

INSPECTION REPORT

Haymerle School

London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100878

Headteacher: Miss Liz Nolan

Lead inspector: Rosemary Eaton

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th June 2005

Inspection number: 268575

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: 5 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 81

School address: Haymerle Road
London
Postcode: SE15 6SY

Telephone number: 0207 639 6080
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Ms Julia Cotton
governors:

Date of previous 22nd March 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Haymerle is a school for boys and girls aged 5 to 11 with a range of special educational needs. Currently, 81 attend, including seven in the reception year. There are around twice as many boys as girls. All pupils have statements of special educational needs and when they join the school the attainment of most is well below average. Twenty-eight pupils have autistic spectrum disorders and fourteen have speech and communication difficulties. Nine have moderate learning difficulties and eleven have severe learning difficulties. A very small number of pupils have other learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, or physical disabilities. Three pupils are in public care and there is one traveller child. The homes of the majority of pupils are in Southwark, but a few live in Lambeth or Lewisham. Although their socio-economic circumstances are varied, overall they are well below average. A wide variety of ethnic groups is represented in the school. Forty pupils are black and twenty seven are white, and there are small numbers who are mixed race or Asian. Thirteen pupils have English as an additional language, with languages such as Yoruba, Portuguese, and Turkish spoken in their homes. Three Year 7 pupils currently attend, repeating Year 6. The DfES has deemed that these pupils are exempt from the Year 7 curriculum statutory requirements. At the time of the previous inspection, the large majority of pupils had moderate learning difficulties.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15173	Rosemary Eaton	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Religious education
9052	Helen Barter	Lay inspector	
14691	Jenny Hall	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
32232	Suzette Garland-Grimes	Team inspector	Science Personal, social and health education Geography History
14563	Graham Pirt	Team inspector	English Art and design Music
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Haymerle is a **good** school. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is good. The quality of teaching is good and the school's leadership and management are good overall. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy headteacher, provides a clear direction for the school.
- Pupils achieve equally well, regardless of their special educational needs or ethnic or linguistic background.
- Staff have not had enough training in the management of pupils with challenging behaviour, especially those with autistic spectrum disorders.
- Good relationships with staff mean that pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to get involved in work and play activities.
- Subject leaders do not play a large enough part in tasks such as checking the quality of teaching and how well pupils are learning.
- The school prepares pupils very well for moving on to secondary school.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers to help them to learn.

The school has improved well since the previous inspection, even though there have been significant changes in staffing and in the special educational needs for which it caters. Achievement is now better in several subjects and pupils' attitudes and attendance have improved. The curriculum is planned more effectively and all the key issues from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully, other than the need to provide more activities after school or at lunchtime. There has been limited success in this area.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 2	Good	Good
Year 6	Good	Good

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

Pupils' achievement is **good**. Children in the reception year achieve well, as do the pupils in Years 1 to 6. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, personal, social and health education (PSHE), and art and design. Achievement is satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. In the reception year, achievement is good in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development. Girls and boys, pupils in public care, and those from minority ethnic groups or with English as an additional language achieve equally well. Pupils with severe learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and speech and communication difficulties achieve as well as those with moderate learning difficulties.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **good**. Their attitudes to school are very good, in response to the school's warm and welcoming atmosphere. Most pupils behave very well, but a minority find it hard to control their behaviour and staff's approaches to helping them are not always successful. Behaviour is good overall. Attendance is satisfactory and is continuing to improve.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good** and, as a result, pupils learn well. Teachers plan carefully, so lessons are interesting and meet the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants often play an important part in helping pupils to learn, but their skills are not always used to the full. A whole school assessment system has been developed recently but is not yet fully in place and, as a result, assessment procedures are satisfactory.

The curriculum is well planned and meets pupils' special educational needs effectively. However, pupils do not use computers regularly to help them to learn in all subjects. This is partly because there is a shortage of resources. Pupils are provided with good support – for instance, to help them move on very smoothly to the next stage in their education. Satisfactory steps are taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Staff look after pupils well, but have not had training in safe methods of handling and moving pupils when they are in danger of harming themselves or others. There are good partnerships with parents and other schools and satisfactory links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Leadership is good. The headteacher and her deputy have ensured that the school has moved forward well and adapted to the increasingly complex nature of pupils' special educational needs. Management is satisfactory. Subject leaders don't yet contribute enough to the school's evaluation of its performance. Governors are committed, supportive and well informed. They meet all statutory requirements and governance is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views. They are especially pleased that their children enjoy school and are well taught, and that the school has high expectations. A few would like their children to have more homework and speech and language therapy, and for staff to write more in the home/school books.

Pupils' views are very positive. They enjoy their friendships and the help and support they receive from staff. Older pupils would like to have a school council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve the ability of staff to manage the pupils who have challenging behaviour, especially those with autistic spectrum disorders.

- Ensure that subject leaders fulfil the management aspects of their role. These should include making checks on the quality of teaching and learning and establishing the accuracy of assessment information.
- Provide well planned and regular opportunities for all pupils to practise and apply their ICT skills in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils, including those in the reception year, benefit from good teaching and consequently they achieve well overall.
- Achievement is satisfactory, rather than good, in ICT and religious education.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language achieve equally well.
- There is no variation in the achievement of boys and girls or of pupils with different special educational needs.

Commentary

1. During Years 1 to 6, achievement is good in all aspects of English, and in mathematics, science, PSHE, and art and design. This is because the quality of teaching is good in these subjects and the curriculum is well planned to support pupils' learning as they move up through the school. The school sets challenging targets for its Year 6 pupils to achieve in English and mathematics, linked to their performance within National Curriculum or Performance (P) levels. The evidence from these, and the evaluations of the targets in pupils' individual education plans, indicate good achievement.
2. Children in the reception year achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development. Their curriculum emphasises these areas, which are taught well. Additionally, children are helped to settle quickly into school, their individual needs are identified, and they start learning straight away.
3. Pupils are taught well in religious education lessons. However, their achievement does not reflect this good quality teaching. The religious education curriculum has recently been revised and improved. Up until now, gaps in what pupils have learned have prevented them from achieving well. In ICT, teaching is satisfactory overall, there are insufficient resources, and pupils have limited opportunities to practise and develop their skills during lessons in other subjects. These factors inevitably restrict how well pupils can achieve.
4. The school provides good quality support for pupils from minority ethnic groups who have been identified as having particular need for help with aspects of their learning – for example, language and communication. Additionally, while every attempt is made to keep the teaching and learning activities for these pupils as close as possible to those of other children in a class, effective adaptations are made to encourage their participation and learning. As a result, and because the curriculum places a suitable emphasis on English, pupils from different ethnic or linguistic backgrounds achieve as well as others.

