

INSPECTION REPORT

ICKBURGH SCHOOL

Clapton, London

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100312

Headteacher: Ms Shirleyanne Sullivan

Lead inspector: Alan Tattersall

Dates of inspection: 23rd -27th November 2003

Inspection number: 258922

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	2-19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	72
School address:	Ickburgh Road Clapton London
Postcode:	E5 8AD
Telephone number:	020 8806 4638
Fax number:	020 8806 7189
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Valerie Bebbington
Date of previous inspection:	17 th September 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ickburgh School has 72 boys and girls aged between two and 19 who have severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Nineteen pupils have autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), three of whom are placed in a recently established special class for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Ten pupils exhibit challenging behaviour. Six children attend the foundation stage full-time and are joined by up to three who attend occasionally part-time. The school is situated in the London Borough of Hackney and serves an area of high unemployment. Seventy seven per cent of pupils receive free school meals, which is very high for a school of this type. Over 80 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority groups, most of whom have English as an additional language and are at an early stage of language acquisition. This is an extremely high percentage. As would be expected, attainment on entry is well below average. The recruitment of teaching staff is very difficult in this area. The school is fully staffed and staffing is becoming more stable, but a third of teachers are temporary. The school received the Investor in People Award in 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20466	Alan Tattersall	Lead inspector	History and physical education.
19693	Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
18498	Denise Morris	Team inspector	English, art and design, personal, social, health education and citizenship and English as an additional language.
27409	Sue Hunt	Team inspector	Religious education, modern foreign languages (French and Italian) and special educational needs.
29452	Christine Emerson	Team inspector	Foundation stage, science, music and geography
19785	John Ashley	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils.

Pupils' achievement, teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Leadership and management of the school, is **sound**. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, good behaviour and very good relationships with each other and staff are strengths of the school.
- The curriculum is enriched well through links with the community and other schools.
- Pupils achieve very well in music and students achieve well at post-16.
- The school promotes pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development well.
- The high quality of support and guidance for pupils for whom English is an additional language enables them to achieve in line with other pupils in the school.
- The recently established provision in the special class for the few pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) is poor.
- Subject leadership in geography, history, religious education, design and technology and modern foreign language is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for religious education is unsatisfactory and not taught currently to students at post-16.

The school has made **good improvements** since the last inspection, only two years ago. The headteacher's **good leadership** and vision for improvements have led the school to improve the achievement of pupils, their attendance, teaching and learning, leadership, management and value for money. The improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**. The headteacher, staff and governors have made significant improvements to the accommodation and although more improvements are needed, much of this is beyond the school's control.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year R	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 2	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 6	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 9	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 11	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 13	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall and **good** for students at post-16 for most subjects. Pupils achieve well in mathematics. They participate and achieve very well in music through excellent support from local musicians in lessons. Students at post-16 achieve well in most subjects by the time they leave school. However, the achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 in religious education is unsatisfactory. Pupils for whom English is not the first language receive effective support from the specialist teacher and other staff to achieve as well as other pupils in the school. This is the case for most pupils who have additional special educational needs, including the majority of the pupils who have ASD. However, the achievement of the few pupils with ASD currently in a special class is unsatisfactory because of the poor accommodation and lack of staff skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Staff guide pupils to behave well, to develop

very good relationships, gain in self esteem and develop very positive attitudes to work and learning. They ensure racial harmony and a school free from bullying. Exclusion rates have been high but are decreasing. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in most subjects, very good in music, good in mathematics and in reading for more able pupils. Teaching is good for pupils who have EAL. The teaching of religious education is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. A positive feature of teaching is the effective planning to use equipment, illustrations, models, sounds and smells to ensure pupils of all abilities become involved. Classroom support staff usually make a strong contribution in lessons. Occasionally staff do not use sufficient symbols and signs to promote pupils' learning in lessons. There are impressive systems for assessing what pupils have learnt. However, staff are not consistent in using them to check what pupils are learning. Teachers enrich pupils' learning well through visiting artists, celebrating religious festivals, and visits out. Provision for music is very good. The school lacks specialist classrooms for science, art and design and technology and facilities in a few of the pupils' changing areas. Teachers make good use of swimming and sports facilities in the community but accommodation for physical education in school is unsatisfactory and limits pupils' achievement. Pupils receive good support from medical personnel, therapists and psychologists. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory and there are effective relationships with other schools to make good arrangements for several pupils to attend to learn and socialise.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership is **satisfactory**. The headteacher provides good leadership and the vision that ensures that the school concentrates upon developments to raise pupils' achievement. More needs to be done to ensure consistent standards in subject leadership in geography, history, religious education, design and technology and modern foreign languages. Management of the school is **satisfactory**. The recently appointed deputy headteacher is growing into the role well. Managers, governors and administrative staff manage finance well to ensure the best value in the use of funds. Governors are supportive of the school particularly in their efforts to recruit sufficient high quality teaching staff. They endeavour to meet statutory requirements but acted on incorrect external advice and ceased teaching religious education this term to students at post-16. This is against statutory requirements.

PARENTS', CARERS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and carers are positive about the school and feel that they receive good help. Pupils confirm their parents' and carers' views that they like school and look forward to coming. They enjoy lessons, being with friends and particularly like going out of school on activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to:

- Improve the quality of teaching and facilities for pupils with ASD in the special class.
- Improve the leadership of history, religious education, geography, design and technology and modern foreign languages to increase pupils' opportunities to make progress.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that students at post-16 receive lessons in religious education.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of boys and girls up to the end of Year 11 is **satisfactory**. The standards judged against 'P' levels (nationally recognised measurement of small steps in learning) show that standards are satisfactory and rising. The achievement of students in the post-16 unit is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students at post-16 achieve well and make good progress in most subjects.
- Pupils' achievement in music is very good.
- The achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 in religious education is unsatisfactory.
- The achievement of the few pupils in the class for ASD pupils is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement has improved from unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. This is because of the way that teachers plan effectively and are more successful at teaching their subjects through guidance, support, training and access to better materials to plan lessons.
2. The recognition of pupils' achievement through Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and students at post-16 is a satisfactory improvement in recording their achievement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve satisfactorily and students at post-16 achieve well. Students also participate in a project called, 'Towards Independence', achieve well and make good progress in preparation for life after school.
3. The majority of pupils who have additional special educational needs achieve and make the same progress as other pupils in the school. Their achievement has improved well since the previous inspection. This includes the pupils who have challenging behaviour and who receive effective support through their individual behaviour plans to participate effectively in lessons. An exception is the few pupils in Years 3 to 6 in the recently formed and temporary special class for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders. Staff have had insufficient training and support to provide adequately for the needs of these pupils. Consequently, their progress and achievement is unsatisfactory.
4. The achievement of children in the foundation stage is satisfactory in all the areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are taught alongside them make the same progress since tasks are geared to individual need to prepare them for learning in the next stage.
5. Achievement in communication, reading and writing is satisfactory. Pupils receive suitable support with communication to achieve the targets in their individual education plans. Many pupils require support with communication through signing, symbols and electronic communication aids and this enables them to make the same progress as others. However, there are a few occasions when teachers and other staff fail to use communication aids and on these occasions, a few pupils do not make the progress they should. The large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language receives good specialist support. This, and the way that teachers usually plan lessons for pupils who are at an early stage of language acquisition ensures that pupils in the school achieve equally regardless of background.
6. Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Often teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other lessons such as food technology and this deepens their understanding.

