

INSPECTION REPORT

BLANCHE NEVILE SCHOOL

Muswell Hill

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 102175

Headteacher: Peter Makey

Reporting inspector: Dr D Alan Dobbins
27424

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th July 2002

Inspection number: 245028

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 (Hearing impairment)
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Admin and secondary department 13 Tetherdown Road Muswell Hill London
Postcode:	N10 1ND
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Downey
Date of previous inspection:	April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27424	D Alan Dobbins	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education Modern foreign language Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9563	J Reid	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
20466	A Tattersall	Team inspector	Deaf studies Mathematics Design and technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?
16722	N Buckingham	Team inspector	British Sign Language Information and communication technology	
13101	M Kell	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18379	O Miller	Team inspector	Geography History	
22577	M Hart	Team inspector	English Music	
12920	M Kingsley	Team inspector	Art Religious education	
17939	G Graveson	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Blanche Nevile is part of the Haringey provision for pupils with hearing impairment. It provides for 84 full-time pupils from age three to 19 years. Forty-nine pupils are boys and thirty-five are girls. Three pupils, two boys and one girl, attend the Foundation Stage full-time. The agreed maximum number of pupils is 97. Eighty-one pupils have statements of special educational need. Three pupils are in the process of being assessed for a statement. Many pupils are admitted from other London boroughs as Blanche Nevile acts as regional provision for pupils with hearing impairment. Most pupils travel to and from the school by minibus or taxi. Thirty-eight pupils are from ethnic minorities. Most are learning English as an additional language (EAL). This number is much higher than in many similar schools. Turkish, Punjabi or Bengali is the first language of most of these pupils. Thirty-one pupils are eligible for free school meals (37 per cent). As a consequence of their learning difficulties, the attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below that expected for their age. The school's philosophy is to promote learning through bilingualism and emphasis is placed on learning British Sign Language and English. Most often, pupils with the severest hearing loss use British Sign Language as their primary language; those with less hearing loss use spoken English, although they quickly become proficient in signing. The school is located on three sites. Primary aged pupils attend departments of Blanche Nevile in two partner primary schools. Secondary aged pupils are based in the Blanche Nevile building on the site of the partner mainstream secondary school. The inclusion of pupils into mainstream situations is well developed. As a consequence, many pupils regularly attend lessons in the partner schools. The single pupil in the sixth form takes all his lessons in the partner secondary school. From September next, secondary aged pupils will be based in a custom designed building on another part of the partner secondary school. From September 2003, the primary provision will be located entirely at one of the partner primary schools. The headteacher was appointed in September 1998.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Blanche Nevile is a good and improving school. Very good leadership by the headteacher, good teaching and the very good relationships staff have with pupils help pupils quickly develop very good attitudes to their work. The very good work of communication support workers, deaf instructors and learning support assistants helps all pupils, including those with the severest of hearing loss and those whose first language is not English, achieve the same good standards and progress as others, over a curriculum that offers a very wide range of learning opportunities. For those with the severest hearing loss learning British Sign Language effectively increases their communication skills allowing them equal access to the curriculum. The considerable programme for including pupils in lessons in the partner schools is very effective in extending their curricular experiences and in developing their personal and social skills. These good outcomes are balanced by the marginally higher cost per pupil than is the case for many equivalent schools. Blanche Nevile provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall and often better. This results in pupils learning well and achieving good standards in many subjects.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher.
- Promotes pupils' very good attitudes towards their work and behaviour and establishes very good relationships between pupils and all staff.
- Provides a curriculum that:
 - promotes the development of language and communication skills through the study of British Sign Language, English language and literacy and the provision of speech and language therapy programmes;
 - positively explores the deaf culture through deaf studies;
 - has a wide range of accredited examinations to demonstrate the extent of pupils' learning at school; and

- has very many opportunities for pupils to take lessons with hearing pupils.

What could be improved

- The role of the subject co-ordinators, so that they provide better subject leadership and monitor and evaluate work in their subject more effectively.
- The provision for teaching and learning music.
- With the help of the LEA, establish the effectiveness of the learning that takes place in lessons in the partner schools.
- The role of the governing body.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in April 1996. All but one of the Key Issues for Action identified then has been met in full:

- the management responsibilities of the headteacher and deputy headteachers are now clear;
- the secondary department will move into new custom designed accommodation in September 2002;
- the systems for co-ordinating the curriculum are better;
- statutory requirements that relate to the teaching of religious education and collective worship are met;
- fire exit areas are no longer used as teaching areas.

The other Key Issue for Action has been met in part only:

- the partnership agreement with other schools has been well written, but does not include procedures for judging the effectiveness of this provision on the standards Blanche Nevile pupils achieve, or the progress they are making.

In other areas, pupils are behaving better and they are better at their learning because the quality of teaching has improved. As a consequence, the standards pupils achieve have improved in many subjects, including English, mathematics, science, design and technology and information and communication technology. Standards in geography, physical education and religious education remain unchanged. Pupils are achieving better grades over an increasing number of subjects of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) than is the case in many similar schools.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by Year 2	by Year 6	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening*	B	B	B	B	Very good	A
Reading	B	B	B	B	Good	B
Writing	C	C	B	B	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	B	B	Poor	E

Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs**	B	B	B	B	
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* This judgement incorporates the use of signing as a medium for communication

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

Over all areas of their learning, pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve good standards. The school's statutory targets are appropriate. Pupils' individual targets, set at their annual review and those in their inclusion plans, represent good challenges for their work for the next year. For the older pupils, the wide range of accredited qualifications allows very good opportunities to demonstrate learning over their time at school. The standards achieved in speaking and listening, with and without sign assist and reading are good. Younger pupils achieve satisfactory standards in writing, older pupils achieve good standards. In other subjects, throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in mathematics, science, art, design and technology, history and information and communication technology. They achieve satisfactory standards in geography, physical education, religious education and in music in Years 1 to 6, the years in which it is studied. In British Sign Language and deaf studies, pupils achieve good standards. Pupils' are making good progress in developing their personal and social skills. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the standards pupils achieve compare very favourably with national data for pupils in schools for the hearing impaired. Pupils in Year 7 and beyond have been disapplied from learning music and a modern foreign language.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils quickly realise that school is a place in which they are expected to work hard at their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils see the relevance of and teachers make effective use of, the 'coloured card' procedure in promoting better behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Teachers and other staff have developed very good relationships with pupils. The school is an orderly establishment and as a result, pupils are friendly and confident.
Attendance	Satisfactory, overall.

The ethos is for learning in an ordered, friendly and considerate environment. All staff are very good role models. In part, because of the very good relationships they have with staff, pupils feel valued, are confident as learners and have very good attitudes to their work and behaviour. Routinely, they work very hard in lessons and, most often, produce their best work. The time spent in lessons with pupils in the partner schools is very effective in promoting confidence and enhancing self-esteem. The level of attendance compares favourably with that of other schools for hearing impaired children.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation Stage	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 –11
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

In one lesson in three, teaching is very good or better. In half of the lessons, it is good. It is satisfactory in all other lessons. The quality of learning in most of the lessons in the partner schools is good. Teaching in English is very good. It is good in mathematics and science. In general, teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and of the learning needs of their pupils. Both help them

manage the pupils very well. The good use of signing and the expert help of communication support workers, deaf instructors and learning support assistants, allows all pupils, irrespective of the level of their hearing loss or choice of their first language, equal opportunities to make progress. Lessons are planned and organised so that, most of the time, all pupils are totally involved. They have fully accepted their role as learners. Routinely, they work very hard, are very interested in their learning and concentrate very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, the curriculum is broad, balanced and made relevant to pupils through lessons in British Sign Language and deaf studies. Taking lessons with pupils in the partner schools provides excellent opportunities to study subjects that would be difficult to present at Blanche Nevile and very good opportunities to promote personal and social skills. The range of subjects that can be taken for accredited examination is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The progress of pupils whose first language is other than English is good. The regular analysis shows no differences in the standards achieved and the progress made by pupils from different ethnic groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for moral development is very good. The school is culturally diverse and makes very good use of this in promoting many opportunities to gain knowledge of and to celebrate, the traditions of many cultures, including the culture of the deaf.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The procedures for promoting acceptable behaviour and for eliminating all forms of oppressive behaviour are very good.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, except for the absence of provision for learning music in Year 7 and beyond. It meets the learning needs of pupils and prepares them very well for their life after school. Pupils are provided with more opportunities to take lessons in other schools and, in Year 11 to be examined in more subjects than is the case in many similar schools. For some pupils, learning British Sign Language meaningfully extends their communication abilities and allows them equal access to the curriculum. Co-ordination of many subjects is not sufficiently developed to ensure smoothness in learning over the key stages and especially between primary and secondary phases. Resources for supporting teaching and learning in English and for work in the Foundation Stage are good. They are satisfactory for the other subjects taught at Blanche Nevile. The partnership between parents and the school is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear direction for the future of the school. Since his appointment, he has instigated a large number of developments that have contributed to the very good improvement in provision. He has been very well supported by many staff, especially the deputy headteacher (secondary) who has been instrumental in making significant improvements to the secondary department. The deputy headteacher (primary) has made a considerable contribution to the improved quality of the primary provision.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The chairperson of the governing body is committed to the success of the school. In order to fully meet its role as 'critical friend', a changing governing body is beginning to increase its expertise and knowledge through training.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision within Blanche Nevile are good, including those for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Procedures to establish the extent of learning when lessons take place in partner schools are not well established and the quality of this important area of provision is not clearly established. Procedures for judging the cost effectiveness of developments through priorities in the school improvement plan are working well.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Priorities for spending are clearly identified through the management plan and the targets for staff development. Teachers and support personnel are very well used in ensuring pupils have access to

	lesson tasks when lessons are taken in Blanche Nevile and in the partner schools.
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The school is well staffed with teachers, communication support workers, deaf instructors and learning support assistants. The majority of teachers have a recognised qualification for teaching deaf pupils. Those who have not are in training, or are waiting to begin training. The secondary accommodation continues to be poor, but the new accommodation will allow much easier delivery of the curriculum. Specific grants are well used according to the designated purposes. Very good procedures operate to ensure that the school's money is spent well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their child likes school. • The expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. • The ease with which parents can approach the school. • That their children are becoming mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive on the progress made by their children.