5. Pupils with the most significant autistic spectrum disorders are taught in separate classes, using approaches recognised as being suitable for them, and they achieve well as a result. Positive links with the speech and language therapist help to ensure that pupils with speech and communication difficulties achieve well. The relatively small number of girls are given equal opportunities to succeed, because boys are not allowed to dominate lessons, for example. The family circumstances of each pupil are well known to the school and so a close eye is kept on pupils in public care, ensuring that their needs are being met and they achieve at the same rate as other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very keen to do well and respond to the high expectations of the school.
- They behave well during lessons and around school.
- The school promotes racial harmony very effectively.
- Pupils are successfully encouraged to become increasingly independent.

Commentary

6. Parents are very positive that their children like school. Pupils demonstrate clearly their enjoyment and are happy and responsive, both in the classroom and during breaks and lunchtime. Many are eager to get involved in lessons and activities – for example, putting their hands up enthusiastically in assembly to answer questions. They work very hard and are highly motivated in lessons, participating to the best of their ability, sitting and listening and concentrating attentively. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders become increasingly able to follow routines and to co-operate with the adults who work with them. Children in the reception year respond to the warm atmosphere and structured day, working hard towards their individual targets.

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	22	3	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	4	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	13	2	0

Black or Black British – African	25	3	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	3	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

7. Last year, the large number of exclusions involved only a few pupils, most of whom have now moved on to provision specialising in pupils with challenging behaviour. So far this year, there have been two exclusions. Exclusion is used as a last resort, when pupils are violent towards staff or other pupils. The behaviour of most pupils is very good. Pupils' overall good behaviour is supported consistently across most classes by the school's approaches to encourage positive behaviour. For example, when a class of older pupils became over-enthusiastic, they were required to practise raising their hands, and this quickly re-established their concentration. Good quality individual education plans, which include a target for social development, work well alongside the whole school systems to promote good behaviour. Where pupils have more significant challenging behaviours, often as a result of their autistic spectrum disorders, staff's approaches are not always as successful, because they do not take sufficient account of pupils' individual needs.
8. The school celebrates diversity and meets successfully the challenges of educating and nurturing children from a great variety of backgrounds. The cultural and linguistic diversity of the staff and the inclusion of a number of black staff contribute to this success and are strengths of the school. Throughout the school, there are very good examples of racial and linguistic harmony – whereby pupils respect diversity, and work and play with their friends amicably regardless of issues of racial, ethnic or linguistic background. In classrooms and in other parts of the school, displays reflect the multi-cultural and multi-racial nature of the pupils. This could, however, be strengthened with a greater focus on more actively promoting these aspects of the school – for example, by providing more signs and symbols from a variety of linguistic traditions, thus helping to enrich the experiences of all pupils.
9. Staff encourage pupils to accept responsibility – for instance, by requiring them to deliver registers, clear their dishes away and wait for their turn. Pupils have a good understanding of the school rules, they know right from wrong and they consider that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly. Pupils' cultural development is promoted strongly – for example, through learning about their own and others' culture through events linked to Black History Month and by performing in 'Othello' at the Globe Theatre. Religious education lessons and assemblies contribute suitably to spiritual development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.3	School data	2.2
National data	8.2	National data	1.8

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

10. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection because the school monitors absences more carefully – for example, by calling parents on the first day of absence. At the time of inspection, up-to-date attendance figures show that there continues to be improvement, with a significant reduction in unauthorised absence. Punctuality is satisfactory because transport mostly arrives on time in the morning. A few parents, however, are frequently late in bringing their children to school, which can cause disruption to learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. Pupils are cared for satisfactorily and supported well. Partnerships with parents, other schools, and the community are good overall.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. The assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers almost always match work closely to pupils' individual needs.
- In most instances, teachers manage pupils' behaviour successfully.
- Activities and resources are interesting, but particular elements of lessons occasionally last for too long.
- Teaching assistants' expertise is mostly used to the full.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have recently developed a whole school assessment system, but this is not yet fully effective.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (11%)	8 (22%)	17 (47%)	6 (17%)	1 (3%)	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 where 30 or more lessons are seen.

11. Although many of the teachers have only worked at the school for relatively short periods of time, they are all very aware of the special educational needs and circumstances of the pupils they teach. They make good use of this knowledge – for example, when planning lessons they indicate clearly what they intend particular groups or individuals to learn. In a religious education lesson for pupils in Years 5 to 7 with a variety of special educational needs, including autistic spectrum disorders, a lively discussion introduced the idea that there are religious symbols and others – such as social signs or company logos – that are more general. To explore this further and embed the knowledge, pupils then worked in three groups, each supported by an adult. Lower attaining pupils matched symbols to similar ones or identified and sorted common symbols, whilst the highest attainers played a game involving a wider range of symbols, discussing what was represented by each. In a minority of lessons, the whole class works on tasks that are pitched at a level suited to most pupils, rather than being tailored to the full range of abilities. This is occasionally because there are fewer teaching assistants in the lessons immediately after lunch, making it more

difficult to support a wider range of activities. On other occasions, teachers are not skilled in adapting questions to draw in all pupils and consequently those who take longer to process information and decide what they want to say may not have chance to answer. Staff often use questions very well, enabling all pupils – especially those with speech and communication difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders – to be fully involved in lessons.