Achievement in science is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement in PHSE and citizenship in lessons and working towards targets in their individual education plans is satisfactory.

7. Pupils' progress and achievement in ICT is satisfactory. This is an area that the school has succeeded in improving since the unsatisfactory achievement at the time of the last inspection. Although pupils do not receive specific lessons in ICT, teachers provide sufficient opportunities in lessons throughout the day to ensure that they make satisfactory progress. Overall, pupils' skills in English, mathematics and ICT are sufficient for them to make progress in their other subjects.
8. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory up to the end of Year 9 but is unsatisfactory for older pupils up to the end of Year 13. This is because the planning for what pupils will learn in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory and students at post-16 do not receive lessons. Pupils' achievement in physical education is satisfactory in spite of the lack of suitable accommodation on site. Pupils make very good progress in music and achieve very well. They benefit from excellent musical experiences provided by 'IMPRO' * to participate in performing with instruments, adding their own contribution and enjoying music.

* *A team of visiting musicians who teach and play alongside groups of pupils from most classes and pupils from other schools in the school hall.*

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their relationships with staff and each other are **good** and this is a strength of the school. Most pupils behave well throughout the school. Pupils progress well in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like coming to school and have a positive attitude to learning.
- The very good relationships between staff and pupils and the care and support pupils receive promote their confidence and social development well.
- Staff have had insufficient training in managing the small number of pupils who have ASD and challenging behaviour in the special class.
- Pupils have good opportunities to experience multicultural dance, music and drama through special projects such as Arts Week.
- The school has improved the procedures for to support pupils' attendance and has reduced the number of unexplained absences.

Commentary

9. Very good relationships are evident between staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers, classroom support staff and mid-day supervisors are effective in ensuring that lunchtime and playtimes are calm and orderly. Staff demonstrate good behaviour and encourage pupils to play and interact with each other correctly. Consequently, pupils learn how to share equipment and take turns. Pupils with more complex difficulties in the foundation stage receive effective support so that they enjoy mealtimes and feel comfortable and secure. Opportunities to perform in front of others help pupils to develop their confidence in the musical improvisation sessions. Primary aged pupils are happy to sing into a microphone and clap improvised rhythms in front of a large group of pupils and staff from other schools. Students at post-16 make good progress in learning to take responsibility through their work on the mini enterprise project.
10. Pupils' responses to questionnaires and conversations with visitors confirm that they value school and are positive about lessons and other activities. They concentrate in lessons and this contributes well to the progress they make. Pupils behave well in lessons and make good progress in learning to work in groups and follow instructions. They look after equipment and are patient in waiting their turn. Where pupils show challenging behaviour it is often managed well

through following procedures specified in individual behaviour plans. This is supported by the Challenging Behaviour Panel, which has been recently established to support staff when drawing up the plans. However, staff do not currently have sufficient expertise or knowledge of ASD to implement appropriate strategies to manage the behaviour of the small number of pupils in the special class. This means that the pupils' behaviour is frequently very challenging and their lessons are disrupted. There is a need for the school to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of and trained in restraint procedures.

11. The school ensures the elimination of any oppression and is successful in implementing its policies to promote racial harmony. There is a very strong tradition celebrating the wide range of cultures represented by the pupils through Arts Weeks and through participating in festivals such as Eid. Assemblies and lessons raise pupils' awareness of their own culture and the cultures and faiths of other pupils and the community. It is a weakness that the provision of lessons in religious education for pupils from Year 10 onwards is unsatisfactory since this misses opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development further.
12. The post-16 provision provides an exciting, yet supportive environment in which students are able to make choices, take responsibility and become more involved in their community.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	10	4	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	3	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	10	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	10	6	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	11	5	0

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

13. There were no permanent exclusions last year but a high number of fixed term exclusions. The headteacher's action to reduce incidents by re-organising teaching groups and the establishment of the class for a few ASD pupils has reduced them. The number of exclusions has declined this term.

Attendance

Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002-2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	16.1	School data :	1.7
National data:	11.2	National data:	0.7

The table gives the percentage of half days missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

14. At the time of the last inspection, the procedures for checking attendance were unsatisfactory and they are now good. Staff follow up any absences rigorously and ensure that these are recorded correctly. This has resulted in a considerable decrease in unauthorised absences. Although the attendance rate remains below average, the vast majority of absences are because of hospital appointments and illness. The pupils usually arrive at school on time, but are occasionally late due to delays in school transport due to traffic problems.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The satisfactory quality of teaching and learning ensures pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Pupils follow a satisfactory curriculum that is enriched well by links with the community and pupils receive a satisfactory standard of care. Parents and carers have a positive view of the school but could be more involved in its work.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** for pupils up to the end of Year 11 and this leads to satisfactory learning. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** for students at post-16.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching for students at post-16, particularly for the mini enterprise project.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well and this contributes effectively to the way they try hard in lessons.
- Teaching and learning in music is very good.
- The teaching and learning for the few pupils with ASD in the special class is unsatisfactory.
- Although the overall assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, teachers and classroom staff could check on pupils' progress more consistently to use the information to plan further work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (9%)	6 (13%)	16 (35%)	16 (35%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages. Care should be exercised when interpreting percentages since one lesson represents approximately 2%..

15. A significant factor in the improvement of the unsatisfactory teaching at the last inspection to the current satisfactory standard, has been the headteacher's high expectations and efforts to drive

improvements. This has been achieved through the observation of lessons and consequent advice to improve, the recruitment of new staff and staff training. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, in spite of the very high turn over of staff and number of temporary staff. This highlights the effective staff induction. More than half of the teaching observed was good or better and it is pleasing that four excellent lessons were observed in different subjects and age groups. Although this demonstrates an extremely high level of expertise in those lessons, an identical number of unsatisfactory or poor lessons revealed weaknesses in teaching in other lessons. There has been good progress since the previous inspection in the teaching of pupils who have EAL. A significant factor is the effective support for pupils and staff provided by the specialist teacher.

