

INSPECTION REPORT

Grangewood School

Eastcote, Pinner

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102467

Headteacher: Mr John Ayres

Lead inspector: Steven Parker

Dates of inspection: 20th to 23rd June 2005

Inspection number: 268570

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: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 73

School address: Fore Street
Eastcote
Pinner
Middlesex
Postcode: HA5 2JQ

Telephone number: 01895 676401
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Philip Haigh
governors:

Date of previous 25th May 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Grangewood School currently provides education for 73 pupils with complex learning difficulties. This number is evenly divided between pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), with 60% being boys. The school's population reflects the diverse nature of the catchment area, so that fewer than half the pupils come from white UK heritage. Of those from ethnic minority groups, a quarter are from Asian or Asian British backgrounds, 8% from Black or Black British backgrounds and 16% are of mixed heritage. Over a third have English as an additional language, and they are in receipt of specialist support. Pupils arrive at the school with attainments well below average, as a result of their special educational needs. Parents' socio-economic backgrounds again reflect the wide variety of the west London locality, with 29% of pupils receiving free school meals. There are structured links with the mainstream primary school co-located on the same site and two others locally. Numbers referred to the school have fallen from a high of over 90 at the time of the last inspection, mostly as the result of the inclusion strategy of the Local Education Authority (LEA). The school has plans, in collaboration with the LEA, to further develop its current outreach and training roles. There are expectations that secure, long term funding of these arrangements can be clarified in the near future.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
13033	Steven Parker	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
32676	Nicolas Power	Lay inspector	
14563	Graham Pirt	Team inspector	English, geography, history
14691	Jenny Hall	Team inspector	Science, religious education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	17
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	20
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Grangewood is a very good school with many outstanding features. Pupils achieve very well in their lessons and make excellent progress in their personal development, as a result of very good teaching and extremely successful relationships with all staff. The inspirational headteacher works in an impressively successful partnership with his very capable senior management colleagues and highly supportive governing body to lead and motivate a dedicated team of staff. Parents are fully justified in their considerable confidence in and satisfaction with the school. The school provides **very good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Exemplary teamwork between teachers, their highly skilled teaching assistants, very effective therapists and other professionals ensures that pupils become very successful learners.
- Through his visionary leadership, the excellent headteacher has successfully encouraged all his colleagues to be reflective about their practice and committed to continuous improvement in their work.
- Pupils' outstanding attitudes, behaviour and social skills are the direct result of extremely positive and sensitively structured support, which seeks to encourage their independence.
- The school's inclusive ethos ensures that all pupils make the same very impressive progress, no matter what their difficulties or backgrounds are. Many pupils gain from first rate links with neighbouring mainstream schools.
- All pupils benefit from very relevant, wide ranging learning opportunities, which are greatly enriched through the arts and the imaginative use of the school's attractive grounds and the wider community.
- Very effective links with parents and carers enable close and productive partnerships to flourish between home and school.
- Excellent outreach and training support is provided for, and highly valued by, staff in partner schools, other professionals, students and parents.

The school has developed very well since its last inspection, particularly in literacy and numeracy, as a result of successfully adapting and applying the national strategies for both subjects. A comprehensive review of the curriculum has been undertaken and planning for pupils' learning has been much improved. Consequently, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Other issues, relating to the use of time, the work of curriculum co-ordinators and the governing body's monitoring role have all been addressed very effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 6	Very good	Excellent

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

Achievement is **very good** overall. Children are given a very effective start to their education in the early years classes and then make very good progress throughout their time in the school. Girls and boys and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve

equally well. When their particular special educational needs are taken into account, the achievement of pupils with complex learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and additional sensory, medical and behavioural difficulties is just as impressive. Achievement is very good in English, mathematics, science and most other subjects. Progress is satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT), and there are very good developments in train to improve this situation quickly. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **excellent**. Pupils' attitudes to school are admirable, resulting in their exemplary behaviour. They respond very well to the school's ambitions that they should be as independent as possible and willingly accept and carry out responsibilities. Attendance is good overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. Teaching is **very good** and, consequently, pupils learn very successfully. Teachers make very effective use of assessment information and their informal knowledge of pupils' difficulties, adapting their teaching methods very effectively to meet individual needs. In this context, the school's approach to the analysis of assessment data is outstanding. Teachers' assistants make a highly significant contribution to pupils' learning and behaviour management, often sharing lesson planning and encouraging pupils to meet clearly expressed high expectations. All of this very good practice is a direct result of the extremely high quality professional development opportunities provided for all staff in the school. The curriculum is very well planned to meet pupils' needs and interests, and benefits from a highly stimulating range of additional activities. Very good arrangements for care, welfare and guidance provide pupils with very effective support for their pastoral and learning needs. There are very successful partnerships with parents, other schools and the wider community and excellent, highly productive links through outreach and training.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, encouraging colleagues to strive for the best in all they do through his own example of child centredness, combined with highly professional aspirations for the school. His senior managers provide equally strong and effective leadership. Management across all aspects of the school's operation, including its finances, is very good. The way the school monitors and evaluates the impact of all its policies and decisions, and takes appropriate action to improve those aspects requiring attention, is highly effective. Governors are fully involved in and knowledgeable about all this activity and make a very valuable contribution to the school's success.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents feel very positively about the school's work with their children. They are extremely appreciative of everyone's approachability and the comprehensive support willingly provided by all staff and the wide range of professionals who work in successful partnership with them. Pupils are equally positive, often expressing their gratitude for the sensitive care and encouragement they receive directly to staff. They clearly enjoy the wide range of engaging and enjoyable activities that are made available to them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant issues of concern. The school is fully aware of and has wholly appropriate plans to deal with areas requiring further improvement – and staff are already

working on many of them very successfully. Staff and governors are particularly committed to overcoming, as a matter of urgency, the significant practical difficulties that have constrained more speedy development of ICT provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **very good** for all pupils, regardless of their age, special educational need, ethnicity or gender.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the early years classes do very well in all areas of learning.
- Achievement is sustained throughout the school, because of the extra support given to those who need it most.
- Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of English, science, and mathematics.
- The most significant achievements are in speaking, listening and communication.

