

INSPECTION REPORT

John F Kennedy Special School

Stratford

LEA area: Newham

Unique reference number: 102791

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Goldsmith

Lead inspector: Dr Mick Megee

Dates of inspection: 11th to 14th April 2005

Inspection number: 268583

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	2-19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	58
School address:	Pitchford Street Stratford London
Postcode:	E15 4RZ
Telephone number:	0208 534 8544
Fax number:	0208 555 3530
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Megan Harris
Date of previous inspection:	19 th May 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

John F Kennedy School is a maintained special school in Newham, London, which provides for up to 74 pupils aged between 2-19 years who have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, also a significant number who have complex learning difficulties like autism or have challenging behaviours. Almost all pupils have at least some degree of difficulty in communication. There are currently no pupils in the Foundation Stage. It is one of two special schools maintained by Newham Local Education Authority (LEA) and there is considerable uncertainty about its future. There are 58 full-time pupils on roll, of whom 37 are boys. Currently all but two of the pupils live in the London Borough of Newham, which is an area of considerable economic and social deprivation. Over a third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. Just over three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and most of these come from homes where English is not the first language spoken. Bengali, Somali, Gujarati & Urdu are the most widely spoken community languages. The standards of pupils who enter the school are well below average overall. The school received Excellence in Cities funding in 2003. In the last school year, 3 pupils left and 3 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time which is below the national average. The school occupies two sites a few miles apart following an amalgamation with another school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23629	Mick Megee	Lead inspector	Science, music, special educational needs, history, geography
19693	Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
23412	Alvin Jeffs	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, physical education
16038	Jill Bavin	Team inspector	English, religious education, design and technology, work-related learning
28106	Michele Majid	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, personal, social, and health education, citizenship
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

John F Kennedy School is a very caring and supportive school with a strong commitment to inclusion that offers a **satisfactory** standard of education to all its pupils. Achievement is satisfactory overall despite some major obstacles most of which the school has now overcome. Teaching and learning are satisfactory as are leadership and management. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school ensures that all its pupils are fully included in all it does and maintains a very high standard of care and welfare.
- Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics up to Year 11, and information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 7 to 11.
- Pupils do not make as much progress as they could in English, science, ICT in Years 1 to 6 and at post-16, work-related learning (WRL) and religious education (RE).
- All pupils achieve well in personal, social, health and emotional education (PSHE), citizenship and physical education (PE).
- The head and deputy headteacher are working hard to put everything in place as soon as possible, but not all subject leaders are fully effective.
- There are very good relationships between staff and learners, and attitudes to learning are very good.
- There is not always consistent support for pupils' communication, although it is satisfactory overall.
- Parents feel well supported by the school and they and the pupils are pleased with what it provides, but links with other schools and colleges are not sufficiently well developed.
- Governors are supportive of the school but are too few in number to be fully effective, and a few minor statutory requirements are not met.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. John F Kennedy School has come through some major difficulties which have prevented it from achieving as much as it would like. For example, the school is not as far along as it would wish in the development of assessment and the curriculum and in ensuring that subject leaders work effectively across the whole school. The school has satisfactorily tackled the issues from the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 6	satisfactory	good
Year 9	satisfactory	good
Year 11	satisfactory	good
Year 14	satisfactory	good

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall for pupils of all ages, including those with additional special educational needs, and those whose home language is not English. In English, achievement is satisfactory. In mathematics up to Year 11, ICT in Years 7 to 11, PE, PSHE and citizenship, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Achievement in science, mathematics at post-16 and ICT other than in Years 7 to 11, work-related learning and religious education is satisfactory. Pupils at post-16 achieve satisfactorily in the accredited coursework programmes they follow. Pupils'