16. There has been an improvement in the way that teachers plan lessons. The most successful lessons demonstrate effective planning, preparation and use of resources that engage pupils' interest and encourage them to want to learn more. Planning was exceptional in a geography lesson for pupils in Years 10 and 11. As the lesson progressed, the teacher introduced more and more resources to illustrate parts of the world. Planning for individual needs was exceptional. For instance, the PMLD pupil was able to make responses using a pre-prepared recording device to say that 'ice is cold'. Pupils remembered events from previous weeks because of the vivid portrayal of their part in a 'trip around the world'.
17. Very good teaching in music and excellent teaching when 'IMPRO' lead lessons result in good learning. This is because of the expertise of staff, the high quality of resources provided and the planning to include interesting work for pupils to do. The quality of teaching and learning in the post-16 department is good in most lessons. Lessons are planned well to take advantage of students' good attitudes to learning and their desire to become more independent.
18. Although classroom support staff play a crucial role in promoting pupils' progress in most lessons, their deployment was a weakness in several lessons. Occasionally they do not have a role in the lesson since the pupil may be managing well without them or they assist at a time when the pupil could work independently. Teachers and managers need to be more vigilant to ensure the efficient use of staff to support pupils but promote independence.
19. Overall, teachers are well aware of the needs of those pupils who have additional special educational needs. For instance, pupils who have PMLD usually receive effective support in class through additional staff support, materials or visual aids. Staff augment speech with signing, symbols or objects to provide additional information. Consequently, the teaching and learning of those pupils ensure that they make the same progress as other pupils in the school. Occasionally, the support provided for pupils who have additional special educational needs is insufficient for them. This happened in a religious education lesson for pupils in Years 10 and 11 where teaching and learning was unsatisfactory and in an assembly for pupils from Year 9. The teachers failed to use sufficient resources to illustrate the topics, or use signing and symbols and did not pitch the level of communication to pupils' assessed needs. Learning and consequently teaching were unsatisfactory.
20. Most of the large number of pupils in the main school who have ASD make the same progress as others through the support they receive for instance, through staff augmenting instructions with familiar pictures. However, staff in the specialist class for pupils who have ASD have not received sufficient training and do not use methods appropriate for this small number of pupils. Consequently, the teaching and learning observed was unsatisfactory or poor.
21. Procedures for assessment have improved in all subjects. Staff have worked hard to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievement and chosen areas for improvement from this analysis. There is clear awareness of pupils' scores in each subject. However, on a daily basis, staff do not gather enough information in lessons to use this consistently in planning further work for pupils. There is also a lack of consistency in how teachers gather assessment information. Although there is some good practice where photographs and annotated pieces of work are used

well to identify what a pupil has learned, there are also times when opportunities to do this are lost, and insufficient evidence gathered.

The curriculum

The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils are satisfactory, overall. They are good for students at post-16, but are unsatisfactory for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the special class. There is a good range of activities to enrich pupils' learning, and participation in community arts projects is a major strength.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision to support pupils for whom English as an additional language is effective.
- Enrichment from visiting specialists for music and art and educational visits.
- Requirements in religious education are not met for post-16 students, and provision is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11.
- Planning for what pupils will learn in modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils in the special class who have ASD is unsatisfactory.
- There is a lack of specialist facilities for physical education, science and creative subjects.

Commentary

22. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and an appropriate range of learning activities is provided for almost all pupils. There is a suitable emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented effectively and are helping to improve pupils' learning. Provision for ICT has improved and is now satisfactory. A very appropriate and relevant curriculum in the form of the '14-19 work related curriculum' has been established and is proving successful. In most subjects the planning that teachers follow ensures that pupils gain in knowledge sufficiently as they move through the school. The provision for the modern foreign languages of French and Italian is unsatisfactory since there is not clear subject leadership to provide pupils with systematic opportunities to learn.
23. The support provided to pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. There is a very high number of pupils at the school that receives support from the specialist teacher. This service is of very high quality and enables many pupils to receive tuition through their own languages. This is a significant factor in ensuring they achieve in line with other pupils in the school.
24. Since most pupils travel home by organised transport, activities outside the school day are limited. However, there are good opportunities for pupils to become involved in community arts projects with visiting artists and musicians. Educational visits such as to a nature reserve enrich pupils' learning well. Pupils also integrate with pupils from other schools to perform and present songs, dance and drama. During the inspection, pupils were observed practising for one such performance. They achieved very well, due to the high quality expertise and skill of musicians visiting the school.
25. Requirements in religious education are not fully met. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not have access to an appropriate range of progressive religious education activities and there is no time allocated to the study of the subject in the post-16 department this year. This is unsatisfactory and inhibits pupils' knowledge of the rich range of faiths and cultures represented in the school.
26. There is sufficient expertise in school to meet the needs of most of the large number of pupils who have ASD. However, the provision for the small number of pupils with ASD in the special class is unsatisfactory. Accommodation and resources have not been tailored to their needs, and the range of learning opportunities lacks detailed short-term planning and the identification of small steps to progress. Not enough use is made of alternative communication systems in this

class to enhance pupils' abilities in decision making. Consequently, this leads to unsatisfactory learning.

27. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. Good new resources and a structured programme of work have resulted in raised achievement in this subject across the school.
28. The school places a strong emphasis upon promoting pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. This happens throughout the day in most classes for instance, during planned activities at break and lunchtimes. Pupils from Year 9 receive suitable guidance on careers and the emphasis upon preparing pupils for life after school continues into the post-16 department. Provision for pupils in the post-16 department is good, since learning opportunities are tailored well to meet their needs and abilities. Students undertake work experience and lessons promote the practical application of skills to prepare them well for life after school. Student's participation in mini enterprise is excellent. In a skilfully planned and taught lesson, they gained practical experience of designing snacks and revelled in putting into practice their skills such as numeracy in working out the profit they might make.
29. Although there is a good number of teachers in the school, a high proportion is temporary. The headteacher and governors are rightly seeking ways to recruit a more permanent group of teachers to ensure pupils' continuity and progression in learning and for more teachers to take responsibility to lead developments in more subjects. The number of classroom support staff is extremely large for a school of this type. Whilst they provide significant benefits to support pupils, they occasionally provide too much help to enable pupils to develop more independence.
30. The headteacher and governors have made remarkable improvements to the accommodation to improve the appearance and space for learning in a very short time. However, there is a lack of suitable facilities for games and sport, science, design and technology and art and design, particularly for pupils beyond Year 7. The final phase of improvements to pupils' changing areas since the last inspection needs completion and the accommodation for pupils with ASD in the special class requires to be designed for the purpose. The school has ensured that teachers have sufficient resources to involve pupils well in lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Measures taken to ensure pupils' and students' care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are **satisfactory**. Overall pupils' and students' support and guidance are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- This is a caring school. Care, welfare and health and safety are adequately provided for all pupils and students.
- Effective uses of external health and education staff and resources ensure pupils and students obtain the necessary support to which they are entitled.
- Career guidance and work opportunities are a strength for students at post-16.
- Child protection procedures need to be made clearer to all staff.
- Pupils' and students' views and suggestions are respected but there is no formal procedure for pupils to give their views.

Commentary

31. Staff place the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils as priorities. The school doctor and nurse work closely with a range of other medical specialists to provide good support for pupils, many of whom have complex medical needs. Speech therapists, occupational therapists, school nurse, school doctor, physiotherapists and educational psychologists visit the school regularly and contribute well to annual reviews and reports. Several members of staff are qualified in first

aid and arrangements for treating pupils are satisfactory. Staff ensure that pupils work in a healthy and secure environment.