Commentary

1. Children get off to a very good start during their time in the Foundation Stage of their education. At first, many of them find it difficult to sit, listen to or co-operate with adults. As the result of very high quality teaching and the work of highly skilled support staff, they gradually settle and participate willingly in activities. The difficulties they experience in communicating are seen as a priority for development and, as a consequence, most make impressive progress in learning to use signs, symbols or speech to ask for help or answer questions about what they are doing. Children make equally significant progress in developing pre-reading and writing skills, and a small number of higher attaining pupils read and overwrite their names by the time they are five. They acquire a range of skills necessary to learn mathematics, such as coming to know and join happily in counting rhymes and learning to match objects by shape and colour. Children also achieve very well in all the other early learning goals
2. Pupils build very successfully on this early success in most subjects, always benefiting from the very well focused help they are given by the whole staff team. In English, they do very well in all aspects of the subject, and make particularly impressive progress in developing their communication skills because of the priority that this aspect is given. The National Literacy Strategy has been imaginatively adapted to meet the wide range of pupils' needs and, when combined with specialist techniques, such as the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), pupils are enabled to make very good progress in their learning. For example, pupils with ASD are successfully helped to cope with changes through the highly successful use of visual timetables and PMLD pupils are enabled to understand and appreciate the experiences planned for them through the sensitive use of objects or sounds of reference to signal new activities. By the end of their time at Grangewood, the majority of pupils are talking confidently about their experiences and participating very well in discussions. By the same token, pupils make very good progress in learning to read and write.
3. Effective adaptation and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped pupils to learn all aspects of mathematics very successfully through practical activities, often using their skills and knowledge well in other subjects. Pupils make equally very good progress in science as the result of very well planned activities thoughtfully structured to engage their interest. Pupils make overall satisfactory, and sometimes

good progress in ICT, in spite of the challenges that staff have had to deal with in relation to significant faults in a new networked system. Progress is very good in religious education and there are examples of very good work in all the practical, creative and physical subjects.

4. Pupils meet all the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) very well and this ensures that the school fully achieves its ambitious targets. This represents very good overall improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **excellent**, as is their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good understanding of the religious beliefs of others.
- Relationships between all pupils and staff within the school are excellent.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and keen to be involved in school life.

Commentary

5. The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development programme is excellent and is very successfully interwoven throughout all that it offers. Consequently, pupils become thoughtful, confident and capable individuals, understanding right from wrong and displaying strong principles. They are helped greatly to become aware of and celebrate the diversity that exists within life and their own and others' cultures through the well co-ordinated celebration of festivals throughout the year.
6. All adults and pupils within the school work together exceptionally well. The school's impressive ten 'Golden Rules', which are sensitively written from the pupils' point of view, and are clearly displayed around the school make a significant contribution to ensuring that the work of the staff remains pupil centred and always has the pupils' best interests at the heart of what they do.
7. Pupils are respected for who they are, as well as what they can do, and this is reflected in the way that acts of kindness are celebrated just as much as achievements. Pupils appreciate the respect they are shown and the dignity they are given, and this is reflected in the way they, in turn, respect each other and adults. As a result everyone within the school works hard and enjoys each other's company. Pupils clearly enjoy being in school, and, within the limits of their capabilities, always try very hard. This helps them to achieve very good progress in their lessons and make the fullest use of their time in school.
8. A significant number of pupils enter the school with very challenging behaviour. All staff and parents are involved in joint review of individual behaviour targets and deciding how best to deal with them. In addition, the very thoughtful and carefully presented policy for managing these challenges plays an important part in ensuring that unacceptable behaviours are quickly eliminated and pupils' behaviour becomes excellent over time. There were no exclusions in the last reporting year.
9. Nearly all absence is due to illness. The remaining absence is due to a small proportion of pupils taking extended holidays in term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	15.4	School data	0.0
National data	9.7 (SLD) 11.0 (PMLD)	National data	0.5 (SLD) 0.7 (PMLD)

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

10. There has been very good improvement in this aspect of the school's work since the last inspection

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good**. Assessment and its use are also **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and teaching assistants work extremely well together to ensure that all pupils learn very well.
- Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn because resources are stimulating and teaching assistants and staff have high expectations that they will do their best.
- Very effective target setting, planning and assessment ensures that every pupil is able to participate fully in all activities.
- The national strategies have been successfully adapted to make lessons relevant and interesting.
- The use of ICT to assist both teaching and pupils' learning is underdeveloped.

Commentary

11. There has been a very good improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. The comprehensive data provided by the school confirms the high standards observed during the inspection. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and the support of the headteacher and assistant headteachers in this process is impressive. As a result, teamwork in the school is excellent and the contribution of teaching assistants is exemplary. They work very closely together with teachers to plan and deliver lessons and they are very effectively deployed. Consequently, they are very clear about pupils' targets and their roles in helping them to achieve them. The inclusion of all pupils in lessons, including those with additional special needs such as autistic spectrum disorder and profound and multiple difficulties, is excellent. All staff have outstanding relationships with the pupils and are very successful in using strategies such as humour and their own enthusiasm to motivate pupils and deal quickly and effectively with incidents of difficult behaviour.

12. Each classroom is a positive and supportive environment for the pupils. Teachers are well informed, and lessons are very well planned and organised with interesting and stimulating activities that engage and motivate pupils to do well. Teachers are making very good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, adapting them successfully to ensure that they meet the learning needs of their pupils. This pattern of good practice is

repeated across all other subjects, with the exception of ICT. Whilst some good individual example were seen of teachers using, for example, the new digital projectors as a teaching tool, and pupils engaging successfully in specific programmes on computers, the school recognises that more work needs to be done to make better use of the technology. Much good development work is being undertaken, and it is clear that the situation will improve rapidly.

13. Particularly good use is made of the end of lesson reviews to ensure that pupils can share their learning and celebrate the success of others. Teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of the recently introduced and highly effective individual curriculum folders to ensure that all pupils are working towards their targets and know what they should be achieving. All staff use praise, encouragement and thoughtful use of questioning very successfully. A particular strength is the use of stimulating resources, as illustrated in a Year 4 religious education lesson, the stimulating resources, including creating a storm, resulted in pupils being engaged and enthusiastic.
14. Assessment of pupils' work is very good and, as a result, has raised standards in the school. The school has initiated an innovative assessment scheme and has collected an impressive amount of data to inform target setting. This data is based on historical data and comparisons with other schools and is used to set challenging targets for the pupils. As a result, the school has identified pupils whom they feel are under performing and has introduced intervention strategies. This data is also evaluated carefully to identify the progress of different groups of pupils in the school. Targets are set in annual reviews in partnership with parents and other professionals and these have a clear link with the more detailed planning in the pupils' curriculum folders. These folders give comprehensive details of each pupil's targets in each subject, which are evaluated in detail after each lesson. There are good quality records of achievement, which incorporate very well chosen photographs and written statements of what pupils have achieved.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7%)	32 (71%)	9 (20%)	1 (2%)	0	0	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

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good** and **very many** opportunities are available to extend and enrich it. The accommodation is **good**. The school is **well** resourced. And staffing levels are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Individual curriculum plans for all pupils ensure that work is very well matched to the wide range of individual learning needs.
- Opportunities for pupils to participate in art, music, dance and drama are excellent.
- The preparation of pupils to move from the Foundation Stage into Year 1 and for transferring from Year 6 to secondary school is excellent.
- The personal and social education programme makes a significant contribution to the excellent development of pupils' personal and social skills.
- Specific needs are very well met through a wide range of teaching techniques.

- The nature trail on campus is an excellent resource.