personal qualities are **good**, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are positive about their school and their attitudes to learning are very good. Behaviour is good and attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**, as are teaching and learning. Staff care a lot about the pupils and ensure that personal needs are taken care of sensitively and with minimum disruption to lessons. There is a very calm atmosphere in the classrooms, and pupils concentrate well. Teaching and learning are good in mathematics up to Year 11, PE, PSHE and citizenship. They are satisfactory in English, mathematics at post-16, science, and religious education (RE). Achievement is good ICT in Years 7 to 11 and satisfactory in the rest of the school. Lesson planning, assessment and homework are all satisfactorily carried out, but not all staff support pupils' communication equally well. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of subjects and the school offers a good range of activities to support learning outside the school day. Support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. There are good links with parents and the community but links with other schools are not as effective as they should be.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher, with the support of the senior leadership group, has done well to carry the school through the difficulties of the past and is now receiving able and effective support from a new deputy headteacher. At subject level, management is uneven but it is satisfactory overall and there is good leadership in ICT, PE, PSHE and citizenship. Subject leaders have so far not been able to monitor the work of other staff who teach their subject. The governance of the school is satisfactory but one or two minor statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. They feel that their children are happy and well looked after and they especially value the openness of staff and the good communications which they have. Parents have no major concerns although one or two parents had anxieties about what the future, beyond school, holds. The inspection team agrees that there is some justification in these concerns because the school has been unable to establish good links with local colleges. Pupils are positive about the school, and trust the staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that communication is always supported well.
- Improve achievement in English, mathematics at post-16, ICT in Years 1 to 6 and at post-16, science, WRL and RE.
- Improve links with other schools and colleges.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so that the management of subjects becomes fully effective.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the Annual Report to Parents and prospectus meet with what is legally required.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because of the good teaching.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well in ICT and all pupils achieve well in physical education, PSHE and citizenship.
- Pupils' progress has been disrupted by the school's difficulties.
- Staff do not consistently use signing or symbols to support communication.

Commentary

1. Pupils of all ages achieve satisfactorily in most subjects, and there are no differences in achievement for those with different levels of ability, different types of special educational need like autism, or for those who do not have English as their home language. Achievement is the same for boys and girls. At the time of the inspection, the school has had to face two years of disruption through building renovations and amalgamation with another school, and this has slowed down the pace of change.
2. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans and the school achieves satisfactorily against its whole school targets. Pupils in Years 11-14 have the chance to gain awards in the scheme accredited nationally by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and achieve satisfactorily in these programmes.
3. Satisfactory progress and achievement is made by pupils in all aspects of English. There is a mutual trust and care in the relationships which make the pupils want to listen to staff and respond to them. However, the use of additional communication systems like signing and symbols is not consistent in all lessons and there are some gaps in the provision and use of technical aids, and this holds back achievement. Achievement in mathematics is generally good and this reflects the good planning and skilfulness of many teachers. However, achievement in mathematics is only satisfactory for pupils over 16 because the assessment and recording is not as effective as in the main school. There is good achievement in PE where teachers work effectively to ensure that pupils make good progress, for example, in gaining water confidence and physiotherapy programmes. Pupils achieve well in PSHE and citizenship. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well in ICT, while achievement in the subject for other pupils is satisfactory. In the other subjects inspected achievement, although satisfactory, is not as good as it could be because of inconsistencies in communication, assessment and curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good relationships with adults working in school.
- Nearly all pupils behave well, however some staff are not sufficiently skilled in managing a few pupils with challenging behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and try hard with their work.
- Pupils like coming to school and parents and carers ensure that they attend whenever they are well enough.

- The school's activities include a good variety of cultural and other events that celebrate pupils' different cultures and beliefs well.

Commentary

4. Staff show great respect for the pupils and often use humour to good effect. Pupils respond very well and develop trusting relationships with their teachers and support staff. This has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils co-operate with each other in lessons and enjoy playing together during breaks and lunchtime. For example the post-16 lunchtime disco club is very popular with pupils and they enjoy dancing with each other and with staff.
5. Most staff understand the pupils' needs well and give pupils good and timely guidance about how to behave both in school and in the community. Most teachers have devised successful strategies and clear behaviour plans to promote good behaviour. Pupils respond well to rewards given in the classrooms and in assemblies. For example, pupils try hard to behave, as they know that if they do well in lessons they will be given an opportunity to use the play equipment at the end of the day. However, a few staff do not have enough expertise and experience to deal with pupils with particular behaviour difficulties. For example, teachers stop teaching to tell pupils off for misbehaving, but the pupils repeat the anti-social behaviour and get more attention from staff. Pupils' and parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire state that bullying is not a problem and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
6. Because pupils have a very good rapport with the adults in their classroom, they want to do their best. They usually respond to staff in a very positive way and work hard to complete the tasks they have been given. However, pupils who are unable to speak are sometimes hampered in giving full answers because of the limited range of alternative methods of communicating. Pupils grow in confidence and independence as they progress through the school. Younger pupils enjoy taking the register to the office, a few making the journey without adult support, whilst post-16 pupils cope with new experiences such as changing money at the bank.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	14.0	School data	1.5
National data	11.0	National data	0.7

