

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR SCHOOL

Kensal Rise

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101582

Headteacher: Mrs J Drake

Reporting inspector: Mr C Henry
16979

Dates of inspection: 3 - 6 December 2001

Inspection number: 243409

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chamberlayne Road Kensal Rise London
Postcode:	NW10 3NT
Telephone number:	020 8968 3160
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mary Henderson
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16979	Charlie Henry	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>a) The school's results and achievements</p> <p>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9092	Ron Elam	Lay inspector		<p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
2351	Jacque Cook	Team inspector	<p>Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage</p> <p>Art and design</p>	How well is the school led and managed?
20444	David Hughes	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Design and technology</p> <p>Religious education</p>	
21899	Gillian Lawson	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>English as an additional language</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>	
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Physical education</p> <p>Special educational needs</p>	
20921	Gordon Wilkinson	Team inspector	<p>Geography and History</p> <p>Music</p>	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Manor School is a maintained, mixed community special school for 135 pupils aged 4 to 11 years old with a wide range of special educational needs. Of the 115 pupils on roll there are almost twice as many boys as girls. All pupils have statements of special educational needs except four who are undergoing statutory assessment. The school has 43 pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), including 20 pupils within a designated unit. This number of pupils with ASD represents a significant change for the school since the last inspection in April 1997. There has also been an increase in the number of pupils who have more severe learning difficulties during this time. All pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties. Additionally a few have communication or emotional and behavioural difficulties and one or two are either physically or visually impaired or have dyspraxia as their primary special educational need.

The school is situated in the London Borough of Brent and shares the rich and diverse ethnic makeup of the area. There are approximately 20 per cent of pupils coming from black Caribbean, from black African, from Indian and from white UK cultural heritages. Nine pupils are from Pakistani, 10 from white non-UK heritage backgrounds and 8 from other ethnic groups. Thirty eight pupils come from homes where English is an additional language and almost all of these pupils are at an early stage of learning language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is high at 30 per cent.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Manor School is a good school that cares for all of its pupils well. It has a strong multi-cultural ethos. The high quality of teaching, strong leadership and management and the close work with parents lead to pupils making good progress. Pupils build strong relationships with staff, which ensures they develop very positive attitudes to their work. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall pupils achieve well and make good progress because of the high quality teaching and the team work of learning support assistants and other staff.
- Staff are very effective at helping pupils develop very good relationships with others and value the multi-cultural diversity of the area where they live. Pupils enjoy school, work hard and want to do well.
- Has a very good partnership with parents.
- Meets the changing needs of its pupils through strong and effective leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff.
- Assesses and monitors the needs and progress of its pupils well.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching in the reception class.
- Pupils' achievement and progress in information and communication technology (ICT).

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then it has made good improvements in the weaknesses raised at that time. The school has developed a good curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils. The senior staff now provide clear and effective leadership for the curriculum and are supporting and continuing to develop further the role of subject co-ordinators. Staff meet regularly to discuss and plan pupils' work and this has improved the co-ordination of the whole curriculum. The quality of teaching has improved significantly as a consequence of the improved curriculum, planning and assessment, and the specialist training provided to meet the changing special educational needs of the pupils. As a consequence the progress pupils' make overall has improved, especially in English, mathematics and science where it is now good. The school now makes very good provision for

developing pupils' moral development. The quality of the leadership and management and the commitment of all staff, provide a good basis for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	Key	
speaking and listening	D	B	very good	A
reading	D	B	good	B
writing	D	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	D	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	C	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	B		

Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well. This includes pupils with ASD and other additional special needs, those who have English as an additional language and those from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils do well in improving their communication skills, in their personal and social development and in music. Progress and achievement are good in art and design, design and technology, science, geography, history, and religious education. They are satisfactory in physical education. Pupils do not do as well as they should in information and communication technology (ICT). Children aged five and under in the reception class make satisfactory progress in improving their physical development but most make unsatisfactory progress in their creative development and in improving their knowledge and understanding of the world. The school has started to set targets in the areas of English and mathematics and is achieving well against these.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They are very eager to come to school, interested in their work and try very hard to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very polite and overall behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	These are very good indeed. Pupils have very good relationships with one another and with staff. They make choices and show respect for the views and beliefs of others.
Attendance	This is satisfactory. There is no unauthorised absence.

Pupils become increasingly mature as they move up the school. They help each other when they can and take on responsibilities with eagerness. Pupils learn to concentrate well in lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation stage	Years 1 – 6

Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	Good
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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 and learning are good overall, often very good and occasionally excellent. A very few lessons are unsatisfactory. Teaching is very good in personal, social and health education and in music, and good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, geography and history and religious education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in physical education and unsatisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT), where too little is taught. Literacy and numeracy are taught well across all subjects. Pupils learn effectively because of the high quality of teachers' planning to meet their individual needs well and to develop successfully their communication skills. Teacher, learning support assistants and other staff work well together as a team to build very good relationships with pupils that increase their confidence and enthusiasm. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall for children in the reception class. This is largely due to inadequate lesson planning and not ensuring the needs of all children are met.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall the curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils effectively. There are particular strengths in the arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education and music. There is a weakness in the provision made for information and communication technology and in ensuring that all areas of the foundation stage curriculum are provided for well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is effective support for these pupils who are at an early stage of learning language as part of the development of their communication skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good overall. Pupils' social, moral and cultural development are promoted very well and their spiritual development is promoted well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good care for its pupils. It is particularly good at promoting good behaviour and checking and supporting pupils' personal development.

The school works very well with parents and keeps them effectively informed about the work of the school. The curriculum has developed well since the last inspection and meets the needs of the pupils well. It is supported by effective assessment of what pupils know and can do so that their progress can be tracked. Teachers use this information to plan further work. The school makes good use of the ethnic diversity of its community to enrich the cultural development of its pupils, through visits and visitors to school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff provide good leadership and management. They have been particularly effective in developing the school at a time of significant change.

How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is well informed and supports the school well and fulfils its duties effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is effective at monitoring its work and using this to improve further.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes wise use of its resources and makes sure it spends its money well.

There are sufficient teaching and learning support staff to meet the needs of pupils. They are well supported by the school's own team of medical and therapeutic staff. The whole staff team work well together. Resources are good in most subjects and support the multi-ethnic nature of the school well, although there is some shortage in resources for information and communication technology. Accommodation is very good. The school applies the principles of best value well, especially through the effective work of the financial administrator.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is of good quality. • The school works closely with parents. • Their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. • They feel happy to approach the school with any concerns or problems. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children make good progress and they are kept well informed about how well they are doing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents questioned the amount of homework provided by the school.

The inspection team agreed with the positive points parents highlighted about the school. The team did not support the concern raised about the level of homework where they felt there was an appropriate amount of work set, according to the needs of the individual pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is an improvement from the last inspection and is largely due to better teaching and learning and the development of the curriculum. However, because of weaknesses in the teaching in the reception class most of the children of this age do not do as well as they should in many areas of their work, especially in the development of communication and mathematical skills. These children do make good progress and achieve well in music and swimming where they receive specialist teaching. Children of reception age who are taught alongside older pupils in another class also make good progress.
2. The school achieves well against the challenging annual targets in literacy or numeracy for pupils in each key stage (Years R to 2 and 3 to 6) and, more recently, for those pupils who are in the designated classes for autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). These results show that, overall, each group makes progress and achieves equally well. In addition, the school assesses all pupils in each subject and these show that pupils are making good progress in most subjects. It also has started to consider if there are differences in the achievement of different ethnic groups and again found this not to be the case. This is an accurate analysis of its pupils' achievements and progress. In addition, the inspection found there to be no measurable difference between the progress and achievement made by boys and girls, nor for those pupils who have English as an additional language.
3. In English, standards of achievement and progress are good. Pupils make good progress in the important areas of speaking and listening and this reflects the emphasis that the school places on developing communication skills, often from a very low starting point when pupils enter school. The joint work between teachers and speech and language therapists, is particularly effective. For example, for many pupils, especially those with ASD, the introduction of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) has proved to be really helpful by giving a means to communicate that does not rely on the spoken word, which they find so difficult. As a result pupils are more confident to communicate. Pupils also make good progress and achievement in reading, learning to read an increasing number of words and in using the pictures to help understand the print. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school has contributed well to this, as has the high quality of the resources that are used to help pupils learn. Progress and achievement in writing is satisfactory. More able Year 5 pupils write a range of words they remember from a popular story, 'Don't do that', including 'blood', 'nose' and 'tickle'. Less able pupils of the same age spell out their name letter by letter. By Year 6 many pupils speak with confidence as they act out different roles in a class activities and read with greater expression and accuracy. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make as good progress and achieve as well as the other pupils in all aspects of this subject.
4. Progress and achievement are good in mathematics. Mathematics is taught through a range of practical skills and is integrated well into activities in other subjects. As a result the work is more meaningful to pupils and helps them learn well. For example, younger pupils learn to count cups before they have a drink at breaktime. Older pupils learn how to subtract by using a game where they take toy figures out of a plastic hoop and count how many are left. The good use of signing and symbols helps those pupils who have ASD to understand and enables them to make good progress.
5. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in science. Pupils by Year 2 know the names of the main parts of their body while pupils in Year 6 start to understand about how their body works. They increasingly develop observational skills, make simple hypotheses and draw conclusions about what they see.

