them improve their children's behaviour • The quality of information and the availability of staff to discuss any issues of celebration or concern • The welcome they receive each time they visit the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for homework • The provision for extra-curricular activities

Although parents expressed concern about homework arrangements, inspectors' evidence confirms that the work set usually meets the needs of individual pupils. The school is currently reviewing its homework provision in individual subject areas and has invited parents to contribute their views. Although activities outside of school hours are limited due to transport arrangements the school does the best it can to provide a suitable range and choice of activities and there is a good level of provision during the lunch break. Activities outside school for music are particularly strong and pupils regularly perform in theatres, concert halls and Guildford Cathedral.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. All pupils at the school are working at levels below those expected of similar aged pupils in mainstream schools. They start at the school with low levels of achievement as a result of their learning, language and communication difficulties. As a result of good quality teaching and a well-planned curriculum, there has been good improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. At all ages pupils make very good progress in developing their social skills. They make very good progress in science, physical education and information and communication technology. They make good progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' achievements are improving and are at least good in most subjects, however, in art and design and the theoretical aspects of music the limited curriculum restricts pupils' progress.
2. Pupils achieve well when the standard of teaching is good and focused to ensure that all pupils regardless of abilities or background build upon their previous achievements. End of key stage tests show that, as they get older, a few higher attaining pupils approach nationally expected levels in some subjects, for example mathematics, physical education, swimming and some aspects of science.
3. The pupils make good progress in relation to their individual education plans because lesson planning usually focuses on their learning targets. The school is now setting appropriate annual targets to provide a clear focus on raising pupils' achievement across the school.
4. Pupils' progress and achievement has improved in most subjects since the last inspection because teachers plan their lessons with a clear focus on language and communication and on what pupils will learn in order to build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. Teachers know their pupils well and match their teaching closely to individuals' special educational needs. Pupils make good gains in reading and can understand a suitable range of written materials to support their learning in other subjects. They have more difficulty in expressing their thoughts in writing but nevertheless their progress is satisfactory in all year groups. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics. This is because of good teaching, an appropriate curriculum which includes useful activities derived from the National Numeracy Strategy and very good assessment and recording of their progress. In science pupils make very good progress because teachers plan interesting and appropriate activities. In information and communication technology (ICT) pupils make very good progress because of an improved confidence in teachers which ensures that pupils apply their skills well and make good use of ICT in all subjects. Pupils make very good progress in personal, social and health education. They make particularly good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of citizenship through opportunities for work experience in the local community.
5. All pupils' study for nationally accredited qualifications in Year 11. Although the number of pupils entered for each qualification is small, where comparative figures are available the Park School results suggest pupils are in line with and sometimes exceed the results of others in similar special schools. For example, in GCSE science, out of eight pupils, two pupils achieved a 'D' grade and five achieved 'F' or 'G'. In mathematics out of eleven pupils one achieved a 'D' grade, one an 'E' and the remainder 'F' and 'G'. Pupils also gained a good range of qualifications at other levels and subjects. For example all 16 pupils who entered gained a Bronze Award in the Youth Award Scheme. The school has extended the range of accredited qualifications since the last inspection, for example this year pupils are able to submit

their work for a Silver Youth Award. This represents a significant increase and caters more comprehensively for pupils at all levels of ability.

6. There is no significant difference in the achievements of any pupils in the school whatever their need or abilities. Those with additional special educational needs, including ICAN pupils with significant language difficulties, make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Teaching assistants are a strength of the school and play a most effective role in providing high quality individual support for pupils. This helps them achieve well in communication and language – a notable strength is the achievement made by pupils in signed speech as a result of the good role models provided by the staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes to the school and learning are very good. Pupils arrive at the school in the morning keen and eager to learn. In class they respond positively to good teaching, concentrate well and are able to make progress. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and show interest and a wish to make progress. In Year 7 mathematics lessons pupils are keen to show their achievements to the class, they share and compare their work on measurement and help each other to use appropriate mathematical language in discussion. The pupils are proud of their work and achievements and are pleased to demonstrate this to visitors. In a Year 4 assembly pupils were sufficiently confident to stand in front of staff and pupils and describe how they had made large scale cardboard models of robots whilst other pupils listened attentively and applauded their efforts.
8. The school is a well-ordered community. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Lessons begin promptly because pupils settle quickly and are eager to learn. The pupils respond well to the systems for managing behaviour in school and are keen to access the reward system by gaining points which lead to tangible rewards. Teachers and support staff identify behaviour targets for all pupils and, at the end of lessons when reviewing their targets, pupils request house points or raffle tickets if they feel that they have performed well. Staff ensure that the positive efforts of less assertive or vocal pupils are similarly recognised and rewarded. Rules and guidance for pupils are displayed around the school and pupils are clear about how they should behave and appreciate that staff have high expectations for behaviour. When occasionally a pupil does display inappropriate or disruptive behaviour others are able to ignore distractions and continue with their work, for example when a boy sought attention from a teacher in a very loud voice. The behaviour management strategies are proving effective in reducing pupil exclusions and there was only one fixed-term exclusion in the last year.
9. Pupils speak politely to staff and to each other; they are courteous and helpful towards visitors. Pupils take care of the school and classrooms and there is an absence of graffiti and litter. Pupils' personal development and their relationships with other pupils and adults are very good. For example at lunchtime pupils queue sensibly and good-naturedly for their lunch and are courteous towards staff. They socialise well together. At break times pupils are able to play on their own or with friends without fear of disruption. Pupils are able to organise their own games and take turns. In lessons, pupils, particularly ICAN pupils, support each other in using language appropriately.
10. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour in the school. Incidents of bullying, sexism and racism are very rare and pupils are aware that any concerns that staff may have about an individual are logged on the 'Alert' system. They understand that any instances of intolerance, negative or hurtful behaviour are quickly challenged.

11. Pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on others is good and is developing. The procedures for reviewing targets at the end of each lesson is allowing pupils to make progress with this understanding. Respect for differences, feelings, values and beliefs among pupils is very good. Pupils discuss moral and cultural issues during such subjects as English and religious education and are also encouraged to reflect upon the feelings and lives of others in personal, social and health education.
12. A major focus of the school's work is to provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to demonstrate initiative and take responsibility. Pupils therefore take part in the School Council, operate a very efficient tuck shop, and older pupils coach younger pupils in basketball skills and referee their games. Pupils often prepare and arrange good food for school events and benefit from shopping expeditions, opportunities to use public transport and many trips and visits. Year 11 pupils undertake work experience placements according to their abilities and interests. These valuable activities are helpful in developing pupils' sense of responsibility and in raising pupils' personal independence, self-esteem, self-confidence and social development. Furthermore, pupils are developing an understanding of their community and the needs of others.
13. Overall the attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils is very good and has been maintained since the last inspection. This contributes considerably to pupils' achievements.
14. Levels of attendance are broadly satisfactory at 90.1 per cent. Unauthorised absence is high at 2.4 per cent. This is because of the persistent non-attendance of two pupils that has a disproportionate impact because of the small size of the school. Pupils are usually punctual at the start of the school day, although occasional problems with traffic result in delays that affect the high proportion of pupils who travel considerable distances to school. Lessons begin promptly allowing the effective use of time available for teaching. Attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on learning for most pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is consistently good for pupils of all ages. Teaching is very good or outstanding in over four out of every ten lessons and good in almost five out of every ten. All remaining teaching is satisfactory. This high quality teaching is a strength of the school and enables pupils to make good gains in learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond well to the variety of activities which the teachers plan. All teachers show a good level of understanding about the subjects they teach and a good programme of in-service training has enabled them to deliver the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively. The teachers all show a commitment to and very good skills in maximising pupils' use, interest in and understanding of literacy and numeracy skills.
16. The very highest quality teaching was observed in three science and one ICT lessons. In these examples all components of the lesson were outstanding in the impact they made upon the pupils. For example, in the ICT lesson with pupils working towards a Youth Awards Certificate, the teacher presented them with the very challenging task of devising a formula which they could use in the spreadsheets they were designing to analyse their recent shopping expenses. Once the teacher was assured that all pupils understood requirements, they were left to work independently with the teacher acting only as a facilitator when problems arose which the pupils couldn't solve themselves. The pupils' interest levels were high as they used this recently acquired data and the pupils were completely absorbed by the high

level of the task. After discussion with other pupils and the teacher, and a clear determination to succeed, the pupils all made very good progress. At the finish of the lesson they very honestly assessed the level of their understanding and the quality of their work which was filed as evidence in their portfolios.