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

7. Parents say that their children like coming to school and this can be seen in the smiling faces of the pupils as they arrive at school and greet the staff. Families ensure that pupils attend school whenever they are well enough. Attendance rates are improving, but rates are still lower than those of similar schools. Nearly all absence is due to illness or medical conditions and the vast majority of parents inform the school if their children are absent. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer when absence is a cause for concern. Pupils arrive by school transport and are usually in good time for registration.
8. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Assemblies are used well to reward pupils' achievements and all pupils are delighted to see their friends receive these awards. There is a warm welcome in the morning in circle time, although there are missed opportunities for a spiritual element to these sessions. Moral development is good. Staff continually emphasise turn taking, friendship and awareness of others. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities such as returning registers to the office. Opportunities for social development are good, as there are frequent trips out of school and there is a good social atmosphere at break times and especially in the dining room at lunchtime where there is a high level of adult support. Visiting artists allow pupils to have a taste of music and dance from different cultures. The school recognises the need to re-assess the right balance between the

needs of pupils (and the wishes of their parents and carers) to learn and practise English and pupils' valid need to use their mother tongues for their social, cultural and emotional development. The school needs to use bilingual resources and skills more effectively for validating pupils' own cultures and identities and for teaching, learning and assessment, where appropriate. Pupils' cultural development is therefore judged as satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are very well looked after, although the guidance and support they receive is only satisfactory. The school has good links with parents and the community but unsatisfactory links with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong relationships and good teamwork are a feature of most lessons.
- Support for communication or for social development is not always provided.
- Assessment is being overhauled and a new nationally recognised system of recording is being introduced which will assist learning considerably.
- Personal needs are attended to without fuss and without interrupting lessons.
- Limited use is made of pupils' first languages in teaching and assessment.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	7 (16%)	22 (51%)	12 (28%)	1 (2%)	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.

- The inspection team found that teachers' practice is effective in a number of areas, but there are some outstanding weaknesses too. Now that the school has moved into its renovated accommodation, the senior managers have re-established appropriate priorities and there are clear signs that the school is now beginning to tackle the weaknesses. In lessons, teachers and pupils are beginning to benefit from these new priorities. A positive feature of teaching is the extent to which the staff maintain very strong relationships with the pupils and this encourages them to try their best. The inspection team also recognised the good teamwork which goes on between staff, with teaching assistants playing a full part in all the elements of the teaching: working effectively alongside teachers, supporting class activities or working with individuals to help them learn.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils very well. They communicate sensitively with them and make slight adjustments in their demands of pupils in order to meet differing emotional needs effectively. If any pupil requires routine personal or medical procedures then these are carried out discreetly and respectfully, without interrupting the lesson. All staff make use of a common, agreed layout for lesson plans. The plans set out the aims for the lesson and for the group of pupils well but they do not all include individual targets for pupils to learn basic social and communication skills. This means that opportunities for teaching and learning these skills can be missed. During the lessons staff sometimes forget to maintain clear communication

through the use of signs and symbols so that pupils are given a clear understanding of what is going on and what is expected of them.