32. The headteacher has taken steps to ensure that staff have a good awareness of health and safety and pupils' care requirements. This is evident for instance, during the lunch period when pupils are fully occupied and well cared for by supervisory staff. This means there is a sense of calm and enjoyment over the lunch period. All staff, including classroom support assistants, administrative and lunchtime staff demonstrate good care, concern and respect for pupils and students. Teachers understand pupils' and students' backgrounds and difficulties well and have positive relationships with their parents and carers.
33. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. There is a trained person on the staff, however, not all staff are aware of the correct person to report to. Induction and transfer arrangements are satisfactory overall for the large number of pupils who join during the school year. However, arrangements could be stronger for the parents and carers of younger children.
34. Pupils and students are encouraged to develop trusting relationships with all adults in the school. This begins as children enter the foundation stage and learn to rely upon staff support to develop strong relationships. This support continues as pupils move up through the different stages in the school and is particularly strong for students at post-16. The teacher in charge and the permanent support assistant are especially caring towards their students.
35. Pupils and students enjoy the praise they receive when they have achieved well, particularly when they receive certificates that are given out at assemblies. Their responses to questionnaires show that they are prepared to give their views. Staff listen to pupils, valuing and acting on their suggestions and ideas. However, there is no school council or staff facilitator established to provide an opportunity for pupils and students to make suggestions and contribute formally to school improvements.
36. There is good careers guidance which begins in Year 9, through a well-planned and monitored work experience programme and individual or small group work with Connexions. A few students have experienced very worthwhile work placements such as working in a local café and car mechanical workshop. During their last year in school, students from Hackney are well supported by the Adult Learning Difficulties Team to prepare life for them after school.

Partnership with parents and carers, other schools and the community

Links with parents and carers are **satisfactory**. The links with the community, other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents and carers hold the school in high regard and the school responds swiftly to their concerns.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their social and personal skills through working with pupils from other schools.
- Good links with individuals and organisations in the community enrich pupils' experiences.
- The school recognises the need to involve parents and carers more in its work.

Commentary

37. Parents and carers feel the school operates an open door policy and are able to contact the school if they have concerns. Most teachers keep parents and carers informed through the home-school books or by telephone. Pupils' annual reviews and reports provide satisfactory information. Parents and carers receive a helpful translation service at the governors' meeting with parents and carers and at consultations, where attendance is good. The governors, headteacher and staff are aware of the difficulties that parents and carers have in keeping in

regular contact with the school, such as in travelling to school. The school is appropriately seeking ways to increase parents' and carers' involvement in school life. Parents and carers whose children start in the nursery are not always given sufficient information about school routines before they start school.

38. The school has developed several beneficial links with mainstream schools that provide pupils with good opportunities to work and socialise with other pupils and staff. For example, three pupils attend a local special school each week, feel welcome and warmly greet staff and pupils on arrival. In lessons, they emulate their classmates who support them as they work together. Lunchtime is a valuable opportunity to socialise and eat their lunch with more independence.
39. Visitors such as musicians, theatre groups and artists work with pupils and share their expertise, such as composing and playing music together. There are regular visits to museums, sports centres and places of interest such as zoos. The school intends to repeat the successful visit to France. These visits deepen pupils' understanding of the world around them. Contacts with local businesses are valuable for instance, one firm is providing nearly new computers for pupils to use.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **satisfactory**. The headteacher has good clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations and these are leading the school forward and contributing to higher pupil achievement. The management of the school is satisfactory as is its overall governance. The management of subject their leaders is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The financial leadership of the school is good and is enabling effective planning for improvements.
- The senior management team and governors are committed to school improvement.
- Governors are supportive of the headteacher and senior management team. They provide challenge in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school. However, they do not ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties of providing religious education to students at post-16.
- Leadership and management by subject leaders needs improving in religious education, geography, history, modern foreign language and design and technology.
- The school is developing an effective system to allocate staff to classes to maximise pupil support. However, there is a need to check how staff operate to ensure that pupils receive sufficient opportunities to develop independence.

Commentary

40. The head teacher provides good leadership and has established a good vision for the school that has led to good improvements since the previous inspection. The commitment for continued improvement and development is shared by governors, the deputy head teacher and the senior management team. The commitment to higher achievement and the improvement of the school environment are central to the school comprehensive development plan. It provides a strategic structure that is guiding the school towards improvement.
41. A strength in management is the collection and analysis of statistics of pupils' performance from year to year. The establishment of 'P' scales is beginning to provide the data for the headteacher to check the performance of different classes, boys and girls, groups of pupils and those whose first language is not English. This provides the opportunity to seek reasons for differences and to take action. However, due to inconsistent subject co-ordination in modern foreign languages, religious education, geography, and design technology, these systems are not being effectively used throughout the school. The leadership and management in the post-16 department are good and have led to the provision of a good course where pupils achieve well.

42. Performance management is in place. The school holds an Investor in People Award and there is a good emphasis upon providing professional development for staff. The senior management team and teachers are developing skills in lesson observation and this is leading to useful advice to improve teaching. The headteacher's analytical checking of the quality of teaching and learning in the school is helping to raise standards. A positive feature in the management of teaching staff is the way that the efficient office staff reduce teachers' administrative duties. However, there is weakness in leadership and management since there has been insufficient checking and consequent advice provided by senior management for staff in the recently established class for a few pupils who have ASD.
43. The governing body is supportive of the school and it receives good information from the headteacher. Governors ask searching questions that help to shape their vision for the school. Governors have been particularly active in support of the headteacher to recruit sufficient teaching and classroom support staff. However, governors do not fulfil all their statutory responsibilities since religious education is not taught to students at post-16.
44. Whilst the school is staffed well, there have been continued difficulties in the recruitment of permanent qualified teachers. This partly explains the weaknesses in subject co-ordination and why the senior management team are over-burdened in sharing the management of some subjects, particularly in the primary department. Although recruitment is difficult, the senior management team and governors place much emphasis upon the quality of staff and re-advertise if they are not satisfied with the applicants. Although this leads to much extra work for them, this policy is paying dividends through the high quality of staff being recruited. Recruitment remains a significant challenge.
45. The extremely large number of classroom support staff make a significant contribution to promoting pupils' learning. The headteacher, supported by senior managers and governors has developed an impressive and sophisticated system for the initial allocation of classroom support staff to classes. However, there are occasions when pupils receive too much support and this limits opportunities to become more independent. Senior managers do not check and evaluate the effectiveness of the allocation sufficiently.
46. The recent establishment by the deputy headteacher of two panels of staff and outside professionals to support pupils who have PMLD and those who have challenging behaviour is a positive development. Panels meet weekly to discuss action and review progress for instance, towards pupils' targets to improve their behaviour more effectively.
47. The financial management of the school is good. The balance of funds brought forward from the previous financial year and the identical sum carried forward to the next year are larger than would be expected. However, the actual carry forward of available funds is at an acceptable level since more than two thirds is earmarked for an impressive range of improvements intended to raise standards. These include creating a PMLD primary unit, a rolling programme of ventilation for each of the classes, expensive standing frames, playground equipment, extending provision for physical education, further development of ICT provision, an accessibility action plan and reducing the workload of teachers further.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1628312	Balance from previous year	144273
Total expenditure	1403993	Balance carried forward to the next	144273
Expenditure per pupil	21147		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the foundation stage is **satisfactory in all areas of learning**. Sessions were observed in all the areas of learning and showed that teaching and learning are satisfactory. This represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The children are taught in two classes according to ability. Provision for children in the higher attaining class is good because the teaching is good. During the inspection, the numbers of children attending the provision were low because of absence through ill health and the Eid festival. Although there are too few children attending currently to make separate judgements about achievement in each area of learning, evidence shows that achievement is satisfactory overall and that higher attaining children achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses across the areas of learning

- Good teaching for higher attaining children ensures that they get off to a good start in learning that prepares them well for moving on through the school.
- The use of children's first language helps them to settle in to school and promotes their learning.
- Links with parents and carers could be developed further. There is insufficient contact with parents and carers to support the admission and induction of children into the school.
- Classroom support staff provide good care and support. This ensures that all children feel secure and happy. However, they miss opportunities to record children's progress during lessons.