Commentary

15. There is very broad coverage of the National Curriculum, and the religious education programme is very well adapted from the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is very practically based to motivate all pupils. Curriculum planning for all pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, is very good. This is because every pupil, irrespective of their learning needs, has a very good individual curriculum plan for each term, where learning outcomes are based on very good assessment of individual needs. These plans provide continuing challenge for each pupil in order to raise standards. The planning methods ensure that tasks are very well matched to the capabilities of pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties and those with visual or hearing impairment.
16. Through very good use of symbols, signing, and PECs, staff are very effective in helping pupils to understand what is expected of them, and in helping those without speech to communicate what they have learned. The use of electronic aids to improve pupils' communication skills, and to extend their mobility in wheelchairs, is, however, not planned as extensively as the use of symbols and signs. Individual learning routines for ASD pupils are planned very effectively and symbol timetables are used well to prepare them for the day ahead and signal changes in activity. The sensory curriculum for PMLD pupils is planned very well, using a very good range of resources to extend their awareness of the world around through touch, sight, hearing and taste. The multi-sensory room is a very good resource for these pupils.
17. Enrichment through the arts is excellent. Visiting theatre companies and specialist drama groups support pupils extremely well. There are joint carol concerts in church with other schools, and music companies and musicians visit to support learning. Excellent themed assemblies enrich pupils' development in personal, social, religious and multi-cultural education, and theme days at regular intervals during each year also enrich learning. There are many valuable community visits to support the curriculum, including visits to places of worship, and to the courtyard gardens and to excellent woodlands on the school site. Enrichment opportunities in sport are not as extensive as in the arts, but pupils enjoy joint sports days with the junior school on campus, and take part in bocchia championships at Crystal Palace. Swimming at a local pool, and in the hydrotherapy pool, on site is very well established. There are excellent links with the Junior School on campus to enrich the curriculum through joint activities like singing, physical education and music. Grangewood pupils also have access to the Junior school for hydrotherapy and, from September, for food technology.
18. The excellent preparation for pupils to settle into their next classes is very well planned. By the end of their Reception Year, for example, pupils have met their Year 1 teacher and teaching assistants. They have begun to have lunch every day in the dining hall with all the other pupils. The transfer of records to Year 1 staff enables the teacher to begin the individual planning process that is so effective in Grangewood School. From Year 5, the educational psychologist works closely with staff and parents to ensure that any issues relating to the transfer of Year 6 pupils to secondary school are resolved well in advance.
19. The programme for personal and social education is very good. Every morning, as pupils arrive in their classrooms, there is a very effective programme of choosing time to help pupils settle. An equally successful circle time follows to make pupils feel welcome and part of the group. For example, excellent practice during this start to the day was

observed when ASD pupils in Year 3 all joined in a joyful and very awe inspiring song with actions and props called 'Circle of Love'. Equally effective are the end of day routines to help pupils recognise what they have achieved, and to prepare them for going home. At break time the breakfast club is very well planned to enable older pupils take responsibility to help younger pupils choose what they want to eat. At lunchtime, staff help pupils to achieve their individual targets, for example, for feeding and to develop pupils' social skills.

20. There is a very effective language and communication team and literacy booster classes are very well planned by a senior teaching assistant. The therapy programme is very well established giving pupils access to music, drama, physio-and hydro-therapies. Recently the creative therapists have developed a programme to bring together music and drama for group and individual work with pupils and the school has provided a new building in the school grounds especially for them. A multi sensory team is also planned to extend the use of electronic communication aids.
21. Classrooms are a good size, but narrow corridors and limited space for storage leaves some areas rather cluttered. Attractive displays in classrooms and corridors very much enhance the environment. Subject leaders have recently improved the extent and range of resources, and most subjects now have a very good provision. Playground facilities are extensive taking very good account of the ages and needs of pupils and courtyard gardens extend pupils' appreciation of the natural world. By the same token, fullest use has been made of the schools setting in woods to provide an outstanding environmental studies facility, in the form of a structured nature trail and a quiet and peaceful outdoor setting. There are a few restrictions to full access to all parts of the campus facilities for pupils in wheelchairs, for example, the pathways round the nature trail, and in the delightful *Monet* style water garden. Plans are in place to improve current inadequacies in the location and size of the library.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives its pupils **very good** support, advice and guidance, ensuring their care and welfare **very well**. The school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views **very well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The tracking of pupils' academic progress and personal development is very good.
- Health, therapy and education specialists work very well together.
- The school's behaviour policy is highly effective.

Commentary

22. This area of the school's work has improved well since the last inspection. Staff know their pupils very well. Each pupil has a curriculum folder, which consists of individual targets in curriculum areas, including personal and social development as well as the work that the teachers plan to cover to ensure that the targets are met. It also allows teachers and teaching assistants to record, in detail, what their pupils have been able to do in relation to the targets that have been set. The teacher regularly reviews this information to ensure that targets are still appropriate, and set new ones if necessary. As a result, pupils make very good progress. However, the evaluations made by staff, whilst being very thorough, do not always clearly show if and when the targets have been met and this means that, occasionally, targets are not always as clear and

responsive to pupils' development as they could be. Recent training to make target reviews more evaluative, rather than descriptive promises to overcome this shortcoming.

23. Pupils' wellbeing is fundamental to the work of the school. All staff are very caring and look after their pupils exceptionally well, whilst still allowing them independence to develop. Everyone is thoroughly trained in child protection matters and only those staff with appropriate training are authorised physically to move or restrain pupils. Risk assessments on the building, the site and educational visits are thorough.
24. The school has regular contact with many related health, therapy and education specialists. Teachers and teaching assistants appreciate the support they receive and take very good account of the advice given when planning and teaching. The training that health, therapy and education specialists provide to equip staff with further skills and knowledge is very much appreciated by the school and is of enormous benefit to the pupils. For example, the speech and language therapists work with teachers and pupils to aid communication skills and to help to formulate communication plans for those pupils with speech and language difficulties.
25. The school's very good behaviour policy informs the way staff manage difficult behaviour very well. It forms an important part of the programme for new staff during their thorough induction, ensuring that that it is always consistently applied.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents, the community and other schools. The school's extended services are of the **highest quality**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outreach and training to support staff in other schools is excellent.
- The integration of pupils into mainstream schools is of enormous benefit to all involved.
- The training opportunities for parents, staff, other schools and colleges are excellent.
- Parents are extremely happy with the partnership they enjoy with staff.
- Community organisations greatly enrich pupils' educational experiences.

Commentary

22. The school has shown very good improvement in this area of its work since the last inspection. Staff share their many skills with other schools through a sophisticated outreach programme. The member of staff with responsibility for this aspect of the school's work is very well respected in the wider community. She generates interest from other schools, visits them to determine the help, advice and practical strategies they would benefit from and then formulates a tailor made programme to meet their needs. Support offered focuses on practical strategies to include pupils with difficulties fully in the educational opportunities offered by mainstream schools. This includes supporting pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, communication difficulties (including those for whom English is an additional language), physical and sensory impairment and behavioural difficulties. The school is very well equipped to offer high quality support in these areas and schools are very appreciative of their work.
23. As part of the ongoing monitoring of pupils' personal and academic development a small number of pupils are identified as being able to benefit from the environment offered by

mainstream schools. For example, some of them mix socially with peers from the adjoining junior school as part of joining in physical education or music lessons. As a result, they make very good, and often excellent progress. The mainstream schools monitor their progress and feedback on how each pupil has done. The relationship between the schools is valued very much by all involved. For example, a comment on an evaluation sheet reads 'The Grangewood children have become more sociable and communicative and the Coteford children more thoughtful and kind'.