17. Teaching in English is consistently good and often very good. Teachers place a firm focus on the pupils' use of spoken or signed English; they check the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking by using questions or activities which are carefully linked to their abilities. Teachers expect pupils to use good spoken language or sign in all lessons and uphold the school's aim of promoting improved communication at every opportunity. ICAN pupils particularly benefit from the regular use of signed speech. In mathematics teaching is good with an emphasis on practical work which helps pupils to improve such skills as calculation and data handling. Teaching in science is good throughout the school but highly effective for ICAN pupils with excellent imaginative, practical tasks. In other subjects the quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good in religious education, history, geography and French. Teaching is very good in ICT, personal and social education and the practical aspects of music. In physical education teaching is very good and includes very effective and highly enjoyable professional coaching for football. In art teaching is no more than satisfactory because the content of lessons does not consistently challenge pupils to do their very best.
18. All teachers place a firm emphasis on the development of pupils' awareness and use of language in English and in all other subjects of the curriculum. This focus upon language is a key feature of the school's aims and teachers are rigorous in ensuring that it forms an important part in all learning. For example, in a drama lesson the teacher was preparing a presentation for assembly through the story of Rama and Sita. As the pupils read through the story she consistently asked them about the language used in the text and invited them to offer alternatives. The group of pupils, which included some from the ICAN unit, worked very well in pairs to discuss the language of the story and to think of alternative words for the text. They then chose an appropriate sound effect to represent the feeling and mood of the writing. Through the teacher's skilled encouragement and challenge, the pupils analysed the sounds and by using a tambourine, violin, calabash, recorder or tambour demonstrated their own interpretation of their excerpt.
19. Whenever pupils need more help with understanding or expression, teachers immediately place an emphasis on language, speech and conceptual development. In an outstanding science lesson with Years 7 and 8 pupils, the teacher made very good use of simple resources. By providing pupils with simple information cards the teacher was able to set high challenges for them to decide where and when it was appropriate to place their card on the diagram showing the digestion process.
20. In mathematics good teaching helps pupils to improve their understanding in all aspects of the National Curriculum. The focus on aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy, such as 'mental maths', is helping pupils to increase the speed with which they calculate. They enjoy this challenge of working quickly and accurately. Where teaching is no more than satisfactory and a few pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory, they are unable to maintain their concentration and are unclear about what to do. The teacher sometimes has difficulty in regaining their attention so that time for learning is lost.
21. The teaching of science is good throughout the school and pupils particularly enjoy practical work. For example, Year 4 pupils are excited at being able to measure the rate of their own heartbeats before and after running round the playground. As a check on their learning at the end of the lesson the teacher skilfully challenges them to identify 'right' and 'wrong' statements about this activity which helps them to

identify how much they have learnt. The regular use of checking on learning at the conclusion of all lessons is a consistent feature of all good teaching.

22. In ICT teaching is now very good and pupils make particularly good progress in contrast to the last inspection when staff were judged to need further training in order to raise standards. The benefits of the school's investment in ICT has improved provision and teaching. The pupils' improvement is clearly illustrated by very good behaviour in lessons and the quality of their work on display around the school.
23. In all other subjects teaching is at least good with the exception of art and design where it is satisfactory. The art curriculum is still under development and does not provide sufficient opportunities to challenge the pupils or a suitable variety of tasks. Teaching is good in religious education, history, geography, modern foreign languages and very good in the remaining subjects. A particular focus of all teaching is the expectation that pupils will increase their concentration spans and improve their ability to work independently. Work in pairs or small groups is a regular feature of many good lessons and such opportunities are particularly useful for promoting pupils' interaction and communication with each other.
24. Homework is set regularly and pupils complete it on time. The school has a clear commitment to ensuring that all its pupils are able to participate in, and benefit from, all learning activities. To achieve this aim the teachers ensure that they consistently plan the core subjects to meet the needs of all pupils by identifying specific tasks for individuals and groups which are linked to their abilities and to the targets in their individual education plans. Informal assessment is enhanced by regular and careful records which culminate in an annual, clear picture of what pupils have achieved over time. This information is particularly useful in helping teachers plan ahead and in providing information for the pupils' annual reviews. All staff use resources well and are sensitive to the range of pupils' varying social and backgrounds, ensuring that the values and lifestyles of all groups are reflected in the materials they prepare and use.
25. Despite these strengths, planning for the pupils' individual needs is less than satisfactory in a very small minority of lessons where ICAN and pupils with other learning difficulties learn together. Whilst the quality of teaching in such classes is good in terms of learning activities, the quality of planning to match the tasks precisely to the pupils' needs is less well identified. The main reason for this omission is because teachers are not always familiar with the individual education plans and targets for the range of pupils in the group. Whilst specialist teaching assistants give very good support to such lessons, teachers do not plan from the individual education plans and are therefore not able to include specific tasks to match pupils' needs. Overall teachers pay good attention to the requirements outlined in the pupils' annual reviews and use the pupils' learning targets well to match learning tasks to their abilities. The school has significantly improved upon the high quality teaching found at the last inspection and continues to strive for higher standards through a developing programme of monitoring.

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

26. The school provides a good curriculum which enables pupils to gain nationally recognised qualifications at Year 11. The curriculum provides a broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities for pupils, and is carefully adapted to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. Statutory requirements are fully met. The curriculum is particularly relevant to the special needs for all pupils because it is strongly and successfully focused on the development of language and conceptual understanding. Those with additional speech and language difficulties are taught

separately for most of the time and disappplied from lessons in French. This enables them to benefit from useful and additional work with the speech therapist, using the ICAN approach. An effective 'social use of language' programme is taught to all pupils for two years up to the age of thirteen. This shows pupils how to use and build upon their language skills. All teachers are rigorous in ensuring that language and communication work is emphasised in all aspects of the curriculum. Other particular strengths in the curriculum include those of English, science, information communication technology, design technology and personal, social and health education. The school regularly reviews the curriculum to ensure it matches the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all its pupils. All pupils gain a good range of qualifications at the end of Year 11, from the National Skills Profile for the lower attaining pupils, to foundation level GCSE for those of highest ability. All fifteen and sixteen-year-old pupils have the opportunity to follow foundation level GCSE courses in science and mathematics, and a full GCSE in art and design. The school makes good use of the national tests in numeracy and literacy to gauge pupils' progress.

27. Strategies for teaching literacy and communication are very good. Literacy lessons follow the national literacy framework. They are very well planned and very well taught. Assessment of pupils' skills in literacy is thorough, and lessons are well pitched to make the maximum progress possible. Strategies for teaching numeracy are also good, and pupils make good progress.
28. Extra-curricular provision is good and complements and enriches the taught curriculum. It has significant strengths but is not extensive, because many pupils travel long distances and have to leave promptly at the end of school. Learning is well supported on a daily basis in a voluntary homework club. The 'Just So Singers' give pupils opportunities to perform in public. The school is a member of the Surrey Special Schools Sports Association and this provides pupils with a variety of extra-curricular team games and athletics. There are specialist sports coaches who enable pupils to play football and basketball to a very high standard. Pupils spend at least one residential week in Devon during their school career, concentrating on outdoor and adventurous activities. Homework is consistently set to extend pupils' learning.
29. The curriculum is socially inclusive, with different groups of pupils well defined and their needs well met. Their progress is carefully monitored. All ethnic cultures in the school are acknowledged and celebrated. Because there are fewer girls than boys in the school, a weekly girls' club has been established. Pupils with physical disabilities are able to join in sports such as table tennis, because specially adapted equipment is provided for them. There are effective arrangements for pupils with differing levels of speech and language dysfunction. Behaviour difficulties are well addressed. All groups of pupils do as well as the rest, and the school's monitoring procedures enable it to be immediately aware if there is any difficulty or lack of progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same progress as the rest because signed speech, in which all staff are fully trained, is also effective in aiding their understanding.
30. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good and well tailored to the needs of pupils. Assessment is thorough. Health education is very well taught and allows pupils to make informed choices as to lifestyle. The governors have approved a sensitive and accessible policy on sex education and a school nurse advises girls when they reach puberty. The school covers such issues as the abuse of drugs using the RIDE programme. Lessons in citizenship have been very well introduced and are of excellent quality.
31. The school has good links with the community. Community studies are taught as part of the ASDAN course in Year 10 and this work furthers pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society. There is an Asian family link worker. A local firm has financed

computing materials. Other businesses support pupils' business enterprise and provide work experience placements. The school links with Surrey police who lead the teaching of drugs education. There are strong and productive links with local schools and colleges. One pupil has attended lessons in mathematics in a local comprehensive school. It is planned that all pupils will study for GCSE in art and design and performing arts in a neighbouring school. Pupils undertake shared writing with a local school. There is a strong computing link with a school in Hounslow. Pupils in Year 11 visit a local college for one morning a week on taster courses such as motor vehicle maintenance, hairdressing, office practice, catering and care. On these occasions, they become acquainted with student life and, with the good standard of help on offer, acquire confidence to transfer to a college course after school.