11. Teaching and learning in English are no better than satisfactory, because not all teachers pay attention to what pupils need to enhance their communication and understanding. Teaching and learning in mathematics (apart from at post-16), PE, PSHE and citizenship are effective and pupils learn quickly. This is because these subjects are well led and managed. In science, ICT, RE and WRL teaching and learning are satisfactory, although they are good in ICT in Years 7 to 11. Teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils post-16. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall for all pupils, including those with more complex needs, a few teachers have not yet received specific training in autism, and this means that they have not developed fully effective teaching and management strategies for these pupils.
12. Assessment procedures and their use are satisfactory overall. Assessment is not yet always precise enough to ensure that all teaching builds on what has been learned. Recently, there have been considerable gains in staff awareness of the value of constantly seeking to analyse what pupils are gaining from lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants now routinely make good use of the end of lessons to review and record individual pupils' achievements. This provides a positive conclusion to lessons, celebrating and respecting pupils' efforts and gains. However, this thoughtful practice is not backed up with secure systems for identifying priorities for the next steps in pupils' learning. School managers rightly recognise that to be of greater use, assessment needs to be more focussed and manageable. The most important recent development is that the new deputy headteacher is working very hard to introduce 'B-squared' - a nationally recognised assessment system.
13. In order to fully exploit the wide array of first languages in the school, further planning is needed to encourage the development of pupils' communication skills through the use of a variety of appropriate languages. Pupils' assessment does not, where appropriate, include their use of the first language, and this is an omission.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. There are **good** enrichment opportunities on offer for all pupils. The accommodation meets the needs of the curriculum **well** and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes and includes all pupils, providing equal access to activities for all.
- There are not enough opportunities for learners to be included within mainstream schools.
- A good PSHE and citizenship curriculum contributes well to pupils' development and has a significant impact on their maturity and confidence.
- Work with learners with autism is developing, but there is still some inconsistent practice.

Commentary

14. The school's curriculum is underpinned by a very strong commitment to inclusion. It is a school that welcomes and celebrates pupils with a wide range of disabilities. This is evident in the assemblies which celebrate the achievements of all, including staff, and in the equality of opportunity that exists for all learners to participate in clubs, trips and visits. It is also a strong element within classroom teaching, where good efforts are made to involve all pupils. Because of the uncertainty about the future of the school, the LEA is not putting very young children forward for admission. Consequently there are currently no children in the Foundation Stage, although the school has developed a satisfactory curriculum for this group should it be required in the future.
15. Pupils at the post-16 centre have the chance to go bowling, orienteering, rowing, swimming and shopping. In addition they visit leisure centres and college, participate in mini enterprises, animal

care and yoga. As a result they develop independence skills and grow in maturity and confidence. For all pupils there are good opportunities to participate in dance, art, music and photography. All of these activities are very well supported by teaching assistants who know the learners well and provide sensitive and effective advice and guidance. Building water confidence is a very successful area of the curriculum and the oversight and active support provided by assistants in the warm water pool is very good. This group of staff, building on programmes designed by physiotherapists, has developed very good one-to-one and small group techniques that build the confidence and mobility of learners who often find a water-based environment liberating and relaxing.

16. There are not enough opportunities for learners to visit and become part of other schools and colleges where they can experience a wider range of behaviours and life skills. A small number of learners have the opportunity to visit and take part in the work of other, mainstream, schools and colleges. Although this is effective for the few who participate, it has not yet developed to its full potential. Work at post-16 has been hampered by difficulties of linking to local colleges and staff are aware that they now need to move forward with a wider range of opportunities. There are accreditation opportunities for all older learners and the ASDAN scheme offers a wide range of opportunities, from ICT to shopping, from music to sport and leisure. All of these involve mathematics, literacy and the use of computers. However, the assessment procedures are not yet thorough enough to ensure that achievement in all these areas is effectively recorded and analysed.
17. The school has a strong personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum which provides good advice for learners in a wide range of health and safety aspects, including relationships and drug awareness. Much of the work is incorporated into lessons, registration sessions and lunchtimes. There is a strong commitment to developing the independence of all learners, particularly in a range of social contexts. For younger pupils this means learning how to use public transport, shop and participate in workshops such as a very successful one recently staged at Tate Modern. For post-16 pupils there is a very strong emphasis every day on community involvement, developing the environment and acquiring independent living skills, such as using money, using public transport independently and joining local fitness centres.
18. The sensory curriculum co-ordinator is a skilled teacher with a wide range of multi-sensory techniques. These are particularly effective within the sensory studio, where a number of learners experience intensive sessions using switching systems to control light and sound. Sessions observed during the inspection indicated that this area of work is of a very high quality and the sensory studio is a very good resource. Within the school good attention is paid to developing non-ambulant pupils' awareness of the day, the location and the subject being taught. This is done through a wide range of smells, textures and the very good use of language. Teaching assistants provide learners with a running commentary as learners move from their bus to their classroom or generally around the school during the day. Once again, not every member of staff does this automatically in every lesson and this reduces the effectiveness of some lessons for non-verbal, non-ambulant learners.
19. Work with learners with autism is developing well. A number of members of staff have skills in this field and many are receiving training. However, the work is still inconsistent, often as the result of staff turnover and the difficulty of providing the intensive training necessary. As the number of learners experiencing autism is on the increase, this is an important area to develop.
20. Significant improvements have been made in the quality of the school's accommodation on the main site and it is attractive and well maintained. There are specialist areas for art and music and spacious rooms for the library and for technology. At this time and as a result of the building programme, the lack of adequate outside provision limits activities in physical education. The outside area has been tidied up and there are plans to reinstate the sensory garden. Attractive displays considerably enhance the learning environment. The post-16 accommodation is not as pleasant as the main site although staff have worked hard to improve the environment as much as they can.