The judgements of the inspection team confirm the points that please parents. The inspection team judges the quality of information provided to parents, especially that on the progress of their children, to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and the references to attainment and achievement take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews.
2. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good. The good standards achieved by children at the Foundation Stage and the good progress they are making in each of the early learning areas prepares them well for their work at Key Stage 1.
3. The standards achieved in each area of English are good. This includes the good use of signing to aid expressive and receptive language. By the end of Year 2, pupils who use predominantly British Sign Language attend carefully to communications by teachers and other staff, though they are less reliable when they communicate with each other. By the end of Year 6, the signed language of most pupils is fluent, has a rich vocabulary that includes adjectives and adverbs and is well supported by the recognition of lip patterns and grammatical structure. Those who use mostly spoken English watch and listen well. In familiar contexts, they make good use of language in expressing themselves, requesting help and when identifying their needs. They become increasingly confident in their use of language sufficient to express their opinions in a reasoned fashion. By the end of Year 9, pupils use of language, whether spoken or signed, is confident and fluent. For example, they relate their personal experiences such as their activities over the previous weekend and express ideas clearly, often using appropriate technical terms. In lessons with hearing pupils, those with the most language skills easily follow the teacher's spoken English and refer only occasionally to support staff for clarification. They show a good understanding and a good level of general knowledge, when they complete reports, for example on a text they are reading or when they answer the questions of other pupils.
4. In reading, the youngest pupils enjoy big book stories, when they are read using speech or sign. By the end of Year 6, pupils who sign identify words and phrases in simple texts. They sign about characters and accurately predict the ending of a story. They are beginning to use dictionary skills, especially for help with their spelling. Orally taught pupils read simple texts with understanding and make accurate comments about their favourite characters and the events of a story. By the end of Year 9, most pupils have sufficient reading skills to have good access to the curriculum. For example, Year 8 pupils enjoyed reading the ballad "The Highwayman" in a mainstream lesson, while Year 10 pupils read a script in a GCSE lesson in drama with good understanding and good recognition of emphasis.
5. In writing up to Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards. They spell high frequency words accurately and make a good attempt to use their knowledge of letter sounds in spelling new words. Those who predominantly sign gain good success in re-ordering signed word order according to the grammar rules of English. By the end of Year 9, pupils have experienced writing for a good range of purposes. Many write fluently, although with simple sentence construction. By the end of Year 11, the best at writing write extended passages of text, redraft their work and reach standards that are close to national expectations for pupils of their age.
6. In mathematics, pupils achieve good standards and are making good progress in each of the attainment targets. By the end of Year 2, they know the signs for one to 100, identify the missing numbers in a sequence and have a good understanding of money so that they combine different size coins up to 20 pence. By the end of Year 6, the best at mathematics create their own symmetrical patterns in many forms and work with numbers up to 10,000. By this time, they are good at adding, subtracting and in completing simple multiplication and division. By the end of Year 9, they have learned to calculate numbers into fractions or decimals. They use their

mathematical knowledge well when they interpret data they are interested in, for example football scores and the goal differences between teams. They are making good progress in algebra, for example in determining the unknown number and when they use equations to solve problems. By the end of Year 11, the best mathematicians have sufficient mathematical knowledge to gain good grades on the GCSE examination. Those who are less proficient in mathematics achieve good passes on the certificate of achievement.

7. By the time they finish school, all pupils are sufficiently literate and numerate to meet most of the demands of everyday living, for example completing forms, telling time, using money and to support future learning. Those with the severest of hearing loss, through a combination of signing and gesture, are able to make their wishes and opinions known to others without signing ability.
8. In science, pupils achieve good standards and are making good progress. On the standardised assessment tests (SATs) carried out at seven, 11 and 14 years of age, the highest attaining pupils gain levels on the National Curriculum that are in line with national expectations for pupils of those ages. In Year 11, the results gained on the GCSE examination by the best at science are close to the average national expectation. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils are good at observing, describe and drawing objects and living things such as flowers. The range of scientific vocabulary is good. For example, in forces and motion they know fast and slow, stop and go and up and down. By the end of Year 6, they have well-developed investigative skills. The highest attaining pupils make good predictions of the outcomes of investigations, such as the number of paper clips that will be picked up by different magnets. They make accurate interpretations because they collect results in an ordered fashion and display them as bar graphs to recognise links and relationships. In the living world, they learn the differences between living and non-living things, understand food chains and have the skills to use simple keys to classify different families and groups. The lowest attaining pupils benefit from the same broad curriculum but demonstrate their understanding in different ways. They show they understand the life cycle of a flowering plant by placing pictures in the correct sequence. By the end of Year 9, pupils measure capacity, time and temperature accurately and through investigations gain a better understanding of topics. For example, they are good at linking their scientific knowledge with everyday events such as understanding the relationship between smoking and the effects on pregnancy and the burning of fossil fuels and the greenhouse effect. By the end of Year 11, they have developed and refined their scientific skills so that they have a very clear understanding of what makes a 'fair test', which they apply very well in their investigations, for example into the effects of insulating properties of different materials, the requirements for seeds to germinate and the relationship between temperature and enzyme action.
9. In other subjects, pupils are achieving good standards in art, all the elements of design and technology, history, information and communication technology, British Sign Language and deaf studies. They are achieving satisfactory standards in geography, physical education and in music from Year 1 to Year 6, the years over which it is taught. At the end of Year 11, more pupils are gaining better GCSE grades over a wider range of subjects than is the case in many similar schools. In English, mathematics and science, the highest attaining pupils gain pass grades on the GCSE examination close to the national average.
10. Since the last inspection, the standards pupils achieve have made good improvement in English, mathematics and design and technology. Satisfactory improvement has been made in science and information and communication technology.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. In half of the lessons they show very good or better attitudes to their work and in most of the other lessons good attitudes. They have fully accepted the routines and expectancies of the school and arrive ready to work hard. The youngest pupils quickly learn to concentrate well for long periods. All pupils are very interested in their work and take pride in completing their best work. For example, in a Year 7 lesson in history, pupils were very pleased when they succeeded in explaining how heaven and hell were understood in medieval times. They like school and as they move through the school, they increasingly appreciate the

- quality of the educational experience they receive. Many choose to be involved in the extra-curricular activities provided, such as the homework and revision clubs and the different sports clubs. Some take part in the lunchtime and after school clubs of the partner schools.
12. Behaviour in lessons and when pupils are in the partner schools is good. Each site is calm and orderly. Parents say that pupils' behaviour is good and that there are high levels of mutual respect between all staff and pupils. Inspectors confirm this judgement. Pupils know the behaviour expected of them and routinely achieve good levels. Occasionally, they require guidance, but inappropriate behaviour rarely affects the learning of others in lessons because teachers and their assistants deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils from ethnic minorities are fully integrated into the school community and there is a high degree of racial harmony. Bullying is uncommon. Older pupils report that when there are problems staff are very helpful and approachable. During the last year, eight pupils were temporarily excluded. No pupil was permanently excluded.
 13. Pupils' personal development is good. As they progress through the school, they become increasingly mature and responsible, so much so that the older pupils regularly organise assemblies and are very helpful at special functions. With little direct help, an older boy has organised football matches and a football tour and an older girl is currently organising a talent show. The Year 11 leavers planned a very moving and heartfelt assembly to demonstrate their gratitude to teachers and other staff who, over their years at school, had acted as mentors, counsellors and friends. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good. This is easily seen in the supportive way pupils interact in lessons where pupils are mutually respectful and listen with an open mind to the views of others. They are very good at understanding and respecting feelings and views of others. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', pupils identified and empathised at a very mature level with feelings, such as jealousy, that characters had for one another.
 14. Overall, attendance is satisfactory, when compared with national averages for similar schools. In the primary departments it is good. Some pupils in Year 10 do not attend regularly for reasons that are known to the school. The school has made a major effort to deal with these pupils. Punctuality is satisfactory. Most often the taxis, which collect pupils from a very large geographic and busy area, arrive on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good. There are no differences over the years, or for pupils with different levels of hearing loss or spoken language. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching was very good or better in three per cent of lessons, satisfactory or better in 76 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 24 per cent of lessons. Now, it is very good or better in 33 per cent of lessons, good or better in 88 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the other 12 per cent of lessons. This represents a very good improvement. Teaching in science is very good. It is good in English, mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, British Sign Language and deaf studies.
16. The other subjects, art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are taught mainly by teachers on the staff of the partner schools. In these subjects no judgement is made on the quality of teaching.
17. In most lessons, teaching meets pupils' learning needs very well. This is because teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject they are teaching, use signing very well and are supported in lessons by very talented communication support workers and learning support assistants. As a consequence, they often present information in innovative and organised ways so that the learning needs of all pupils are met. This is irrespective of the extent of their hearing loss, their command of English or their preference for signing or for speaking. Small class sizes also help. For example, in a very good lesson in information and communication technology for younger pupils, the teacher's good subject knowledge, her very good relationship with pupils, the very good work of the communication support worker, and good quality equipment helped pupils learn to operate a search engine on the Internet to gain information about Helen Keller. In this lesson, the learning needs of pupils were met through sign, speech or most often a mix of the two so effectively that at