32. Provision of careers advice and guidance and work-related education is good. It is well supported by the Steps portfolio. Careers lessons begin in Year 9, when a careers officer first talks to pupils and parents about possibilities for further education and training at the annual review. Thereafter, careers personnel are present at all annual reviews and at transitional review. The school has a small but appropriate careers library. Pupils have frequent, specialist careers advice from the age of fifteen. All are given realistic action plans, which are frequently monitored. They are good opportunities for closely supervised work experience, both in and outside the school. These are carefully matched to pupils' capabilities so that they are able to succeed in them.
33. Life skills lessons enable pupils to work towards independent living. Pupils learn traffic skills, shopping, safe food storage and cooking, which are particularly effective strategies for equipping them in day-to-day skills. The regular and consistent emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT maintains pupils' interest and motivation in these essential areas and makes a significant contribution towards their success in further studies.
34. Links with partner schools are very good. The school incorporates information from feeder schools into its baseline assessment. New pupils and their parents are invited to visit the school on open day, to familiarise themselves with the layout of the building and with routines. Teachers from the Park School visit the feeder schools to talk to pupils about the school's expectations. The school brochure supplements this information. The 'Day Book', supplied to parents and pupils, gives clear behaviour guidance and details of the school's homework policy. The school takes care to collect any available information with regard to pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Although individual pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy is tested diagnostically on arrival, information provided by feeder schools is used as appropriate to supplement attainment profiles. No pupil as yet has returned to a mainstream school fulltime, as the needs of all pupils have hitherto been met within the school but the school has introduced a regular programme of visits to neighbouring schools in preparation for a fuller programme of integration. There are contingency plans for any transfer to be fully supported.
35. Pupils are provided with a survey of their academic and personal achievements at age sixteen. All have been given consistent and impartial advice of good quality. All have experienced life at a local college and have some experience of a workplace. At the end of their time in school, pupils and their parents attend an information evening to which all colleges send representatives, so that they can confirm their choice for the next stage in education.
36. Since the last inspection, there has been a good level of improvement. The school day has been lengthened to include an extra fifteen minutes of reading for all pupils at the beginning of the day. Literacy and numeracy lessons reflecting the national

strategies have been successfully introduced. The time allowed for ICT and French is now satisfactory. The number of accredited courses for pupils in Years 10 and 11 has been significantly increased. Links with neighbouring schools have been significantly improved.

37. The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well. Spiritual development is well promoted. Frequent opportunities are given to pupils to reflect on their progress towards the behavioural targets of themselves and others. On these occasions, they reflect on what they have done, and often resolve to do better. In lessons, pupils confidently give their opinions and share their ideas, which are highly valued by all staff. Writing is particularly well displayed on the walls. Pupils' art forms a striking backdrop to many lessons. Pupils make music and sing at such internationally known venues as the Barbican. Pupils are genuinely awe-struck when, in a geography lesson, their imaginations are stimulated when they are shown video clips of volcanoes and volcanic eruptions. Collective worship and grace before lunch give other valuable spiritual insights. Religious education lessons give pupils knowledge of religions and customs other than their own.
38. The school provides a strong framework of moral values. These are embodied in the very good behavioural policy that is consistently promoted by all staff. All pupils have behavioural targets to help them and the school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour to one another underpins the principles of fairness and honesty which are successfully promoted. Pupils are in no doubt as to what is right and wrong behaviour. They are capable of using reason to justify what is wrong and what is right and have good opportunities to do this during tutorial time, where teachers take every opportunity to talk through any moral dilemmas that are apparent. Pupils treat books and equipment kindly and the school environment with respect.
39. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Individual development is promoted through meticulous individual planning and by a two-year programme to promote pupils' social use of language. Very good lessons in personal, social and health education further enable pupils to develop socially. Pupils are given responsibilities such as running sports clubs, the school tuck shop or helping in the school library, all of which add to their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils gain confidence by participating in the School Council. They show a high level of respect for those less able than themselves. There are good opportunities for them to help others, pushing the wheelchairs for people with movement difficulties at the school harvest festival for example, and helping younger pupils. Pupils further improve their social awareness when they join with other pupils in mainstream schools to undertake shared tasks. Opportunities for residential experience further supports their sociability and independence.
40. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' cultural development. Pupils visit a range of museums and galleries. Theatrical workshops visit the school. Pupils sing in several prestigious halls. Pupils experience a range of other cultures in the religious festivals they celebrate and in lessons in geography, religious education and music. There is an annual trip to France.
41. The very good provision for pupils' personal development has been maintained since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school makes satisfactory provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. There is a designated person with responsibility for child protection who has a good working knowledge of local procedures. Teachers and classroom assistants are

aware of their responsibility to report any concerns and the school seeks external advice where the need is identified. However, there are no formal routines to ensure the updating of training in child protection matters or that all staff are properly briefed at induction. This results in some staff not being fully aware of requirements. High priority is given to raising pupils' awareness of the need to be mindful of their personal safety. In addition to road safety there is a well-planned programme about relationships, including sex education; they are also made aware of the dangers involved in taking drugs. In personal, social and health education, pupils explore rights and responsibilities, including their right to say 'no'. Assertiveness training for older pupils helps them to understand their right to make decisions for themselves and how to communicate these effectively. The very good relationships between staff and pupils results in them having confidence to share concerns where there is a need and thriving in a positive learning environment.

43. There is a suitable health and safety policy that gives a broad outline of requirements. Governors are fully involved in inspecting the premises on a regular basis to identify potential hazards. They carry out this process conscientiously but not within the context of checking against a formal whole-school assessment of risk as required. Arrangements to deal with first-aid emergencies and prescribed medicines are sound, although the school is unable to make the best use of its medical room since it is not suitably sited to supervise it adequately. Requirements for the periodic testing of school equipment and appliances are fully met. Procedures to evacuate the premises are practised with sufficient frequency to ensure pupils and members of staff are aware of what to do in case of emergency. There are suitable levels of supervision for pupils at break and lunchtimes, ensuring any problems that occur are dealt with promptly.
44. Registration procedures ensure an accurate record of those present in the school. Reasons for absence are always required and class teachers follow up absences with a telephone call home where there is no explanation. There are some families where communication is assured by the use of translation services where necessary. The school and the education welfare officer work co-operatively together through weekly meetings. Unexplained and patterns of absence are regularly recorded and monitored by the headteacher and senior management team to minimise unauthorised absence.
45. There are well-established and implemented procedures for promoting good behaviour and supporting pupils where there is a need for improvement. The behaviour of all pupils is monitored with care and the school ensures that they are fully involved in this process through discussions about their personal targets and their progress towards achieving them. This, together with the high levels of parental involvement and the acknowledgement of success, motivates pupils well and raises self-esteem. There are effective procedures for dealing with the rare incidents of bullying, as well as those of a racial nature. They are rarely needed as the high priority given to fostering an environment of care and concern for the needs of others results in generally pleasing levels of 'give and take' amongst pupils. Procedures that alert the school and parents at an early stage when individual pupils are behaving in a way that may lead to exclusion result in action being taken to resolve this at an early stage. This has resulted in a significant drop in the number of exclusions since the time of the last inspection.
46. The school has very good arrangements to provide effective support and advice for pupils both for their personal development and academic performance. The personal, social and health education programme is planned well for their personal development. Arrangements for careers education and guidance take into account the need for early action planning to ensure options available are suitably explored. It is enhanced by community service placements in Year 10, work experience that is

planned well in Year 11 and arrangements for all pupils to take courses at a local college of further education in Year 11. These, together with suitable opportunities for them to explore courses available beyond the age of sixteen years, result in all those leaving at the end of last year finding placements in education, training or employment. Particular attention is given to developing personal independence, for example in the use of public transport, shopping, the preparation of food as well as taking responsibility and using initiative. Class teachers work well as a team with the college co-ordinator to provide a coherent programme for the personal development of pupils. This is particularly evident in the work done recently on citizenship skills which has resulted in an impressive mapping of provision across a range of subjects. Monitoring personal development is given high priority both in pupils' everyday response to school and also within the personal, social and health education programme. The school has clear records, sets suitable targets and monitors progress towards these regularly with pupils. This results in pupils having a very good understanding of their own learning. There is effective personal support for work in lessons from both teachers and classroom assistants and as a result pupils are confident to ask for help when it is needed. In the best but rather rare examples of marking there is good guidance about what pupils need to do to improve and also explanations of what it is that makes a particular piece of work worthy of praise. Pupils are given suitable help and support outside lessons through a homework club held at lunchtime.

47. Arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance and using the results to plan suitable work for them are very good overall. Effective use is made of assessment when pupils enter the school which provides a good basis for planning future work. The subsequent arrangements for short-term 'can do' assessments are well suited to the needs of the pupils and based on National Curriculum requirements. Good use is also made of standardised tasks to identify levels in such skills as reading. The small class sizes enable targets to be set individually in lessons and the teachers' planning usually reflects this. There has been an improvement since the time of the last inspection when assessment arrangements in some subjects required attention although more work is still required to improve procedures in music. Pupils are fully involved in monitoring their progress and have a very good knowledge of the targets they are working towards. Comparison of the rate of progress for individual pupils in each subject is made every term for use by class teachers. Where differences between subjects suggest underachievement class teachers meet with other staff to plan for improvement. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator is aware of the need to establish monitoring procedures to identify how information from assessment can be used more comprehensively to raise standards. In some lessons there is sometimes a lack of suitable planning from the pupils' targets to meet their needs effectively.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Almost all parents are very pleased with what the school provides and achieves and feel that staff work in close partnership with them to support their children's learning and personal development, and to ensure an effective two way flow of information. They say their children like and enjoy school; that they are taught well, work hard and make good progress. They particularly note a growth in confidence and, in some cases, a reduction in anxiety after starting at the school. Most parents express confidence in the way the school is managed and the willingness of staff to discuss any concerns or problems they may have. Some expressed concern about arrangements for homework. Inspection evidence confirms that work set is usually planned well to meet the needs of individual pupils. The school is currently reviewing homework provision for individual subject areas and has asked for parents' views as a contribution to this. Although a proportion of parents would like to see more

opportunities for activities outside of lessons, these are necessarily restricted because of the distances that many pupils travel to school. Inspectors consider there is a good level of provision during the lunch hour, which includes a homework club. Provision for extra-curricular music is particularly good.

49. The school has established a very effective working partnership with parents and they are usually kept very well informed. There is a newsletter each month that is lively and informative, ensuring that parents are kept up to date with news and events and reminded of dates for their diaries. Day books are used well for messages and to establish a dialogue where this is needed. Where there is any cause for concern parents are involved at an early stage; some parents particularly note that the school is often ahead of them in identifying problems their children are experiencing and in seeking to resolve them. The prospectus, together with the governors' annual report to parents, provides a full range of information, although its presentation results in rather 'dry' reading. Where there is a need for translation services the school makes these available. Parents appreciate the trouble taken to ensure they are familiar with the school and its staff before their children are enrolled. The communications policy recognises the need for and effectively supports good communications with parents. This is particularly evident in the high expectations for form teachers to communicate on a day-to-day basis where this is needed.
50. Annual progress reports are produced shortly before annual reviews and together, in the best examples, they provide an effective evaluation of pupils' progress and what they know, understand and can do. Areas for development are suitably identified, communicated and discussed with parents as targets following reviews. Parents are asked to contribute to the report that is written before the annual review and the school makes good use of this information in identifying targets both for home and school. Parents are particularly pleased that the school works well with them to find ways forward about problems their children experience in the home. There are high levels of attendance at parents' consultations and annual reviews reflecting the strong interest the majority of parents take in their children's progress.
51. The involvement of parents with the school has a very good impact on pupils' learning. The home/school agreement is used fully as a working document to support a close partnership that results in a usually high level of support from parents to achieve both academic targets and those for personal development. Most parents are interested in the work their children do at home and are prepared to find out how best to support this by attendance at various information events held by the school. They respond well to the requests from the school for helping with assessment of both work and behaviour at home. Attendance at events involving their children is high and there is usually a good dialogue between home and school established through the day-books and by regular telephone and written contact where this is needed. The parents' and friends' association supports learning well through funds raised. In particular it helps the school to run two mini buses. There is a high level of response to the school's requests for parents' views through the use of questionnaires; these are used well to support development planning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school's leadership and management are very good. The acting headteacher and the senior management team provide very strong educational direction and the governing body is very effective, well informed and committed. The leadership demonstrates very clear vision for the school, which is reflected in its aims and values and in the standards the school achieves. Since the last inspection the number of ICAN pupils has quadrupled and the staff have managed this increase in

numbers very well, improving the focus on language and communication throughout the school so that all the pupils benefit.

53. The acting headteacher sets high standards and has led the school very successfully in the absence of a substantive headteacher, maintaining the standards, aims and values of the school and striving for improvement.
54. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good, all staff have been trained in monitoring and evaluation issues and those subject co-ordinators in place and the senior management team undertake a regular programme of observation and feedback. The governing body is very well informed and along with the acting headteacher has identified appropriate targets for improvement and has a close working relationship with the school including formal and informal visits. The governing body has a good understanding of the strength and weaknesses in the school; the chair of governors in particular is very informed, having a deep understanding of all aspects of life in the school. School improvement planning is very thorough and shows a clear understanding of both the ways in which the school should progress and how good, existing practice should be consolidated. All decisions are evaluated over time and their effectiveness quantified and this along with very good financial management means that the school's finances are administered effectively and in a way which ensures best value for money and efficiency. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities although there is a need to undertake formal risk assessments in some parts of the school.
55. The number, qualifications and experience of staff are generally well matched to the needs of the pupils and demands of the curriculum. The support staff in the school make an important contribution to its success and are valued by teachers and pupils. The absence of a design and technology specialist is a weakness as is the absence of a deputy headteacher. However, both these areas are to be addressed in the immediate future. Not all subject areas have co-ordinators and this is a concern.
56. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. Since the last inspection a library has been created but there is no music room and the medical room is unsuitably sited. The accommodation is clean and attractive, helped by good quality displays of pupils' work.
57. Resources are good. The number of computers has increased since the last inspection and they are now well used. The stock of books in the library has improved since the last inspection but is still limited, although most classrooms also have a stock of books. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to build upon and raise the high standards of the school, the staff and governors should:
 - a) Improve provision for music by:
 - i. reorganising the use of classrooms so that music teaching takes place in a room where pupils can sit and learn appropriately;
 - ii. ensuring that planning and lesson content are more closely recorded and reflect National Curriculum content for music;
 - iii. introducing a relevant assessment procedure, which is consistent in quality with other assessments in the school; and

- iv. improving the content of written reports so that parents are fully informed about their children's knowledge, skills and understanding in music.
(Para refs: 50, 95-99)
 - b) Immediately introduce a regular and thorough system for identifying possible risks within the school through formal risk assessment procedures.
(Para refs: 36, 37, 48)
59. The school may also wish to address this other less important issue:
- The consistency of teachers' planning for those few lessons where the needs and targets of all pupils are not clear.
(Para refs: 19, 41, 80)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	22	27	8	0	0	0
Percentage	7	36	44	13	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 almost 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	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	9.9	School data	2.4

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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	76
Any other minority ethnic group	6

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.12
Average class size	12.5

Education support staff: Y3 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	456

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	552,264
Total expenditure	524,612
Expenditure per pupil	5,961
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9,826
Balance carried forward to next year	17,826

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2.92
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.92
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	87
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	39	50	2	5	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	48	0	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	5	7	5
The teaching is good.	68	27	0	5	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	39	0	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	0	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	27	0	5	2
The school works closely with parents.	64	32	0	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	23	0	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	30	0	5	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	36	11	5	14