6. Pupils do very well indeed in music and continue to make very good progress throughout their time in school. They do so well because of the consistently very high quality of the teaching. They also make very good progress in their personal, social and health education. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, reflecting its high importance to all adults in the school and the introduction of a good plan of what pupils are to learn. Pupils make good progress in art and design, design and technology, geography and history, and religious education. They make satisfactory progress and achievement in physical education. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress and do not do as well as they should in information and communication technology largely because it is not taught sufficiently throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes and their personal development and relationships are strengths of the school. This is an improvement on the positive picture found in the last inspection.
8. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They listen carefully to their teachers and learn to concentrate well during lessons. They are really interested in what they are doing and try very hard to do well. For example, pupils in Year 1 tried really hard to predict what would happen next when being read 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. They were excited to hear the next part of the story and see if they were right. Parents commented on how happy their children were to come to school and this was very apparent in the way they were eager to learn. A few pupils offer suggestions about how to develop their work further. For instance, in a Year 6 pupil suggested that the class should send out invitations to a party and use the computer to do this. He added that he 'really loved this work.'
9. The behaviour of pupils in their lessons, at playtime and around the school is good. They are courteous and try to be helpful by holding doors open. Where there are difficult incidents these tend to be related to the pupils' special educational needs. For example, resulting from refusal to do as asked by staff on the playground and insistence on wanting to play with the computer in the reception class. There is no bullying nor any oppressive behaviour inside school or when they are outside playing. No pupils have been excluded.
10. Pupils' personal development and the quality of the relationships they form with other pupils and with adults are very good indeed. They make choices sensibly and take responsibilities seriously, for example, when asked to take the register back to the office. They help one another without being asked, as when one pupil helped another get up after he had fallen down when running on the playground. When pupils go into class they sit down quickly and are ready for work. A particularly strong aspect of their personal development is the way they have respect for the differences in the cultures and faiths of other pupils. The use of a group session to evaluate work at the end of a lesson is very effective in helping pupils to talk about and analyse their own work as well as to comment positively on the work of others.
11. Overall the level of attendance is satisfactory. Absences are usually due to illnesses or other medical reasons, although a number of parents take their children on holiday in term time, sometimes for extended periods. For the great majority of pupils, punctuality is dependent on the time of arrival of their coaches. During the inspection coaches arrived in plenty of time for the pupils to be in school for the start of the day; any that arrived late did so by only a few minutes.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good overall and as a result pupils learn well. Most lessons are of a high or very high standard and occasionally they are excellent. A very small number of lessons are unsatisfactory. This picture of high quality of teaching is a significant improvement on the last inspection where fewer lessons were of such a high standard and ten per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory.

13. Teaching and learning are very good in music. This is because of the enthusiasm of the teacher, the high expectations she maintains for pupils' efforts and achievements and the detailed planning to meet their individual needs. Pupils respond well to the familiar structure of the lessons and join in with great gusto. Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good in English, mathematics, geography and history, art and design, design and technology and religious education. Teaching and learning are sound in physical education. There is insufficient teaching and learning of information and communication technology (ICT). Teaching and learning for children in the foundation stage are unsatisfactory overall. This is due to the quality of lessons in the main reception class where most children of this age are taught. There is inadequate planning of what children are intended to learn, ineffective management of difficult behaviour and inconsistent use of systems to develop their communication skills.
14. Major factors in the quality of teaching and learning are the extent to which they are planned to meet individual pupils' special needs, especially to ensure that their communication skills are developed well, and the way all staff build good relationships with their pupils. This gives pupils confidence in what they can do and encourages them to try even harder. Pupils make choices and start to take some responsibility for their learning. Teachers, learning support assistants and other staff work really well together so that pupils do not waste any time and move from one activity to the next smoothly. For example, in a numeracy lesson for Year 1 pupils each member of staff knew in detail the plan for the session, so that as soon as pupils had finished one activity, such as sorting coins, they were moved to the next activity of counting by adding on one. All of the time staff made sure that pupils did as much as they could independently and monitored closely that they were learning well. In a Year 4 literacy class the teacher read 'The true story of Father Christmas'. She regularly asked questions to check pupils were understanding the story and effectively keeping their interest and excitement. The learning support assistant encouraged pupils to give their thoughts and ideas and, with the teacher, was successful in making sure that all pupils contributed well to the lesson.
15. Teachers' knowledge of their subjects, especially in music, art and design and literacy really helps raise the standards of pupils' work. They have good awareness of what all of their pupils are doing and readily provide any extra help when it is needed. Teachers check on whether pupils are learning through good questioning and looking carefully at what they are doing. This is done effectively and builds pupils' confidence. It helps to keep pupils' attention on their work and for them to develop good skills in concentration on what they have to do. Encouragement is used really well and every opportunity is taken to catch pupils doing well and to praise them for it, including through the use of smiley faces and certificates. Where there are incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour these are dealt with an equally positive way, for example, by distracting and getting the pupils to do something well, for which they can be praised.
16. Throughout all of their teaching, staff use very well the rich multi-cultural and multi-faith nature of the pupils and the area where the school is. For example, one teacher used her own knowledge of Nigeria to compare and contrast aspects of daily life with the United Kingdom, for instance with samples of different foods and drinks, musical instruments and discussion about common faiths of the two countries. This lesson was very interesting to the pupils. They were really keen to learn more and it helped them gain some insight into both the differences and similarities of the two countries.
17. Teaching of literacy across the curriculum is good overall. Teachers work hard and effectively at helping pupils to develop their communication skills, for example, in class discussions and, for less able pupils and those with ASD, with the use of signing and symbols. Numeracy is also taught well in other subjects. Teachers and support staff use many opportunities to build on and consolidate pupils' skills, in such as counting and recognising numbers. However, information and communication technology (ICT) is not taught and used sufficiently to allow pupils to make adequate progress in this subject. Neither is it used well to support learning in other subjects, especially with the development of their communication skills.
18. For pupils who have ASD, teachers and learning support assistants have started to make good use of PECS, the Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped

Children (TEACCH) and Highscope. These approaches provide the necessary organisation and structure as well as an effective means of communication for these pupils to learn as well as the other pupils. The learning of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) is also effective. This is because teachers are clear about the level of their language development and teach this well, including the use of PECS and through Makaton signing. Teachers work well with speech and language therapists to work out the best ways for these and other pupils to learn.

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

19. The school has made good progress in developing the curriculum since the last inspection and now meets the needs of the pupils well. The lowest level of the National Curriculum has been split effectively into smaller steps to form the plans for what pupils will learn in classes. This arrangement is based on a published curriculum designed for pupils with learning difficulties. More able pupils progress from this published curriculum to one based on the lower levels of the National Curriculum. Religious education is also included successfully and contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual development. Although most subjects have a well planned curriculum, those for music and personal, social and health education (PSHE) are particularly good and, as a result, pupils achieve high standards in these subjects. A two year plan of topics works well to ensure pupils do not repeat the same work. The curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language is also good since these pupils are at a very early stage of development of their communication skills and the school's approach to this important area of development is well developed. The school recognises that the curriculum for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and has made it a focus for improvement. The work of children aged five and under appropriately includes the areas of the Foundation Curriculum in mixed age classes of five and six year olds, careful planning ensures children experience all areas well. However, in the main reception class adequate time is not spent on each area of learning. Mathematical development, for example, is not given sufficient prominence and children do not make the progress they should.
20. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been adapted successfully to help the pupils improve their skills effectively. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for its commitment to improving performance and effectiveness in basic skills, including the involvement of parents.
21. The school makes effective provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Staff have received recent training in PECS and a few have also had training in TEACCH. These new curriculum and teaching methods are improving learning by providing structure and helping pupils to communicate more effectively with their teachers.
22. Personal, social and health education is taught through other subjects as well as in specific lessons. It is included in the teaching of nearly all subjects and underpinned by a commitment to the inclusion and the equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school nurse is involved in this effective area of the school's work. Sex education is well covered, however, while education about drugs misuse is included in the school's policy it is not currently taught.
23. The school provides a wide range of learning experiences for pupils and these include outings and residential experiences. A good range of extra curricular activities takes place each week. These include gardening, which takes place during a lunch-break, and after-school swimming, play and homework clubs.
24. At present the school has satisfactory links with other schools. In the past there have been more links to aid both the academic and social development of the pupils than at present. For example, the headteacher has worked with a local mainstream school to arrange outreach support for pupils who have special educational needs, however, this is currently not in operation. There are appropriate links when a pupil is to be placed in a mainstream school and, for a few of

the older pupils, there is an inclusion programme in their last two terms at the school. The pupils use sports centres attached to another school for aspects of their physical education. A few pupils, as part of the 'Drum Heads' drumming group, perform their music for other schools. Links with the local community are good and visitors support the work of the school well, especially to promote its multi-cultural and multi-faith nature. There are effective links with universities through work placements for students who are training to become speech therapists, occupational therapists and nurses.

25. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains very good, as at the last inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Through religious education and assemblies pupils are helped to understand the spiritual aspects and values of Christianity and other faiths. This understanding is supported across the whole school curriculum. Staff encourage pupils to reflect, for example, to consider the quality of the art they see and produce, to think about their lives and to consider the wonder of things that happen, such as in design and technology when observing the dramatic change from liquid milk when making butter.
26. Provision for moral development is very good. The school provides a clear moral framework for pupils and all adults provide very good models of polite and friendly behaviour. They form very good relationships with pupils and show clearly what is right or wrong, giving them clear and consistent moral messages. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to debate moral issues and illustrate these issues with reference to local events from the press. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other and value each other's work. Teachers also encourage pupils to celebrate the success of others both in the classroom and through more formal settings, such as "Star of the Week" displays of success.
27. The school's promotion of pupils' social development is very good. It is characterised by the level of commitment by the staff to the well being of all pupils and is supported by a range of social activities. These include visits, residential trips, concerts given by pupils, a full and varied range of activities for pupils during breaktimes and the after-school clubs and lunchtime gardening club. Pupils help and support each other both in lessons and in their social activities and are courteous to each other and to the adults around them. Social communication and development are very important and integral parts of the school curriculum and social development targets are frequently featured in pupils' individual education plans. The mid-morning snack times are particularly effective aspects of this area of the school's work when the pupils sit down together, take turns and help one another.
28. Cultural development is very well promoted throughout the school. The cultural diversity of the school is very well celebrated in displays and pupils' work. For example, in the recent work about everyday life for a Nigerian child and during the school's International Day. The curriculum itself enhances pupils' cultural development through music and through visits to the school by performers as well as to cultural centres and experiences, such as the drama workshop in Edgware. The school buildings are enhanced by fine displays of cultural diversity such as a wide range of work by various artists and a display showing different festivals and places of worship. The wide cultural and linguistic experiences within the staff team are used very effectively to broaden the cultural development of pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is a caring community where all staff show a high level of regard to the individual needs of the pupils and provide positive support and encouragement. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored well and the staff provide good educational and personal support and guidance for all pupils. Parents are rightly pleased with the level of support their children receive, seeing it as a caring school where all staff are approachable if there are any problems.

30. Overall, the school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. At the beginning of each term all staff are reminded how to deal with any situations that may arise and know who to report to in the school if necessary. This is reinforced with a good summary of arrangements in the staff handbook. The provision for first aid is excellent with a full-time nurse, several other staff having full training and others having emergency training. The school keeps records of any treatment and sends letters home to parents as appropriate. The arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory and teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. The headteacher and the nurse, who is also a governor, are currently completing a risk assessment for the school and there are regular checks on fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment. The school has undertaken individual risk assessments for all the pupils so that they are aware of the need for support both in school and on trips out of school.
31. The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Good behaviour and attitudes are rewarded by staff giving out smiley faces or stickers that can accumulate to earn a small present. Parents feel they support the school's approach by being able to praise their children for the positive reports they receive. Staff provide very good role models and adopt a consistent approach in dealing with any inappropriate behaviour. For example, with a friendly but firm approach, pupils are encouraged to wait their turn and to not call out. In the playground at break and lunchtimes enough staff are on duty to encourage play as well as monitor behaviour. Pupils who have particular problems are helped by all staff; all of whom have been well trained in behaviour management. On the very few occasions where there are difficulties it is because the school's approach is not as well implemented as it might be or there is insufficient individual support available.
32. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality are good. The school provides clear guidance to parents that they should notify the reason for any absence, and the school nurse telephones home on the same day if absences are unexplained. Parents are informed that holidays in term time should to be limited to ten days and advises them that absences for longer periods can effect their children's progress.
33. The procedures for assessment of pupils' academic and personal development are good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection following the development of the curriculum and assessments are now far more accurate. Assessments focus particularly well on the key areas of communication and pupils' development in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, and include a specialist assessment for pupils who have ASD. These assessments, along with those in other subject areas, are based on the curriculum plans for what pupils are to learn and provide regular updates of progress in pupils' learning. Work is carefully annotated and supported by photographs to show achievements and progress. This information is monitored carefully, especially with respect to pupils' personal development where it is monitored very effectively, and provides information for pupils' annual reviews and reports. It is used to guide further work with individual pupils and set future targets for their learning. The assessments are particularly useful in identifying pupils whose achievements mean that they require close monitoring and tracking. The information is also used to determine the composition of classes for the next year. The use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning is good. Pupils' targets in each subject are based closely on assessments of their learning and they are reviewed on a regular basis. Assessment data is now starting to be used to look at achievement in terms of gender and ethnicity, showing there is no identifiable differences in levels of progress and achievement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are very pleased with all that the school does. The inspection team supports all of their positive comments. The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable approaching

the school with any questions; they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. These reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. Some doubts were expressed about the amount of homework but the inspectors concluded that the work the pupils are encouraged to do at home is appropriate.

35. The school has established good and effective links with parents. The headteacher sends newsletters home each term providing general administrative information as well as outlining the topics that the children will learn about during the term and providing class timetables. Other letters are sent to keep parents aware of information and developments during the term. Most pupils come to school by coach so parents do not have the opportunity for informal conversations at the start and end of the day. The school overcomes this by the excellent use of the link books which teachers complete each week providing an extensive summary of what the pupil has been doing. Many examples were seen of a dialogue established between teacher and parent. Almost all parents come to the formal meetings with teachers in the autumn and summer terms to discuss their progress and to the annual reviews of the individual education plans. The annual report on progress is sent home in the summer term. A few parents have a limited knowledge of English and the school provides interpreters at meetings, including at their child's annual review. Few documents are translated and the school recognises that contact with parents would benefit from the translation of, at least, some standard documents. There is a toy library available for parents to use for their children. There are also training workshops arranged for parents to cover a range of subject of interest to their children's education, including communication development and signing.
36. Parents' involvement with the school makes a very good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. When they start at school parents provide extensive information about, for example, the pupils' social development and communication and motor skills. Pupils' happiness and hard work in school reflect the extent to which their parents encourage them to respect the school and value education. Many parents take up the opportunity to come to school for the wide variety of activities such as coffee mornings, class assemblies and performances by the pupils. Parents do not usually help in the classroom on a regular basis though they provide support on trips out and to help with swimming. They also actively help on events such as an International Day, which was a great success and involved many parents. When parents come to meetings the teachers provide guidance on how they can help at home and the therapists provide useful advice both in school and, sometimes, on home visits. The very good support provided from a Portage home visiting service has had to be reduced considerably this school year due to a decrease in the school budget and is now limited to a few of the youngest pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The headteacher and senior management team provide strong and effective leadership and management. Since the last inspection they have dealt successfully with the many difficulties that the school has faced. For example, the special educational needs of the pupils have changed significantly to include a far greater number of those with more complex needs and there has been considerable change in staff. As a result, the structure of classes has been reorganised from four teams to three and training of staff has had a priority to ensure they have the necessary skills. The ability to seek solutions to meet current needs and to forecast and plan for future trends is a strength and has led to improved standards. However, the school is rightly concerned about the unplanned increase in the number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder as this causes difficulties in fully planning for improvements. This increase has put a considerable strain upon the school budget, for example, the purchase of resources and the funding of specialist training for teachers and learning support staff. This has required the use of previously accrued money, including that obtained when the school changed site a few years ago.
38. The school's aims and values are very well represented in all areas of its work. Of particular note is the celebration of the ethnic heritage and multi-faith of the pupils, their families and the wider community. This is very evident in the displays of work and the choice of resources. There is