12. Most lessons run smoothly. Once again, teachers use their knowledge of pupils in order to pre-empt problems – for instance, by taking prompt and firm action at the first signs of lack of concentration or attempts to distract others. For example, in a PSHE lesson, about moving on to secondary school, pupils in Years 5 to 7 played a game in which they identified the people in photographs. In their excitement, a little calling out began, and the teacher quickly reminded pupils of the rules, restoring order at once. This firm discipline is balanced with plenty of praise for good behaviour, effort and learning, so pupils are clear about how they should conduct themselves. In the classes for children and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, behaviour management is not always as secure, because the approaches used are not based on individual pupils' needs and preferences. 'Time out' is used as a response to those whose behaviour challenges, but this does not noticeably help pupils to modify their behaviour.
13. Teachers often plan imaginatively, so lessons capture pupils' interest and encourage them to get involved and work hard. For example, children in the reception year, with autistic spectrum disorders, co-operated to find out 'What's in the box?' during a communication, language and literacy lesson. Again, as part of a dance lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2, without this degree of communication difficulty, responded extremely enthusiastically to an invitation to mimic a leaf falling. Lessons often follow a three-part structure, with a whole class introductory activity, main tasks, and a final phase in which matters are brought to a conclusion. This pattern provides a successful approach in which efficient use is made of the time available for learning. The rate of learning slows when teachers misjudge the timing of particular elements – for example, taking too long over the introduction. This results in pupils becoming restless and other sections of the lesson are rushed, so pupils do not make as much progress.
14. For the most part, teaching assistants make strong contributions to lessons and pupils' learning and achievement. They are often deployed to work with particular groups of pupils, implementing the teachers' plans. Occasionally, teachers do not provide a clear enough role for their assistants – for instance, during class discussions. In an English lesson for pupils in Years 5 to 7, everyone enjoyed the teacher's reading of 'Cinderella'. The minority ethnic support teacher and the teaching assistants provided excellent support for pupils with speech, language or comprehension difficulties, because the teacher had equipped them with vocabulary boards and cards. The staff spoke quietly with their targeted pupils, helping them to identify and understand key words and giving them confidence to answer questions. Where the partnership between teachers and teaching assistants is not so effective, learning is inevitably less good.
15. In reading, writing and science, assessment is good. It is satisfactory in other subjects. A lot of very high quality work has been done by both the deputy headteacher and the headteacher to develop procedures for the school. They have created a system that allows for very effective recording of pupils' achievements. However, it is incomplete in English, where speaking and listening is currently being introduced, and in mathematics it is not well maintained. In most other subjects, the checklist of

achievements has only recently been introduced and at present it is inconsistently used, with some teachers recording work covered and others indicating what pupils have achieved. The teachers' assessments have not been compared and standardised, and so there is no guarantee that the record is an accurate reflection of each pupil's progress. The very comprehensive computerised records, in those subjects where they are available, are not analysed sufficiently by subject leaders to show the strengths and weaknesses in subjects. However, the school is in a very strong position to move ahead in this area. Individual education plans have precise targets and are used effectively to evaluate how well pupils are progressing in key areas. Pupils are given good feedback in lessons and the records of their reading are good.

The curriculum

The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are **good**. A **good** range of activities enriches their learning. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subjects are well planned to meet individual needs, but planning for the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is not so well developed.
- The arrangements for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are generally good but there are inconsistencies in teachers' planning to meet the needs of these pupils.
- There is a good range of enrichment opportunities to support and extend learning in lessons, but only a limited programme of activities is available outside the teaching day.
- Year 6 pupils are prepared very well for their transfer to secondary school.
- The very good quality outdoor environment enhances pupils' learning and social development considerably.

Commentary

16. Within the curriculum, all the necessary subjects are taught, with a good emphasis on English and mathematics and an effective PSHE programme. 'Booster' groups are identified in each class – pupils who are doing especially well or who need additional support – and they are given extra work in literacy. Good use of national guidance for literacy and numeracy ensures that planning for lessons in English and mathematics meets pupils' learning needs. Planning is not so effective in providing regular opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects. The planning of PSHE teaching time in the dining hall, during the lunch period, is not as rigorous and effective as that for lessons, which means that full use is not made of this time in order to promote learning. The curriculum for children in the reception year has recently been revised and now follows national guidance for the Foundation Stage.
17. Subject plans have been suitably adapted to take account of the increasingly complex range of learning and communication difficulties of pupils joining the school. The organisation of older and younger pupils with significant autistic spectrum disorders into two classes is generally effective, with a suitable focus on the use of nationally recognised teaching methods and classroom organisation for such pupils. Not all pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, however, are located in these two classes and,

although the provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is good overall, enabling these pupils to achieve as well as others, staff across the school require more training. There are occasional weaknesses or inconsistencies, for example, in the use of low stimulus working areas, visual timetables, signing, picture exchange communication systems, and symbols.

18. A good range of activities is provided during the school day to enrich learning, particularly in the creative arts. Visiting musicians, artists and theatre groups extend pupils' experiences in drama, dance, music and art. An interesting project with other schools gives pupils the opportunity to perform at the Globe Theatre. Good use is made of local facilities in London, such as museums, art galleries, historic buildings, and attractions like the 'London Eye', to motivate pupils and capture their interest. The oldest pupils have a residential experience before leaving school that supports their personal and social development and independence. Pupils make very good use of the excellent new adventure playground at lunchtime and breaks. The range of activities outside the school day remains limited. There are now dance, football and cricket clubs but only for a minority of the pupils and no clubs are provided at lunchtime.
19. The arrangements to prepare pupils for leaving school include opportunities for pupils to meet Year 7 pupils from the secondary schools when they visit Haymerle, and visits to the secondary schools for lessons during the summer term. Pupils begin an English project in the summer term of Year 6 for completion in September in their new secondary school. Pupils are also very well supported when they transfer from class to class within Haymerle School, enabling them to settle in quickly.
20. The school is staffed satisfactorily by teachers and teaching assistants. However, frequent changes and difficulties in recruiting experienced or qualified staff present difficulties for the school's managers and have delayed, for instance, developments in the role of subject leaders. Resources for most subjects are good and are used well to support pupils' learning. In ICT, there has been extensive investment in computer resources during the last year. Despite this, the single interactive whiteboard is in the library and has to be timetabled for whole-class use, and there are only two computers in each classroom. There is only a limited range of electronic augmentative communication aids, and no touch screens in classrooms, for pupils who find it difficult to hold and control the mouse. Overall, the accommodation is good. The outdoor area has recently been very well developed to provide pupils with an attractive and stimulating environment. This encourages physical development, by providing pupils with opportunities to play together, either on the equipment or in the football area. The school is well maintained and bright with colourful displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors. However, the design of the school is such that the upstairs gymnasium, library, and four classrooms are inaccessible to wheelchair users and this is unsatisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **satisfactory**. The support, advice and guidance given to them are **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school understands pupils' individual backgrounds and needs well.

- Staff have not had sufficient training to manage the more challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils.
- The induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- Pupils have good relationships with staff but formal opportunities to seek their views on their school are underdeveloped.