Commentary

48. The promotion of children's **communication, language and literacy** forms an important part of most lessons. Children are encouraged to communicate using speech, signs, objects and symbols. Those with more complex learning difficulties make choices and greet staff using a special switch that plays recorded messages. Children participate in stories through sensory experiences. For example, they handle and smell fruit when the class reads 'The very hungry caterpillar'. Occasionally the teacher goes round each child in turn and this means that although there is a high number of support staff, children are not involved in learning as much as they could be due to waiting for their turn. Higher attaining pupils use writing materials to develop pencil control such as mark making and joining dots to make letters. Children with more complex needs use materials such as finger paints. There are sufficient opportunities for **mathematical development**. Children complete two piece jigsaws and make paintings and collages to help them to understand shape and to recognise circles, triangles and squares. Teachers promote the learning of the concept of number in many lessons. For instance, the class counts the eggs when they participate in making scrambled eggs.
49. Classroom staff know children very well and provide gentle and consistent care for children with complex learning difficulties and additional needs. This helps children to settle well and promotes their **personal, social and emotional development**. Meal times develop children's skills and their social behaviour. The speech and language therapist draws up good feeding plans for staff to follow. Several children are supported through visual symbol cards to request items of food at snack times. However, the role of support staff is underdeveloped in helping teachers to record in detail children's responses in lessons. In **creative development** children sing songs about the rain and make rain noises with percussion instruments. They respond very well to excellent musical experiences provided by professional musicians as part of the 'IMPRO' project. Children have good opportunities to use paint and other materials such as glue and paper to make pictures to display in their 'art gallery'.

50. Children are helped to develop their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They use symbols and objects to recognise the day and the activities they will participate in. Children have added their names to a large map, labelled with words and signs to show which part of the world their family comes from. They have good access to computers in both classrooms including the use of a touch screen to help them to make changes on the screen. Higher attaining children use the mouse to draw pictures. Children's **physical development** is promoted by their individual physiotherapy programmes, which are carried out by the classroom staff. The children enjoy the exercises and co-operate well.
51. Teaching and learning is good in the class for higher attaining children. Lessons are planned well to meet each child's needs and this enables them to learn well. This is because the teacher evaluates how children respond to each activity and uses this assessment effectively to plan future work. Teaching and learning in the class for children who have more complex needs is satisfactory. Classroom support staff make a strong contribution to the development of children whose first language is not English. For instance, one provides two Turkish children with important words in their first language. All children have well drawn up individual learning plans with appropriate targets.
52. The number of children in the foundation stage has risen since the last inspection and several have more complex needs. The headteacher has addressed this by dividing the children into two classes to meet children's needs more effectively. The classes join together for a few activities but the links between the classes could be improved. All children have home-school diaries which maintain links with the children's parents and carers. When children start school there are flexible arrangements for attendance until children are well settled. However, contact with parents and carers prior to admission is not always sufficient for parents and carers to feel confident that children's needs will be addressed. One child has a dual placement with a mainstream school but most children do not have opportunities to work with children from other schools.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 to 4 and Students at Post-16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Lessons were observed in English for each year group. One lesson was observed in French but none in Italian. There was sufficient information available to judge the provision and management in the modern foreign languages. However, there was insufficient evidence of pupils' work available to judge pupils' achievement, teaching and learning in them.

Provision in English is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively and this is helping to raise achievement, particularly for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Additional support for pupils to learn reading skills is leading to higher achievement.
- Occasionally, not enough use is made of alternative communication systems, such as signs and symbols, to support pupils' communication throughout the day.
- Provision for literacy for pupils with autism in the special class is unsatisfactory.
- The assessment of pupils' achievements is inconsistent.
- More able pupils do not write and record their work often enough in all subjects.

Commentary

53. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has led to pupils' satisfactory achievement. The good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is helping to raise achievement across the

school. This was the case in lessons where good teaching was in evidence. The very structured lessons helped pupils to achieve well. Pupils' satisfactory achievement is recognised through ASDAN and students' achievements are recognised through Towards Independence awards.

54. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Although the teaching of pupils who have additional needs has improved, there are still weaknesses. The provision for English for the large number of pupils with autism is satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in the special class. This is because there are too few systems in place to meet the needs of this group of pupils. Not enough use is made of visual symbols, signing and picture clues to promote effective interaction. The methods used to improve pupils' communication and interactive skills are satisfactory overall. In several lessons, a good range of communication aids are used to enable pupils to take a full and active part in discussions and in making choices. In a few lessons however, there are too few opportunities for pupils to see adults signing, or to use symbols themselves to make their needs known.
55. The teaching of reading for pupils of higher ability is good and this enables them to make good progress. A specialist reading teacher works individually with these pupils, ensuring that they develop good phonic and early literacy skills through regular opportunities to read, discuss and sharing books. Overall, pupils' achievement and progress in reading is satisfactory. Teachers use resources and books well in English lessons to gain pupils' interest and promote achievement. A multi-sensory approach is used in many classes in which pupils have the opportunity to look, touch, taste and smell real objects and artefacts to extend their language skills. There are good examples of teachers using 'big books' during literacy lessons and this has contributed well to high levels of interest and enjoyment in those lessons. However, symbols are not used consistently for pupils. Good home-school diaries keep parents and carers informed and involved in the their children's reading.
56. The teaching of early writing skills is satisfactory. Although there are many examples of more able pupils throughout the school using a range of writing implements to make marks on paper, draw pictures, describe their experiences and practise their writing, pupils do not receive sufficient opportunities to record their work. By Year 7, pupils of higher attainment can write their own simple sentences while lower attaining pupils have many opportunities to explore with their hands and develop their sense of touch. Students benefit greatly from their good literacy programme. For example, when asked to comment on the painting of the 'Mona Lisa,' a more able student wrote independently, 'She is beautiful, she looks shabby, I wonder if she has a family?'
57. Pupils for whom English is not their first language achieve as well as other pupils in lessons. This is because they receive effective support from teachers and classroom staff to help them to develop their emerging language skills. They receive additional support and work with the specialist teacher, mainly within their own languages. They achieve well because of the good teaching and very high level of support provided. At these times, these pupils show good understanding of what is expected and interact well.
58. Leadership of English is satisfactory. Some good analyses of pupils' achievements are helping to inform staff about the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. However, the use of assessment, on a daily and regular basis, is inconsistent and pupils' individual English targets within their IEPs are not always evaluated. This means that their small steps in learning are not always noted to enable the teacher to plan further work.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

59. Provision for the promotion of language throughout other subjects is satisfactory. In most subjects, planning indicates the important vocabulary that will be taught to enable pupils to understand their lessons, such as in science. Pupils use their literacy skills well in subjects such as history and geography. For example, language skills are fostered appropriately through questions and discussions. However, systems to promote communication through signing,

symbols and ICT are only satisfactory. They are not always evident in lessons and this limits pupils' understanding and their ability to contribute.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (French and Italian)

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- French and Italian lack subject leaders.
- There is no written planning for teachers to follow.