- the end of the lesson pupils were able to operate the search engine themselves, including downloading their findings into their own files. Lessons are ordered events because teachers and support staff have good expectations for pupils' behaviour as well as for their learning. Some lessons are fun, as was the case for a lesson in British Sign Language for younger pupils taken by the senior deaf instructor who was very well supported by the class teacher.
18. The basic principles for good teaching are routinely adhered to. For example, planning is good and in all lessons taught by Blanche Nevile staff the recommendations of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well implemented, as are recommendations of the Key Stage 3 strategy for older pupils. Individual education plans and inclusion plans, designed to support the learning of pupils when they take lessons in the partner schools, are used well to provide appropriate learning experiences for pupils. Pupils are good at realising that if they work hard their efforts will be rewarded by gains in knowledge and in skills and in most lessons they do. Only rarely is lesson time used to remind pupils of their responsibility as learners. When this is the case, teachers and support workers act quickly, most often with little or no disruption to the learning of others in the class. When needed, the 'coloured card' system is effectively used in maintaining and supporting the development of appropriate behaviour.
 19. In most subjects, pupils' performance is well recorded. Especially in English, this information is well used to support teaching and learning through lesson planning and the reworking of targets in pupils' IEPs.
 20. The very good relationships between teachers, support workers and pupils allows pupils to be confident as learners, to ask questions when they are not clear of the demands of their tasks and, through signing or speech, to engage in discussion. This benefits the standards they achieve and the progress they are making.
 21. The procedures for homework are well thought through and are accepted by pupils as important in the routine of teaching and learning. Secondary aged pupils chose to take part in the homework club and, for primary aged pupils, the home-school book is well used in supporting the completion of their homework.
 22. The good quality of teaching motivates pupils to do well as learners. In 23 per cent of lessons learning is very good or better. In 77 per cent of lessons it is good or better and is satisfactory in almost all the others. In most lessons pupils make a considerable intellectual effort to learn. Routinely, they are interested in their learning, concentrate very well and take pride in producing their best work.
 23. Since the last inspection, the improved quality of teaching has helped realise improvements in pupils' attitudes to their work, to their behaviour in lessons and to the progress they are making in many subjects.

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

24. The curriculum is good. It is well balanced and is relevant to pupils' age, range of ability and learning needs. It includes most of the subjects of the National Curriculum and through the additional subjects of British Sign Language and deaf studies reflects the school's philosophy of bilingualism and the recognition of the deaf culture. In addition, the programme for personal, social, citizenship and health education is good and, for older pupils, includes sex education and drugs awareness. Pupils with the severest levels of hearing loss and those whose first language is other than English gain good access to the curriculum, primarily through gaining skills in signing. There has been satisfactory improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection.
25. The curriculum for pupils up to Year 6 meets all statutory requirements and, on both sites, provides a good range of quality experiences and learning opportunities. The principles of the National Strategy for Literacy have been very well implemented into lesson planning. Those for the National Numeracy Strategy have been well implemented. On both sites, in lessons in all

subjects, teachers and support staff are expert at taking opportunities to develop pupils' watching, listening, speaking and signing skills. Information and communication technology is well used in the lessons in subjects to provide additional learning opportunities, to enable individuals to work independently and to help match lesson tasks to pupils' needs.

26. The curriculum for secondary aged pupils is satisfactory. Pupils have good access to many subjects, but those in Years 7 to 9 do not learn music. Proper procedures have been followed to disapply each of the Key Stage 3 pupils, but it is unlikely that dissaplying all future Key Stage 3 pupils from learning music, in lieu of extra work in another subject will enhance their curricular experience. Pupils are also disapplied from studying a modern foreign language, although all pupils are learning British Sign Language.
27. Pupils are well prepared for life after school. For example, Year 11 pupils are able to demonstrate the extent of their learning through a good range of nationally accredited examinations, including the GCSE and certificate of achievement. Pupils gain a good grounding in the world of work through the work of the careers service and the good quality programme of careers education. In Year 10, pupils benefit from a one-week work experience placement. This is well monitored and the placement is often near to the pupils' home, thereby encouraging independent travel and the possibility of a permanent placement. The Year 11 careers programme aims at helping pupils transfer easily to further education. While the link with the secondary school is well established, opportunities in local colleges for pupils to follow vocational and work related courses to accreditation are not as readily available as are opportunities to take examinations in National Curriculum subjects.
28. Provision for post-16 study is available at the partner secondary school. When required, individual programmes are worked out according to the interests and abilities of pupils. This works well and provides very good opportunities to prepare for admission to university courses or to gain the skills, experience and knowledge for life at work.
29. The inclusion programme results in pupils having very many opportunities to take lessons with hearing peers. This is well organised at both primary and secondary phases. Pupils' personal and social skills, especially, benefit considerably from this. The extent of inclusion is tailored to each pupil. Some, whose preferred language is English, spend most of their time in lessons in the partner schools. Those who predominantly sign spend less time. Therefore, some take only a very small number of lessons with hearing pupils, whilst others are included for almost all of their working week. Utilising the provision of other schools beneficially widens the curricular experience for all. However, there is no formal procedure that operates to evaluate the considerable benefits to the development of pupils' personal and social skills and their academic progress.
30. Pupils' horizons are widened through the good relationships with other educational establishments and the local and wider community. The links with other schools for hearing impaired children are good, particularly for sporting competitions. A good recent development has seen the establishment of the link with a mainstream school in Devon, which has resulted in pupils visiting and staying at the school. Residential experiences are available to all pupils in Years 7 to 9 at the local authority's residential facility in Wales. Pupils gain from their week of outdoor activities but also make significant gains in their personal and social development. Good use is made of the local community with regular visits, which are clearly linked to topics being studied in lessons, to places such as museums, galleries and other facilities in London.
31. The programme of extra-curricular activities is good. Transport arrangements make it difficult for such activities to be provided at the end of the day, but the school does offer clubs and pupils take part provided they are able to travel home independently or are collected by parents or carers. Both primary aged and secondary aged pupils take part in the programmes of lunchtime and after school activities that are planned by the partner schools. Collectively, this provides a very wide range of extra-curricular possibilities.
32. The provision for spiritual and social development is good; that for moral and cultural development is very good.

33. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to develop insights into values and beliefs, which in turn fosters their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. This happens in a variety of ways. For example, when they study Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' in Year 10, they are encouraged to identify and examine the different aspects of love portrayed by the characters in the play and to relate their findings to their own lives. In other subjects, for example in deaf studies pupils explore the excitement and mystery of their environment through the use of computer simulations.
34. Because pupils are located over four sites, enabling them to take part in a daily act of worship requires considerable organisation. This is achieved, with the good participation of the partner schools and arrangements meet requirements. Assemblies provide important opportunities for worship and for reinforcing pupils' understanding of the beliefs of different religions and cultures that are presented in lessons in religious education.
35. Pupils are expected to behave well and, when necessary, are provided with specific support in deciding what is right and wrong. Individual behaviour plans help by providing specific targets for behaviour and in identifying appropriate strategies for improvement. In personal, social, citizenship and health education good opportunities are provided to clarify what is right and wrong. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 personnel from the Haringey Drug Advisory Team outlined strategies for dealing with the negative effects of peer pressure in an informative and helpful way.
36. The Jack Ashley Assembly, which took place over the time of the inspection, focused on the experiences of a group of Year 11 pupils who received funding from the Jack Ashley Award Scheme to visit America. The video made by the group, recorded activities that showed considerable initiative on the part of the pupils.
37. The school is culturally rich. Pupils from many different cultures often lead the celebration of days important in their culture. Those up to Year 6 gain considerably from taking part in theme days, when they and their parents and staff come together to display national costumes and provide examples of music and dancing from different cultures. The culture of the deaf is seen as important. This is evident in assemblies and through the emphasis given to British Sign Language and deaf studies as important additional subjects of the curriculum. The feeling of pupils, that they are part of a shared community of interest, plays an important role in helping them development their self-awareness and self-esteem as well as promoting a positive image of deafness to pupils and staff in the partner schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Good procedures exist for ensuring child protection and pupils' health and safety. Staff at each site have a common policy and are clear of the procedures to be followed if there is a concern. Procedures to carry out risk assessment are good, including the examination of the risk involved when pupils take part in visits within the community. Fire drills are regularly held and evaluated to improve procedures. The arrangements to share the medical facilities of the partner schools are good. On each site, pupils are well supervised in lessons and at other times of the day such as break and lunchtimes. The procedures for registering attendance have improved since the last inspection and work well, as do those for checking absences. Teachers receive a good level of support from specialist personnel, such as speech and language therapists, in providing particular guidance that pupils may require.
39. The procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. These include selecting pupils to classes so that social mix is appropriate as a first step in ensuring improved behaviour. The 'coloured card' system, familiar to footballers, provides an effective way of encouraging good behaviour. The merit award system also works well as pupils work hard to obtain merit awards for good behaviour. Staff are vigilant in intervening when pupils are rude to each other through signing. Pupils develop respect for each other as they move through the school. In this they are helped by the consistent guidance from staff and the very good examples that staff

set. Pupils know that they can approach a member of staff to resolve a difference if they feel another pupil is breaking a rule. A minority of pupils have targets to improve their behaviour. These are very effective in enabling them to recognise the goals they need to achieve. Staff know the targets and whenever relevant refer to them during lessons and throughout the day. Good records are kept of the few incidents of significantly inappropriate behaviour. Although, more consistency in the procedures between primary and secondary departments would realise a better whole school picture of the progress pupils are making.

40. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are good, although in some subjects the information gained is not always used well, especially in informing Year 7 work on transfer from the primary phase. Commercial schemes are used in English, mathematics and science. Samples of pupils' assessed work are kept and the attainment of all pupils is recorded each term against First Steps and Small Steps criteria. This information is fed into planning, targets in the IEPs and reports. Especially in English, it is well used by teachers to make realistic predictions for pupils and to be more accurate in setting targets. Each pupil has an assessment profile that is reviewed termly. This allows minor adjustments to be made to medium term planning to ensure good understanding and coverage of topics. Other subjects have appropriate assessments and pupils in Years 7 to 11 are increasingly being encouraged to assess their own performance. The portfolio for pupils at the end of Year 6, which is passed to the secondary department, contains very useful information. In addition information from end of key stage assessments and end of work modules, for example in science, are also used well in tracking the progress of pupils. Targets in IEPs are assessed termly and the current system is generally effective in linking specific targets with medium term planning. Annual reviews are well used as opportunities to monitor and evaluate the progress of pupils.
41. Additional provision as outlined in the pupils' statements is being met. Statutory requirements related to annual reviews of statements are met.