Commentary

21. This is a caring school where pupils are happy and feel well looked after by adults. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for within a secure environment and that this helps them to make progress. Staff are knowledgeable about the different backgrounds from which pupils come and sensitive to any difficulties that they and their families face. Pupils receive good support and guidance because individual education plans are detailed, clearly focus on their specific needs and are well understood by teachers, teaching assistants and parents. Child protection procedures and those for supporting pupils in public care are very carefully followed and documented. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory, although staff require more training in the use of risk assessments – for example, to inform procedures when pupils are arriving in the mornings. Teachers and teaching assistants have not been sufficiently trained in the use of physical intervention to move pupils when they are at risk of harming themselves or others.
22. Most pupils behave well because they understand the school rules and these are applied consistently by staff. However, there is insufficient planning of approaches to manage a number of pupils who have more challenging behaviour, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorders. Records are not used well enough to identify patterns of incidents and to plan individualised programmes for managing specific pupils.
23. Pupils settle well into school life because Haymerle has good links with other primary schools and nurseries and plans transition and induction into the school well. All this has a good impact on pupils' sense of well-being and on their learning. Parents are very positive about this area of the school's work. They say that they are made to feel welcome and that it is easy to discuss their concerns with the headteacher and staff.
24. The quality of relationships between pupils and adults is a strong feature of the school and contributes to the positive atmosphere in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are confident to talk to adults, to share their experiences and convey any worries that they might have. This makes pupils feel happy, confident and ready to learn. The school recognises that it now needs to develop more formal arrangements to seek pupils' views and to act on their wishes. Older pupils told inspectors that they would like a school council so that they could discuss matters such as playtime and lunches.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents and with other schools is **good**. Links with the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school and the education and care provided for their children.

- The school communicates well with parents but is planning to develop more opportunities for them to be involved in their children's learning.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities for integration through the positive links with other schools.

Commentary

25. Parents are happy that their children like coming to school and feel that it provides a good 'stepping-stone' towards their secondary education. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. Several parents would like their children to receive more speech and language therapy. The school recognises this concern and has set aside funding to train teaching assistants to support therapy programmes.
26. Parents feel comfortable to approach the school with any queries and consider that the school works with them a great deal. Home-school books are a useful tool for daily communication. Not all parents take advantage of this opportunity, while others would like more information from their children's teachers. Inspectors find that the use of home-school books is satisfactory but varies between classes. A few parents wish their children to have more homework. All pupils take books home regularly and parents are encouraged to support their reading. This is satisfactory, although the school is looking to also provide work in mathematics. Most parents respond well to the school's encouragement to visit as much as possible. Attendance at annual review meetings is good and parents lend good support to fundraising and social activities. However, the school recognises that more could be done to engage parents' interest in their children's learning and has been disappointed in their response to courses provided for them.
27. The school has a well-established programme of integration links with other primary schools which gives a number of pupils good opportunities to work and socialise with other pupils in a mainstream setting. These links are well planned to meet pupils' individual needs and carefully supervised to ensure that they are gaining from the experience. Foundation Stage staff have good and developing links with local nursery providers, which aids transition for children into the reception classes. Partnerships with the two main receiving secondary schools are good and mean that pupils move smoothly on to the next stage of their education. Links with the community are used to develop and enrich pupils' learning. There are a number of missed opportunities – for example, links with churches to support learning in religious education are underdeveloped. The rich resource of London is used well to further pupils' experiences and learning outside school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. Leadership is **good** and so is governance. Management is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher provides clear direction for the school.
- The subject leader role is underdeveloped, partly due to frequent changes of staffing.
- The governing body contributes well to the school's strategic planning and is aware of its strengths and weaknesses.

- Teachers' performance management is well established, but they do not take part in extensive training.
- There is good planning for improvement, based on the headteacher's knowledge of the school but not on subject leaders' analyses of how well pupils are learning.
- The good financial management helps the school to achieve its aims.

Commentary

28. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have complementary strengths that result in effective leadership of the school. The school benefits from the professional approach of this team who share the vision for the school with other members of staff. Together, they have enabled the school to move forward well since the previous inspection, adapting to the increasingly complex nature of pupils' special educational needs. The senior management team has been affected by the absence of two members who are, or have been, on long-term sick leave. Although good teamwork is evident across the school in many individual classes, the opportunity to develop an overall strong team approach has been restricted by the regular changes of staff that have been a feature of the school over a number of years; a problem common to schools in this area.
29. The changes in staffing have meant that the subject leader role, although set out, is not operating entirely effectively. Regular checks on the work of colleagues, accompanied by advice, are not well established and, therefore, do not operate as a way of improving provision. The overall view of the success of a subject is not gained through a regular system of analysis of results. The lack of lesson observations by subject leaders means that the very good practice of a number of teachers is not shared between staff, some of whom are relatively new to the profession and this type of education. The school's leaders are very aware of this and intend to bring about improvement. The relative stability of staff over the past few months makes this more possible to achieve. The school will then be well placed to develop this work further by placing greater emphasis on evidence of success, in terms of pupils' learning, compared with that of pupils in other schools.
30. The governors are committed and supportive. Governors work effectively with the school to make sure that necessary improvements take place. Statutory requirements are fully met, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Governors contribute to the very comprehensive school development plan and review the school's progress through reports and visits. At present, all governors are members of each of the committees for different aspects of the school's work and this means that the whole governing body must discuss issues. Although this does not impinge on the quality of the decisions made by the governors, it does not make efficient use of their time.
31. The system for checking on the quality of teaching through performance management by the headteacher is complemented well by the deputy headteacher's observations on behalf of the senior management team. Work is taking place to introduce performance management for support staff and this is preparing well for a response to the current national emphasis on workforce reform. The continuing professional development of staff is only satisfactory. Despite training needs being identified through performance management, staff have difficulty pinpointing suitable courses to attend. Gaps in whole school staff training include approved methods of holding and moving pupils. Induction takes place with new staff and is supported by the very

detailed staff handbook. However, procedures are not formalised and, considering the history of staff changes, are merely satisfactory.