21. Learning resources are satisfactory and include a good variety of software and a wide range of books in the library. However, there are no interactive whiteboards to enhance learning, although digital cameras and camcorders are used well for recording achievement and for making electronic profiles of the pupils to be held on DVD. In the main school, staff are well matched to the curriculum. All staff, including office staff and the site supervisor on the main site make a strong contribution to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the school. There are not quite enough permanent staff in the post-16 provision, which can affect the consistency with which pupils are handled. While most of the community languages are reflected in the staff, the range of teaching staff does not reflect either the community the school serves or its diverse intake of pupils. The school's library and other resources are generally reflective of pupils' ethnic and cultural diversity. The displays around the school of pupils' work and other artefacts re-enforce the school's commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for health, safety, care and welfare is **very good**. Provision for support, advice and guidance is **satisfactory**. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff show high levels of care and concern for the pupils' welfare.
- Pupils receive good support for their personal development.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are good.
- Staff value pupils' views but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to express their opinions.

Commentary

22. Teachers and support staff treat pupils with respect and value them as individuals. Pupils say they can turn to adults if they are worried. Staff work hard to promote the pupils' physical and emotional well-being and work closely with a range of health professionals to support pupils' particular difficulties. For example, the speech and language therapist has provided valuable training on feeding programmes which enabled support staff to refine their skills. The school has also taken part in a successful multi-agency project, and discussions focus on pupils who are approaching transition or causing concern. Records are kept and analysis made of the ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of pupils. More use could be made of this information in assessment, curriculum planning and teaching.
23. Staff endeavour to provide a healthy and safe environment for the pupils. The arrangements for first aid are very good and good records are kept of accidents and when medication is given. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid and in the absence of a full-time school nurse, some have undertaken valuable training in various medical procedures. The headteacher co-ordinates child protection and carries out her duties effectively. Teachers are given regular reminders about how to report any concerns to the co-ordinator. There are good arrangements in place for pupils in public care. Risk assessments are undertaken and appropriate arrangements are in place for testing of electrical equipment and emergency evacuations.
24. Staff understand the pupils' needs and give them good encouragement in developing their confidence and independence. They provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their social skills on visits into the community, for example when buying ingredients in the supermarket. Parents value the way their children are settled into school through a series of visits to the school and some home visits. Year 11 pupils are sensitively introduced into post-16 through visits and opportunities to work alongside older pupils. Post-16 pupils and their parents are given good support by staff in their preparation for life beyond school. However, the school has had very little success with organising college placements and work experience outside school and this limits the students' opportunities to develop independence and make informed choices.

25. Although staff know pupils well, the approach to monitoring and recording pupils' personal and academic achievements is not yet sufficiently consistent. This makes it more difficult to track their progress and plan the next steps. Staff listen to and watch pupils carefully and take note of their views and preferences. Where appropriate pupils are involved in their annual review. In lessons and around the school pupils are given choices and their decisions are respected. The school recognises the need to improve the ways in which pupils are consulted about school life and the importance of acting upon them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are **good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcome parents into school and encourages them to become involved in their children's education.
- Pupils deepen their understanding of the wider world through the school's use of local facilities.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to have contact with those in mainstream schools.