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

ENGLISH

60. The quality of teaching and learning in English is very good. The school's strategy for literacy is very good. The subject is very well co-ordinated. There are clear priorities for further improvement which include further monitoring, evaluation and the development of teaching to be undertaken by the co-ordinator. Provision for information and communication technology has been greatly improved since the last inspection and pupils now make good use of computers to present their work. Lessons based on the national literacy framework have been introduced and are very effective in improving pupils' achievements and interest and they make very good progress in speaking and listening, good gains in reading and satisfactory gains in writing. Lesson time has been extended to allow pupils to learn reading for an additional 15 minutes a day, and this is already beginning to improve standards. Resources are satisfactory and more books are on order for small group reading. The school makes satisfactory use of the library, which is adequate for pupils' needs and supplemented by appropriate loans from the local authority. Learning support assistants work hard to help to maintain consistency of provision, especially in Years 7 to 9, where two, and sometimes three, teachers teach English to each group. Co-ordination of the subject is very good.
61. By the end of Year 6, pupils listen carefully to the teacher and delight in listening when big books are read to them. Pupils confidently play games which involve verbal interaction. They identify their preferred games and say in very simple terms what they would do if they wished to spend time with a friend who wanted to play something else. In their reading, pupils begin to connect letters with sounds and words as they use an interactive computer programme. Few read, however, more than a few words or phrases independently. Pupils trace and overwrite letters by the end of the key stage. They copy letters correctly, but not all can form their letters independently without help. A few higher attaining pupils write short sentences and phrases with recognisable spelling. The highest attaining pupils know and can spell about half the high frequency words specified in the national literacy framework.
62. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils read simple text and easy poems aloud confidently, and with good expression. In a Year 8 lesson, higher attaining pupils read a play script aloud in small groups, paying careful attention to characterisation. Average attaining pupils identified rhymes, and lower attaining pupils were helped to talk their way through a very simple storybook. In a Year 9 lesson, higher attaining pupils read the poem 'Prowlpuss' by Gina Wilson, with at least a basic understanding. They volunteered adjectives such as 'enormous', 'fat', 'brave' and 'scary' to help them write their description of a cat. Writing in this lesson was properly punctuated. Pupils carefully considered the use of conjunctions to join their short sentences, and fully understood the basic stylistic concept of avoiding repetition to produce well-written work. By the end of the key stage, pupils have read, or had read to them, a range of worthwhile literature including very simple adaptations of 'Macbeth', 'Beowulf' and 'The Canterbury Tales'. They have enjoyed Roald Dahl's short story 'Lamb to the Slaughter' and predicted the ending. They have read a range of simple poetry including limericks and shape poems. Pupils extend their reading in non-fiction and can use, with help, a simple index, or contents page. They identify and can use a database. Some use a CD-ROM to find and print out information. Pupils also plan and draft their written work well, and some present their work effectively using ICT. Few pupils write independently, however, but with help, pupils have produced lively accounts of a football match. They have made diary entries, with proper use of the

first person and the past tense. Pupils fail, however, to understand and use the conventional punctuation when writing dialogue.

63. By Year 11, pupils are confident speakers and careful listeners and make good oral contributions to lessons. They realise that different social situations demand a different style of speech and they prepare and give formal speeches to the class. Teachers and assistants give good levels of guidance so that pupils improve their performance and the rest of the group comment on such issues as clarity of speech and style of body language. Pupils make a call to the school from a local telephone box, sometimes needing help for this. Pupils are capable of taking and giving very simple messages. Pupils read a further range of well-adapted literature with at least some degree of understanding. They have some knowledge of genre and identify types of writing. In their study of the media, pupils skim-read to find key information from an article. They compare advertisements and say why they are effective. In their study of poetry, pupils begin to annotate text. Their writing is not extensive, but, with considerable help, pupils write a readable account of Halloween and a story based on an exciting accident at sea. Spelling, punctuation and grammar, however, remain the weakest elements of their work. Pupils present their work in striking and original ways, making good use of ICT.
64. Pupils make very good progress when they are well taught. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and for ICAN pupils they use sign very clearly and effectively to ensure understanding. Planning is detailed and objectives are clear. This is particularly evident in literacy sessions, where big books are well chosen to catch pupils' interest and attention. In a lesson in Key Stage 2, for example, 'Scat Cat' promoted great interest and enthusiasm. The pupils became fascinated by the simple tale, and absorbed by it. This improved their concentration and motivation to learn. Pupils took pleasure in the illustrations. They excitedly answered simple questions on the tale, participating orally in a striking way. Pupils were able to connect cause and effect within the plot and identified simple rhymes in the text, sound foundations for subsequent study of English literature. Good attention is paid to behavioural targets. Group work, carefully adapted to pupils' differing abilities, allows all pupils to make maximum progress in understanding. All questions are reinforced by written flashcards, so that lessons promote all attainment targets in English simultaneously, accounting for the very good progress pupils make. Class management is so good as to appear effortless. Attractive supplementary materials, including illustrations, aid all learning. Pupils learn well because teachers make learning fun. This encourages interest and concentration further. The very good use of learning support assistants promotes continuity, and allows teachers to make a high level of 1:1 input, so maximising pupils' progress. Relationships between pupils and teachers are amiable and productive. Good opportunities for self-evaluation and evaluation of others' work allow pupils to have better than ordinary insight into their own learning.
65. The curriculum is very good. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are supported by well taught drama lessons. Practical oral tasks are well taught and promote pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Attractive and suitable texts and materials support pupils' reading in the well-focused morning lesson which improves attainment. A good phonics programme and shared reading enhances support. A good and consistent emphasis on spelling helps pupils' writing. Shared writing with a local school further helps attainment. As ICT develops within the department, pupils' motivation to write independently continues to improve.

MATHEMATICS

66. There has been good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection particularly in the use of ICT as a tool for learning and pupils achieve well in relation to their targets and previous achievements. Although most pupils are attaining below the national averages some higher attaining pupils are working at or near national averages and by the end of Year 11 two pupils gained D grades at GCSE. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 4 and the impact of this strategy in Years 7 to 11 has improved the pupils' skills and increased their enjoyment as, for example, they rise to the challenge of 'mental maths'. Pupils of all ages are achieving well as a result of the quality of the curriculum and the good teaching that they receive. Teachers take good account of the needs of all pupils whatever their ability, background or lifestyle and, as a result of good support, they all make equally good progress.
67. At Years 4 and 5 pupils count in tens, they recognise the symbols on British coins. Higher attaining pupils understand the concept of 'more' and 'less' change whilst lower attaining pupils recognise coins and understand that the number on a coin denotes its value. Year 9 pupils count on and back in tens, hundreds and thousands, they estimate distances in metres and are able to use trundle wheels to measure distances accurately. They understand symmetry and know how to make symmetrical shapes. By the end of Year 9, pupils are able to recall key strategies and articulate ideas clearly. Pupils work together confidently to solve problems and plot co-ordinates on graphs and transfer information from their own surveys on leaves to bar charts. Higher attaining pupils are able to predict outcomes accurately.
68. Year 11 pupils are able to demonstrate varied strategies for solving arithmetical problems and use a range of appropriate mathematical vocabulary to do so, for example pupils talked confidently about how they found the value of 'x' in an algebra lesson. Pupils are able to recognise and name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and are able to work in pairs to use a computer programme to model 'mind maps' of their work on geometry using text boxes and lines. Lower attaining pupils are able to count in tens and units using number squares, other pupils are able to use three digit calculations to solve problems with accuracy. Other higher attaining pupils working on GCSE coursework are able to apply the principles of factors and prime numbers to solve problems.
69. Pupils in all year groups consistently use appropriate mathematical language and in ICAN classes the involvement of the speech therapist in teaching results in good specialist support for the development of language. The strong focus on language development enables pupils to discuss their understanding with their peers and with teachers, reinforces learning and enables pupils to make progress. In Year 4 pupils are able to discuss the concepts of 'more than' and 'less than'. In Year 8 pupils are able to describe millimetres, centimetres and metres. In Year 11 pupils are able to use correct terminology when discussing axis and plotting co-ordinates. Teachers also ensure that pupils know how to use number in other areas of the curriculum. For example in art and design they use their knowledge of shapes to design Cubist inspired collages. In science they measure body parts. They also record information in graphs and interpret their data.
70. The quality of mathematics teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are very well planned and carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils and their targets. Teachers make good use of resources including data which is collected by the pupils through surveys and analysed by computer. The pace of teaching is good. Pupils are reminded of their targets during lessons and are able to make progress at their own rate. Pupils are well motivated to make progress and are proud of their achievements. The management of classes by teachers is good. Pupils are further

supported by able classroom assistants and, where their role has been well planned, pupils' benefit from specific guidance. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good; this increases pupil motivation and enables pupils to make progress. Most pupils demonstrate eagerness to learn. Many higher and lower attaining pupils are able to concentrate for sustained periods but those who cannot are occasionally frustrated by their inability to make progress and seek attention by calling out. These pupils are supported by good one-to-one teaching and encouragement and are able to concentrate for further periods of time.

71. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and this results in good progress and positive attitudes in all age groups. Teachers and pupils mark and assess work together in line with the school policy. This increases pupils' learning and encourages pupils to make progress. Teachers are aware of the mathematical knowledge of each pupil and use this awareness to plan work for individuals and set targets for pupils. As a consequence pupils are almost always appropriately challenged by lessons. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the good working relationships between teachers and teaching assistants.
72. The management and co-ordination of mathematics is good. The co-ordinator is effective in leading other teachers but do not currently monitor classroom teaching. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented. Pupils are making good progress against their targets and older pupils gain external accreditation for their studies through Certificate of Achievement, AEB Mathematics and GCSE coursework. The assessment of pupils is consistent and secure and pupils' progress is well monitored.
73. Mathematics classrooms are well resourced, there are bright and stimulating displays that encourage number development and reinforce mathematical language. Examples of pupils' work are also displayed, this increases pupil motivation. More use is made of computers to help develop mathematical thinking and increase pupils' pride in their work and presentation since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

74. Science is a strength of the school and achievement in science is very good. This is because pupils are inspired by the subject, are eager to learn, and enjoy being successful. They gain knowledge and understanding through carefully chosen and well-planned lessons, in which they have many opportunities to go over the same work. It is presented in multi-sensory experiences, promoting understanding and expressive language. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements are good and at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 it is very good. Higher attaining pupils achieve standards close to those of mainstream pupils of the same age. There have been good successes in gaining accreditation through Certificate of Achievement or GCSE foundation level.
75. By Year 6, all pupils name and describe the functions of the main internal organs of the body; lower attaining pupils doing so with careful prompting. As a group they all recognise the shapes of internal organs from diagrams, and take turns to position them appropriately in the body. Higher attaining pupils read the labels correctly. They have fun playing a 'right or wrong' game in which they say if a statement about an organ is correct. Using a computer program to reinforce learning, everyone takes turns to 'drag' the external body parts into the correct position, whilst a few pupils read and label correctly the brain, the lungs, abdomen and other parts of the body. They learn to spell the words correctly and carry out investigations into eye, hair and skin colour. The higher attaining pupils present their work in pie charts and block

graphs with a little guidance, whilst lower attaining pupils require more support to create pictographs.

76. Throughout units of work on the body in Years 7, 8 and 9, pupils learn an effective mnemonic for the body systems – ‘MRS GREN’. They develop a close understanding of the digestive system, using for instance, a long and colourful diagram to track the digestive process. They play board games for questions, hold cards up for right or wrong statements and say what they know in turn about what is on their card, for example ‘nerve cells carry messages’. Everyone knows the function of the body systems and the different types of cells of the body. Higher attaining pupils give fuller explanations, for example ‘the nucleus of a cell controls chemical reactions’, whilst a lower attainer knows that excretion means ‘getting rid of waste’. Whilst pupils in Year 8 are beginning to understand the terms ‘donor’, ‘host’ and ‘transplant’, by Year 9, they know the terms, and discuss which organs of the body can be transplanted, whether the donor can be alive or dead and how soon after death organs must be used. Year 8 pupils know the terms for changes of state in the study of physical science. With varying degrees of support, they prepare for an investigation into evaporation. They predict that a flat paper towel will dry quicker than a folded towel, and that a wet towel will dry quicker when exposed to hot air.
77. By the end of Year 11, pupils are working with maturity, increasing independence and confidence. Higher attaining pupils know that an atom is the smallest bit of a ‘solid, liquid or gas’, and that ‘an electron is the negative part of an atom. It whizzes round the outside’. They write statements about atoms, elements and compounds with minimal assistance, because they have learned to spell the key words for the topic for homework. Lower attaining pupils know that protons have positive signs and can identify from diagrams parts of an atom, match pictures and words to statements, and write simple definitions with support and encouragement, first drafting them before writing them accurately.
78. Teaching in science is very good overall. Nine lessons were observed in all and the quality of teaching was excellent in three lessons, very good in one lesson, good in three lessons and satisfactory in two lessons. All lessons were well planned, resources plentiful and of a very good quality. Homework is very well used beyond Year 6, to reinforce vocabulary through crosswords, word search, gaps in text, and always for learning to spell key vocabulary for the current topic. As a result, the standard of literacy in science is high and pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject despite the difficult challenges. Where the teaching was of the highest standard, the structure of the lesson was superb, and pupils were highly motivated, fully involved in the learning process and their behaviour outstanding. As a result of this high quality work pupils’ learning in science is very good overall. At the end of the lesson, teachers empowered pupils to evaluate their performance and learning in the lesson, as well as progress towards personal targets which could then be negotiated further. Where teaching was less successful with younger pupils, the arrangement of learning activities lacked variation, which caused some pupils to become restless and off task for short periods. Teaching assistants supported pupils well but, occasionally, could have been more active in encouraging and supporting pupils’ independent learning, for example alerting pupils to use information from diagrams on the board. All pupils benefit from the ICAN approach to developing language skills. Teachers use additional writing, speaking and listening aids efficiently when teaching pupils with special additional needs, so that everyone can take a full part in the lesson.
79. Assessment is thorough. There are clear procedures for assessment, and information is used well to plan following lessons. Pupils are aware and involved in assessing their own progress and learning. At the beginning of a new topic, each pupil has a realistic but challenging bank of targets to aim for, knowledge, understanding, key words to aim to read and spell, and an investigation to carry out.

During a topic, pupils learn to spell the key vocabulary and as they do so this is marked off on their topic assessment sheet so that they know exactly where they are and what they must aim to do. Two weeks after the end of a topic, a test checks learning, the time gap being left to ensure long-term memory is being tested. Higher attaining pupils are successful in more targets than lower attaining pupils, some of whom may not achieve success in the topic investigation. Working as a team, teaching assistants and the teacher assess pupils' learning within each lesson and useful points are carried forward for consideration in planning a following lesson. At the end of each year pupils' achievement is matched to National Curriculum levels across the attainment targets.

80. Leadership is very good. The co-ordinator has developed a very good programme of study across the school with a skilful balance of the four attainment targets. It is designed well to provide continuity, and to build knowledge skills and understanding in a continuous spiral of learning. Each time an attainment target is revisited, all previous work is reviewed and revised, and knowledge and understanding extended. Very good quality, mostly school-made, teaching aids for a good range of activities are plentiful, varied and serve to reinforce learning in fun ways. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very good; the success which pupils experience in science promotes happiness, good self-esteem, confidence, independence and provides a very good preparation for their next stage of education. The use of ICT is appropriately planned into topics and only programs that pupils can fully understand are used. Monitoring of teaching and lesson planning is in place but is an appropriate priority for further refinement in development planning. At present much of the monitoring is informal.
81. Improvement since the last inspection is good because higher attaining pupils now have the opportunity to achieve external accreditation including GCSE science in addition to Certificate of Achievement. The co-ordinator has developed planning in line with the ICAN special focus on communication using a multi-sensory approach. Although many pupils are not ICAN students all benefit from this approach to teaching and learning.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory by the end of Years 6 and 9 and good by the end of Year 11, when pupils work towards external accreditation. This year a small number of students will enter for GCSE accreditation. Pupils in Year 11 enjoy regularly integrating for art with a local school. They gain socially from seeing a broader range of ideas. Although the quality of displays around school is of a good standard, there is a paucity of larger scale work and work in three dimensions. Opportunities for pupils to explore ICT software are at an early developmental stage. There are good opportunities for pupils to see the work of local artists, and to take part in local schools art competitions. Younger pupils are soon to take part in a sculpture workshop at the Tate Modern Gallery. Pupils' learning is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in drawing and painting skills, explore work in clay and collage. The work that they do by the end of Year 6 linked to cross-curricular subjects is too prescriptive with insufficient focus on creativity.
83. By the age of eleven, higher attaining pupils show good control of pencils when they are drawing. They control paintbrushes and mix colours and tones in their work which is usually linked to topics in other subjects. They create collages of costumes using carefully selected textures and patterns to suit the clothing of Victorian men and women. Younger pupils use preparatory sketches to create patterns for decorating clothes with pattern repeats and some higher attaining pupils have more complex pattern ideas than is expected of them.