32. The headteacher has a good knowledge of improvements needed in the school, resulting in an accurate self-evaluation. This is supported by an independent audit of the school commissioned in partnership with other schools and providing a view of the strengths and weaknesses on which the school is basing some of its developments. Although there is limited information from subject leaders to add to the sum of knowledge, self-evaluation is still good. A greater input, based on their analyses of pupils' achievement, would help to confirm these views and support the senior team when identifying what steps need to be put in place to improve further.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,307,821	Balance from previous year	182,106
Total expenditure	1,289,161	Balance carried forward to the next	200,767
Expenditure per pupil	16,766		

33. Financial management is good. There are very efficient systems for accounting and forward planning is linked to available budget. No concerns were noted in the last audit report. The headteacher and governors understand the need to implement principles of best value and are vigilant about purchasing services at the best price. The very large sum carried forward into the current year was accrued over a long period of time, when there were plans to make additions to the school. This has now been accounted for in supporting the present level of staffing, following reductions in the budget. This is an issue of which the headteacher is fully aware and consideration is already being given to future management of the available budget.

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

Throughout the following commentary, overall judgements about provision relate to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and any other significant aspects. Judgements were based on evidence collected through observing lessons, analysing pupils' work and assessment records, reviewing subject plans and other documents, and holding discussions with staff.

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Five lessons were seen involving children in the reception year. Judgements have not been made about knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, because not it was not possible to gather enough evidence.

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of good quality, well taught experiences in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development.
- Activities are carefully planned to build on what children have learned already.
- Approaches to managing their behaviour are not matched closely to children's particular needs.
- None of the teachers has responsibility for leadership and management of the Foundation Stage.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic and very patient and have high expectations for children to achieve.

Commentary

34. The children are taught in two classes alongside older pupils who have broadly the same special educational needs. All but one of the children has autistic spectrum disorders. The deputy headteacher has recently led a revision of the curriculum, to ensure that national guidance is followed. The teachers of the two classes work together well and, as a result, children's achievement is good. However, leadership and management are satisfactory rather than good, because the current arrangements are informal and leave too much to chance. The Foundation Stage was not reported previously, so it is not possible to judge improvement since that time.
35. The area of **personal, social and emotional development** is taught well and children's achievement is good. Throughout lessons and daily routines, staff work hard to develop children's social skills and encourage them to be as independent as possible. For instance, at the start of sessions, children are expected to respond to greetings songs, select their own photograph, and attach it to the 'school' section of the registration board. Although children seldom interact with each other, staff provide activities to develop this. As a result, one child said 'Home', when asked about another, who was absent. Staff create a warm and happy environment in which children are often able to relax and learn well. Consequently, they frequently make very good progress in important skills such as dressing and using the toilet. Snack and lunch times provide good opportunities for children to learn eating and drinking skills and table manners and to help with clearing away, developing their independence

well. At playtimes and lunchtimes, children join older pupils – for example, at outdoor play – helping them to tolerate being with others and observing how they play together. Children take part in visits to places linked to the curriculum – for instance, to an aquarium – learning how to behave when out and about. As a result of their special educational needs, most children find it hard to cope with change and several react strongly when asked to go from one activity to another. Staff use only a limited number of responses to children’s challenging behaviour – moving them to another part of the classroom, for instance. These approaches do not meet the needs of all children and do not help them to learn to manage their own behaviour. Good links with their families help to foster children’s development and parents are happy with the arrangements for helping their children to settle into school.

36. Children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**, because teaching is good. Signing is used effectively in order to help children to communicate, and a picture exchange system provides opportunities for them to make choices – for instance, about the snacks they prefer. The speech and language therapist and minority ethnic support teacher work closely with the Foundation Stage teachers and offer specialist expertise to promote communication and literacy. A significant strength of the teaching is the way in which the targets in children’s individual education plans are used to match work to their particular needs. For instance, on most days, a substantial amount of time is allocated to enable children to work on a one-to-one basis with a teacher or teaching assistant. Activities are carefully planned and prepared to allow children to practise existing skills and revise their knowledge, and to gradually extend their learning. As a result, a higher attaining child with autistic spectrum disorders and English as an additional language accurately reads four familiar sentences, quickly places them in the correct sequence, and further demonstrates his understanding by pretending to blow out the candles on the cake pictured. Staff record how successfully children have worked, so subsequent plans can take account of this. Literacy lessons begin with activities involving the whole class – for instance, listening to a story or matching pictures to objects and learning their names and signs. Because their expectations are so high and they are keen for children to do well, teachers often allow these sessions to go on for too long, especially for particular children. Consequently, individuals become restless, make their displeasure evident, and so distract others, slowing down the pace of learning.
37. The area of **mathematical development** is taught well and, as a result, children achieve well. During whole class activities, teachers make good use of well chosen number songs and rhymes – such as ‘Five Little Monkeys’ (or Speckled Frogs). Children become familiar with these and, with the encouragement of staff, higher attaining children join in the activities – for example, by holding up the correct number of fingers. Toys, such as monkeys or frogs, are often used especially well to help children to understand and remember. Individual tasks are matched accurately to children’s particular targets, so they each build on what they have already learned. Consequently, a higher attaining child reads the words ‘triangle’, ‘square’, and ‘rectangle’, and draws the appropriate shapes. He can count to 50, with only a few stumbles. Meanwhile, another child, at an earlier stage of learning, sequences numbers from one to five and matches colours. Staff encourage children to be as independent as possible and they record regularly how well children have learned. Once again, the whole class activities occasionally run on for too long.
38. Children have lots of opportunities to develop their **knowledge and understanding of the world**, through interesting experiences. Teachers’ plans for all areas of learning are now linked to over-arching themes – ‘Old MacDonald’, at the time of the

inspection. As a result, children's attention is focused consistently on certain aspect of the world around them, helping to reinforce their knowledge and understanding. For instance, one of the classes visited a city farm, seeing real animals as opposed to pictures or toys. Children use computers and other electronic equipment, such as large switches with pre-recorded greetings or sound effects. They take part in assemblies and role play activities – for example, going to church or finding out about Diwali – supporting their learning about religious education.

39. To enhance their **physical development**, children have varied opportunities to help them to develop and control their bodies. They all have weekly swimming lessons at a local school, learning to be safe and to enjoy playing in the water. In the school's multi-sensory ('Rainbow') room, they take part in a variety of play activities – using soft play resources or smaller equipment such as beads on wire. When playing outside, children choose from scooters, prams and bikes, and they use the climbing apparatus. Both classes will have their own secure play areas next term – currently, only one of them has this facility – although they are not covered, precluding play during wet weather.
40. Children's **creative development** is encouraged through a variety of activities – for example, weekly music lessons, during which they play percussion instruments and hear the piano being played. Additionally, songs feature in many lessons and children become familiar with these, often attempting to copy actions or smiling and bouncing. Children learn to handle crayons and use rollers, brushes or fingers to apply paint. Their play activities provide another way for children to express themselves and staff are skilled at encouraging children to copy their actions and use resources – such as a marble run – with enjoyment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Nine English lessons were observed.