24. The school is very committed to the training and development of its own staff, parents, staff from other schools and students. It offers courses in many areas such as autism, positive handling and language and communication development to staff from other schools. Many students from hospitals and colleges undergo practical aspects of their coursework within the school. Courses for parents have included 'sleep routines' and 'toileting' and have been very well supported and appreciated. The school is committed to developing its own staff and has a member of staff that is able to assess teaching assistants as they work towards their NVQ level 3 qualifications in Early Years and Childcare Education. All who participate in the school's training and development activities appreciate their value.
25. In both their questionnaire returns and comments during the pre-inspection meeting, parents were highly praising of the school. They are confident that their views on their children's education matter and are acted upon diligently. They value the high quality information that flows between home and school. Many use home-school diaries daily and, and when this is not appropriate, regular phone contact is made with families. Office staff are very welcoming to any parent or visitor who calls, and parents say they are very comfortable approaching any member of staff. In particular, they praise the very helpful and encouraging responses consistently provided by the headteacher. Concerns are always followed through promptly and carefully. Written reports are very informative and parents find the statement review meetings helpful and enabling.
26. The school is very well supported by community organisations and local churches and this greatly enriches pupils' educational experiences. For example, 'Live Music Now' is a group of music students, sponsored by businesses, who provide an interactive musical experience once a term for pupils. Pupils can experiment with percussion instruments, conducting and dancing to different genres of music. Links with the local Baptist church help to support the religious education curriculum and spiritual development of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and other senior staff is **excellent**. Management of the school is **very good**. Governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The inspirational and motivational leadership of the headteacher.
- The governing body contributes very well to the school's strategic planning and is very aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The excellent creation of team work across the school.
- The excellent commitment to inclusion.
- The excellent development of assessment and its analysis.
- The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher and assistant headteachers has empowered all staff to be highly effective.

Commentary

27. Each member of the leadership team has complementary strengths that result in very effective leadership and management under the extremely strong leadership of the headteacher. The school has been enriched by the professional approach of this team who share a vision of the work and purpose of the school that leads to the very successful achievement of pupils. The creation of teams responsible for many aspects of the school's work has led to innovation in the curriculum, its assessment and the judgement of success. Members of the teams present excellent role models for staff and pupils alike.
28. There are very good systems in place for the management of the school. Regular monitoring by members of the leadership and other teams helps improve the quality of teaching and curriculum content. Very good assessment and analysis of results is at the forefront of national developments and is used significantly in judging strengths and weaknesses in the school.
29. Governors are very committed and highly supportive. There is a shared understanding of priorities and staff and governors value the process of and their involvement in whole school development planning. Statutory requirements are fully met, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. They have a particularly impressive financial knowledge and relate this very effectively to personnel and other expenditure issues. They are fully involved in reviewing the school's progress through shared analysis of achievement data. These are examples of the excellent involvement in which the strengths of particular governors are used for the benefit of the school. However, specific links with subject leaders would improve their knowledge even further. Meetings are professionally managed and there is pertinent questioning and discussion of issues which both challenge and support the headteacher. There are appropriate committees with delegated powers for different aspects of the school that report to the full governing body. The governors have a positive and active impact on pupils' achievements and are very aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.
30. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The leadership team have improved practice considerably within the school. They have addressed issues from the previous inspection, improving curriculum delivery and use of time, clarified planning to improve teaching and learning, improved monitoring through the creation of team responsibilities, improved the role of governors in monitoring the curriculum and developed expertise in autism. In addition they have taken major steps to improve assessment and its analysis, which helps to provide the very good systems for monitoring and review, as a result of which the school has moved forward. The system for monitoring the achievement of pupils has improved the quality of teaching and learning considerably. Monitoring through performance management is complemented very well by the monitoring of lessons by the teams responsible for different areas of the school. The effects of the excellent teamwork are apparent throughout the school. There has been considerable development of teams for areas such as language and communication, behaviour and autism. These work closely together as part of the school management and are very effective. The commitment of a senior member of staff in organizing professional development and the very good staff training and induction programmes, has a very positive impact on the quality of learning in the school. In addition, the very good programme of training for staff from other schools is developing very well and is another innovative feature of how the school shares its expertise.

31. Financial management is very good. There are very efficient systems for accounting, and forward planning of expenditure is linked to the school improvement planning process. The carry forward is accounted for in terms of planned improvements to resources and projected increased staffing costs. The recommendations noted in the last audit report have been fully implemented. The headteacher and governors understand the need to implement principles of best value and are vigilant about purchasing services at the best price. The school provides very good value for money and is in a strong position to develop even further.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,732,500
Total expenditure	1,723,500
Expenditure per pupil	23,609

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	115,400
Balance from current year	124,900

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision for children in the foundation stage is **very good**.

Five lessons were seen in the early years class. Evidence was also gathered from discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because careful planning allows them to experience all the areas of learning through guided play activities.
- The staff team works together extremely effectively to help children achieve their individual targets.
- Links with parents and information about their child's achievements are very good.
- Accommodation and resources are of high quality.

Commentary

32. Children who attend the early years provision come either on assessment placements or with a statement of special educational need. The assessment group spend the morning in their own well designed, purpose built accommodation and are taught by very experienced and capable teaching assistants, overseen by the Foundation Stage teacher. Those children that attend full time join their older peers in the main early years setting in the afternoon.

33. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good and children get a very good start to their education. Children are encouraged to explore their environment both inside and out in the attractive, well equipped play area. They are enabled to participate in carefully planned play activities in order to work very successfully towards their individual targets during lessons. These are planned co-operatively by the teacher and her extremely able support staff team, with progress carefully recorded on a daily basis by staff working with individual children. Short group sessions, including the engaging and motivating 'good morning' period, help children to become aware of one another and extend their skills. Staff use signing and PECS symbols very effectively to help children understand the structure of the day. Many of the children find it very difficult to co-operate with the demands of school in the early stages because of their special needs, but staff work very sensitively and successfully with each child to establish a routine suited to their individual character, so that they can participate and make progress. For those children who need them, there are very detailed behaviour plans to support their learning.

34. Staff work in very effective partnership with parents and provide them with very helpful information about their children's activities and progress. Parents express considerable satisfaction with the way they and their children are introduced to the school and supported throughout their time in the early years facility. Home-school books provide daily feedback between home and school and any difficulties or concerns are followed up speedily.