also good emphasis on providing a high quality of education for all pupils. The aims and values are particularly well reflected in the effective school improvement plan. All staff are involved in the process of evaluating the success of the previous plan and consultation on the new plan each year. There are an appropriate number of well-chosen priorities with suitable steps to achieve them, realistic costings and responsibilities for implementation and checking progress clearly stated. Training is closely linked to the school priorities and to individual staff needs and is well set out in a staff development plan. The review of training for the previous year shows a wide range of courses and demonstrates the commitment of staff to improving expertise. This has included an increased amount of in-house training, including PECS, SCIP (Strategies for Crisis Intervention and Prevention) and Highscope to raise staff awareness and improve their ability to meet the needs of pupils who have ASD. Information about pupils' progress is used well. Analysis of each pupil's progress in all subjects provides the basis for class groupings before additional information is taken into account. Any differences in year on year figures are explored and reasons sought. For example, last year, data from science, history and geography indicated the least progress for the pupils aged five to seven. On analysis of the levels it was discovered that the differences between a number of the levels was not equal and specific examples were given to illustrate the point. This information now informs the teaching of these subjects. An analysis earlier in the year of the progress made by different ethnic groups within the school showed no significant difference, which confirmed the school's view that they were using the right approaches.

39. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teacher lead by example. They supervise pupils at lunchtime, which helps to maintain a calm atmosphere. Each morning they make a point of greeting pupils on arrival whilst ensuring, for example, that behaviour on the stairs is appropriate.
40. A good, well-structured policy outlines responsibilities for ensuring that standards are being maintained throughout the school. There is effective monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. This is supplemented by focused lesson observations, which change each term. For example, observations have concentrated on the learning environment, and the teaching of humanities and physical education over recent terms. Each teacher has feedback on their lessons and a report on overall strengths and weaknesses with what needs to be done to improve matters is produced. Individual teachers are very well supported to improve the quality of their teaching by members of the senior management team and where appropriate by team leaders. Many strategies are used from helping with planning, organisation of the classroom, working alongside the teacher and teaching the class. If necessary, pupils are moved to other classes to help reduce the range of needs within a group. Recently support has been given to the team working with pupils with ASD and to the reception class because the school has recognised that standards need improving. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teacher have responsibilities for subjects and meet termly with their co-ordinators. They monitor closely the progress of subject action plans. Although teachers' planning is always scrutinised during lesson observations, the headteacher aims to look at each teacher's planning in detail, but is not able to complete all teachers each year. At present, neither the team managers nor the curriculum co-ordinators monitor the quality of the work of their colleagues, in order to improve further the standards achieved by pupils. This is partly because staff absences have required the use of the time of the teacher without a class, so there is not enough time for co-ordinators to assist with monitoring, and also because not all co-ordinators are sufficiently trained to observe lessons effectively.
41. The team leaders are very important to the smooth running of the school and have, despite recent changes in teachers, built cohesive teams of staff well. They encourage the sharing of ideas and good practice. Problems are discussed at team meetings and team leaders give good support and practical help, for example, with pupils who have difficult behaviour. They manage their teams well and also provide an effective route for information from and to the senior management team when they attend their regular management team meetings. The role of subject co-ordinators has, in most cases, improved considerably since the last inspection. Policies and planning linked to the National Curriculum have been developed. Clear action plans for each subject ensure that steps taken to make improvements are well thought through and easily monitored. In this way, funding is well spent on developments that will make a difference for the pupils. There is

a good structure of meetings in the school, which ensures all staff are informed and involved. These include meetings for support staff and for midday supervisors.

42. The governing body, as at the last inspection, is committed and well informed about the work of the school. They have at least termly meetings of the full governing body and appropriate sub-committees. Although they do not have a regular pattern of classroom visits to observe lessons, there are occasional monitoring procedures to enable them to gather first hand evidence of the work of the school. For example, the chair of governors carried out a number of classroom observations when the literacy strategy was introduced and has spent a day exploring the work of the therapy staff. The governor with an English and literacy focus visits the school every week to listen to pupil read. Opportunities are also taken to attend assemblies, concerts and events such as International Day. They use the knowledge gained well and as a result provide constructive criticism and strong support for the work of the headteacher and the school. They meet their statutory responsibilities well.
43. Finances are managed well. Good use is made of funding that is designated for specific purposes. For example, money is well spent to ensure that pupils from homes where English is not the first language have their needs met. Of particular note is the successful negotiation with the local education authority leading to the school's direct employment of therapists. This ensures, for example, that all pupils who need speech and language therapy or occupational therapy have regular sessions, which considerably improves the quality of learning for these pupils. Additionally, art therapy and music therapy is also provided by the school, which makes a very positive contribution to the social and emotional well-being of pupils who are selected to attend sessions. The financial administrator maintains a clear and effective oversight of income and expenditure and, as part of the senior management team, is able to evaluate financial implications of planned expenditure well. The principles of looking for the best value are applied well. For example, several quotes for work replacing windows were considered before the contract was finally awarded. The swimming pool is well used by the school and also by other members of the community. The senior management team is good at recognising potential in staff and encouraging them, where appropriate, to widen their roles. For example, the school nurse's role in following up pupil absences. The secretary is efficient and makes a good contribution towards the smooth day-to-day running of the school.
44. Teachers are well-qualified, experienced and sufficient in number to meet the special educational needs of the pupils. There is also an adequate number of support staff, many of whom have a nursery nurse qualification. In response to changes in the school population, three teachers have been trained to use the TEACCH approach for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. There has also been extensive training through attendance of courses outside of school and subsequently within school in the use of PECS to improve pupils' communication skills and SCIP training to help staff deal with behaviour problems. It is recognised that staff need to improve their expertise in using information and communication technology and specific training is due to take place shortly. Currently they do not make sufficient use of the range of new technology available to help them in their work. Whilst there are good arrangements for providing appropriate staff training, induction procedures for new staff, although largely satisfactory, are not formalised. This is being worked on and a package is being designed to complement less formal arrangements. Performance management strategies are effective and all teachers have targets set. The support staff also each have an annual meeting and a half yearly review to discuss their work and training needs with the deputy headteacher. They appreciate the strong emphasis on their training and feel valued and appreciated by the school.
45. The school's accommodation to meet the needs of the curriculum is very good. The school is in a Victorian three storey building that has been refurbished and is maintained to a high standard. The classrooms are of good size and the staff work hard to provide very attractive displays of pupils' work and general information. The use of the various specialist rooms has improved since the last inspection apart from the information technology suite, which is underused. Other rooms are very well used for working with small groups and individual pupils, providing storage and opportunities for staff to prepare teaching and learning materials. The outside playgrounds have a good variety of play and climbing equipment and are well used during play and lunchtimes. The

indoor swimming pool is well used by the school and also by the local community when the school does not require it. The environmental garden is attractive and pupils help to maintain it. The lack of any grassed area is overcome by regular visits to a nearby park. Overall the pupils and staff make efficient and effective use of the facilities available and there is good support from the premises staff in providing an attractive and well-maintained environment.

46. Overall the resources for learning are good and have improved since the last inspection. There are good resources for all subjects, except for science and information and communication technology where they are satisfactory. The latter subject lacks sufficient equipment for pupils with additional special needs, such as concept keyboards, switches including voice activated ones and touch-screens. These were not available for pupils to use during the inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. In order to improve further the quality of education and pupils' progress the headteacher and governing body should:
- (1) Increase pupils' achievement and progress in information and communication technology (ICT) by
 - ensuring that pupils are consistently taught this subject throughout the school (paragraph 87)
 - implementing the planned training of staff in the teaching and use of ICT across all subjects (paragraphs 58, 67, 87)
 - overcoming the shortages of specialist equipment for pupils who are not able to make effective use of current facilities (paragraphs 53, 89)
 - (2) Improve the quality of teaching in the reception class so that these pupils receive the same high quality in all areas of learning. (paragraphs 48-55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	24	36	14	2	0	0
Percentage	1	31	47	18	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	115
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	25
Black – African heritage	23
Black – other	1
Indian	19
Pakistani	9
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	31
Any other minority ethnic group	7

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6
Average class size	7

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	26
Total aggregate hours worked per week	760

FTE means full-time equivalent.