English as an additional language

42. A high per cent of pupils (40.5 per cent) come from homes where little or no English is used. The school has convincing evidence that on entry, pupils from these backgrounds have as little capability in their home language, as they have in English. Many pupils have no operational language at all. English and British Sign Language are the two functional languages for all pupils. English is not therefore considered to be an additional language for any pupil and pupils receive no direct additional or separate provision for this purpose.
43. The language and literacy curriculum was originally devised (in Australia) to meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language and it has been well adapted to match the National Literacy Strategy for England. It is appropriately developmental in structure and in addition the small numbers of pupils in lessons and the ease with which teachers and support workers can provide individual attention results in lesson tasks that are routinely very well matched to pupils' learning needs. Consequently, progress is good and pupils are making gains equivalent to those from home backgrounds where English is the first language of use.
44. The school has judged that the use of English as an additional language by parents and other close family members has a strong impact on the development of pupils' language. Great care is taken to find out the exact linguistic circumstances at home. To help promote the use of English in the home, staff work directly with parents in a number of ways. For example, parents can attend lessons in English, in British Sign Language and lessons to introduce them to the deaf culture in Britain. These developments are relatively recent, but they have the potential to extend the range of communication that parents have with their children. From September 2002, additional specific grant resources are available to employ additional staff to work full-time with parents as an important contributor to extending the work of the school into the home.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The parents who attended the inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire mostly agreed that their children like coming to school, that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible, that they find the staff approachable and that their child is making good progress. They are less secure about the amount of work their child gets to do at home, the information they receive about how their child is getting on, how closely it works with them and on the range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team found that overall, pupils receive an appropriate amount of homework and that the extra-curricular provision is good considering the constraints imposed by the wide catchment area and the need for pupils to be transported to school.
46. The links with parents are very effective. The population of parents is diverse. Many have little or no English and they are widely dispersed across the north of London. The school works hard to establish links with every family. It provides support of different types to parents and operates a number of strategies to involve them in their child's learning. For example, the induction of parents of primary aged pupils is good and home visits are made to each family. High quality interpreters are used at meetings. The home-school liaison officer organises a programme of events for parents, which includes communication workshops, literacy sessions and social events. Generally, these are well attended. Regularly, teachers speak with parents providing positive comments on the progress of their children or to discuss concerns. Considerable effort is made to induct parents into the needs of deaf children, including providing lessons in British Sign Language for families, so as to improve communication at home and enable parents to provide support for their child's learning.
47. The quality of information provided to parents is very good. Parent consultation meetings are held each term at which the level of attendance is good. When necessary, these are attended by teachers from the partner schools. Nearly all parents attend their child's annual review. Written annual reports to parents are good. They inform parents clearly of what their child is doing and the progress they have made over the year. For pupils in Years 7 to 11, the reports identify what needs improving. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, they tend not to give targets for the next stage in learning. The brochure and the governors' annual report to parents provide a clear picture of the ethos of the school. The regular newsletters advise parents of activities, significant dates and particular issues upon which the school is concentrating.
48. The very good link between the speech and language therapists helps in developing pupils' communication skills. They write to parents each term, informing them of the targets of their children so that they can work towards these at home. This is further supported by the presence of up to half of the parents at the group sessions run by speech and language therapists.
49. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. The home-school books for pupils up to Year 6 provide a valuable means of communication and many parents use them to effectively continue the work of the school at home. The coffee mornings in the partner primary school work well. They give parents access to the targets in their children's IEP and provide help with audiological equipment, as well as providing social and self-help opportunities. The Friends of Blanche Nevile is a charity that supports the Deaf Club, which helps promote deaf culture and communication skills and organises out-of-school activities for families. Parents give good support to the annual culture festival, which celebrates the deaf culture. The beautiful silk panel displayed in the school was made by parents and pupils working together at the Parents Partnership Day. Parents' views are taken account of by the school and have resulted in developments in the newsletter, improvements in transport arrangements and in those for family-school celebrations.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He has a very clear vision for the future of the school, which includes the setting of the highest of standards over all of the provision, within the concept of bilingualism and biculturalism. The school's philosophy for educating its pupils is based on the pragmatic notion that enhancing communication abilities is the first step to accessing learning and meeting the demands of the wider world. The aims are precise and detailed and are reached for many pupils through the combined use of British Sign

Language and spoken English. Since his appointment he has orchestrated completion of the mission statement and the linked six-year school improvement plan and created a new staffing structure based on revised job descriptions. He has been and continues to be a harbinger for development, aiming to quickly match reality to his vision of the school. In this, he is very well supported, both in philosophy and practice, by the deputy headteacher (secondary) and other senior academic and administrative staff. The very good improvement seen since the last inspection reflects his commitment to succeed, as well as that of the staff. Day-to-day this is seen through the very good planning for lessons, the detail of the procedures and policies that direct the smooth running of the school, the detail of the improvement plan and the uptake by staff of training opportunities. The capacity of the headteacher and the senior management team to continue to develop the work of the school is very good.

51. The headteacher has a first-hand knowledge of all that occurs in the school. He is beginning to delegate responsibilities well. The deputy headteacher (primary) has worked hard to ensure good quality provision for the younger pupils. The deputy headteacher (secondary) very effectively discharges her duties, which include co-ordinating English over all the school. Other subjects, with the exception of mathematics, have different primary phase and secondary phase co-ordinators. This results in teachers, especially in the primary departments, being responsible for co-ordinating more than one subject, including subjects in which they hold little specialist knowledge. This is not helpful in ensuring full coverage of the relevant programmes of study, in supporting other teachers when they teach the subject or in recognising continuity in learning within and between the key stages.
52. Governors are committed to the success of the school; this is especially so of the chairperson. Since the last inspection she has worked hard in helping to secure the new accommodation for secondary pupils. Many governors are relatively new appointments and, as yet, have not assumed the authority associated with the position. This limits the governing body from fully meeting its role as 'critical friend'. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the expenditure of money are very good. They are not as well developed for judging the quality of work in other areas, for example, in judging the effectiveness of the headteacher and members of the senior management team, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, pupils' academic, personal and social progress and their behaviour, attendance and the efficacy of provision in the partner schools. As a result the governing body is not in the best position to judge the effectiveness of the provision or to identify directions for further development.
53. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are good. Formed after the last inspection, they are now well established and are making a significant contribution to the improved quality of teaching. Some teachers are observed once per term, others less so. The senior deaf instructor may also observe teachers to judge the quality of their signing. Reports of the observations include identifying areas of strength and areas for further development. Teachers' planning and assessment files are regularly monitored by the relevant deputy headteacher. Analysis of the effectiveness of teaching sometimes results in whole school in-service training or in specific training according to need.
54. The strategy for appraisal and performance management is good. The headteacher's targets have been set. The deputy headteachers also have targets that follow the model of the headteacher's. The principle of target setting has been very effectively implemented into the school's routines and procedures. Each teacher has annual targets that are most often linked with the areas for further development identified through the procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. These work well. They provide a focus for improvement for all teachers. The targets are reviewed annually and this information is available to support any performance management decision. The school's statutory targets have been appropriately set. Targets for individual pupils, written in IEPs and in inclusion plans work well in informing the planning of lessons. This information is well presented at annual reviews and forms the basis for the establishment of pupils' targets for the following year.
55. Induction procedures for new staff are satisfactory. Each new appointment is assigned a mentor who is responsible for ensuring that specific training is provided, for example on the administrative system and matters to do with the classroom, such as registers, educational visits and pupils'

records. For teachers and support staff this may include basic signing, which is necessary to communicate with some pupils and some staff. As a result newly appointed teachers and other staff become effective in their roles reasonable quickly.

56. The school is well staffed with teachers, communication support workers, learning support assistants and deaf instructors. The majority of teachers have a recognised qualification for teaching deaf pupils. Those who have not are either receiving training or are ready to start training. The staff turnover is higher than average for schools outside inner cities. This means that well-qualified teachers are sometimes lost and this can result in some teachers being responsible for subjects, in which they have no particular expertise. Communication support workers are committed to further training following a re-designation of their roles, which gives them a clear career structure and is adding value to the work they do.
57. The building for secondary pupils and the administrative headquarters is poor. It consists of a warren of unsuitable small rooms and narrow passages, many of which are small and dark. The interior is clean and wall displays in classrooms do much to try and brighten the school and celebrate the work of pupils and their achievements. The exterior of the building is equally depressing and in poor condition. Pupils have to move to another building for assemblies and for lunch. The new building, available in September 2002, provides an appropriate range of very good facilities, including specialist rooms for practical subjects. For secondary aged pupils, learning resources are satisfactory with some subjects being under-resourced in some areas, for example English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, geography and religious education.
58. For primary aged pupils, the accommodation and the resources to support teaching and learning are mostly good. When they take lessons in the partner schools they have access to a good range of additional resources, such as computer suites and libraries. The rooms occupied by Blanche Nevile pupils in both the partner schools are sufficiently spacious and accessible. They are bright and airy and displays of pupils' work help make them an effective learning environment. Pupils have access to good outdoor play areas that enjoy a good range of large play equipment. Plans are already well developed to locate all primary aged pupils in one of the partner schools by September 2003. This is good, as it will reduce the logistical difficulties associated with providing for similar pupils on different sites.
59. Educational developments are very well supported by careful financial planning. The improvement plan is well costed and forms a good basis for further development. Recent achievements include: the balancing of a budget which, in 1998 had a rising deficit to the order of £100,000; the revision of the staffing structure to help attain a balanced budget; the securing of funding for a new building on the campus of the partner secondary school; the securing, in partnership with the local education authority, of funds to provide an extension at one of the partner primary schools; the rationalisation of the accommodation to fewer sites by September 2003; the appointment of a bursar to be responsible for finances and the move to 'cheque book' status; the separation of the school's budget from that of the Hearing Impaired Service; the setting up of an appropriate committee of governors to oversee financial matters; and the planning of teaching groups from September 2002 on a more cost effective, efficient and educationally sound basis. Discussions are ongoing with the local education authority (LEA) on advances, recoument and staff payments. When these are resolved the finances will not only be under expert control, but the financial links with the LEA will be fully understood.
60. Considerable improvement has been made in the effective use of resources. Nevertheless, further improvement is possible, for example, in the allocation of support staff and in the planning and liaison with the partner schools in order to avoid ineffective use of staff time. Also, no formal system is operating for evaluating the effectiveness of the provision in the partner schools for promoting standards and progress for Blanche Nevile pupils.
61. Effective use is being made of information and communication technology to support educational and administrative functions. However, the adequacy and location of both educational and administrative hardware and software are unsatisfactory. This will be remedied when the new

building is commissioned in September 2003.