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening because of the consistent focus on communication skills.
- There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and pupils' achievement in reading and writing is now good.
- Teaching is good for pupils in all parts of the school with much that is very good or excellent.
- The leadership of the subject is good although its management is not yet removing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

Commentary

41. Pupils' achievement in English overall is good, but is slightly stronger in speaking and listening because of the school's emphasis on developing speaking, listening and communication. There is now a better focus on developing writing skills and a wider range of reading texts and supporting materials. Teachers encourage pupils in the early stages of writing to become more purposeful about the marks they make on

paper and provide regular opportunities for practise in writing over and under words. As a result, more pupils are able to write down what they want to say. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 follow adults' instructions and read books with a repetitive structure. Their writing skills are developing well as is their use of a picture exchange communication system for many of the pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils in Year 2 with moderate learning difficulties are starting to choose books from the book tray and making themselves understood using signing to augment their speech. By the time pupils are in Year 6, the highest attainers recognise syllables within words, sound out words when reading, and write sentences in their imaginative and descriptive writing. Many of these pupils hold very sensible conversations and express their ideas and opinions with clarity. Pupils in Year 6 with severe learning difficulties match symbols to words in stories and learn the common starting and finishing phrases for traditional tales. Graphs of pupils' progress produced by the school show pupils with a range of special and additional needs make equivalent good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language and speech and communication difficulties make the same progress as other pupils, because the school places such an emphasis on communication and provides good quality support. The pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders achieve well in improving their communication and the highest attainers read well matched books with fluency.

42. The best teaching includes lesson planning that makes clear what it is each pupil should achieve and is well referenced to their individual targets. In these lessons, there is very good teamwork between teachers and support staff, as a result of very good planning. The variety of activities and challenge presented to pupils are good, tasks meet pupils' individual needs very well, and there is very good quality of communication – for example, encouraging pupils to sign accurately where needed. In these very high quality lessons, all pupils, including those with severe learning difficulties, make very good progress. For instance, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 to 7, the very good use of symbols enabled all pupils to understand the story and to recognise syllables within the words. The use of challenging questions by the teacher meant that pupils had to extend their listening skills to analyse the words and how they were made. The very well planned lesson led to pupils working well together as they enjoyed the story which was read very enthusiastically by the teacher so that pupils became very involved in the learning. Where teaching and learning are less successful, activities last for too long, are not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs, and staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.
43. Leadership and management are good. Lessons are observed – although mainly in the subject leader's role as deputy headteacher – targets are set, and pupils' achievements are analysed for any discrepancy between different groups. Assessment and recording of pupils' work is very good in reading and writing but is only just being developed in speaking and listening. However, the presence of reports from the speech and language therapist contributes to the knowledge of how pupils are progressing, so assessment is good overall. This close working relationship with the speech and language therapist means that those pupils with significant speech and communication difficulties have work matched to their needs. The limited availability of provision reduces the effectiveness for other pupils but support staff are being trained to deliver programmes designed by the therapist. Resources are often well chosen to help pupils to explore the content of stories – for example, when objects such as a magic wand were used to refer to aspects of the traditional tale of 'Cinderella'. However, at present, there is under-use of ICT in classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Pupils have good opportunities to use their skills in other subjects. The school's good emphasis on communication results in pupils using language well, often supported additionally by symbols and signing and occasionally by micro-electronic switches. Good attention is paid to teaching the vocabulary needed for learning in different subjects and pupils are expected to write carefully. Displays of work are well captioned with words and symbols and books are displayed well in classrooms. However, there is scope for the use of more languages in displays, in order to raise all pupils' awareness of the importance of writing in communication. The newly refurbished library contains a good selection of books although currently it is often unavailable as it houses the school's interactive whiteboard.

MATHEMATICS

Eight lessons of mathematics were observed.

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well in a broad range of mathematical skills.
- Teachers plan lessons well and their use of targets in individual education plans is very good. However, their planning for the use of ICT in lessons is too general to provide the necessary support for individual pupils.
- There is not enough review by the subject leader of teaching, including the accuracy of teachers' assessments, nor of performance of the subject across the school.
- Planning for pupils to use mathematical skills to support their learning in other subjects is not as rigorous as the planning of mathematics lessons.

Commentary

45. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of mathematics. This is good improvement since the previous inspection, when progress was simply satisfactory and confined to a narrower range of number skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 with severe learning and communication difficulties have appropriately modified mathematics programmes. They enjoy joining in with familiar number rhymes and begin to indicate an awareness of numbers, by using their fingers or voices. With support they can add one more when threading beads and they enjoy the resources that accompany the number rhymes, and using number magnets and puzzles. Older pupils with more moderate learning difficulties count to 100 in ones and tens, recognise and sort two- and three-dimensional shapes, and understand money and its use in everyday life, for example. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make equally good progress as other pupils because they are well taught and motivated.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is occasionally very good. Day-to-day assessment procedures are very thorough, particularly the use of high quality targets in pupils' individual education plans. This enables teachers to plan work and resources for individual pupils very effectively. Teachers take good account of the guidance provided by the National Numeracy Strategy. Their planning does not, however, ensure that all pupils have regular opportunities to make progress in their

use of ICT to support their learning in mathematics. Pupils are grouped well so that there is a good match of work set and the resources used to meet different learning needs. During whole class teaching, however, questions are at times too difficult for pupils with the most severe learning difficulties. Teaching assistants are well deployed for group work and have a good understanding of pupils' learning needs. Their role during whole class teaching is less well planned. Teachers provide clear information to parents about the progress their children make in mathematics.

47. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Planning documents are adapted well from a published scheme. The headteacher and deputy headteacher analyse and present assessment data very effectively. Developments in the subject, however, have been delayed through the long term absence of the subject leader. As a result, the subject leader has not yet been able to carry out planned developments such as a programme of lesson observations and checks on the accuracy of teachers' assessments in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their mathematical skills to support their learning in other subjects. The range and regularity of these opportunities are not planned, however, to the same high quality as the planning of mathematics lessons. However, there are a few good examples of pupils using their mathematical skills. For instance, Year 2 pupils observed the shape of buildings, during a visit to look at old and new buildings in London. Those in Years 3 and 4 reinforce their understanding of three-dimensional shapes during a project to investigate the shape of packaging for different purposes. Morning welcome routines in a class for older pupils with autistic spectrum disorders include regular revision of two dimensional shapes.