* This figure is accounted for by funds accrued by the school over several years, including that obtained when the school changed site. It represents a significant reduction from the previous year due to increased staffing and training costs.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	1,587,723
Total expenditure	1,708,955
Expenditure per pupil	14,008
Balance brought forward from previous year	221,105
Balance carried forward to next year	99,873*

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	115
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	37	2	2	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	33	5	2	15
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	30	14	7	9
The teaching is good.	56	31	0	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	46	0	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	18	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	36	5	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	36	5	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	21	0	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	21	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	24	2	2	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Overall, children of reception age are making unsatisfactory progress and do not achieve as well as they should in many areas of learning. This is because of unsatisfactory teaching and inadequate procedures to manage children's difficult behaviour in the main reception class. However, there are areas where children make good progress, for example, in music and swimming lessons where they are taught by specialist staff. Children of reception age who are taught in classes with older pupils achieve well and make good progress because the quality of the teaching is good and, at times, very good. It is not possible to make a comparison with the last inspection because no judgements are recorded in the report for children who are not of compulsory school age.
49. The personal, social and emotional development of children is given a high priority and as a result, children do well in making choices. For example, they choose whether to have water or juice and what activity they would like to do. A good routine has been established by staff, which works well to help children understand what is required. This is particularly noticeable when children arrive in the morning. They go straight to the cloakroom and staff have clear roles to encourage children to be independent in such areas as using the toilet and hanging up coats. This is effective because children are then quickly involved with an activity so no time is wasted. Most have learnt that at snack time they must sit on a seat at the table and wait for their turn. Children's sense of responsibility is increased through requests made by staff. For example, when a child threw play dough on the floor, he was asked to pick it up and put it back on the table. Accompanied by a support assistant, a child takes the register to the school office each day. One child, unasked, collected the broom to sweep the flour from the floor at clearing up time. However, strategies to manage difficult behaviour in the reception class are not sufficiently effective. Where children find it difficult to follow instructions they are not given the security of symbols or offered appropriate choices through using PECS. Children have, on occasion to be physically moved. Where they choose not to sit at a table with the group, this leads to other children leaving the table during group activities.
50. In the reception class, the approach to developing children's communication skills is inconsistent and as a result their progress in developing communication, language and literacy is unsatisfactory. PECS is used effectively during the snack time to help children make choices and effective use is made of photographs, for example, to signify playtime. However, there are significant periods when the teaching places too much reliance on the spoken word, which is not appropriate for children whose understanding of language is limited. This does not reinforce and improve children's use of PECS. Most know how to look at books and turn pages when they join the reception class, which is consolidated for those that choose to look at books during choice time. More able children make links between the pictures and the stories and particularly enjoy listening to story tapes. Opportunities are taken to read stories to individual children on request, which develops their enjoyment. In larger groups, the size of the book is not always adequate for the children to follow the words easily and see the detail within the pictures. Children in the class with older pupils make good progress. They ask questions and have begun to 'write' in scribble form about their news on Mondays. This demonstrates the connection is made between the written and the spoken word.
51. A teaching approach called Highscope has been selected to help the children learn. Children are encouraged to plan what they will do, do the activity and then review what they have learnt. It is in the early stages of development and is working successfully as part of the curriculum in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. In the class of reception children the plan and review stages are not well used and the choices are not sufficiently organised to ensure all children have an adequate amount of each area of learning. This is of particular concern in mathematical development where learning is not reinforced and practised sufficiently regularly and evidence of progress made is slim. Children begin to learn the names of colours and to put groups together,

for example, of certain types of animals. Through water play their understanding of capacity is developing as they pour water from one container to another. More able children learn to follow patterns. During snack time, children show they understand the difference between big and small and the concept of 'more'. Children in the class with older pupils, have many opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. They count whenever they can, for example, the cups at snack time. They learn to recognise and name circles, triangles and squares and sort and match items.

52. Children taught in the class with older pupils make good progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of the world, their creative and their physical development. Good opportunities are taken to provide a range of experiences and to encourage children to participate. For example, a teacher carefully demonstrated how to wrap a parcel. To ensure the whole class understood what to do, two pairs of pupils were asked to demonstrate the activity to the class. This was made into an interesting and exciting activity which the children and pupils enjoyed doing with the support assistant. They learnt how to use tools and increased their physical dexterity. During sessions to improve their physical development, children learn about the value of warming-up before an activity and follow well established routines taking turns to throw beanbags at a hoop. This improves their co-ordination and begins to develop an understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. Children learn to use musical instruments, for example, exploring the sounds made by a rain-maker and develop role-play, for instance, a child pretended to do the ironing, remembering to have water in a jug to make the steam iron work.
53. Children's progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of the world is unsatisfactory in the reception class. Those that have a fascination with water or sand learn about the properties of these substances through choosing to work with them. They know that certain actions will produce predictable results. However, activities for groups of pupils are not sufficiently well planned. For example, in a session making play dough, children worked on a round table without trays, where a great deal fell off on to the floor. Instead of making their own dough, they had to wait for their turn to add an ingredient and as a result became impatient. Although most children manipulate play dough and use a rolling pin to flatten it they are not yet able to choose appropriate tools for a task. They quickly lose interest in the activity and move away. Children's use of information and communication technology is hampered because most do not have sufficient dexterity to use a mouse. There are no appropriate alternatives, for example, roller balls or touch screens available for use with the new computer equipment. Also, the teacher lacks sufficient expertise to use the computer adequately.
54. Children's physical development in the reception class is satisfactory. They become more able to place objects in specific places, for example, moving small model figures. Children do not have easy access to an outside play area, which restricts their physical development. However, time is allocated for an afternoon play session where children learn to use the climbing frame and slide and propel themselves on wheeled toys. This develops into using toys with pedals effectively. Raised blocks in the classroom give opportunities for children to balance on them and to run toy cars over them. Specialist teachers take swimming sessions and children make good progress in developing water skills. Creative development is unsatisfactory overall in the reception class, although the musical aspect is developed well through specialist music teaching. Children are given many opportunities to paint but these are not structured to develop techniques and skills. As a result the art work does not show sufficient progress. Children are learning to play imaginatively. For example, they push dolls in a pram, dress up as firemen or play with toy cars.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. It is satisfactory for personal, social and emotional development and for physical development. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall for the other areas of learning because almost all the children are taught in the main reception class. In this class lesson planning is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all children experience a broad range of experiences. Choices are not adequately structured and what children are expected to learn from each activity is not clearly established. Roles are not clearly defined for staff and valuable direct teaching time is, as a result, lost. There are insufficient effective strategies to improve children's behaviour and an inconsistent use of PECS and symbols does not give information in an appropriate way. As a result children do not develop their communication effectively or adequately comprehend what is being asked of them. One

child's demands to use the computer constantly are not eased through removing the equipment from the room temporarily when it is not to be used. The initial assessment made with parents before the child starts at school is good. This provides very good information, which together with the assessments carried out in school gives a basis for assessing progress. During the course of lessons, the teacher takes photographs of any activity that looks like progress, which provides evidence of on-going assessment. Teaching and learning are more structured in the class where children are taught with older pupils and in specialist music and swimming and are of good and, at times, or very good quality. Choices are more defined and the teacher is clear what is expected to be learnt from each activity. Children's behaviour is managed consistently by staff who work together well and often distract a child into a more acceptable activity if they are not doing as they should.