84. By the age of fourteen, pupils have developed an awareness of creating atmospheric landscapes in collage, working with tones and textures and creating effects from overlays. They produce colour work using their observation and knowledge of the impressionists such as Monet and Pissaro. In drawing buildings in townscapes they begin to understand and develop perspective in their work, referring to pictures by, for example, Edward Hopper.
85. In their study of Cubism and Picasso, pupils in Year 10 identify the basic features of Cubism, and recognise a range of two and three-dimensional materials used in Cubist art works. Observation of pupils' sketchbooks show that they explore and develop their own ideas. In planning collage they make choices of materials, showing awareness of the qualities of those materials and the suitability for their purpose. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils are increasingly independent in their work on the topic of 'pop-art' and study of the work of Lichtenstein. They make use of the overhead projector to enlarge work and download images of pop-art to include in their research on artists. Higher attaining pupils write about the artist and download text about his life and are able to answer relevant questions. Study of the pupils' 'Popeye' cartoons, where they have replaced cans of spinach with up-to-date images of food, show their ability to work from previous models in the same genre. They develop decorative fabric printing and painting techniques and design for a computer keyboard cover.
86. Teaching in art and design is satisfactory overall with one good lesson. A common element of successful teaching was the calm but purposeful working environment created by the teacher in which pupils worked productively and thoughtfully. Good questioning in a Year 10 lesson elicited a sound understanding of previous work on Cubism. Pupils with special needs were well supported by teaching assistants who reinforced the teaching and promoted pupils' confidence.
87. In one lesson there was insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils who surpassed the learning objectives of the lesson by creating more complex patterns than expected. In one lesson observed the introduction was dull and failed to catch pupils' imagination and interest; although the work produced was workmanlike by most pupils there were incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour by two pupils which limited their concentration.
88. At the present there is no co-ordinator for art and design. The curriculum is currently being updated for the lower age groups in line with Curriculum 2000. The subject lacks overview at present to track progression and continuity of skills and techniques in art and design in all aspects including ICT and art history. There is suitable assessment in art and design following each lesson in Years 3 to 6. However, comments can be about coverage of an activity, behaviour or skills and there is a need to focus consistently on progression of skills and creativity.
89. Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress by providing further accreditation and opportunities for pupils to experience working alongside pupils in a mainstream school. Art and design makes a satisfactory contribution to the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences of the pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. The quality of provision in this subject is very good in food technology and satisfactory for design and technology. Pupils make very good progress in food technology particularly in Key Stages 3 and 4 and make good progress in developing design and production skills in Key Stages 2 and 3. The school does not offer design and technology as a separate subject at Key Stage 4.

91. Pupils' learning is very good and by the age of eleven, all pupils know the principles of healthy eating. They develop design skills, for example in conjunction with geography designing and making models of playground equipment using straws, pipe cleaners and commercial modelling kits. They investigate the best ways to join materials. By the age of fourteen pupils understand the principles of safe food handling. They know a variety of different grains and cereals. They follow simple recipes accurately and experience examples of Indian and Chinese cooking. They work well individually, for example when making pizzas and show initiative and responsibility in washing up for themselves. Higher attaining pupils follow recipes without assistance. They are confident in explaining what they have to do. Pupils of all abilities are always aware of safety procedures when using kitchen knives and graters. In one lesson seen pupils co-operated very well in designing and making towers using paper sheets and adhesive tape. They made hypotheses regarding the best shape to ensure stability and tested those hypotheses. When making animated books for younger children all pupils made good use of a computer programme to design pages. Pupils design and make structures and test them for strength, for example making bridges using art straws and extend their technical vocabulary.
92. By the age of sixteen, pupils have demonstrated good levels of achievement. They know and can discuss the principles of food hygiene and accident awareness. They understand the effects of contaminated food on humans and how to store cooked and uncooked foods safely. Pupils know of different food choices, for example when planning a party they catered for vegetarian and vegan tastes as well as for people who have no preference. They make good use of ICT, for example in designing labels for food and taking care to identify the correct ingredients. In Year 11 pupils study for the Certificate of Educational Achievement and of the 16 entering, 15 gained certificates at Levels 1 and 2 and one pupil achieved Level 1 – distinction.
93. Teaching is very good across all key stages. Teachers have very good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs. They plan their lessons well to ensure that tasks are well matched to need. Very good use is made of questions to enable pupils to check on their learning, for example about the need for hot water when washing up. All adults treat pupils with respect which in turn motivates all pupils.
94. The quality of co-ordination in food technology is very good. Schemes of work are in place. Assessment and recording is well used. At the time of the inspection there was no design and technology co-ordinator. Opportunities for pupils to develop skills in using resistant materials, for example wood, metals and plastics were very limited. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

HUMANITIES (Geography and history)

95. The school makes good provision for teaching history and geography for Years 4 to 9, but it was only possible to observe lessons in Years 8 and 9. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is well adapted to reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils' attainment is well assessed. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory level of improvement in teaching and learning, which are now good.
96. By the end of Year 9, pupils have learned about volcanoes in geography and can say what extinct, dormant and active mean in relation to volcanic activity. Higher achievers have learnt vocabulary such as, crater, magnum, lava and core, but others have difficulty in recalling these terms. One pupil defined core correctly as 'very hot molten metal.' Higher attaining pupils know of tectonic plates and the effect they have on the landscape of Iceland, for example. In history, pupils know of the industrial revolution and have a real concept of time when they say it lasted 150 years. They

name key features of the revolution using simplified concepts. They understand how transport changed during this period and how times for moving goods and people shortened. They are able to say why this happened, and see that it spelled progress in industrial terms. Pupils have basic knowledge of the suffragettes. They write down at least two things a woman was not allowed to do in 1900. Pupils collaborate orally in lessons to prepare for role-play which effectively aids learning.

97. Teaching is good in both subjects, and pupils achieve well and make good progress. Lessons are well planned. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and teach concepts such as time and distance consistently and well. Basic skills such as literacy are strongly promoted and often signed to aid pupils' understanding. In history in Year 8, the teacher beat out vocabulary rhythmically so pupils could learn it, and encouraged the pupils to do the same so they began to appreciate the rhythm of the words. In this lesson, as in others, planning was good, objectives were clear and shared with the class, and there were useful periods of recapitulation and evaluation. All pupils were helped and encouraged to take a full part in the lesson by contributing orally. Pupils suggested sentences and gave answers to the teacher to enable him to key in text as an effective preparation for their own writing. In this rigorous lesson, pupils began to learn to annotate and take notes, as they responded to the teacher's high expectations. In geography, teachers are knowledgeable and resources are well chosen. Pupils were highly motivated to learn when they saw striking video clips of volcanic activity. In this lesson, technical language was well promoted, and pupils participated well orally.
98. Resources for both subjects are good. There is currently no co-ordinator for either subject, but this is not yet adversely affecting progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

99. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress measured against their prior achievement and the targets set for them. By Year 6 pupils of all abilities log on and off their computers, many without adult help. They use keyboards and mice accurately. They know the names of the component parts of a computer, for example printer and monitor. Some more able pupils program a 'turtle' to produce shapes, for example a square or a rectangle. Modelling is first practised in the playground or classroom using verbal instructions before moving on to a computer. Pupils use results from surveys to produce bar charts and pie charts, for example colours of cars in the car park and eye colour in the class group. They show great delight whenever they master a new skill, for example changing the pen colour unaided in a modelling exercise.
100. By Year 9, all pupils know how to use a word processing tool including the use of the spell checker. They produce letters and stories, the most able without support. They use other programs appropriately, for example to produce work for display and to produce a program for Harvest Festival. In one lesson seen, ICT was used very effectively to introduce pupils to the concept of modern art. Higher attaining pupils drew shapes, filled them, changed colours, rotated the shapes then saved them whilst lower attaining pupils made choices by pointing to shapes on the screen. All pupils remained enthusiastic throughout because of the teacher's knowledge of the subject, the special educational needs of the pupils and the ability to encourage and extend learning for all ability levels.
101. By Year 11, pupils of all abilities use a wide range of programs including the use of spreadsheets. All pupils have developed a wider subject based vocabulary including the meaning of 'cells' and 'formulae'. They are confident in editing their work and saving it and some are able to devise formulae for a spreadsheet without support,

including copying formulae to a range of cells. They produce data in a variety of forms including bar charts and three-dimensional charts. All pupils can be entered for the National Skills Profile. This does not extend the small number of pupils who achieve at a level close to national expectations. The school recognises the need to introduce a more suitable external accreditation for these pupils but the current timetable allocation at Key Stage 4 makes this impossible.