SCIENCE

Four science lessons were seen.

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned to provide activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities.
- The high quality of relationships is an important factor in the good progress that pupils are making.
- The subject leader is working effectively to ensure that the subject is evolving to best meet the needs of the pupils.

Commentary

49. In their planning, teachers set out precisely what they intend pupils to learn, and this ensures that lessons have a clear focus. Work is planned for pupils of different abilities, so that all are included in the lesson. Interesting and imaginative activities are carefully selected to match with what will engage and motivate pupils to learn. For instance, a class of Year 3 pupils learn about electricity by looking at miniature versions of electrical appliances. In a Year 2 class, pupils excitedly enter a dark 'cave' in the classroom, to see what happens when they switch on their torches. Pupils achieve well, due to this good quality teaching. Year 2 pupils know that they need their

eyes to see and that they cannot see if it is dark. Those in Year 3 appreciate that a washing machine needs electricity to make it work, but that a torch needs a battery.

50. Good relationships between staff and pupils are evident and, as a result, pupils are highly motivated in lessons. Staff know their pupils well and know how to support them so that they stay on task. In one lesson, the teacher clapped and repeated a pupil's name several times, to successfully engage him with eye contact. On another occasion, a teacher set high expectations by asking the pupils what they needed to do in the lesson to make him happy. Pupils responded admirably by saying that they would listen and put their hand up to answer a question. Praise is an effective feature of the good science teaching. In a very good introduction to a lesson, the teacher tells the pupils that he is so proud of them for sitting quietly. Another teacher rewards a pupil for doing his best by saying 'Perfect speaking'.
51. The enthusiastic and capable subject leader provides good leadership and management. Science has improved well since the previous inspection. The subject leader has developed the range of scientific enquiry skills within the curriculum. He has introduced a curriculum map with detailed programmes of work to support teachers and ensure that pupils' learning builds systematically on what they have learned already. Colleagues' planning has been examined and pupils' work has been checked, in order to provide information about the success of teaching and the curriculum. Areas for development have been identified as setting targets for pupils' progress in science and comparing teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements, to make sure that these are measured accurately.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Two lessons were observed.

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their ICT skills but are held back by shortages of equipment.
- Staff have the skills necessary to make good use of the available equipment.
- Teachers have identified a good range of software to support learning across the curriculum, but their plans for its use are not sufficiently detailed.

Commentary

52. Pupils enjoy using ICT and their skills build steadily as they move up through the school. With close support, pupils with severe learning difficulties use the mouse – for example, clicking on images on the screen. By Year 2, pupils with moderate learning difficulties begin to see the link between the mouse and the screen, using the mouse to draw lines on screen. They learn to control a tape recorder with minimal assistance. A Year 3 boy with autistic spectrum disorder uses 'click and drag' techniques to move images round the computer screen. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 with moderate learning difficulties manipulate sound using a variety of equipment including electronic keyboards, CD-ROMs of stringed and brass musical instruments, and electronic games. In Years 5 and 6, pupils with moderate learning difficulties use the computer keyboard to enter text. With verbal prompts, they design the front cover of a book, importing images and text onto the screen, selecting colours and changing font sizes.

They use programs to construct sentences and a publisher program to make a leaflet. They enter data from a survey and produce pie charts and graphs of the results.

53. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In a good ICT lesson about the manipulation of sound, pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned well because there were enough electronic resources to enable each pupil to participate. Generally, however, there are insufficient resources for more than a small number of pupils to learn and practise new skills at any one time. The management of this arrangement, whilst the rest of the class do other work, is satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants understand how to use the various items of software and the new interactive whiteboard. This represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. When pupils with severe and moderate learning difficulties are in the same lesson, however, pupils with the more moderate learning difficulties tend to have more opportunities to participate and interact with the whiteboard.
54. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader is currently on sick leave but in recent months there have been good developments. The computers are now networked, and an interactive whiteboard has been installed. Whole class teaching of ICT remains difficult for teachers to arrange, however, because of shortages of computers. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Teaching and achievement have improved. The quantity of resources has increased and staff are more skilful in using computers. The planning of ICT lessons and the assessment of pupils' skills have also improved. There are still not enough ICT resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. Opportunities for pupils to use and apply their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects are satisfactory. However, these are limited by the availability of hardware, teachers' planning – which is too general to ensure that each pupil has regular opportunities, and insufficient assessment of each pupil's achievement in using and applying their ICT skills in other lessons. Teachers have researched well the availability of appropriate web sites and software to support work in most subjects. There is, therefore, a good variety of ways in which pupils apply their ICT skills. These opportunities, however, are not routinely made available to each pupil in a class. The one interactive whiteboard is used extensively by all classes – for example, to support work in mathematics and to help pupils compose music. There are only two computers in each classroom and no touch screens. There is, therefore, limited scope in the space of one lesson for all pupils to access ICT equipment. Pupils are making increasing use of digital cameras to record what they have seen and done, operate an electronic keyboard to make music and control sounds and tape recorders to listen to stories.

HUMANITIES

Two religious education lessons were observed. No lessons of geography or history were seen. Judgements have not been made about these subjects.

56. In **geography**, pupils explore the locality around the school, compare different types of environment in Britain, and discover how people live in other countries. Work displayed around the school demonstrates that Year 3 pupils have learned about the lives of people around the world, identifying on a map the places from which their own families originate. Pupils in Years 3 to 5, with autistic spectrum disorders, find out

about the weather around the world and what it is like in a cold country and a hot country. Year 5 pupils look in detail at a village in southern India. Neat handwriting tells us that 'As well as tea they grow coffee'.

57. During **history** lessons, pupils find out about events that took place in the past and the lives of famous people. They compare life today with that in times past, considering, for example, how toys have changed. Teachers work hard to make the subject interesting. This is clear from a display of Year 6 pupils' work on World War 2, including their writing about rationing, evacuees, and air raid shelters.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader has worked very hard to revise the curriculum.
- Teachers often find interesting ways of enabling pupils to learn.
- Pupils are taught to appreciate and respect diversity, but full advantage is not taken of opportunities for visits in the local community.