ENGLISH

56. Standards of achievement and progress in English are good overall. They are good in speaking and listening because teachers and therapists provide effective opportunities for communication through signing, symbols, pictures and speech. Pupils' achievement is also good in reading where skilled teaching and careful introduction of an adapted form of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) has meant that all pupils' understanding of language in both oral and written forms has developed well. The introduction of particular reading programmes is proving highly successful with more able groups of older pupils. They make good gains in using pictures, and increasing the number of words they know. While achievement in reading and speaking and listening is good throughout the school, pupils acquire writing skills at a slower pace and make satisfactory gains. The recent development of high quality resources to support the appropriate implementation of the NLS is beginning to have a good effect upon pupils' achievement in all areas of English. Those pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) also make good progress, at similar rates to other pupils. The success of staff in meeting pupils' individual special educational needs is usually the predominant factor in the progress of pupils with EAL.
57. Many pupils enter school with very limited communication skills. They often lack confidence and have a very restricted vocabulary. However, by Year 6 most learn to speak clearly or to communicate through the use of signing or symbols. They listen carefully to their teachers and each other. More able pupils are able relate their news and talk about their work and school life. They develop their vocabulary appropriately and answer questions in simple sentences. More able pupils in Year 2 learn to state their choices clearly; answering questions in full sentences and listening to each other enthusiastically. Younger pupils sing the alphabet song and many name or indicate objects associated with sounds, for example, 'ball', 'biscuit' and 'box'. A few speak confidently or sign to indicate their responses and most listen attentively to the teacher. Simple extended sentences are used, for instance, one boy in pointing to a picture said "That's a green banana and a blue ball". Most pupils follow instructions carefully, and are beginning to co-operate within small groups and when working in pairs. For example, less able pupils in Year 6 were engaged in structured role-play, which centred on a café. Pupils chose their parts, either with speech or with the aid of signs and symbols, and worked well together, from greeting and seating the customer, to serving the food. The receptionist answered queries on the telephone concerning the meals from a giant board that contained the week's menu. Pupils, in roles from the chef to the waitress, knew exactly what each had to do and were meticulous in carrying out the various tasks, even to donning the correct hat for the job. Pupils often make rapid and sustained progress in communication. Their achievement is good because teachers give specific and detailed instruction and make lessons exciting experiences.
58. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring skills in pre-reading and reading. They make slower but steady progress in writing and achieve sound results. Through carefully planned and structured teaching, pupils develop reading skills well so that by Year 6 most pupils know the initial letters and use these to try to sound out unknown words. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts clearly and accurately. Well-planned and established routines encourage all pupils to read and to enjoy books. Resources are attractive and pupils want to use them. In whole

class sessions using large books pupils read and recall phrases from the story. Although many pupils have significant difficulties forming letters, a few are beginning to copy under their teachers' writing and most are being supported systematically to follow patterns with pencils and crayons. Pupils in Year 2 learn the names and sounds of letters in the alphabet and begin to trace them with their finger in sand and on letter moulds; more able pupils write the letters independently. More able pupils in Years 5 and 6 write words and sentences independently and begin to order their sentences to form a story. Pupils try hard to complete the tasks set and, because of the sensitive and encouraging support they receive, they are usually successful. However, the development of pupils' writing skills is not sufficiently supported by the use of information and communication technology (ICT). There are limited suitable resources in ICT, particularly for those pupils with more complex needs, which would help pupils to make more progress.

59. Overall, teaching and learning are good. At times they are very good and occasionally excellent. This positive picture of teaching is an improvement on the last inspection. The close working relationships between teaching staff and speech and language therapists make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching in English. Detailed and effective planning leads to highly imaginative and stimulating lessons. Teachers and learning support assistants work very effectively together to provide interesting lessons, which include a variety of well-structured activities. Relationships are very good between staff and pupils and so pupils try hard, are fully involved in activities and their attitudes to work are good. Most teachers have clear goals for learning and explain them carefully so pupils know exactly what they have to do. This helps them to complete their work successfully and as a result, improves their self esteem. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities and detailed assessment helps teachers to get this right. Expert individual teaching enables even the least able pupils to share and enjoy books.
60. Since the last inspection there has been substantial improvement in the overall organisation of the subject due to the development of comprehensive planning and policies. The school has suitably adapted the NLS so there is a concentration on developing literacy skills and all classes have a strong literacy focus. This development has been supported through staff training. Considerable effort has gone into providing effectively high quality, multi-cultural, age appropriate resources for pupils. The library is developing well, with a good supply of fiction and Big Books for whole class reading. The non-fiction books are being gradually increased. These improvements have had a good effect on pupils' achievements. Work has begun on monitoring teaching, and the sharing of good practice is effective in contributing to the raising of standards of teaching and learning. Assessment is detailed and thorough and is well used to plan future work.
61. Other subjects pay good attention and contribute well to the development of literacy. The good use of signing throughout the school supports communication well. The use of symbols and PECS are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' progress in the classes for pupils with ASD.

MATHEMATICS

62. The achievement and progress of pupils in mathematics is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because of the consistently good teaching and a better curriculum that has been extended to include a far wider range of work. A particularly strong feature is the practical teaching of mathematics.
63. The work in mathematics is carefully integrated into classroom activities. A good example for pupils in Year 1 is when they are asked to count the number of cups required at snack time and taking turns as they choose either a biscuit or a piece of apple. In another good example, the teacher uses numbered, woollen dolls, which she had made to help the pupils understand numbers between one and eight. Pupils hold the dolls and then try to associate the number of their doll with the one named by the teacher. These dolls are very effective visual aids to help learning and have been designed to reflect the multi-cultural nature of the school.

64. In Year 4, the pupils successfully learn subtraction by using practical equipment. They sit around a hoop on the carpet and watch the teacher place five plastic figures of people into the hoop and then count these together. One pupil is asked to remove two of the figures and they then they count the remaining ones. This activity is repeated several times with different objects and numbers and helps the pupils understand the concept of subtraction. The teacher consolidates this work effectively by doing the sums on the white board and setting good practical tasks. More able pupils are developing a good understanding of mathematical language; a Year 4 pupil looked at the subtraction sign on the board and recognised that it means minus. Probing questioning, with the use of other visual resources, helps others to understand that minus means take away. Most pupils are accurate in describing three-dimensional shapes such as a cube, sphere, cuboid and cylinder when they feel shapes in a feely bag. In describing the sphere a more able pupil said, 'It is like the globe in the classroom and the world is a giant one of these'.
65. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in Year 5 learn to recognise different two-dimensional shapes by drawing around them and then colouring them in. The majority of these pupils do not readily speak to the teacher but strategies such as signing and the use of symbols are used to communicate satisfactorily with the pupils. Occasionally there is insufficient support for each of these pupils. This leads to the teacher being distracted from working with the rest of the class while a pupil's behaviour is dealt with and this affects the learning of the whole class. Some of the mathematics work for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in Year 6 is closely linked to design and technology and involves handling data. Pupils use symbols to create a list on the magnetic white board for making oat cakes, including flour, milk, sugar and oats. Learning support assistants work very well with small groups of pupils, for example, to use the computer to create a chart of the ingredients. Mental arithmetic sessions are used very successfully. For example, Year 6 pupils clap rhythmically as they count from one to 50 together. Less able pupils are not yet confident with bigger numbers although are learning to use a numberline to help them. A dramatic game of 'Paddington Station' is successfully used to teach the ordering and reading of numbers. The pupils become passengers and when their names are called they collect their number from the station. This activity really encourages pupils to do well.
66. Numeracy skills are applied well in other subjects. Pupils compare the British and Nigerian currencies in geography, count the rhythm and beat in music and count and weigh items and give receipts during play sessions.
67. The teaching and learning of mathematics are good overall. Teachers liaise very closely with learning support assistants in planning individual pupils' work and this is evident on the quality of the way they work so well together in class. Other features of the best teaching are the detailed planning for individual pupils' learning based on the assessment of what they already know and understand. Teachers use questions effectively to reinforce pupils' learning and carefully assess what has been learnt. They have appropriately high expectations for more able pupils and, overall, the work is very well matched to the ability of all pupils. Overall not enough thought has been given as to how computers can be used to help pupils learn mathematics.
68. The leadership of mathematics is good. Since the last inspection, the school's plans for what pupils will learn are constantly improving through developing their own practical teaching materials for pupils with complex needs. Teachers use the scheme successfully to assist them with their planning and assessment. Assessment is particularly good and used to set targets for future learning; pupils' achievements are accurately recorded. Resources have improved significantly since the last inspection and they are very well used.

SCIENCE

69. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in science. This is due to the good quality of teaching and the planning for what pupils are to learn. The school has developed schemes of plans showing what pupils will learn at each stage based on the National Curriculum and on a published curriculum designed for pupils with learning difficulties who are at the earliest stages of

the National Curriculum. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. Pupils with ASD and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress overall. Teachers also work effectively with these pupils to develop their communication and language skills.

70. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand the relevance and position of various body parts and can name and point to them. Pupils in Year 5 learn the difference between hot and cold by helping to make and then taste porridge and then eat an ice lolly. By the end of Year 6 pupils are beginning to understand the function of parts of the body and the basic details about key processes, for example, the way we digest food and the function of the oesophagus. They understand the effect of light on an object, including that shadows are the same shape as the object making them and that reflections are images of an original. More able pupils understand that changes in appearance of materials can be reversible, for example, the change between water and ice, while some changes are permanent, such as flour and water when they make bread.
71. The quality of teaching and learning in science are good overall and occasionally very good. Teachers plan their work well around topics or themes and this ensures the lessons are consistently interesting. This approach provides strong links between science and other parts of the curriculum, for example, to design and technology, geography and history. The details of what teachers want pupils to learn are clear and, together with a wide range of communication strategies, effectively makes pupils want to learn and ensures they use their time well. Pupils show interest in their work and concentrate well. They are keen to explain what they learn, for example, when comparing the taste of different red coloured foods they explain if they like them and if they are sweet or bitter. Teachers take great care to make sure that individual pupils needs are understood and met and that they all take part in the lesson's activities whatever their level of ability and communication and language level. Learning support assistants greatly enhance pupils' learning through their knowledge of the pupils and of what the teachers want pupils to learn. They support effectively the development of pupils' language and communication skills.
72. Science is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has oversight of teachers' planning, assessment and recording. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress are sound and use appropriately both photographic evidence and checklists. The co-ordinator is developing the curriculum and associated assessment further to breakdown some of the larger "leaps" in pupils' understanding required at times of pupils by the current approach.

ART AND DESIGN

73. Pupils' progress and achievement have improved from sound and in some cases good at the last inspection to good overall. This is even though they are no longer taught by a specialist art teacher. Pupils now achieve well in art and design. They make very good progress once they join team two, usually in Years 3 and 4, and have the benefit of using a specialist art room. Additionally, teachers have easy access to an art specialist who is one of the co-ordinators and the advice and support they receive increases the range of techniques and skills that are taught successfully.
74. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils select and use colour effectively. Their control of tools has improved and they are beginning to explore the effects they can achieve for example, with different types of brush and amounts of pressures when they are used. Print making is developed through using hands and feet to form interesting effects. Careful instructions encourage pupils to explore materials. They select different coloured powder paints to mix together and, with staff assistance, add water. Good focused questions ensure pupils understand the process. Language is developed effectively as they are asked to explain details of their paintings. For example, candles on a birthday cake, which need to be blown out. Materials are chosen carefully to ensure all pupils achieve well. They develop mathematical skills as they stick triangles together to create a Christmas tree shape, noting the largest at the bottom and the smallest at the top. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to encourage pupils to create designs.

They use a program independently and make patterns establishing a link between cause and effect.

75. As they get older, the range of techniques and skills which pupils use widens considerably. Through skilful teaching, they improve their understanding of colour mixing, for example, by progressively lightening or darkening a colour and explore texture by thickening paint with the addition of corn flour. They write about their work. In pieces entitled 'My Mum is Magic' they make collages of their favourite food, achieving realistic effects with very interesting materials, and write an explanation of what their mum makes. Artists are written about, explored and imitated, for instance, one pupil wrote about Wassily Kandinsky, 'he likes colours'. In another group piece a collage in the style of Guiseppe Arcimboldo cleverly uses two and three-dimensional elements of fruit and leaves to create a face. This is taken further as pupils make observational drawings of the finished result and write about what they have achieved. By the time they are in Year 6, observational drawings have improved in detail. Portraits of Martin Luther King show increased use of shading and accurate colour matches can be seen in drawings of fruit and vegetables.
76. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders of all ages make at least satisfactory, and at times, good progress. In the special classes they work with collage to make faces on plates and design plates of food. Staff encourage them to experience the texture by developing finger painting and hand and foot printing. They work with a range of materials including fabric and plastic to improve their cutting and gluing skills. Pupils do not have opportunities to learn about the wide range of techniques and skills, partly because staff are concentrating on other aspects of their education.
77. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and very good for older pupils. In almost all cases staff plan their lessons carefully and are clear what the pupils are expected to learn. No time is wasted because materials are often laid out for each child to start work. Techniques are demonstrated competently so that pupils know what to do and which choices they have to make to achieve the desired effect. For example, a class was shown how to get an appropriate shape for an angel and how to make an interesting translucent effect for wings. Pupils' behaviour is well managed. Staff have clear expectations of behaviour and reminders, for instance, about valuing the work of others and listening carefully are all that are usually needed. This is because every opportunity is taken to praise pupils when they get things right, behave appropriately and achieve well. In one instance a pupil was asked to 'take time out' and sit on a chair away from the rest of the class. It was effective and the class understood why it was being done. Very good opportunities are taken to explore and widen the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. For instance, they work on African patterns from fabric, have art aspects during 'Black Awareness Week' and often work with other pupils in pairs, groups or whole classes on larger pieces of work. Time is taken to reflect on what they have achieved, particularly with the older pupils.
78. The subject is led well. The co-ordinators have a very effective action plan to improve standards throughout the school. Staff have very good guidance from a well written policy and scheme of work. An excellent booklet gives detailed and very clear instructions on how to teach a range of exciting techniques. It also makes links with specific areas of the curriculum. Although the co-ordinators do not have a formal means of monitoring the work of teachers, they do comment on the work on display. The quality of the display is very good indeed in the top corridor, celebrating pupils' work and demonstrating the high standards they have achieved.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. Pupils' achievements and progress in design and technology are good and, at times, very good. This is because the quality of teaching is high and lessons are well planned with strong links to other areas of the curriculum. For example, there is a good link with science in the introduction of the different ways in which materials change when making of bread and butter and with information technology in using the Internet to find out about making the butter.

80. Pupils develop their skills in cutting wrapping and securing parcels, just in time for Christmas presents. They make choices about the paper to use and fold it appropriately. Pupils in Year 2 learn how to make griddle cakes. They mix the ingredients, knead and roll the dough and then use cutters to make different shapes ready for cooking. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have increased the range of foods they can prepare, including bread, butter and vegetable stew. They think carefully about the fillings that will go on their sandwiches and, with help take care about health and safety, when making them. More able pupils plan the ingredients for the stew and help to prepare the different vegetables. Pupils improve their understanding of the design process and draw up a plan before they make something. For example, when making doll's houses out of boxes, they plan the layout of rooms and the colours of wallpaper beforehand.
81. The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is good and often very good. Teachers plan their lessons well which results in pupils working at a good rate and using all available time. They help pupils to learn by a range of approaches, including the modelling of skills they want them to learn. Questions are used well to check pupils' understanding. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together to meet the individual needs of each child. They concentrate on helping pupils develop their communication skills with the use of signing and, especially for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, the use of PECS to support simple spoken language. These approaches help pupils to be enthusiastic about their learning and want to do more for themselves.
82. The subject is well managed. There is now a good and comprehensive plan of what pupils will learn in each of their topics that they cover. These plans are linked well to National Curriculum and based on a published curriculum designed for pupils with learning difficulties. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Resources for design and technology are good and each classroom has a basic set of tools and materials and this is supplemented from a central bank of other equipment. Pupils are able to manufacture in materials like paper, card and papier-maché but there are limited opportunities for pupils to work with resistant materials such as wood or to use a wider range of tools. The specialist rooms for food technology are used effectively to supplement work in classrooms.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

83. History and geography are taught throughout the school as part of a topic approach, covering the broader area of 'knowledge and understanding of the world'. It was possible to observe only limited amounts of the teaching and learning of each these subjects since many classes were focusing on other aspects of this broader area, including science and religious education, during the period of the inspection. Judgements about geography and history are, therefore, based significantly on the scrutiny of previous work and on records of teachers' planning and pupils' achievements. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well in geography and history. There has been good improvement in the subjects since the last inspection.
84. Pupils in Year 2 find out more about their school environment and learn to relate things they use and see with the different parts of the school. For example, they know that a swimming costume goes with the swimming pool, and books with the library. This helps their early learning of important concepts in geography as well developing their communication and literacy skills as they read and use pictures and symbols to represent the different objects. Less able pupils learn where things are in their classroom, again increasing their knowledge of things that are important to them. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they compare currency, clothes, foods, language, religion and ways of life in different countries. They identify and name two countries on different sides of the world and say which clothes would be most appropriate in each of the countries at Christmas time. Pupils have learnt to recognise a selection of the food and drink that children would have in Nigeria. They use a computer to make invitations to their party, where they sampled the different foods.