35. The Foundation Stage is very well led by the teacher in charge, who manages her team very effectively. She ensures that any new staff understand the needs of pupils and how best to meet them, modelling best practice by her own enthusiastic example. With such a wide range of ability amongst the children, she regularly checks whether staff judgements are consistent with the expectations of the Foundation Stage profile. As a result, very thorough assessment procedures inform all planning well.
36. The accommodation is light and spacious with four well equipped areas and an enclosed play area containing very good facilities, including climbing equipment, a grass area and hard standing for bikes and pedal cars, together with sand and water play. This contributes particularly well to very good achievement in physical development.
37. Children are encouraged to become as independent as possible in their self-help skills and make very good progress in their **personal, social and emotional development**. Opportunities throughout the day are used very well to support this, such as putting on shoes and socks after physical education and finding their own belongings. At snack times, which have a healthy eating focus, children are helped to develop an awareness and respect for others. They learn to make choices and ask for what they want, some using PECS. As part of daily routines, children learn to sit on their chairs in the group for increasing periods of time and to co-operate in a one-to-one relationship with staff. The nature of their difficulties makes it difficult for them to share toys or play together, but staff are constantly alert to situations that might present a learning opportunity and are always encouraging and modelling such behaviour.
38. The development of **communication, language and literacy** is a priority, as it is throughout the school, and children consequently make very good progress in this crucial area of their learning. They learn to identify and name their friends and staff in pictures, enjoy making animal noises in response to rhymes and are encouraged to ask for help with signs or gestures if they need to. Children can point to named objects in books and give toys to an adult on request. Language is structured so that children can learn to ask for what they want. The familiar routines of the day and the use of visual timetables and other symbols are very effective in making transitions between activities smooth and to consolidate learning. Staff are very skilled at using signing and symbols to develop early language skills. Children look at books and listen to adults reading familiar stories, engaging successfully in a dialogue about what is happening and sometimes predicting next events. Higher attaining children can read their names and are happy to work on letter sounds. Most draw accurately between lines and some can overwrite their names.
39. In the area of **mathematical development**, regular counting games and rhymes teach some children to count up to ten and find number symbols on a line. Counting is aided by the successful use of real objects related to the rhymes which can then be counted. These skills are practised every day and extended in play activities. Some children can make groups of objects and create patterns with objects and beads. They learn to copy shapes and sort and name colours. Overall they make very good progress in this area of learning.
40. Children have very good opportunities to develop **knowledge and understanding of the world** around them and consequently achieve very well. They enjoy exploring lots of different materials and respond with real interest to the situations presented to them, both within the school's extensive grounds or out in the community. ICT is used as a natural part of teaching and learning and visits to the sensory room also provide wide ranging opportunities to experience sound, light and touch in unusual and engaging

circumstances. Staff use every situation very successfully to engage children in different experiences and encourage them to explore and find out for themselves how things work, as for example when using construction toys. Staff are particularly skilled at this.

41. The **physical development** of children is very good. Most can climb and use the outdoor equipment, run in a given direction and steer a bike. They participate fully in all the opportunities that staff provide to challenge and extend children's capabilities in a safe and secure way. Exercises involving, for example, threading and lacing, cutting and peg boards effectively encourage development of fine manipulative skills. More physical activities, such as the very positive movement and physical education lessons, climbing and sliding on the outdoor play equipment, throwing and catching balls and using the school's own spa pool help children to become more confident and effective in controlling and using their bodies more successfully. There is also an important recognition of the value of these activities in developing the whole child. For those children with complex needs whose physical capabilities are much more limited, staff very sensitively, but assertively, follow comprehensive programmes of activity developed by the school's excellent physiotherapist, who provides illustrated guidance on how best to help and exercise these children. No matter what the situation, all staff are very attuned to the anxieties that many children have about some physical activities, like, for example, swimming, and are both extremely sensitive and supportive when encouraging children to experience new or challenging situations.
42. Children's **creative development** and skills are developed very well through the wide ranging opportunities that staff plan and provide for them to express themselves and, as a result, they make very good progress. Children use paint, crayons and other materials to produce imaginative pictures and junk materials and construction toys to build models. Music and singing form a natural part of many sessions and children have opportunities to use instruments and learn about 'loud and soft' and 'fast and slow'. They have chances to dress up and some engage in simple pretend play, such as rolling out cakes from dough. All of these activities are enthusiastically presented and staff are very skilled at motivating sometimes resistant children to engage productively in the activities

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Seven lessons were seen in English. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Clear target setting in the communication files that guides lesson planning.
- Teaching and learning is very well matched to pupils' different ability levels.
- Excellent teamwork between staff.
- Very good relationships leading to very effective interaction between pupils and staff.
- Very good assessment systems, which are used very well to determine pupils' progress.

Commentary

43. Achievement is very good overall for pupils throughout the school and is excellent in speaking and listening, because of the great emphasis that the school places on communication. Improvements since the last inspection have been very good. There is a better emphasis on developing writing skills and there is a wider range of reading texts and supporting materials. Teachers encourage pupils to become more purposeful about the marks they make on paper and provide regular opportunities for them to practise by writing over and under words. As a result, more pupils are able to write down what they want to say.

44. More able pupils in Year 2 start to demonstrate independent writing at early stages and most others are able to write over teachers' guidelines with accuracy. As they read they can recognise both symbols and signs, as well as naming some of the verbs. The use of Picture PECS is well developed and used effectively throughout the school. More able pupils in Year 6 with autistic spectrum disorders are working on prepositions and using symbols to build sentences. They can remember stories well and respond appropriately to questions about them. By the time pupils are in Year 6 the most able are able to sound out words in their reading and can write sentences using words and symbols. Many of this group of pupils can hold very sensible conversations and express their thoughts, ideas and wishes with clarity. Graphs of pupils' progress, produced by the school, show pupils with a range of special and additional needs making very good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make the same progress as other pupils.

45. Overall, teaching and learning is very good and shows a very good improvement from the last inspection. Much of this success is due to the very effective work of the language and communication team. They are very involved in all planning, as well as providing advice and support for those pupils with significant speech and language difficulties, and providing booster classes for pupils who are capable of being extended further. The high quality of teaching is largely the result of planning that makes clear what it is each pupil should achieve and is well referenced to pupils' individual targets. There is very good teamwork between teachers and support staff, so that all are aware of what pupils need to learn and then record how successful they have been. However, at times the recording tends to be more descriptive than evaluative. Variety of activity

and challenge for pupils are good, tasks meet pupils' individual needs very well and there is very good quality of communication at all levels, encouraging pupils to sign accurately where needed. Some pupils use switches to indicate choices and, as a result, their achievement in communication is very good. In the best lessons, pupils with more complex difficulties, make very good progress. This is due to the sustained repetition of activities and encouragement on the part of the staff. There is often very good use of objects referring to the content of the lesson or to aspects relating to children. For instance, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, the very good use of symbols allowed pupils to understand the lesson and to match symbols to images on the screen. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils with ASD anticipated outcomes as they rolled a dice to select instructions in text and symbols. One pupil smiled when he realised he had selected the command that meant he had won a sweet. This type of well planned lesson means that all pupils are fully engaged. The quality of the teaching in these lessons leads to excellent attitudes by the pupils.