62. Funding had been gained from a good range of sources. Additional funds are well and appropriately used for the purposes specified. New Deal funding has been used to support the completion of the new building on the site of the partner secondary school. Good work has been completed with the LEA towards the gaining of funds for extending the building on the site of one of the partner primary schools. Standards Fund money has been well used for gaining qualifications in British Sign Language, the mandatory training for teachers of the deaf and in audiology. Sports development funds have contributed to a sports co-ordinator post. In partnership with Barclays Bank, money has been gained to support citizenship education. Delays have occurred in the use of funding to support newly arrived families from Turkey and Kurdistan, but specialist support staff should be appointed by September 2002.
63. The senior management team and governors are fully aware of the need to compare performance with that of similar schools and to obtain the best possible value through the tendering procedures. While costs per pupil are rather high, additional costs are incurred because of the number of sites and the fact that it provides a service for pupils over 12 London boroughs. The rationalisation of the staffing structure and move towards fewer sites are contributing towards a future with improved services for lower cost. Consultation with parents has led to changes in the school's practice. The school applies principles of 'best value' well.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The governing body should:

- provide increased support for the headteacher and staff by being fully involved in developments to improve the school's provision and operate formal procedures to evaluate the work of the school (paragraph 50);
- further develop the role of subject co-ordinators so that they monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, especially, to ensure a smooth transition from the primary to secondary phase (paragraphs 49, 83, 103, 107, 116);
- make provision for teaching and learning music for pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 (paragraphs 26, 110);

working with the LEA:

- formally monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and benefits of the inclusion programmes on the standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making (paragraphs 28, 49, 83, 88, 92, 96, 99, 103, 107, 113, 116).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	15	26	6	0	0	0
Percentage	2.1	31.3	54.2	12.4	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. The number and percentages are based on the 48 lessons taught by Blanche Nevile staff. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	84
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	31

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	2

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	6.5	School data	1.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	0
White	49
Any other minority ethnic group	11

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	3	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	3	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 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.9
Average class size	4

Education support staff: YR – Y11

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	668

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	1,586,333
Total expenditure	1,565,295
Expenditure per pupil	18,859
Balance brought forward from previous year	-14,166
Balance carried forward to next year	6,872

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	84
Number of questionnaires returned	22

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	18	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	57	5	5	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	57	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	24	14	5	14
The teaching is good.	43	38	10	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	36	36	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	45	9	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	32	36	9	5	18
The school works closely with parents.	55	9	5	14	18
The school is well led and managed.	27	36	0	14	23
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	45	0	0	14
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	32	23	14	18

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

65. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below that expected for their age in all areas of development. The range of hearing loss is considerable. Some children have little speech; others have no speech.
66. Overall, the provision in the Foundation Stage is good. It has improved since the last inspection, especially in the range and detail of the planning. It now includes opportunities for children to learn British Sign Language and deaf studies and to gain regular speech and language therapy and audiological training. Children achieve good standards and are making good progress against each of the early learning goals. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are well prepared for their work at Key Stage 1.
67. The deputy headteacher (primary) has led the improvement in planning and in organising the curriculum. Long and medium term planning documents provide very good support for lesson plans, which are formed to meet the particular needs of all pupils. The teacher has a very good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. She knows the children very well, is very sensitive to their needs and has high expectations for their learning, each of which is reflected in all aspects of her teaching. In this, the very good deployment of the support workers helps. They work well with the teacher and when required sign well in supporting speech. Children are often directed in their learning, for example in circle time or when they work as individuals or as members of small groups with the teacher or support workers. But they benefit from frequent opportunities to make choices, in lessons but also at break and lunchtimes. Assessment is well done, against the relevant 'P' Scales and children's attainment is regularly recorded. This information is well used in setting targets for each of the learning areas.
68. The Foundation Stage area is a happy, colourful and orderly place. The good quality of the teaching realises learning that is fun, ordered and progressive. As a consequence, children enjoy their time in the Foundation Stage, quickly accept their role as learners and routinely try very hard.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Well-established routines such as circle time and the very good relationships between all staff and the children, help children feel secure, as they become increasingly independent and aware of the needs of others. They feel cared for and confident and this helps them in learning to take turns, sharing equipment and working with each other in small groups. They learn to persist for good lengths of time on activities they choose, such as playing with blocks to construct a tower or when they learn to program the Roamer. They link well with each other in lessons and when they play. They enjoy learning new experiences and taking part in new activities. Although those with less well-developed language and social skills are more comfortable playing by themselves, they readily engage in established classroom routines, such as completing the register at the beginning of the day. All children have learned to dress and undress themselves and show initiative in many ways, for example when they choose who they wish to play with at break times.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Work in this area is mainly focused on the development of expressive language, mostly speaking and receptive language, mostly hearing, often with the support of children's increasing vocabulary of signs. A small number of children speak in simple sentences. They join in the singing of nursery rhymes, as well as making the correct actions at appropriate times. A small number do not have the skills, vocabulary or confidence to communicate spontaneously or initiate communication with staff or other children. At circle time, for example these children respond in single words, either in sign or speech to simple questions. The very good application of the principles of the National Strategy for Literacy has resulted in all children being very interested in

big books. A small number read along very well, know that words and pictures convey meaning; that words travel from left to right in straight lines and move through a book from the front to the back. They know up to 20 words, which they recognise from flash cards and when they appear in stories. Some know that the author is the person who wrote the story. Good support is given in developing the early writing skills of mark making, scribbling and colouring within small areas. The best at writing hold a crayon or paintbrush well enough to form dots, lines and circles. They copy write with good accuracy and write their first and last names without support. Others hold a pencil only briefly before discarding it and are still developing a dominant hand.

Mathematical development

71. The principles of the National Strategy for Numeracy are implemented well into lessons. Routinely, many opportunities are provided for children to explore objects by size, weight, colour and texture. Counting strategies are encouraged and the concepts of shape and position introduced. In other lessons throughout the day, counting is encouraged, for example counting the number of children in class when the morning register is taken. As a consequence, most children show a good interest in number and respond well to the counting sequences in familiar number rhymes and songs. At the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, the best counters sequence numbers to ten, rote count to 30 and count objects to ten. They complete simple addition sums with objects such as blocks. The lowest attaining children point to numbers with help and extend a finger to a number when counting to five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. This early learning goal is developed, primarily, through pupils taking part in a wide range of physical and sensory activities. Natural and man-made objects are explored by touch, smell and taste, including tasting a wide range of fruits. A small number of children are able to describe the weather for the day through the use of simple words, sounds, signs and symbols and know what clothes they should wear. They confidently control simple computer programs using a roller ball or mouse and have fun in learning how to program a Roamer. The highest attaining children show a natural curiosity. For example, they enjoy building structures from large blocks to see how high they can go before they fall down. They demonstrate a beginning sense of time by using the visual timetable to explain the school day. They use the good range and quality of play equipment at break and lunchtimes to explore climbing, riding and swinging.

Physical development

73. The facilities and equipment of the sensory areas within the classroom, the hall and the outside play area are well used to promote physical development. Children learn to control their movement by learning to move in different ways, for example quickly or slowly. They learn to start and stop on command, to adjust their speed, direction and body shape easily and smoothly with increasing balance. The development of fine motor skills is promoted in all lessons, but especially when pupils are drawing, painting and when they are learning to write. Lunch and break times also help. They are well used to promote independence and the development of fine and gross motor co-ordination when children feed themselves, or when they play on the big equipment in the playground.

Creative development

74. Children are given many opportunities to work creatively in a number of different ways using a wide variety of materials and equipment. Through cutting, tearing and gluing they explore pattern making with different shapes, colours and textures. They use different materials for painting and for making three-dimensional collages. Music is used very effectively to create different moods, to attract and maintain pupils' attention and, through the use of rhymes, to promote learning, especially counting. Some have developed a good understanding of cause and effect, for example through programming the Roamer to start and stop at particular points.