Commentary

60. Each teacher chooses to teach French or Italian to their own group once each week in Years 7 to 9. The teaching and learning in the one lesson observed in French was satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence of pupils' work in files and records to make a judgement regarding their progress, achievement or of overall teaching and learning. French and Italian lack leaders to develop the subjects. Pupils learn about the cultures in the countries studied and this makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting their cultural development. However, it is unsatisfactory that there is no overall planning to provide guidance on what pupils should learn as they get older.

MATHEMATICS

Lessons were seen for mathematics in all year groups.

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

- Teaching and learning is good.
- Teachers have access to good planning systems for mathematics for the whole school.
- The systems to check pupils' level of achievement are good.
- The school could make better use of classroom support staff.
- ICT is used well to support pupils who have additional special educational needs.

Commentary

61. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is good. During the inspection, teaching and learning was good and pupils made good progress in lessons. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for the few pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are taught alongside children in the foundation stage. Teachers and classroom staff manage pupils' behaviour well and this has contributed to the good attitudes and application to tasks evident in all lessons. Teachers provide good resources for pupils and these enable pupils in Years 7 to 9 to measure in centimetres, record for themselves or receive support such as selecting pre-written numbers. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 learn about money using real coins.

62. Teachers often plan well to make effective use of classroom staff to support pupils' learning. For instance, staff displayed scores on the whiteboard as pupils in Years 7 to 9 aimed bean bags at a target, encouraging pupils to add their scores to make a new total up to 20. However, there are occasionally too many staff present in class to provide pupils with opportunities for independent work.

63. Teachers usually plan well to ensure that pupils make good progress towards targets set for them in the IEPs and to support pupils who have additional special educational needs such as communication difficulties. In a very good lesson that explored concepts of size, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were able to sign 'too big' when observing a teacher trying to place a large toy in a small box. The inclusion of pupils with PMLD was very good in a lesson for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to

learn shopping skills. They were able to operate a large switch to activate pre-recorded speech to ask for items in the class shop, helped by another pupil. However, teachers and classroom staff occasionally miss opportunities to use signing to aid pupils' understanding.

64. The National Numeracy Strategy and the strategy for pupils beyond Year 7 have been introduced and this has led to improved teachers' planning for lessons. This was evident in a lively introduction to a lesson for pupils in Years 10 and 11 where the teacher led a session of counting to 10 and back down again. There are good systems to assess pupils' achievement for instance, to produce a 'P' level. Pupils' achievements are recognised through ASDAN and students' good achievement is also recorded through the Towards Independence awards.
65. There is a good use of ICT. For instance, more able pupils in Years 10 and 11 use computers to add numbers to 100. Digital cameras provide a useful way for teachers to record pupils' learning for instance, about shapes. The leadership and management of mathematics shared between the headteacher and the head of the secondary department are good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Mathematics is promoted satisfactorily in lessons throughout the day. Teachers plan for pupils to weigh and measure in food technology. In the most successful cases, the planning for pupils to develop numeracy skills is an integral part of the teacher's planning for the lesson. For instance, in the mini enterprise lesson the students at post-16 determined the potential profit from making snacks that deepened their understanding of practical mathematics. Pupils showed enjoyment and ability to select items to buy, to give correct money amounts to the shopkeeper and to check change. In an art lesson, pupils in Years 7 and 8 explored shape and understood that an artist had included circles in his work.

SCIENCE

Lessons were seen in science in all year groups.

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to study life processes through their work in the school's fruit and vegetable garden.
- Most teachers are skilled in using multi-sensory experiences to help pupils with complex learning difficulties to participate fully in lessons.
- The lack of a specialist room for science restricts opportunities for older pupils to carry out experiments.
- There are good links between science and other subjects.
- ICT is not used enough to support pupils' learning.
- Staff could improve the recording of what pupils are learning.

Commentary

67. Pupils' achievement, progress and teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is not a specialist room for science, which limits the range of work, particularly for pupils from Year 7 onwards to carry out investigations and experiments. However, pupils have good opportunities to study how plants grow in the classroom, where they plant cress and bean seeds, and in the school fruit and vegetable plot. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 chose which kind of fruit trees they wanted to grow and planted them. All pupils have been involved in working in the garden and in picking, preparing and cooking the vegetables and salad which they have grown. This helps pupils to make progress in understanding life processes.

68. Teachers provide experiences to appeal to all senses to help pupils with more complex learning difficulties to participate. This ensures that they learn as well as the rest of the pupils in the class. For example, in a lesson about the weather, pupils in Year 8 understood about hot and cold through touching a warm spoon and ice. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and are skilled at encouraging them to participate and work independently. Occasionally, teachers do not break tasks down into small enough steps for pupils to succeed. This was evident in a lesson where pupils struggled to complete a work sheet. Pupils' progress is assessed using 'P' levels and the results are analysed to measure progress after several months of learning. However, there is a missed opportunity to collect ongoing information about pupils' progress. Although there is a high ratio of support staff in lessons, there is little recording of pupils' responses to tasks set. This means that teachers do not have an accurate measure of how well pupils have achieved in the lesson to use this in planning for future lessons.

69. The amount of science on the timetable is less than would usually be expected for pupils beyond Year 7. However, teachers plan well to extend pupils' learning in other subjects for instance, to investigate temperature in geography. This extends pupils' learning well and ensures that they have sufficient opportunities to study science. The written long-term planning for what pupils will learn allows teachers to ensure that pupils revisit areas of work as they get older. However, there is occasionally insufficient planning to build on older pupils' previous learning. Teachers do not plan sufficiently to promote pupils' skills in ICT or to use resources to help pupils with their work. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Inspectors were able to look at the use of ICT in different subject lessons and scrutinise evidence in planning records and samples of pupils' work.

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Management and co-ordination is good and there is a suitable action plan for improvements.
- Funds have been used well to purchase a good range of equipment.
- Although teachers plan for pupils to learn ICT in several subjects, this is not consistent for all subjects.
- Several classroom support staff lack confidence in supporting pupils with ICT and therefore require further training.

Commentary

70. ICT is not taught as a discrete subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are set good targets in ICT and make satisfactory progress to achieving them. Their achievement is satisfactory overall since they do not receive consistent opportunities in all subjects to make progress. They make consistently good progress in learning to use ICT in mathematics since lessons provide plenty of opportunities to use equipment to develop skills.