46. The structure of the curriculum is very effective in helping pupils to make progress. Emphasis on individualised communication programmes means that both content and style of teaching engages the pupils. The close working relationship between the speech and language therapist and the language and communication team is extremely productive. The use of booster sessions for more able pupils and extra support for those pupils identified as not achieving sufficiently are a very successful reinforcement of the curriculum. Resources are well chosen to help pupils to explore the content of stories, for example when objects, such as a sand tray for sandcastles, a beachball and ice lollies, are used to refer to aspects of the story of 'The Cold Day'.
47. Assessment and recording of pupils' work is very good in all aspects of the subject. The use of the communication file, with its individualised targets, means that all staff are fully aware of what pupils need to do, as well as contributing fully to the assessment. Reports include clear stages that pupils have achieved, showing the good progress they are making. The school uses its own computer based system to monitor pupils' progress from entry to the school through to their leaving, enabling very clear measurement of the impact of initiatives to boost achievement in English.
48. The subject leader and the language and communication team lead and manage the subject very well. Lessons are observed, targets are set and pupils' achievements are analysed fully to identify any discrepancy between different groups. The accommodation is good for the subject and resources, many of them produced by the school, are very good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The school's very good emphasis on communication results in pupils using language well throughout the school, usually very well supported by additional aids of symbols and signing and occasionally by the use of micro electronic switches. There is a good emphasis on developing the vocabulary needed for learning in subjects. Pupils' use of literacy is good. The impact of the language and communication team in being able to help teachers develop resources is significant and an aid to achievement. Displays of work, in classrooms and corridors are well captioned with words and symbols.

MATHEMATICS

Six lessons were seen in mathematics. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of mathematics is consistently very good by both teachers and teacher assistants, and there are high expectations that pupils will do well.
- Very good relationships make a strong contribution to the excellent attitudes and behaviour in lessons.
- Target setting and the on-going assessment of pupils' progress is very good.
- Very good leadership and management ensure that the curriculum is rich and varied and that very good use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- There is a lack of planned application of mathematical skills in other subjects.

Commentary

50. Most pupils achieve very well in the different aspects of mathematics. By Year 2, pupils are showing great enthusiasm for the subject. Lower attaining pupils enjoy number songs and are aware of cause and effect in familiar mathematical activities. Pupils with PMLD make good use of the sensory room and are able to track objects in their field of awareness and show interest in familiar objects. For example, one pupil was fascinated by a 'slinky' and demonstrated impressive progress as he handled it and felt it. Higher attaining pupils can recognise numbers from one to five, follow simple repeating patterns and name simple shapes. They join in number songs and can indicate one or two by using their fingers.

51. In Years 3 to 6, pupils consolidate their number recognition, encouraged by number songs which the pupils thoroughly enjoy and join in with enthusiasm. Pupils with additional special educational needs all make the same very good progress and, as a result, a pupil with autistic spectrum disorder in Year 4 was able to display his recognition of numbers up to 10 by putting the teacher's hand on the correct number on his number board. By Year 6, pupils recognise numerals and make sets of objects up to 10, counting onwards from a given number. They have a clear understanding of addition and equals signs and can recognise and describe simple two dimensional shapes. Lower ability pupils are able to identify the number one out of a choice of two and can match pairs of objects.

52. The quality of teaching in mathematics is very good across the school. One of the key factors that contribute to this is the high quality of the teaching carried out by teaching assistants which enables pupils to obtain the full benefit from individual support. As a result, attitudes to the subject are very good and pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. Behaviour is excellent, because staff follow behaviour management plans carefully and have high expectations that pupils will work hard and learn. Teachers make the lessons fun by playing number related games that are enjoyed by all the pupils. For example in a Year 6 lesson a pupil was delighted when she was able to press a communication device that said 'Bingo!' Ongoing assessment of pupils' achievements is very good and teachers ensure that their evaluations inform the setting of well focused targets in the detailed individual curriculum files. When teachers use ICT, it is used well. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher used the data projector to enable pupils to identify real life shapes such as chimneys on a video and match them to a cylinder in the classroom. However, there are

too few identified occasions when ICT is used and opportunities to encourage and support learning are missed.

53. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator has produced a very effective programme for pupils with PMLD and is making very good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to ensure that all aspects of mathematics are taught. Improvement since the last inspection is very good, as the provision was only satisfactory at that time. The school has responded to the main key issue by allocating more time for mathematics on the timetable.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. The teaching of mathematical skills is not formally planned as part of the teaching of other subjects. There are, however, many examples of pupils practising, for example, the sequencing of the days of the week in early morning sessions, identifying shapes in art lessons and reinforcing counting to 10 by rote in other settings. Also, during breakfast club, pupils are able to use money in a real purchasing situation.

SCIENCE

Six lessons were seen in science. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn equally well about the lives of plants and animals, the characteristics of materials, and about processes like forces, electricity, light, sound and magnetism.
- Pupils eagerly join in the very many practical and sensory science experiences that are planned very effectively to meet individual learning needs.
- Very good assessment procedures and analyses of assessments help teachers to keep track of each pupil's achievements from year to year.

Commentary

55. Achievement in science is very good. Pupils with moderate, severe, profound and complex learning difficulties all achieve equally well. This is because planning is very well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Pupils enjoy science and their attitudes and behaviour overall are excellent. Year 1 and 2 pupils with less severe learning difficulties, when observing and feeling objects, use words like soft, hard, wet, sticky, shiny and smooth to describe the properties of materials. They say 'pull' and 'twist' when changing the shape of play dough, and can discriminate the direction of sounds, and recognise when sounds are switched off, distinguishing 'can hear' and 'can't hear' correctly. Other younger pupils with the most profound learning difficulties have access to a very extensive range of sensory science experiences. They communicate their preferences when tasting foods and touching materials, responding with facial gestures and by reaching out, for example during hand and foot massages, and when smelling flowers on the excellent campus nature trail. They listen to sounds on 'listening' walks, and make purposeful movements to activate a sound beam.

56. By Year 6, junior pupils with more moderate learning difficulties have learned simple investigation skills like predicting, using simple equipment, and communicating what they have found out. Their predictions are particularly skilful because they are made without reliance on visual stimuli. They extend their understanding of materials by sorting them according to their properties, and by recognising that materials can change if heated. They understand that plants are a source of food and happily consume the cress seedlings they have grown. Pupils with the most profound learning difficulties continue to learn science through many sensory experiences. They sense changes in materials, for example, through the vibration and sound of a deflating balloon. They observe animals during visits to a pet shop, to a duck pond, to the school's excellent nature trail, and on 'Animal Day' at school. These pupils readily accept hand-over-hand support to water seeds and care for plants, enjoying the texture of the leaves, and the scent of the flowers.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, enabling pupils to make very good progress across the school. Significant strengths in teaching are the stimulating use of resources, the excellent relationships that staff have nurtured with pupils, and the very high quality of the teaching assistants in their support for learning, their management of behaviour, and their attention to the personal care of pupils. In Years 3 and 4, for example, teachers planned the resources and tasks very effectively to enable ASD, SLD, PMLD, and visually and hearing impaired pupils all to gain some understanding, at different levels, that fruits and vegetables contain water, that juice can be extracted from fruits to make drinks, and that plants need water to grow. The use of the resources was very well matched to individual learning needs.
58. There is very good and consistent practice in assessing, at frequent intervals, pupils' progress towards their individual science targets. These records are used very well to plan the next steps, and to inform parents about progress through the annual report. There is not enough planning for the application of pupils' ICT skills, or of their number skills, to support learning in science.
59. Day to day management of the subject is good. Extra resources have been purchased, and resources are well organised and accessible. The temporary subject leader has very good support from an assistant headteacher to manage the subject. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. A very limited development programme for science this year is the result of the temporary appointment for one year only of the subject leader. Improvement in science since the last inspection, however, is good overall. Pupils have a more positive attitude and are making better progress. Resources have improved, as has overall management of the subject. The headteacher and governing body have made a very good start using science assessment data to analyse pupils' progress over time. At this stage, however, there is not enough data for these value-added analyses to be fully reliable.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Three lessons were seen in ICT. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and learning support staff, planning documents and assessment records.