102. The quality of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent for Years 10 and 11. Teachers ensure that all pupils are provided with tasks which match their ability, interests or backgrounds. Where it is very good or better, teachers circulate throughout the classroom offering advice and monitoring progress. This ensures that all pupils are engaged in the lesson, gain confidence and increase their ability to work independently. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject which also builds pupils' self-confidence and trust in the staff. Teachers make very good use of humour which motivates pupils and they respond enthusiastically to questions in order to show what they have learned. Teachers have a high expectation of work and behaviour and learning is made fun whilst ensuring that all pupils are included in the lesson. The rapport between pupils and adults is excellent, so that by the time they leave school at the end of Year 11 they have mastered a good range of computing skills.
103. The subject is very well co-ordinated. Schemes of work are in place for all age groups although further work is being undertaken to revise that for pupils under eleven. The quality of assessment and recording is very good and contributes to the progress pupils make. The school has made a high level of commitment to the quality of provision for ICT including training staff to raise their confidence and skills. This has produced a very good level of resources including a dedicated ICT suite. The result of this investment is a very much improved quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Very good use is made of ICT across the curriculum, for example plotting results in science, extended writing projects in literacy, writing the results of investigations in food technology and recording facts learnt during role-play in history. This has a positive impact in raising pupils' confidence in writing and producing neat work. Very good use is made of digital cameras in recording activities around the school. The inclusion of all pupils is greatly enhanced by the use of ICT, for example an electronic communicator and the use of a phonic ear. There has been very good all round improvement in this subject since the last inspection.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

104. Teaching and learning in French are good. Pupils make good progress in the light of their individual needs, especially in terms of speaking and listening skills. They enjoy learning French and do their utmost to take a full part in lessons. This keenness to learn reflects the teacher's enthusiasm. The school has maintained the standards found in the last inspection. Pupils repeat and memorise phrases, speaking clearly with a good accent. The teacher encourages this by acting as a positive role model. French is used naturally throughout the lessons with constant checking for pupil understanding. Teaching is good overall and pupils rise to the challenge of trying to work out what the teacher means. They watch gesture and mime carefully and pick out the words they know. They then respond with familiar phrases. There is rightly a strong emphasis on speaking and listening which in turn helps pupils develop skills related to their personal language and communication targets.
105. Pupils read and write basic vocabulary. For example, Year 7 pupils had their photographs taken with a digital camera; they then wrote greetings in speech

bubbles, which they read back with a sense of achievement to the teacher and the class. Year 8 pupils wrote food poems, and read them out confidently in front of the whole school and parents for the Harvest Festival assembly. Pupils also act out role-play situations in restaurants or shopping to reinforce this work further. They are proud of their wordprocessed work, which is on display in the classroom and the reception area.

106. All Year 9 pupils benefit from an annual day trip to France and although pupils from the ICAN resource do not study French they are included in the visit which contributes to their understanding of another culture. The trip encourages pupils to try out their French and also usefully covers aspects for their study of the Second World War in history.
107. Pupils make honest assessments of their own progress at the end of each lesson. The co-ordinator has started to develop more detailed assessment criteria in order to improve individual records. As recommended by the previous report, computers are now used more. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop this still further with new software programs and use of the Internet.

MUSIC

108. All pupils enjoy music and take part in a good variety of listening, playing, performing, basic composition and appraisal of their work. By Year 6 pupils use a wide range of untuned percussion instruments to represent the sounds of a storm. By Year 9 pupils demonstrate their understanding of texture in music and can confidently describe their thoughts about a track from 'The Lion King'. The specialist teacher is rigorous in her expectations that the pupils will hold and play the instruments correctly and this helps them produce a good sound. All adults provide good role models by joining in alongside the pupils. A very good example of a strong relationship between support assistant and pupil was seen when, before playing her excerpt as requested, the assistant boosted the self-esteem of the pupil next to her by asking her advice on how she should play it.
109. The quality of practical teaching is consistently very good and as a result pupils develop very good practical skills. Their learning is very good in practical activities but limited in their understanding of theoretical aspects of music. Short-term planning is good and each lesson results in pupils clearly demonstrating an improvement in their playing, singing or listening. In classes where ICAN pupils and others in the school are taught together, there is less effective planning for the pupils' individual needs because the teacher does not know the pupils' targets. The teacher is therefore more reliant upon the classroom assistant to provide immediate guidance to the pupil and information to her. Whilst this system works well in practice, the teacher is not able to plan specifically for these few pupils' individual needs ahead of time. However, the level of interest and commitment shown in such groups remains very high, for example pupils co-operated well in pairs when practising the main theme of Pachobel's Cannon. The lesson finished with a well co-ordinated and final performance by pupils who were justifiably proud of their efforts.
110. The practical aspects of provision for music are very good. As well as performing for school celebrations pupils also sing in local and national theatres and are soon to perform at the Barbican concert hall. However, despite these strengths, there are also weaknesses in the provision. All lessons take place in the staff room – an arrangement not conducive to learning – the chairs are too low and soft for pupils to control their breath or to maintain good posture when playing. There is no room for displaying information or for the teacher to reinforce the literacy aspects of music and classes are regularly interrupted. The specialist teacher has very limited time at the

school and the records of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory, lacking detail of pupils' acquisition of musical skills and understanding. This lack of time for the teacher to complete administrative tasks also results in descriptive rather than evaluative reports to parents.

111. Provision for music therefore includes many strengths but some weaknesses. Very good teaching and learning results in enthusiastic and well-behaved pupils who gain confidence through their skilled and practised public performances. However, unsatisfactory long-term planning of lessons with minimum assessment opportunities and unsatisfactory accommodation limits what pupils can learn and does not enable pupils to move smoothly through the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject has therefore made barely satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Pupils' achievement in physical education is good across the school and the pupils' attainment is often comparable with national standards. Although no lessons were observed in Years 4 to 6, discussions with pupils and staff and standards through the rest of the school, show that good standards are set in the early years. Therefore by the time they are eleven, pupils have reached a level that can be built upon in later years.
113. By Year 9, pupils have experienced a wide range of activity in games, gymnastics and swimming and have developed their hand-eye co-ordination which enables them to take part in team games, for example soccer and basketball. They have an understanding of tactics as a result of very good quality coaching. In the gymnasium they work freely and with confidence and can talk about their performance. Nearly all pupils can swim at least 50 metres. By the time they leave the school at age sixteen pupils have improved their skills so that they can compete competitively. Their understanding of the importance of health-related fitness is good and some are exploring ways to improve their work in physical education further by, for example, undertaking activity out of school.
114. The school has maintained the good standards found at the last inspection and continuing good achievement is helped by a varied and stimulating curriculum and by very good teaching. The curriculum is sufficiently broad for the needs of pupils whose skills are in line with national standards to be challenged, whilst at the same time pupils who are working below expectations can be provided with a range of interesting and stimulating physical activities. The quality of teaching overall in physical education is very good. The subject co-ordinator is very committed to the subject, has very good subject understanding and is very skilled in enabling pupils to participate and enjoy physical education. Other staff teaching the subject are equally enthusiastic, work well with pupils to demonstrate skills, have good subject knowledge and manage pupils well in practical/outdoor settings. Outside coaches are employed from time-to-time and the soccer coach observed working with Years 7 to 9 was very effective in involving all pupils, enhancing their skills of, for example, passing and in including all pupils regardless of their ability to join in a small-sided game.
115. The subject makes a major contribution to pupils' health, self-esteem and personal development. Pupils are expected to change for physical education and shower afterwards, however, not all pupils wear appropriate clothing and this was ignored by teachers in some lessons. Resources for the subject are very good and facilities include good outdoor hard and soft areas and swimming pool. Pupils enjoy physical education, usually behave very well, persevere with activities they find difficult and work together in pairs or teams.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Although only two lessons of religious education were observed due to timetabling arrangements, evidence from these lessons, from scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator show that pupils' achievements in the subject are good. By the time they are age eleven, pupils have an understanding of Christianity and know that there are other world religions. They have developed the beginning of a subject vocabulary which will enable them to further their understanding in later years. By Year 9, pupils have developed their knowledge and undertaking of religion and know key facts about, for example Judaism and Islam, as well as further developing their knowledge and understanding of Christianity. In a Year 7 lesson pupils were developing their understanding and vocabulary of Christian churches, they could identify and describe the function of, for example the altar, nave and font. In Key Stage 4 pupils address other aspects of spirituality, for example a Year 10 and 11 class were observed discussing the role of a range of charitable organisations. With teacher support pupils were able to discuss what a particular charity was concerned with and why they would support it. Pupils show enjoyment in their work in religious education and are willing to discuss challenging issues. Behaviour is good.
117. Pupils' good achievement in religious education is supported by good teaching and a broad and relevant curriculum approach. Teaching is skilled and sensitive and encourages pupils to consider new concepts and ideas. The curriculum which is based on the local education authority's agreed syllabus, addresses a wide range of issues and areas. Subject resources, which include a range of appropriate artefacts, are good.