85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and occasionally very good. Lessons are well prepared, with clear detail of what pupils are intended to learn. The teachers make the learning as real and interesting as possible, for, building up their work towards having a party that includes Nigerian food and music. This approach really maintains interest and helps pupils learn new things. Lessons are well paced, with smooth transition from one activity to the next, so that pupils' concentration is kept. Good use of questioning ensures that the pupils have learned the main points of the lesson.
86. History and geography are well led. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and has a high level of subject knowledge. There is a clear vision about how the subjects should be developed further. There are good plans for what pupils are to learn in each of the topics covered throughout the school. Photography is well used to record pupil's work. Many photographs are made into attractive books by the teachers that are referred to by the pupils and used as a resource for further learning. They illustrate a wide range of activities in and around London and further a field. The range of resources is broad with useful, posters and pictures, clothes, books and videos to support each topic being taught. Many resources are purpose made by the teachers to meet effectively the individual learning needs of the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

87. Achievement and progress by pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) are unsatisfactory and there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have too little taught time and 'hands on' experience on computers to develop their knowledge and skills. Although there is a substantial increase in new equipment many staff are not yet confident in using it. All teachers have had limited basic training in ICT and are due to have further training next September. There is a clear subject policy and plan of what pupils will learn, which provide a good framework to support teaching once this training has taken place.
88. Insufficient teaching of ICT was seen to make an overall judgement about its quality. Where pupils were seen to be using computers they clearly enjoy using them and work co-operatively together. On these occasions pupils concentrated for surprisingly long periods of time, used the computers sensibly and were starting to learn to do some things for themselves. However, pupils of all ages have under developed mouse and keyboard skills as a result of the limited practice and use. A few higher attaining pupils in Year 6 can 'log on' to the computer network and, by following instructions, can visit an Internet web site to research topics in science. With support, a few pupils use a word processing program to write using symbols which aids their communication skills. A limited sample of pupils' work shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 can use art programs to make pictures and higher attaining pupils are able to word process their names and write a few words accurately. They use reading and mathematics programs to match words and shapes and to develop their manipulative skills. At present, ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in all subjects of the curriculum.
89. The overall management of this subject is unsatisfactory. Although a significant amount of money has gone in to replacing older computers, building a computer suite and installing an electronic white board, at the time of the inspection some of the new equipment in the computer suite was not working. There is also too little equipment for pupils with more complex needs. For example, during the inspection, no touch-screens, concept keyboards or computer aided communication devices were seen to be used. The computer suite is in a useful location and is attractively furnished. Software programs are gradually being built up and, at present, are particularly appropriate for the older, more able pupils.

MUSIC

90. Music is a strength of the school and has made good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. This is due to the very high quality of the teaching of this subject.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is very good indeed. It is taught to each class weekly by a very talented and experienced music teacher, who is very enthusiastic about the subject. The teaching is especially sensitive to the needs of the individual pupils and has realistically high expectations of each pupil based on his or her particular needs. This ensures the needs of pupils who have ASD and those for whom English is an additional language are met well. Lessons are well planned and sequenced, based on a routine which is familiar to the pupils and which leads them into particular types of activities. For example, the lessons start with a song which asks the pupils if they have “brought their quiet voices”, or ghost voices, or singing voices. This leads into the “Say Hello to...” song, which welcomes every child by name into the lesson. Similarly, all lessons end with the “Say Goodbye” song. The teacher and the learning support assistants work well together as a team, ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the lessons - alone, as part of a group or as a whole class. This approach encourages pupils of all abilities very well and they obviously enjoy the lessons. They work hard and no time is lost as the different parts of the lessons move well from one to the next. Vocal and instrumental skills are developed and as a result the pupils gain confidence in their ability to communicate, as well as sing, play instruments and dance.
92. Drumming, led by a talented professional drummer, is very effectively taught to many pupils. This instrument teaching is fun, further develops a sense of rhythm, time and beat and extends concentration and improves co-ordination. In addition to being fun and interesting, many pupils achieve a good standard of drumming and gain confidence through their personal achievements.
93. Music is effectively managed by a subject co-ordinator supported by the specialist music teacher. All of the pupils have a baseline assessment in music and individual targets are set within an overall scheme of what the teacher has planned for them to learn. This includes musical experiences from different cultures, times and traditions, participating as part of a group, exploring a range of vocal and instrumental effects and playing a range of instruments. Lessons take place in a specialist music room and there is a range of good quality resources in this room and other classrooms, which improves pupils' musical skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. Pupils' progress and achievements in physical education are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, teaching has improved and a sound policy and plan for what pupils are to learn are in place. Swimming still remains the main strength.
95. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, have learnt to enter the hall sensibly and sit on their individual mats awaiting instruction about what they will do. They follow the actions of the teacher well, when warming-up for their lesson, by shaking their arms, shoulders and heads. Lessons are well led by the teacher who, with the learning support assistants, use songs such as, 'Heads and shoulders, knees and toes' to reinforce the pupils' learning about different body parts and extend their vocabulary. With the help of the teacher, the pupils walk along an upturned bench, balancing carefully before they jump off onto a mat. They throw beanbags with increasing accuracy into a hoop. Much of the work is intended specifically at developing mobility, balance and confidence, as well as communication and social skills, such as listening, following instructions and turn taking. In a games lesson for pupils with ASD they copy their teacher when learning to how to pass a ball over a short distance. Most work well in pairs and improve their accuracy and catching skills by throwing passes to each other, although the most able pupils are not always extended enough by such activity and, consequently, demand constant attention.
96. Pupils in Year 4 develop their arm and leg actions for the front crawl and backstroke in their swimming lessons. Their instructor works effectively with the pupils in the water and encourages

them to work hard and make extra efforts. Her high expectations and good individual attention, enables more able pupils to achieve well and refine their swimming techniques, with some making particularly rapid progress. Lower ability pupils are enthusiastic and enter the water with confidence. They listen carefully, use the armbands and floats sensibly and try hard to respond to the challenging tasks. Pupils are assessed very well and have a good understanding of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. Year 5 pupils with ASD warm-up sensibly for gymnastics by hopping, skipping and jumping, but are sometimes less controlled when moving quickly around the hall and going on the apparatus without permission. Few of these pupils understand and respond well to spoken language so the teacher uses different symbols to communicate with them. This is mostly effective and builds on the development of their communication skills they use in other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 watch respond well to demonstrations by their teacher of new skills and how to improve what they can already do. They try hard to copy what they have seen and often successfully improve their performance as a result, for example, with a single point balance and with landing after a jump.

97. The quality of teaching and learning in physical education is satisfactory overall, often it is of good and occasionally very good quality. Lessons are usually well planned and structured. Assessment of what pupils achieve is good, linked closely to the plan of what pupils are to learn and are often recorded by photograph or with a digital camera. In the best lessons there is effective demonstration of new skills, close monitoring of what pupils are doing, with effective individual support where it is needed. Pupils are encouraged to work together and this increases their motivation and interest. At the end of these sessions there is a warming-down period followed by a good plenary, with probing questioning by the teacher to help the pupils evaluate their own performance. Teachers are very conscious of safety and take sensible precautions at all times, but especially when using apparatus. Occasionally there is insufficient for pupils to do and time is wasted as they sit for too long whilst waiting to take turns.
98. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated, however, there is a lack of dance in the curriculum. A sports club is held each Thursday after school and there is an annual sports day. A few pupils have the opportunity to play skittles and other activities through the school's links with MENCAP. The occupational therapist works closely with teachers and pupils regarding problems with mobility.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. Overall, pupils make good progress and achievement in religious education (RE). The school has made sound progress in the development of the subject since the last inspection.
100. Religious education is taught both as a discrete subject and as part of the school's topic curriculum framework. As such it is well incorporated into many other subjects, for example, in making celebration cards and a nativity collage in Art. RE also makes a considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development especially through the thematic approach to the subject, for example in the current school topic about festivals. Younger pupils learn about themselves, their relationships with others and care for each other. Older pupils develop further their understanding of their relationship with the world around them. They learn more about festivals, celebrations and ceremonies as a part of relationships with others and with God. Many pupils understand that different faiths have things in common, for example, through the theme of "waiting" and festivals, where Christians wait for Jesus at Christmas, Muslims wait for Eid ul-Fitr at the end of Ramadan, and Hindus celebrate waiting during Divali.
101. The teaching and learning of RE are good overall. Teachers form good relationships with their pupils and use questions and answers well to encourage pupils to recall and explore religious themes and beliefs. They plan their lessons well and work effectively together in sharing these plans. They tell stories well and promote pupils' interest. They support pupils' communication development through the use of signing and PECS learning support assistants work well with teachers to ensure individual pupils' needs are met. Teachers make good use of pictures and

artefacts and provide for a wide range of religious beliefs engendered by the families of the pupils, for example, they discuss with pupils the nature of the buildings in which religious celebrations are held: temples, churches, mosques and synagogues.

102. The subject is well managed and led by a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The school has a clear policy and plan for what pupils are to learn, adapted from the local agreed syllabus, a published curriculum designed for pupils with learning difficulties and plans produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. There is a good and well kept range of artefacts, books and pictures that help pupils' knowledge and understanding. These resources are well supported by visitors from a range of faiths, including Jewish, Christian and Hindu.