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships with pupils and excellent support from teaching assistants
- Pupils enjoy this subject, have very good attitudes and behave very well.
- In a minority of classes, the use of ICT is narrow and only covers word processing.
- ICT is not planned for and sufficiently well used in other subjects of the curriculum.

54. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across the school. Pupils enjoy the discrete ICT lessons and progress during lessons is often good, but, overall, progress is satisfactory, because of the low number of computers in the classrooms and the narrowness of the curriculum in a minority of classes. By Year 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress in the use of switches, and higher attaining pupils are able to use a rollerball to access programmes independently. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress in the sensory room as they experience using a switch for cause and effect. Pupils in Year 6 are making good, steady progress, but in a narrow range of skills, namely writing their name using a word processor. Over the year, they learn to use the caps lock key and the spacebar and to find the letters for their names, becoming increasingly confident and independent.

55. Whilst the quality of teaching during the inspection week was good overall, with very good relationships and management of behaviour, records and samples of work show that teaching and learning is satisfactory over time. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that lessons are interesting and that lower ability pupils have worthwhile opportunities to use switches to control electrical equipment. The use of computers is less effective, as there are insufficient for a whole class and this limits time for consolidating learning. Teaching assistants give very effective support in the classroom. For example, a pupil with ASD responded very well to individual teaching and was able to move the cursor around the screen using the touchpad on a laptop. Reviews at the ends of lessons are used well for pupils to share their learning with others and celebrate each other's success. One Year 4 pupil was thrilled to demonstrate how she could make the remote control go forwards and backwards. Assessment is good where it is related to specific targets, but does not identify clearly all areas of individual progress. In some areas, it is not clear what the pupil has achieved.

56. The extreme unreliability of the current, recently installed wireless network system has seriously limited development and progress in ICT. The school is about to install a more robust and reliable system from another provider, so that staff confidence can be renewed and computer usage in classes can be increased and enhanced. The co-ordinator has worked tirelessly to overcome the difficulties experienced in recent times and to support staff in their continued frustration. There is an effective scheme of work and the co-ordinator is aware of the improvements needed. There are detailed plans in place to invest in further resources and training. This, together with the new network system, should improve the subject throughout the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. This aspect is satisfactory overall, being recognised as an area for further development in English, mathematics and science. Whilst the school has not yet formalised the planning of the use of ICT in other subject areas, there are many examples of its informal integration across the curriculum. Switch access is used appropriately, such as in food technology, and all staff make very good use of the sensory room and the sound beam technology. Teachers also use data projectors and the internet effectively to

enliven lessons, using an online digital library to show the pupils up-to-date images and short, focused video clips.

HUMANITIES

Since only one lesson was seen in history and none in geography, insufficient evidence was gained to support an overall judgement on provision. Pupils' work and records were sampled for both subjects and a discussion was held with the subject leader.

Geography

58. Geography is largely delivered through visits to the community as part of projects. There is a broad curriculum that allows pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of geographical facts. Pupils visit country parks where they explore the environment. They explore habitats such as that at Ruislip Pond. When learning about other countries they are sometimes given foods relating to the country being studied. Local resources are used well so that pupils can gain greater understanding. Resources are satisfactory, but the school action plan identifies greater opportunities for use of ICT.

History

59. History is well delivered through a mix of project and specific lessons. The curriculum is sufficiently broad to give pupils experience in considering the passage of time. Pupils start by exploring changes in their own life and experiences. These are then developed into changes in the wider environment. The school makes good use of local buildings and artefacts in the surroundings. Work develops so that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they are studying changes on a much wider scale. For example in the one lesson seen during the inspection they compared old with new. Resources are used well so that there is a use of artefacts when pupils dress in period costume. They use computer based visual displays to view examples from museums. Resources are generally good, but there is a shortage of artefacts for pupils to handle and observe.

Religious education

Three lessons were seen in religious education. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Provision for religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time in lessons and assemblies, and make very progress learning about religious festivals and traditions, and about values and beliefs.
- Curriculum enrichment for the religious education programme is excellent.
- Teachers make very good use of resources, but there is insufficient planning for the use of ICT.

Commentary

60. Achievement in religious education is very good, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress across the school in their knowledge of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Pupils achieve very well because all have excellent access to interesting practical and multi-sensory activities, and because pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils love to role play, sing, dance, listen to music, smell incense, taste foods from around the world, join in dramatic re-constructions of stories from the Bible and other faiths, make collages of the stories they have heard, and look at artefacts from different faiths, Hinduism, for example. Pupils' happy facial expressions and vocalising confirm their enjoyment in religious education lessons.
61. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy the sensory experiences and artefacts of the celebrations of the Christian, Hindu and Buddhist faiths. They learn through these studies the importance of family and friends, coming to understand the value of sharing, and taking turns when 'passing the parcel' in circle time. Pupils with less severe learning difficulties learn to recognise different emotions from facial gestures, how to be kind and say 'sorry', to be tolerant, to ask for help, and to value the efforts of other pupils in achievement assemblies. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 with less severe learning difficulties broaden their knowledge through role play of Bible and Hindu stories, and during celebrations like Divali, Chinese New Year and the Chinese dragon festival. Very good teaching has enabled a Year 3 boy with little speech to understand about the value of new life, in preparation for the arrival of a new baby at home. All pupils with the most profound learning difficulties experience a very good multi-sensory, and multi-cultural religious education curriculum. They are fully included in all the activities that are planned and respond through smiles, touch, eye pointing, head movements, and accepting hand over hand support; feeling artefacts and vibrating drums, smelling incense and experiencing the beauty of the woodlands in the school grounds.
62. Excellent presentations in themed assemblies, and the very thorough planning and co-ordination of festivals and religious celebrations throughout the school year, make a very rich contribution to the school's provision for religious education. Through excellent partnerships with other schools, on campus and elsewhere, pupils sing in carol concerts and benefit very much from the personal and social opportunities that these occasions provide. Visits to places of worship, and to the excellent woodlands and water gardens on campus enrich pupils' spiritual development and their appreciation of special places and the natural world.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A very good range of resources is used very effectively to motivate pupils to listen, observe, join in, and to stimulate their senses. In Year 4, for example, excellent resources enable all pupils, with a very wide range of learning needs, to create a storm over the house built on rock and house built on sand. Teachers' assessments are good, because there are weekly evaluations of the achievement of individual pupils. In Year 6 there is excellent support for pupils to evaluate for themselves how well they have learned.
64. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A programme of lesson observations has been completed and the findings discussed with staff. There is, however, not yet enough assessment evidence to analyse how much progress pupils make from year to year. Extra resources have been purchased, and resources are well organised and accessible. The subject leader is supported very well by an assistant headteacher who co-ordinates the celebration of festivals and assemblies.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Since only one lesson was seen in art and design, one in design and technology and none in music insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement about provision in this subject. Four lessons were seen in physical education. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and support staff and analysis of planning documents and assessment records.