72. There are good examples of teachers planning for pupils to learn skills in subjects and to use equipment to support their learning. For instance, pupils with PMLD use switches to make choices with support. However, in other subjects such as science, they do not have enough opportunities to use ICT equipment to learn more. Although there are good examples of the use

of ICT in English to use switches to communicate using recorded speech and to use word processors, there is scope for pupils to use computers more.

73. Teachers make effective use of ICT in music lessons to promote pupils' learning. Pupils of all abilities in Years 10 and 11 achieved well in a music lesson through using ICT. They refer to cards with symbols to choose their music; more able pupils experiment with a software piano keyboard, with support from classroom support staff to compose their own music.
74. There is strength in the way that teachers receive support from the co-ordinator and technician to plan for pupils to learn skills in ICT alongside learning in different subjects. However, there is a need to check to ensure that pupils receive sufficient opportunities to learn. The school has made good improvements to equipment and what pupils learn since the last inspection, when achievement was unsatisfactory.
75. The headteacher has provided good support and encouragement for improvements and governors keep a keen eye on developments through regular reports of the outcomes. Teaching and support staff have begun to receive good training to improve skills since the last inspection. It is good that more is planned since several support staff are still insecure in skills. There are high expectations for further improvements for instance, to introduce the national initiative to improve opportunities for pupils beyond Year 7 to learn.

HUMANITIES

Two lessons were seen in religious education. Three lessons were observed in geography but none in history. There was insufficient information available to make judgements about pupils' achievement, progress, teaching or learning in history and it was not part of the focus for the inspection.

Religious education.

76. The provision for religious education is **unsatisfactory**. Although it is satisfactory for pupils up to Year 9, it is unsatisfactory for older pupils and students.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis upon pupils learning about major faiths.
- Religious education is not taught at post- 16.
- Religious festivals are celebrated, such as Eid during inspection week.
- There is a lack of planning for teachers to follow for pupils in Year 10 and 11.
- There is not enough recording of what pupils learn.

Commentary

77. Teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils up to Year 9. Lessons are based suitably on the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the advice of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. Much of the pupils' learning is associated with the celebrations and festivals of the Christian faith and other world religions. During the week of the inspection Eid was celebrated well in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 3 to 6. They prayed, listened to Islamic music and made cards to celebrate Eid. An Islamic pupil in Year 4 explained very carefully the procedures for prayer while his classmates listened intently. Skilful questioning by the teacher and classroom support staff enabled pupils to recall what they had learned previously and build on this in the lesson. Another lesson observed during the week of the inspection also celebrating Eid was not as successful in engaging the pupils, particularly those who required support with communication. For instance, pupils in Years 10 and 11 did not receive enough help through signing. The amount of visual and technological aids to support learning was unsatisfactory and

so they could not follow the lesson sufficiently well. Similarly in the assembly for students at post-16, there was insufficient support to enable many to understand what was being said.

78. Lessons for pupils in Years 10 and 11 lack systematic planning. In the lesson observed, teaching and learning was unsatisfactory. Lessons follow the teacher's personal choice and this has led to unsatisfactory achievement. There is a lack of recent evidence of pupils' work or records to provide information of pupils' progress. Students at post-16 received lessons in religious education last year. However, following incorrect external advice, it is not taught to students this year. Consequently, statutory requirements are not met.

79. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The recently appointed subject leader is not proceeding with improvements with sufficient urgency. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development in the primary department. There are satisfactory assessment procedures using 'P' levelling for pupils up to Year 9 to record their achievement. However, these are not evident for older pupils.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**. This represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive a wide range of rich experiences which stimulate their interest very well.
- The organisation and timing of activities is very good in lessons. This means that all pupils are fully involved and maintain concentration well.
- Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but in the lessons observed this ranged from poor to excellent. Where teaching is best, lessons are carefully organised so that support staff ensure that all pupils are fully involved. Teachers are good at helping pupils to communicate using sign and vocalisation and in questioning to check for understanding. However, in a lesson where teaching was poor, organisation of pupils and resources were not properly structured and the very high number of support staff were not deployed effectively. This meant that little learning took place.

81. Pupils have learned about where they live and life in other countries. Practical work such as recording the features of the local community using a digital camera helps pupils to make sense of their environment. There are good links between geography and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 8 and 9 are working on a project about the weather, which links geography and science.

82. There is not a clear plan for how geography will be improved further. The written planning for what pupils will learn has not been updated to reflect pupils' changing needs and sufficient checking of the quality of teaching and learning in geography is not in evidence. There is therefore a missed opportunity to extend the excellent teaching observed in a few lessons to the teaching of geography throughout the school.

Example of outstanding practice

Two geography lessons in different classes where teachers build up pupils' knowledge of the world through sensory experiences of sight, sound, touch and smell.

The extremely imaginative and lively way in which the teachers used sensory experiences meant that the pupils' attention was gripped throughout the lessons. In the first lesson pupils could really feel what it was like to live in Bangladesh as they followed the route from England on a globe and large map before 'setting off on the journey'.

They moved their hands through water to represent flying over the sea and 'arrive' in a corner of the classroom, which is 'Bangladesh'. Sitar music heralded the end of the 'journey' and the teacher, wearing local dress, marked pupils' foreheads with Bindi marks. The air was rich with the smell of joss sticks and pupils smelled spices, which they ground in a mortar and pestle. They felt and ate local food such as rice and lentils and learnt that Bangladesh is very wet. The teacher sprinkled them with 'rain' and they 'fished' with a net. Pupils loved this and began to understand that life is different in other countries. In another lesson, pupils achieved targets based on their prior learning. They make outstanding progress as one pupil identified sea on the globe and another picked out his parents' country of Italy. The teacher illustrated a 'round the world' journey with sounds and items to feel. PMLD pupils recognised changes in temperature around the world as they role played feeling hot and cold with fans, warm air and blankets and feeling the ice at the North Pole.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Two lessons were observed in art and design, one in design and technology, three in music and four in physical education. Inspectors were able to look at evidence in planning records, samples of pupils' work and scrutinise videos, photographs and displays of pupils' work around the school. It was not possible to judge teaching and learning in design and technology overall.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enrichment activities, including work with the community, are good.
- The development of pupils' cultural awareness through art is good.
- Assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent.

Commentary

83. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. In the two lessons observed, and as the videos show, pupils enjoy their work and join in with enthusiasm. Good use of the work of local and world famous artists helps pupils to develop their observation skills. In Years 7 and 8, pupils created pictures in the style of Kandinsky. They chose his circle designs as a focus and worked well to create a piece of work of their own, showing his influence. Their finished pictures were of a high quality. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 created a collage using a variety of materials to celebrate the foods that would be eaten at the festival of Eid later the same week. They chose colours and materials well, benefiting from good support.

84. Pupils' cultural awareness is fostered through a variety of community projects linked to the arts. An Arts Week each year ensures that pupils learn about art from different cultures. During the most recent Arts Week, pupils worked with a local artist to create posters to advertise their work. Displays around the school show evidence of the wide variety of cultural influences on all aspects of art, both in paint and textile.

85. Assessment procedures are established, but this does not lead consistently to pupils receiving information on how to improve their skills. The leadership of art and design is satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the two lessons observed, there was good teaching and learning.
- There is not a subject leader for design and technology.