ENGLISH

75. The provision for English is good and has made good improvement since the last inspection. The standards achieved in each element of English are good throughout the school, as is the progress pupils are making. Pupils are taught according to their language needs in mixed age groups either orally or through British Sign Language. The range of attainment is extremely wide because of the severity of hearing loss and experience. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining pupils gain GCSE examination grades close to the national average. Most of the others gain pass grades on the certificates of achievement. In recent years, the grades gained in nationally accredited examinations compare favourably with those of pupils in similar schools.
76. Achievement in oral and signed communication is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils who use predominantly British Sign Language for their education, attend carefully to communications by teachers and other staff, though they are less reliable when attending to each other. They sign confidently to visitors, 'Hello, how are you, what's your name, why are you here?' Those who use mostly spoken English watch and listen well and their language is often intelligible in familiar contexts. By the end of Year 6, signed language is often fluent and has a rich vocabulary that includes adjectives and adverbs. By this time, signing pupils are increasingly familiar with English lip patterns and structures. Orally taught pupils are becoming more confident and can express opinions as well as making factual statements. By the end of Year 9, language, whether spoken or signed, is usually confident and functional and pupils can easily relate their personal experiences and express ideas. Interaction skills are still developing and some need reminding about taking turns and letting others finish what they are saying. By the end of Year 11, pupils can, with appropriate support, cope with mainstream lessons. The highest attaining pupils try hard to follow the teacher's spoken English, referring only occasionally to support staff for clarification. Pupils show more fluency and confidence in small group settings and many can report well, orally, on a text they have read and, showing good understanding and general knowledge, answer questions about it. For example, one pupil gave a very clear and competent oral account of the life of Marilyn Monroe and answered questions from others in the lesson fluently and accurately.
77. During Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy stories read to them from big books in speech or in British Sign Language. They enjoy videotaped and signed stories by teachers, deaf instructors and communication support workers. By the end of Year 6, pupils who use predominantly British Sign Language identify words and phrases in simple texts, sign about characters and predict the ending of a story. They are beginning to use dictionary skills. Orally taught pupils read simple factual texts, poems, instructions and stories with good understanding and comment, accurately, on their favourite events and characters. By the end of Year 9, most pupils have reading skills that give them good access to their learning. For example, pupils in Year 8 enjoyed reading the ballad 'The Highwayman' in a mainstream lesson, while pupils in Year 10 read and sensibly annotated a script in a GCSE drama class.
78. Because of the extent of hearing loss, pupils generally need more time than hearing pupils to gain the language and grammar rules needed for writing. The standards they achieve in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are satisfactory, but the grounding they gain acts as a good base for improving achievement in writing at the secondary level. Primary aged pupils write about topics within their own experience. Spelling is accurate for the most common words and pupils make a good attempt at using their knowledge of letter sounds, although this is difficult for them and they do not always do this confidently. Those who use British Sign Language for their learning work on the transition between British Sign Language word order and that of English. By the end of Year 9, pupils have experience of writing in a good range of genres. Many write fluently but with relatively simple sentence construction. The regular opportunities they have to write in their 'dialogue books', without correction, but with teachers' modelling of correct forms in their responses, develops confidence and improves the complexity and structure of their written language. By the end of Year 11, pupils write extended passages of text, make good improvements to their first draft and, the highest attaining pupils reach standards that are close to

national expectations for their age. Handwriting and presentation are sometimes unsatisfactory and the plan to adopt a handwriting policy is appropriate and much needed. The basic skills of language and communication are taught well and provide considerable support for learning over all subjects of the curriculum.

79. Teaching in English is good. A strength is the very good teamwork by the teachers, communication support workers, deaf instructors and learning support assistants. Subject knowledge is good, both in language development and in literacy. Speech and language therapists have made an extremely valuable contribution to staff training and the development of courses for pupils in interactive skills. Staff have worked effectively in adopting the new approach to language and literacy based on 'First Steps' materials and this is having a very good impact on planning, on the recording of attainment and in using this information to guide teaching. As a consequence, lessons are planned very well to meet the needs of individual pupils. Pupils' work is marked in a detailed, conscientious and helpful fashion and provides good support for learning, for example, writing individual responses in pupils' dialogue books to provide good models of language for language structures that pupils find difficult. Relationships between pupils and all staff are very good. Teachers use good methods and materials and sometimes make good use of information and communication technology to support their teaching. Pupils' behaviour is managed very well. Each makes a significant contribution to the good quality of teaching. As a result, pupils develop confidence and enjoy their lessons and this contributes to the good quality of their learning.
80. English is very well co-ordinated across the school. Major change, which has resulted in the implementation of a more developmental approach to learning language and literacy, has been achieved in a relatively short time. The recent appointment of phase co-ordinators should be helpful in maintaining the momentum of development through the monitoring of teaching, the modelling of good practice and the careful evaluation of the impact of the changes on pupils' achievement. New resources to support a more developmental orientation are good. Other resources are barely satisfactory and the library on the Blanche Nevile secondary site is inadequate to develop higher order study skills, such as those of investigative learning. Through a recent audit of books the school is aware of the need to increase the number of books, which offer age appropriate material for older pupils but at reading levels well below their ages.

MATHEMATICS

81. The provision for mathematics is good. Pupils' achieve good standards in mathematics and are making good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when pupils made satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve well in the standardised assessment tests (SATs). Pupils in Year 11 achieve results on the GCSE and certificate of achievement examinations that compare favourably with pupils in similar schools.
82. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning the signs for ten to 100 and answer questions about missing numbers in a sequence. By the end of Year 2, they have gained a good understanding of money and are able to show equivalent ways of combining coins up to 20 pence. Pupils enjoy their lessons. In one for pupils in Year 4, they relished the challenge of creating their own symmetrical patterns using a pegboard. They followed the teacher's clear instructions to make symmetrical patterns by folding paper to show the line of symmetry of a butterfly. The teacher guided them by effective questioning as they modified their pegs to create the required patterns. Pupils in Year 5 made very good progress in a lesson working with numbers up to 10,000. They co-operated very well with each other in playing a game of counting and clapping each time a multiple of the numbers three, four and six occurred. This reinforced their understanding of common multiples when clapping coincided and they realised that, for example the number 12 is common to each of their numbers.
83. Over Years 1 to 6, pupils of different ability levels are making similarly good progress because of the good work of the support staff and the good match of lesson tasks with their needs. Relationships between pupils are very good. This contributes to their good concentration in lessons and helps them want to behave well and do well in their learning. The higher attaining

pupils take their lessons in mathematics in the partner schools. Planning is good. Pupils are supported well when they join classes to follow challenging work. For example, a pupil in Year 3 achieved well in a lesson to sort animals, shapes and numbers into sets according to their features. Although there were complex verbal instructions to follow, the pupil received effective support through signing from the support assistant and teacher to understand that the number 30 is common to both the two and five times tables. By the end of Year 9, the best at mathematics have a good grasp of all aspects of the subject. For example, they have built well on their knowledge of fractions to understand that they can represent the same portion, such as five-sixths, in different ways. In lessons in the partner school, pupils follow the same work as the remainder of the class, for example in using their numeracy skills to interpret data, such as football scores and the goal differences between teams. They make good progress in lessons in learning algebra. They use letters well to represent unknown quantities and form appropriate equations to solve problems.

84. Lessons in other subjects enhance pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 9 use their numeracy skills in lessons in deaf studies when they interpret aeroplane, bus and train timetables.
85. Although, there is now a co-ordinator for pupils in the secondary department, there has been little improvement since the last inspection in the link with the primary department to ensure a consistent approach and continuity in pupils' learning. Co-ordinators have a satisfactory knowledge of how well pupils are learning in lessons in the partner schools, but no formal procedures operate to judge the quality of provision in lessons in the partner schools. Resources for learning in the primary department are good and provide effective visual information for pupils. For example model pizzas that can be cut in portions to help in learning fractions and the Roamer are good resources. However, there has not been sufficient improvement in the provision of resources in the secondary department. There remains a shortage of teaching materials, such as textbooks and a need for more computer programs to provide specific support for teaching and learning. The paucity of textbooks means that there is an over reliance on work sheets and this limits the opportunities for the highest attaining pupils to move further ahead with their work and make better progress.

SCIENCE

86. The provision for science is good. Pupils achieve well in lessons and make good progress on each site. Some pupils are attaining in line with national expectations on the SATs tests carried out in Years 2, 6 and 9. As a result of the good progress they make, many take the GCSE examination at the end of Year 11 and results show that the highest attaining pupils attain in line with national standards. Accommodation for teaching science on the Blanche Nevile secondary site is poor and resources to support teaching and learning are poor. Good use of resources borrowed from the partner school helps, in part, mitigate this problem.
87. Pupils on both primary sites have good scientific experiences and are making good gains in developing knowledge and understanding of the subject. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils observe, describe and draw objects and living things such as flowers. Through investigating physical processes like forces and motion, they know simple and appropriate scientific vocabulary associated with movement, like fast and slow, stop and go and for positions, such as up and down. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their investigative skills well. The highest attaining pupils predict outcomes of investigations, such as the number of paper clips that will be picked up by different magnets, tabulate the results and display them as bar graphs. Their concepts of the living world are developing well. For example, they know the differences between living and non-living things, understand food chains and have the skills to use simple keys to identify organisms. The lowest attaining pupils benefit from the same broad curriculum but demonstrate their understanding in different ways. For example, they show they know the life cycle of a flowering plant by placing pictures in the correct sequence.
88. In Years 7 to 11, the science curriculum places an increasing emphasis on learning through investigations and experiments. This is particularly so for the oldest pupils as they complete investigative course work for their GCSE examination. By the end of Year 9, pupils have learned to

measure capacity, time, temperature and linear dimensions accurately and use this information to form graphs that help them interpret the results. The highest attaining pupils link their scientific knowledge very well with everyday events. For example, they understand the relationships between smoking and the effects on pregnancy and the burning of fossil fuels and the greenhouse effect. By the end of Year 11, pupils have developed and refined their scientific skills so that they have a clearer understanding of the concept of a 'fair test' and apply this well when they form their experiments. This knowledge enables them to investigate effects such as the insulating properties of different materials, the requirements of germinating seeds and the relationship between temperature and enzyme action.