Commentary

26. There are frequent opportunities for parents to come into school to discuss their children's progress and parents feel that the school keeps them well informed about how their children are getting on. Parents are consulted about their child's individual education plan and have appropriate opportunities to contribute to the annual review process. The annual reports are satisfactory. They give parents details of what their child has been doing, but there is not enough information about what they should be aiming to achieve next.
27. Parents feel that staff are approachable and are willing to talk with parents and carers if there are concerns. There is good informal communication between home and school through frequent telephone calls, the home-school books and escorts. Parents gain valuable insights into their child's progress through the information gathered by the school and presented on a DVD. New parents receive good information about the school through visits and meetings. The school makes good use of interpreters when required. The prospectus and governors' annual report are informative but do not contain all the required information. The school invites parents to open days and coffee mornings and attendance at events such as the leavers' assembly is good. Communication with parents and carers of ethnic minority pupils is good. This is well supported by bilingual teaching and non-teaching staff.
28. Links with the community need strengthening further. The school makes good use of the local area to enrich the curriculum and through these experiences pupils gain understanding and an appreciation of the world around them. School transport is used well for purposeful visits to facilities such as the shops, sports centres, parks and museums. Pupils are given opportunities to be considerate of others. For example, they participated in Red Nose Day and a collection was made for the homeless.
29. The school has struggled to establish partnerships with local schools and colleges and this means that very few pupils have been able to experience working alongside mainstream pupils. There have been a few successes and one pupil attends mainstream school for part of the week and all post-16 pupils attend valuable taster courses at a college outside the borough. Although staff work hard to prepare pupils and parents for life after school, the school has also found it difficult to find college placements for Year 14 pupils. The lack of opportunities to work and socialise in a mainstream environment limits pupils' personal development and aspirations, and is a real weakness.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **good** and that of key staff is **satisfactory** and the management is **satisfactory**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite the serious difficulties of the last year, the headteacher has done well to maintain a satisfactory quality of education in a very inclusive school.
- The senior staff have continued to provide a very good quality of care and a good range of activities which enhance the curriculum.
- Subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to work right across the school
- The governors are supportive of the school but are few in number and have not yet ensured that all the necessary legal requirements are met.

Commentary

30. There have been a number of barriers preventing the school from moving forward as quickly as it could. Most of the school's accommodation has been re-built, but the renovations have slowed down the progress which the school has been able to make. The managers, in their preoccupation with the inevitable constant demands and with maintaining a high standard of care and safety, have not been able to bring the school as far along as they would have wished in the development of assessment and the curriculum and in ensuring that subject leaders are fully effective.
31. The headteacher has acted effectively to minimise the impact on staff morale and the quality of education which the school provides. The focus for the school is now to upgrade its assessment procedures and then to modernise the curriculum and develop the role of subject leaders. Three months before the inspection the governors appointed a new deputy headteacher as a curriculum and assessment specialist. Under the guidance of the headteacher he has brought in new ideas and has worked hard to move the school on quickly. This work is already showing positive benefits in some classrooms. There are still inconsistencies in classroom practice, for example in planning and the use of communication. This is a reflection of the fact that teachers are at different stages of development and because there has been insufficient time for advice following monitoring to be incorporated into teachers' practice. The school development plan is a comprehensive plan for the governors to take the school through the next three years. However, the plan does not identify clearly which are the highest priorities which need to be established, especially for this first difficult period.
32. Subject co-ordinators have been under pressure from the circumstances of the school and have not all been equally successful. Overall they have provided a basically satisfactory quality of leadership and management but they have not really been able to develop their roles across the school. They do not all routinely monitor their colleagues' planning or observe their subject being taught by others, and there is insufficient liaison between the main school and the post-16 provision. This means that not all the information is efficiently passed on at the end of Year 11. The school recognises these shortcomings and has plans in place to remedy them quickly. In a few subjects, for example, ICT, PE and PSHE, subject leaders are beginning to show good leadership.
33. The headteacher and governors ensure that the school operates a very inclusive provision in which all pupils have full access to every activity. For the many pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, the school is well supported by the LEA. The school development plan includes realistic ways of developing strategies for strengthening its systematic use of pupils' rich cultural and linguistic diversity. The school recognises that the absence of a senior person to co-ordinate

issues relating to ethnic minority achievement (e.g. assessment, curriculum development, teaching practice, staff support and development) impedes progress in this respect.