Art and design

65. There are many examples of pupils' attractive, high quality work on display around the school and in portfolios. Pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of techniques, including painting, collage, printing, marbling and modelling. They also learn about the work of many famous artists and apply this learning very imaginatively to develop their own individual styles. In the one lesson observed, pupils were making friendship bracelets, using a comprehensive selection of shiny, furry and textured materials. They were motivated by the idea and the teacher's enthusiastic introduction, making sensitive decisions about colour and in a couple of instances thinking carefully about the preferences of the intended recipients.
66. The long standing co-ordinator has continued to be thoughtful about how best to develop her subject further, taking full account of the challenge of the changing school population in her thinking. She has worked closely and productively with the recently appointed design and technology co-ordinator to plan and purchase new, good quality resources, recognising the significant overlap between the two subjects.

Design and technology

67. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive range of opportunities to develop their design, make and evaluate capabilities. There is a more structured approach to planning their learning experiences and teachers are making the best use of the subject's potential. Food technology continues to be an important aspect, and the recent purchase and equipping of a cookery trolley to facilitate in-class activities has been appreciated by staff. There was considerable evidence around the school of a great variety of stimulating projects to encourage pupils to think carefully about meeting the challenge of what they were going to do to fulfil a brief and how they were going to do it. In the one good lesson observed, pupils made musical instruments using common household containers and made a choice of rice, lentils, pasta and cotton wool. They were helped to engage in the activity by the encouragement and effective signing of teaching assistants, being invited to think about whether the shaker would be loud or soft. They demonstrated their instruments to others during the singing of the music man at the end of the lesson and favourites were chosen. The co-ordinator has clearly had an early beneficial impact on the subject and she has very good plans to develop it further.

Music

68. Music plays an important part in the school experience for pupils, and they demonstrate their well-developed capabilities during other subject lessons and in assemblies throughout the week. They sing confidently and clearly, both in unison and individually, and play percussion instruments well, showing that they can recognise and keep to a rhythm and make a variety of sounds at different volumes and pitch. Good quality instruments, well chosen recorded music and videos and imaginative approaches are used effectively by all staff to motivate and teach pupils. The recently purchased sound beam has been well received. Visiting musicians and joint assemblies and festivals with

other schools all contribute very well to pupils' growing appreciation of music in its many forms. The co-ordinator has had a solid influence on the subject's improvement since the last inspection, and he has very well formed plans to develop the creative/composing aspect of the subject, through recently purchased keyboards and recording equipment. The excellent work done by the school's own music therapist certainly has knock-on benefits for those pupils who are lucky enough to be in receipt of therapy

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Highly skilled staff have very high expectations, which pupils live up to.
- Pupils develop very good self-esteem as a result of their impressive achievements.
- The subject is very well led by an experienced and committed co-ordinator.

Commentary

69. Pupils make very good progress in learning a wide range of skills in games, dance, athletics gymnastics and outdoor activities. Younger pupils have very successful hydrotherapy sessions in the neighbouring mainstream school's pool, in the extremely capable hands of the school's physiotherapist and in the school's own spa pool with very well trained teaching assistants. Older pupils attend a local municipal pool and many demonstrate the ability to reach national average standards in swimming.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is very high, helping all pupils to achieve very well in all that they do, representing a considerable improvement since the last inspection. All staff benefit from very good quality professional development through The National PE and Sports Development Initiative Project and have become very capable and confident in delivery physiotherapy programmes as a result of very effective training by the outstanding physiotherapist. A small number of older pupils very much enjoy the inclusive physical education sessions they attend in the neighbouring mainstream school and the joint, inclusive football sessions held in Grangewood. Class teams work very effectively together to make physical education sessions challenging and enjoyable. Health and safety considerations are rigorously applied. Teachers plan sessions to take full account of individual needs and difficulties, and detailed records are kept of pupils' progress. Teaching assistants play a very important role in supporting and encouraging individual pupils, enabling them to meet the very high expectations that teachers have of their performance. Every lesson celebrates individual achievements, and pupils clearly benefit from overcoming their difficulties and making the impressive progress. The subject makes a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

71. The subject is very well managed by the committed co-ordinator, who leads by example through her own participation in activities. The curriculum is constantly under review and opportunities for extending pupils' experiences are always sought. Resources, particularly for games, are very good and the school's outdoor environment makes an important contribution to the subject's success.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Six discrete lessons were seen in personal, social, and health education and citizenship. Many other related activities, such as lunchtime, were also observed. Evidence was also gathered from pupils' work, discussions with teachers and learning support staff, planning documents and assessment records.

Provision in personal, social, and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work in the subject is characterised by full collaboration between all staff, the pupils and their parents.
- Planning is solidly based on very good assessment records.
- Very good use is made of a wide range of other professionals.

Commentary

72. Pupils make very impressive progress and achieve very well, because the school has seen pupils' personal and social development as a crucial part of its role, and has ensured that the whole staff team teaches the subject to a very high quality.

73. The two co-ordinators lead and manage the subject collaboratively and very capably. They have developed a very effective PSHCE curriculum, as a result of careful analysis of assessment data and collaborative planning, taking full account of the views of staff on how best to use the time available. The most recent development has been to plan the initial registration period to provide a more focused start to the day and to structure transition times between activities, particularly to enable pupils with ASD to cope better with change. The recent main focus of teaching has been on developing pupils' emotional literacy through the use of photos, puzzles, stories and puppets. Earlier initiatives involved the production of a booklet to aid mid-day supervisory staff in their role of supporting pupils in the playground at lunchtime. Observations of this often difficult time of the day showed that this approach had been extremely effective, with pupils and staff enjoying lunchtime as a productive and fun time, thereby alleviating many of the afternoon behaviour difficulties that had previously been encountered. This flexible approach to meeting identified needs, coupled with the integration of pupils' personal development right across all activities undertaken, has had an important impact on the ethos of the school and resulted in significant improvements since the last inspection. The best of this approach was typified in an excellent Year 3 morning arrivals session in which pupils were engaged with constructive activity as soon as they arrived and were then each in turn greeted into a 'circle of love', which gave due recognition to each individual, but stressed the value of being part of a group of interdependent people. Throughout the school, the exemplary teamwork of teachers and their assistants ensures that relationships are of the highest order and pupils always feel supported and appropriately challenged.

74. Parents are clearly extremely appreciative of this aspect of the school's work, valuing highly the very positive effect that life skills teaching and structured community visits have on their children, and in turn on the whole family. The one-to-one and group work of the creative therapists makes an important contribution to the overall mix of provision as does the support provided by staff from external agencies, such as the educational psychologist.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).