89. Science teaching overall is of high quality and has a number of strengths that build on the very good relationships between pupils and staff and the very good level of communication in lessons, with and without signing. Teaching is well planned and organised so that pupils' new learning is based on their existing knowledge. This well ordered approach makes pupils want to work hard. They show good levels of interest and a good understanding of what is their role in learning, especially when they are conducting investigations. They collaborate well when required to do so but also work well when given individual tasks. In particular, teachers have high expectations of pupils' academic performance, behaviour and for their auditory and observation skills. All these features were demonstrated very well in a lesson for Year 6 pupils who examined the concept of pitch. Skilful questioning and the use of scientific vocabulary, such as vibration and sound wave, helped them understand the concept. The teacher's high expectations resulted in pupils' working very hard to recognise sounds with different levels of pitch. Pupils made great efforts when explaining exactly what they had learned. Similarly, in a lesson to pupils in Year 4 who communicated primarily through British Sign Language, the good range of activities enabled pupils to recognise different features of rocks and to sort these in to specific groups. The very good relationships between teacher, communication support worker and the pupils and the very good use of British Sign Language, made learning effective and fun. Sometimes lessons taken in the partner secondary school are not as effective. Communication support workers and learning support assistants are not always briefed about lesson plans and activities. On other occasions, groups are withdrawn but appropriate resources are not always available to provide adequate support for teaching and learning and the support workers do not always have the necessary level of subject knowledge.
90. There has been satisfactory improvement in the school's provision for science since the previous inspection. Accommodation and the range and quantity of resources on the Blanche Nevile secondary site continue to be poor, but these issues will be resolved with the opening of the new site in September 2002. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of planning and assessment procedures and pupils have a good variety of experiences and their achievements are recorded effectively. However, procedures that enable the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning of science across all sites as an important step in raising pupils' achievements do not operate.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Lessons in art are taken with the mainstream pupils in the partner schools. Therefore, it is not appropriate to comment on the quality of teaching. The provision for art is good and pupils are achieving good standards and are making good progress.
92. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learned about a number of art techniques including pencil sketching, charcoal drawing and using oil and chalk pastels in developing their close observational drawings. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a range of media and have experimented with a range of three-dimensional models based on movement in learning to use more detail and control in their work. They develop their design skills through painting on glass, making mosaics and their weaving skills using a range of different materials.
93. Over Years 7 to 9 pupils extend their range of techniques, so that by the end of Year 9 they have learned how to make wax rubbings and roller print as well as use oils and acrylics in copying the styles of famous artists, such as Lichtenstein, Modrian and Picasso. By this time their finished work is of a good level, they work more independently and express their own personalities and

feelings in their work. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow the syllabus for the GCSE. The standards they achieved are in line with national norms, with the best of their work showing good depth and maturity.

94. Co-ordination is good, in that communication with mainstream teachers and the co-ordinators in the partner schools has established good relationships that realise effective provision for Blanche Nevile pupils. The link arrangement beneficially extends the art curriculum beyond that available within the Blanche Nevile facilities and allows pupils, especially of secondary age, to be taught by teachers with a specialist knowledge of the subject. No formal procedures operate to recognise the quality of learning in lessons taken in the partner schools.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. The provision for design and technology is good. Pupils are making good progress. The secondary co-ordinator has led the good improvement since the last inspection, when there were no facilities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to study the subject. Now, pupils in Year 11 gain good results on the GCSE and certificate of achievement examinations. Most lessons are taken in the partner schools. Some are taken in Blanche Nevile by Blanche Nevile teachers. The quality of teaching in these lessons is good.
96. The curriculum in design and technology is, mostly, planned by the partner schools. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 follow a curriculum that focuses on topics. For example, pupils in Year 2 draw shapes, such as triangles that fit together to make a pattern. Older pupils make biscuits with accompanying posters and design and make their own lunch boxes. Pupils learn the importance of drawing designs and ensuring that their product would meet the intended purpose, for example being big enough to hold sufficient food and drink for lunch. Secondary aged pupils are making good progress towards accreditation in design and technology. Planning is good and teachers routinely provide good explanations that guide very well the completion of work. Attending lessons in the partner school enables pupils to make use of specialist facilities not available at Blanche Nevile and experience a full range of work in the subject. Also, lessons are making a good contribution to promoting personal development. For example, in the workshop pupils are encouraged to work as independently as possible on their projects, such as completing wooden table lamps.
97. Pupils are interested in their work and attend well to the instructions of teachers and support workers. This was evident in a very good lesson in which the teacher's effective communication through sign guided pupils to place a series of tasks in order, leading to the completion of a wooden box. It was also evident in a lesson that resulted in the completion of a healthy meal and in one in which pupils researched and planned a healthy diet for women who are pregnant.
98. Although resources are satisfactory the use of computer programs to support both design and making is limited. There is too little communication between the primary and secondary departments to check what pupils are learning and ensure a consistent approach and continuity in pupils' learning. No formal procedures operate to establish the outcomes of the provision for Blanche Nevile pupils who take lessons in the partner schools.

GEOGRAPHY

99. The provision for geography is good. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good. The subjects have made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
100. Over Years 1 to 6, teaching is by staff of the partner primary schools. In both schools the subject is taught as part of a topic web. Themes such as 'ourselves' or the 'weather' provide a useful context for learning about maps, the local area and for exploring issues such as making the local environment safer. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn the main characteristics of different environments, such as rain forests, farms and woods and in simple terms are able to explain why each is as it is. They have developed good skills in using secondary sources of information, such as photographs,

pictures and books to help them gain additional information and a clearer understanding of the topic. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study the local environment in good depth. They are good at identifying features on a map of the local area and can design their own map of their journey from home to school. They identify countries using an atlas and the highest attaining pupils locate their positions on a blank outline map. They have learned to use a compass and give directions well using appropriate terminology, such as north and south. By the end of their time at school, most pupils have made sufficient progress to gain good grades on the certificate of achievement, and have a good grounding over a wide range of the subject, including procedures for gaining knowledge. For example, Year 10 pupils are good at conducting surveys according to a classification system that they feel is relevant to the purpose of the survey; then tallying results before presenting them in graph form as an aid to interpretation. They are also able to discuss the reasons for the use of surveys and relate these to their everyday life. The attitudes of pupils to their learning is, generally, very good as is their behaviour.

101. The relationship with the partner schools is managed well. Pupils are very well supported in lessons by communication support workers and learning support assistants. However, no procedures operate to recognise the quality of learning in the lessons and the co-ordination of the subject does not involve tracking learning over the key stages to ensure a sensible progression.

HISTORY

102. The provision for history is good. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good. Lessons are mostly taken in the partner schools with mainstream pupils. The curriculum is planned by staff of the partner schools, who also teach most of the lessons. The support work of Blanche Nevile staff is good. They help match the lesson tasks to pupils' needs very well, often through the very good use of signing. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to learning history and their behaviour in lessons are, generally, very good. The subject has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

103. In Years 1 to 6 history is taught as part of a topic web. For example, a theme for pupils in Year 1 is 'toys' and pupils discuss how today's toys are different from those in the past. Historical vocabulary, such as then and now is introduced well and concepts of chronological time are reinforced using terms such as 'today', 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow'. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 follow the full range of the programme of study. The highest attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 are working close to national expectations and at the end of Year 11 gain good pass grades on the GCSE examination. The lowest attaining pupils achieve good grades on the certificate of achievement.

104. The subject is well planned across the key stages and assessment information is fed into the planning process. Learning in lessons is well supported by trips to museums and art galleries. For instance, a trip to the Imperial War Museum provided important background information for learning about World War I and what life was like in the trenches at that time. This was beneficial because it helped them focus on the spiritual, moral and social implications of war. Similarly, a visit to the National Portrait Gallery helped to bring images of Tudor England to life through the work of famous painters of the period.

105. Co-ordination of the subject does not include managing a smooth transition from primary to secondary phases. Nor does it include assessing the effect of taking lessons in the partner schools with mainstream pupils on the standards Blanche Nevile pupils achieve and the progress that they are making. Teacher produced resources such as worksheets and topic boxes for pupils in Years 7 to 11 are of high quality, but are limited in quantity both as an outcome of budgetary constraints and a general limited availability of specialist commercially available resources for supporting teaching and learning of history to hearing impaired pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Provision for information and communication technology is good. Although pupils achieve well throughout the school, progress for secondary pupils in the Blanche Nevile secondary site is limited by a difficulty in easily accessing computers which are few in number and located in a very

small room. Also, pupils do not have regular access to computers in every classroom and this restricts the use of their emerging skills in supporting learning in other subjects. Pupils up to Year 6 in the partner schools have good access to information and communication technology. Their good grounding provides good support for their later work at Key Stage 3 and beyond. Despite the access problems encountered at the secondary site, there has been some improvement in the provision since the previous inspection.

107. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn how to program a Roamer and confidently use a mouse to direct a screen icon in response to verbal instructions. In a lesson to Year 2 pupils, they worked as equal partners with mainstream pupils and took turns giving instructions. They selected the correct icon to access a program and knew how to change the screen. Pupils in Year 3 have learned that the Internet can provide information and that a search engine is required to help locate specific information. For example, they used the Internet well to gain information on Helen Keller in support of their work in deaf studies. In a lesson in English, they used photographs taken with the aid of a digital camera on a visit to Madame Tussaud's as a base to add text. In a well-planned lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils, they use digitised photographs of Buddhist artefacts to present their work and add words to explain their use. In word processing, the highest attaining pupils create a new page, insert a text box and add text. They change the font, bold, underline and italic. They use the delete button to edit their work and can file, switch off and close down. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 improve their skills and develop confidence using computer assisted learning approaches to find things out and to develop their ideas. For example, they use their own data for planning a party that they enter into an Excel spreadsheet. The highest attaining pupils add colour and enhance features through underlining and bolding. They learn about control techniques and remember a simple formula to create a square, which they use to make graphic images on the screen. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are working through an ASDAN module on investigating the use of information and communication technology in business. For their work toward the GCSE examination, pupils create a web site. They work well with their mainstream peers and are predicted to achieve good grades. Over their time at school, pupils learn to use a wide range of programs such as Clipart, 2 Simple and Publisher to enhance and present their work. For example, following a survey pupils have presented their work as bar graphs or pie charts using colour to emphasise differences. They use their skills well in presenting work in many subjects and also, for example when they produce posters advertising school productions, such as Macbeth.
108. In the lessons in Blanche Nevile, teaching is good and as a result pupils learn well. Although teachers do not have specialist training, they have sufficient subject knowledge to be confident in the tasks they present to pupils. Also, they have a very good knowledge of pupils' needs so that they plan lessons effectively and provide good opportunities to promote the learning of all pupils. Lessons are made exciting for younger pupils when using the Roamer disguised as a hamster, which pupils program to find food. They enjoy this and learning is fun for them. In all lessons communication is very well supported by the use of British Sign Language to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lesson tasks, whatever is the language they prefer. The very good relationships between adults and pupils help make pupils sufficiently confident as learners for them to try things themselves in support of their learning. Good use is made of open questioning to assess pupils' understanding and to encourage them to extend their thinking. In lessons in the partner schools, support by Blanche Nevile staff is well targeted and pupils gain from working together with a hearing friend.
109. The subject is led by primary and secondary co-ordinators. A common policy has been formulated along with an appropriate subject development plan but neither co-ordinator monitors planning or teaching or operates a common assessment procedure, which would give an overall view of progress. Specialist training in information and communication technology has been organised but not all teachers have participated. No procedures operate to recognise the meaningfulness of the lessons taken in the partner schools.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

110. There is no provision for teaching and learning a modern foreign language. Pupils in Years 7 and beyond, for whom learning a modern foreign language is an entitlement within the National

Curriculum, have been disapplied from this entitlement. The procedures to do this have been followed correctly.

MUSIC

111. No lessons could be observed in music during the week of inspection. However, observation of pupils participating in performances at each of the partner primary schools, together with photographic records, reports, planning documents and discussions with teachers, indicate that pupils in Years 1 to 6 have a satisfactory and relevant experience of music. Over these years, they gain from experiencing singing, moving to music, using rhythm and handling percussion instruments. They take part in musical performances with mainstream pupils and experience the excitement of improving their performance and performing to an audience.
112. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 have been disapplied from learning music. The disapplication procedures have been correctly followed. However, inspectors' judgement is that music contributes an important dimension to pupils' educational experience. Consequently, provision for teaching and learning of music should be available for pupils of all ages and not just for those in Years 1 to 6.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. Pupils take their lessons in physical education with pupils in the partner schools. In each partner school, the curriculum followed closely reflects the relevant National Curriculum programmes of study for the Key Stage. The planning documents are those of the partner school, which are supported by inclusion plans for each pupil. These work very well, especially for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and provide the mainstream teachers with good quality information on targets for pupils, as well as some information on their background. At all times, pupils are very well supported by Blanche Nevile staff. In Years 10 and 11, involvement in physical activities benefits from the opportunity to study physical education as a subject for the GCSE examination.
114. By the end of Year 2, the highest attaining pupils are water-confident and know and adhere to the safety rules of the swimming pool. The best swimmers are beginning to move well using the four main strokes. In gymnastics, they learn to sequence movements together, which include rolls, jumps and moving and static balances, to a controlled finish. They play striking games indoors and are developing satisfactory control when they strike and receive balls and pucks. Most pupils have learned to catch big balls well and the highest attaining pupils are able to catch cricket and softballs. The lowest attaining pupils have difficulty in co-ordinating their movements sufficiently well to balance in a static position or to regularly catch a well-thrown ball. By the end of Year 6, pupils increased strength, co-ordination and balance abilities promote improved performance in gymnastics. For example, they now complete tumbling and cartwheel movements to a good finish and show better performance and techniques in the throwing and jumping events in athletics. They improve their swimming and the best swimmers swim as well as their hearing friends. Over Years 7 to 9, progress continues to be satisfactory over each element of the programmes of study, including dance. Pupils learn the basic rules, skills and tactics of a number of games, including football, cricket and tennis. Over this time period, the link between physical fitness and good health is well made, so that by the time they leave school pupils are well aware of the advantages of being physically fit. During Years 10 and 11, the focus of the curriculum is to promote the importance of physical fitness and to prepare pupils for the leisure activities they can continue to enjoy after they have left school. An increasing number of pupils are achieving this while taking the subject for examination at the GCSE. Mostly, pupils are keen to take part in lessons in physical education. They work hard and, generally, enjoy being physically active.
115. Co-ordination and facilities are within the responsibilities of the partner schools. The management of the link is effective in enabling Blanche Nevile pupils to gain equal access to all aspects of the provision. No formal procedures operate that judge the effectiveness of the provision on the standards pupils achieve or the progress they are making.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. The curriculum for religious education meets statutory requirements. Lessons are taken predominantly with mainstream pupils in the partner schools. Pupils are making satisfactory progress, although progress for some pupils is inhibited by the considerable delay in the development of their language. Religious education includes learning about abstract concepts, such as belief, respect and trust. These, by their very nature, are difficult to understand for pupils with limitations in language.
117. By the end Year 2, pupils are able to develop an awareness of other customs and beliefs. They take part in discussion about Christian celebrations and learn about other major religions. In this, whole school assemblies and focused class activities provide good support to the learning, which occurs in lessons in religious education. By the end of Year 6, classroom based learning has been well supported by visits to the places of worship of a number of religions, including temples and mosques. This helps makes learning relevant to pupils and improves their understanding of the symbols relating to different faiths. By this time, the highest attaining pupils have developed a good understanding of faith as a cultural concept. By the end of Year 9, pupils have a good knowledge of the Bible as a historical and dynamic document of the Christian faith and of the equivalent writings in other major faiths, such as Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. They know that God comes in many forms in the different religions and have a good knowledge of parts of the Bible, including understanding the parables of Jesus.
118. Lessons in other subjects help in learning about religious education, although these links are not formally planned. For example, in art, work reflects the symbols of different religions. In information and communication technology, pupils insert photographs of Buddhist artefacts into a word-processed document. Generally, the management of the provision for Blanche Nevile pupils in the partner schools is good, although this does not include detailed planning to meet the needs of all pupils in the mainstream lessons. Nor does it include procedures to assess the quality of teaching and learning.

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE

119. The school's adopted philosophy of bilingualism aims to provide an accessible environment for deaf pupils and give them a strong sense of individual identity. This includes making available provision for pupils to be taught through spoken English, British Sign Language or a combination of both. To achieve this British Sign Language is taught as a subject so as to improve the quality of communication for all pupils irrespective of the extent of their hearing loss. Lessons began last September and follow a prescribed course so that all pupils learn the same fundamental information.
120. Lessons are well planned and the quality of teaching is very good. Very good relationships between deaf instructors and those who support them and the pupils results in pupils feeling confident, secure and comfortable. They watch very closely and are happy to practise their hand positions and fingering with very good attention to the detail of positions. Instructors ensure that pupils are able to have eye contact and give their full attention to their learning. Routinely, they give pupils positive reinforcement through sign and facial gesture, which helps motivate and encourage pupils. Pupils quickly learn the class rules, such as hands up to answer questions and they accept the rules, for example when they take turns to answer. Many pupils benefit from acquiring a British Sign Language vocabulary alongside spoken English. Sometimes, they find it difficult to sign without using voice but are always able to communicate their message. Pupils' receptive skills are making good improvement as they progress through the school.
121. Learning in British Sign Language lessons is often fun. Pupils sign well enough to communicate with each other, so that there is some relaxation from constantly watching the teacher. Game strategies are well used to practise letter shapes and involving a competitive edge in learning motivates pupils to try their hardest, with beneficial results. Lesson topics are well selected for pupils' age. For example, older pupils will practise their signing on topics such as holiday

destinations. This allows them to find information from atlases, look at timetables for arrivals and departures and learn time via digital and analogue clocks. This has the added advantage of showing that British Sign Language can access the ongoing need for pupils to gain information on routine and regular topics to do with daily living. Subject specific vocabulary is well targeted and reinforced and records show a systematic introduction of vocabulary, logically based on pupils' prior learning.

122. Deaf instructors have high expectations of pupils and lessons operate at a good pace. Pupils work hard and the instructors and their support workers persevere until they are sure pupils have understood a sign and can make appropriate use of it in the right context.
123. The British Sign Language curriculum is very well organised and managed throughout the school. It enhances pupils' ability to choose their preferred method of communication. The post of senior deaf instructor is a relatively new post, but is proving to be meaningful in that a very good role model is available to pupils who is also very skilled at teaching British Sign Language. Assessment is by monitoring pupils' progress and success at CACDP Level 1 or Level 2. Sessions for staff to learn signs specific to subjects are proving very informative and successful in preparing them for their lessons.

DEAF STUDIES

124. Pupils throughout the school are making good progress in all aspects of deaf studies. The quality of teaching is good.
125. The youngest pupils follow lessons that are relevant for their age. For example, pupils in Year 2 made very good progress in a lesson that provided guidance from the audiologist. They used computer programs to listen to and identify a range of sounds such as cars, trains and a storm. By the end of Year 6, pupils are showing increased skills in managing their own hearing equipment. They gain greater self-confidence knowing about the success of deaf people. Pupils from Year 7 are also making good progress in learning about famous deaf people, as are pupils in Year 8, who were delighted to learn about the achievements of film stars who had hearing difficulties. In lessons, the links with English, mathematics and British Sign Language are considerable and are beneficial to the progress pupils are making in these subjects. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 10 who were making decisions about holidays, for example where to go and how to get there.
126. Subject leadership is very good and has already ensured that there is a consistent approach to promoting pupils' learning throughout the school. The subject makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' personal, social and cultural development. A meaningful part of the course is the planned programme of visits, for example to places such as Derby, to meet other deaf people. These help extend pupils knowledge of deafness and deaf people and help promote their independence skills and their self-confidence. Their awareness of other deaf people is extended through the good use they make of the Internet and of electronic mail to initiate communication with them.