- There is limited specialist accommodation for the subject.

Commentary

86. Due to timetable arrangements it was only possible to observe food technology lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and for students at post-16. Teaching and learning was good in the two lessons observed. A scrutiny of planning and pupils' completed work indicates that achievement and the progress pupils are making is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 experienced and responded to the ingredients of flour and cooking oil in the process of making chappatis. They remembered important words such as 'rolling and mixing.' The teacher's good summing up at the end of the lesson was effective. Pupils smelled and examined the ingredients used. This led to pupils expressing their likes and dislikes with smiles and vocalisation, demonstrating that they had made good progress in the lesson.
87. The teacher in the post-16 department prepared well to revise previous work. Consequently, students tried hard to remember important words such as 'chopping board' and responding using signs. Students remembered the hygiene rules to wash hands and fruit for fruit salad. There was good questioning and signing by the teacher and this led to good understanding. For instance, to concentrate in order to make choices about which fruits to use. Students sustained concentration and listened well to make good progress.
88. There is no leader for the subject and it is overseen by the senior management team. There is suitable long-term planning of work that provides the information for teachers to plan lessons. Although there is satisfactory accommodation for food technology in small areas throughout the school, there is no specialist room for design and technology for pupils beyond Year 7. This limits the range of work that pupils can undertake.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The input into the school from the 'IMPRO' project gives most pupils exceptional opportunities to experience musical activities led by professional musicians.
- Primary aged pupils benefit from teaching by a specialist music teacher and a music therapy centre provides individual music therapy for a small number of pupils.
- The school has purchased a good range of resources including percussion instruments. This is supplemented very well by instruments from the 'IMPRO' project.

Commentary

89. Teaching, learning and pupils' achievement are very good. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when there was unsatisfactory achievement for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Classroom support staff are used well to help all pupils, including pupils with more complex learning difficulties to make good progress. Teachers have good skills in singing and playing instruments. These create a good foundation to lessons so that pupils join in confidently with singing, dancing and clapping rhythms. Visual prompts, such as pictures of the elements of a sequence about rainy and stormy weather, are effective in ensuring that all pupils understand the sequence and can join in. As well as providing individual therapy, music therapists have helped members of staff to learn how therapy can benefit the pupils.
90. Good resources enhance pupils' learning. The subject leader works effectively with visiting specialists and has a clear vision to develop the subject further.

Example of outstanding practice

Pupils receive music lessons in school with the 'IMPRO' project alongside pupils from mainstream schools in three London Boroughs.

The 'IMPRO' project gives pupils outstanding musical opportunities. The musicians have worked with most pupils and the music that fills the school is testament to the excellent musical experiences pupils receive. Pupils perform together with skilled professional musicians and this provides excellent opportunities for pupils to interact with others from mainstream schools and improve social skills. Primary aged pupils join in marvellous improvisation sessions where they are supported by skilful staff to take it in turns to lead the whole group in responding to freeform piano playing. Pupils in the foundation stage experience sessions where they are helped to make sounds with combined instruments such as ringing metal instruments or shakers. The musicians give time to each pupil child in turn, for example, playing melodic flute music very near the person. The effect is very moving. Young children with very severe disabilities, including visual impairment, come alive. They smile, make sounds in response to the music and remain interested for long periods.

Physical education

The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils follow a good range of sports and activities.
- Teachers receive effective support from therapists and plan effectively to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The use of community sports and swimming facilities provides pupils with suitable activities but results in much time being lost in travelling.
- The school lacks suitable indoor and outdoor accommodation for physical education and this prevents them from achieving more.

Commentary

91. The school is unsatisfactorily equipped for physical education. The hall is too small for activities such as ball games. The grounds limit opportunities for team games. Pupils participate in a good range of activities at alternative venues. Teachers have arranged suitable opportunities for pupils of all abilities to swim at public baths, other schools or hydrotherapy pools. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. In the lesson seen for pupils in Years 4 to 6, they developed confidence in the water and they were beginning to make swimming movements at a hydrotherapy pool. However, the planning lacked specific guidance on how pupils should make further progress. Overall, too much time is taken up with travelling.
92. Pupils and students in Years 10 to 13 use a public sports hall. This enables them to use a large enough area to run around and participate in team games. During a lesson observed, a large number of pupils and staff participated in one game of cricket. This provided pupils and students with good moments of participation as they took turns to bat and field. However, it is difficult for the school to provide sufficient equipment and manage groupings in this hired facility to provide more individual learning.
93. Teachers also arrange physical education lessons in the classroom. However, this restricts pupils' opportunities for instance, to move about freely. There were only two pupils present in a class for pupils in Years 6 as they participated in music and movement. Pupils made satisfactory progress responding to the different music recordings. Although staff needed to provide very close support to ensure pupils moved safely in the restricted area, pupils were making satisfactory progress towards the well-chosen targets to start and stop when requested. Pupils up to Year 8 enjoyed playing skittles where it was valuable for them to gain practical experience in counting the pins they each knocked down in turn with the ball. However, there was only space for one large group and pupils had to wait too long for their turn.

94. There is a good link with physiotherapists and occupational therapists to ensure that teachers and classroom staff continue to support pupils' targets for physical development in physical education lessons. A strength is the way that teachers plan to ensure that pupils receive equal opportunities to participate in lessons. For instance, in a movement lesson for pupils in wheelchairs in Years 10 and 11, the lesson was geared well to allowing them to move in their chairs in response to music. Since staff knew the pupils well they encouraged pupils to respond in their own way to the music.
95. The two subject leaders provide satisfactory management. However, there is a need for more checking of teaching and learning in lessons throughout the school and to use this information to plan for pupils to make more progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planned programme of work is good.
- Pupils achieve well in the targets in their lunchtime care plans.
- There is too little monitoring of pupils' individual targets for this area of learning.
- Assessment of pupils' achievements is not established well enough.

Commentary

96. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The statutory programme for citizenship has been implemented satisfactorily and pupils are taught about the responsibilities of living in a community. A high proportion of time is allocated to PSHE throughout the school. This is because of the significant levels of care time required to meet the needs of many pupils.
97. Lunchtime care plans are good and pupils achieve well at these times, due to effective guidance and support. Pupils are taught to behave well, and this is evident in and around the school. In lessons however, there were missed opportunities for pupils to develop social skills. For instance, to work together on tasks without staff support. Too often, pupils work with adults only, and have few opportunities to discuss their work with their peers or to engage in joint tasks with two or three others. This impacts negatively on their opportunities to make more progress in developing independence.
98. All pupils have individual targets. These are of good quality and are clearly linked to their needs and abilities. Occasionally however, staff do not record their achievements well enough to enable their small steps in learning to be measured and the information used to plan for pupils to make more progress. Careers education and guidance for pupils beyond Year 9 is incorporated well into several lessons. As pupils move into the secondary department, they begin to learn about daily living skills and participate well in a good range of leisure activities and pastimes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7). * In a special school such as this, "standards achieved" are judged in relation to pupils' individual targets and not in relation to national standards.*