Commentary

58. Religious education is well led and managed and this is why there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. A significant achievement has been to broaden the range of work covered by the school's programme of work. This now meets the requirements of the Southwark Agreed Syllabus and the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Until very recently, pupils did not learn about two major religions – Buddhism and Sikhism. As a consequence of these gaps in their knowledge, pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory, rather than good, despite good teaching of the elements that were in place. There has not yet been time for the new curriculum to have a significant impact on achievement, although pupils learn well in individual lessons. However, the units of work for each year group now provide detailed guidance for teachers within a structure that enables pupils to build up their knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic way as they move up through the school.
59. The two lessons observed were of a very high quality. Pupils were very well motivated, partly owing to the very good relationships they have with teachers and teaching assistants, but also because their tasks were very relevant to their age and special educational needs. For instance, in an excellent lesson for pupils in Years 1 to 3 with a range of needs including autistic spectrum disorders and emotional and social difficulties, pupils' understanding of 'special' places was extended very successfully. This was because the activities and resources chosen were pitched at just the right level and included music, objects – such as a prayer mat and a copy of the Qu'ran – painting and modelling, offering a wide variety of learning methods. The teaching assistants and minority ethnic support teacher shared the class teacher's very high expectations, contributed to the discussion, and prompted pupils to identify their own special place – for example, school or church. In the course of the lesson, pupils began to learn about mosques and the Muslim religion, and that there are special places and special things. They were also helped to learn important messages promoted by religion – for instance, to appreciate that everyone is different and to respect and enjoy these differences.

60. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has its own collection of artefacts from each of the religions studied, and teachers also use a local resources centre. There are occasional visits to churches, a mosque, and to a statue of Buddha. However, the subject leader has identified the need to make more use of the local community to provide pupils with opportunities to learn at first-hand.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson of design and technology was observed, one of music and one of physical education. Judgements were not made about these subjects. Three art and design lessons were seen.

61. In **design and technology**, the local community is used periodically as a starting point for activities. For example, younger pupils visit a pizza restaurant to design their own pizzas and construct buildings from card and straws, following their visit into London to look at old and new buildings. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have learned that packaging is designed for different purposes and a very good display enables everyone to see the packages they designed and made. In a very good lesson for pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 with severe and moderate learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders, pupils were very well motivated to design a wall hanging for younger pupils, on the theme of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. This was because of the teacher's infectious enthusiasm, excellent relationships in class, and opportunities for pupils to make independent choices from a stimulating array of resources.
62. In every class, there is a good spread of opportunities for **physical education**, covering games, athletics, gymnastics, swimming and dance. In an outstanding dance lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, excellent teaching, coupled with extremely high expectations, enabled pupils to move confidently, imaginatively and safely to music, showing an awareness of space. Very good use of signing and symbols ensured the full participation of all pupils including those with autistic spectrum disorders.

Art and design

Three lessons of art and design were observed.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught well and their achievement is good.
- There is a broad curriculum with exciting elements.
- Leadership of the subject is good but more management is needed to ensure that good practice is shared.

Commentary

63. Most teachers are sufficiently well informed about the subject and display enthusiasm that is transmitted to the pupils. They give individual attention to all pupils and help them to become involved in what they are doing. This leads to them producing interesting and well produced work. Examples of this were seen when pupils discussed the content of portraits by Gainsborough and Picasso or where others were enthused by their visit to photograph buildings in order to provide stimulus for their

models. Where, on rare occasions, teaching is less than satisfactory, teachers do not give the pupils sufficient time to respond to what they are seeing, teachers' talk goes on for too long, and the resulting unsatisfactory behaviour is not consistently managed. Pupils' attitudes are usually very good in art and design lessons and they behave well. The confidence they gain means that they can talk with enthusiasm about their work, when they might find this difficult at other times.

64. The well planned curriculum covers a wide range of artistic experiences through drawing and painting, a range of fabric techniques, as well as three-dimensional work involving sculptural forms and ceramics. There is a small, though consistently used, amount of digital imaging involved in pupils' work. For instance, they take photographs of buildings in London and then use them when they produce three-dimensional models. The curriculum is adapted well to the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders – for example, they use paint and glitter and cut and stick to produce pictures.
65. The leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and, although relatively new to the post, has produced a development outline for the subject. Management is satisfactory, as there are no visits to lessons, which could identify some of the inconsistencies in teaching. Satisfactory assessment is in place but has only recently been introduced. Art resources are generally good but would benefit from an increase in ICT resources. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Five lessons were observed.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to extend their personal development, but the arrangements are occasionally too informal.
- The use of signing and symbols supports the personal and social development of many pupils.
- The programme of work covers a good range of themes and topics.

Commentary

66. During the school day, a good range of opportunities supports pupils' personal development. For instance, the youngest children use signing to ask for banana or apple at snack time. The teacher goes to great lengths to ensure that pupils are making their choices known. Another teacher explains to two Year 4 pupils about how responsible it is to return the register to the office, as they proudly depart the classroom. Staff effectively promote pupils' skills at lunchtime. They receive guidance in eating more independently, co-operating with each other, waiting for their turn to collect lunch, and in clearing away their dishes. However, these aspects of PSHE are not planned formally and pupils' learning is not assessed and recorded.

67. The use of signing and a picture exchange communication system contribute significantly to personal and social development, especially for pupils with speech and communication difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils are helped to become independent communicators and make choices and decisions. Staff have high expectations and insist that their pupils respond, for example, at snack time. One pupil is encouraged to sign 'biscuit', select the correct symbol, and exchange it for a biscuit. Well-earned praise follows quickly.
68. The timetabled lessons are well taught and provide a range of relevant topics. As a result, pupils achieve well, learning, for example, how to behave responsibly towards others and how to play their role in the community. During the inspection, a Year 3 class played a variety of games, co-operating well with each other. One pupil remarked correctly, 'We are taking turns and sharing'. Pupils moving on to secondary education at the end of the year took part in a lesson to explore how they feel about changing schools. The teacher skilfully built up their confidence and positive attitudes as they considered what will be the same and what will be different about their new school. The programme of work includes sex and relationships education and drugs education, carefully matched to pupils' age and stage of development, and meeting statutory requirements.
69. Leadership and management are currently satisfactory. The newly appointed subject leader has suitable plans for how the subject will be developed and is to provide teachers with detailed half-termly plans. Teachers have not yet compared their assessments of pupils' achievement, in order to ensure that these are consistently accurate. The school intends to develop further its health education, through working towards the Healthy Schools accreditation. It is not possible to judge improvement, as the subject was not reported previously.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).