34. The governors are committed and supportive of the school and show a good understanding of the nature of the pupils, and generally carry out their duties satisfactorily. They are too few in number to be fully effective and a few minor statutory requirements are not met. These mean that there are gaps in the information provided for parents. Financial reporting is done well and the day-to-day running of the school is effective and smooth. Given the difficulties facing the school leaders and the barriers they have faced in maintaining satisfactory standards, improvement is judged to be satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1953287	Balance from previous year	10141
Total expenditure	1841112	Balance carried forward to the next	122316
Expenditure per pupil	27895		

The expenditure per pupil and balance carried forward were higher than normal in this particular year because of the additional money put into the budget by the LEA for the costs of amalgamating the two schools. They are, therefore, not a cause for concern.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

Provision for work related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff make good use of visits into the community to increase pupils' self-confidence.
 - Mini-enterprise and work experience sessions are well planned.
 - Opportunities for pupils to experience working environments outside school are not available currently.
 - Opportunities for pupils to work in college are limited.
35. Members of staff in the main school and in the post-16 provision have a good understanding of both the value of this area of learning and the practical difficulties attached to it. The main school sensibly plans this provision through pupils' personal and social development and citizenship. This allows teachers to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs. For example, during the inspection a good lesson was seen that took place out in the community and concentrated on recycling of waste and how to behave in the outside world. Throughout the school staff make very good use of the local environment to extend pupils' experiences and understanding.
36. Staff in the post-16 provision work hard to give pupils well planned experience of making and selling goods, such as tomato chutney and lavender bags. Pupils work alongside adults other than members of staff to cook, freeze and sell produce, but they do this on their usual site. There are very few chances for pupils to work in employment settings 'out in the real world' and to extend their relationships to working with adults other than familiar staff and a couple of volunteers. Links with Connexions have been tenuous and have contributed little to preparing pupils for further education or wider experience of the world of work; although a new personal adviser has attended some meetings prior to pupils leaving the centre.
37. Similarly, forging links with colleges has been an uphill struggle. Currently most pupils have a satisfactory but limited opportunity to visit and work in a local college. Staff select the courses carefully to make sure that pupils extend their experience beyond activities that are available to them at school. The paucity of 'mainstream' experience is a clear area for development but it is

not the fault of the school that they have not made further headway with this important provision.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2, 3, 4 AND AT POST-16

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English was inspected in detail and a modern foreign language was sampled.

38. As part of the provision for a **modern foreign language**, the co-ordinator has devised termly topics about different countries to introduce words from other cultures. Thus cookery involves the use of Italian and French words, while music lends itself well through the introduction of songs in a range of different languages. While this is not a conventional approach to the subject, it provides a satisfactory curriculum which widens the range of learners' experiences and enriches the language environment throughout the school.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and teaching assistants have very good relationships with pupils that successfully motivate them to pay attention and want to communicate.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but additional systems of communication, including electronic communication aids, are not always used systematically throughout the school.
- Members of staff successfully stimulate pupils' interest in stories, pictures and books.
- Monitoring to ensure consistent practice is not well developed.

Commentary

39. Throughout the school satisfactory teaching overall ensures satisfactory learning and achievement in all elements of the subject. There are no notable differences in achievement between girls and boys or groups of pupils with different needs, different ethnic backgrounds or of different ages, in any element of the subject. This is because teachers and teaching assistants care enormously for each pupil and take great pains to develop strong relationships with them. These very good relationships with staff mean pupils are very well motivated to learn most of the time. Consequently pupils pay close attention to adults and they want to respond and to communicate.
40. Adults in the school are consistent in speaking kindly, clearly and closely with pupils and successfully gaining their attention. They are skilled at speaking to pupils without patronising them, but a few adults use spoken language which is too complex. Most teachers and teaching assistants use additional systems of communication such as signing to ease understanding and also to provide pupils with an effective means of expressing themselves. This means that communication generally works well and pupils achieve well. For example, when a pupil in the post-16 provision was reluctant to stand up, members of staff successfully used signs to reinforce the key idea of standing but also asked questions to which the pupil responded by eye pointing to one hand for 'yes' and to the other for 'no'. However, the use of such strategies, including picture and symbol cards, is not always there so pupils do not always have enough opportunity to make a response beyond giving attention. Similarly, there are occasions when technical aids are used well, such as a pupil using a 'switch' to operate a cake mixer. However, chances for pupils to make choices using electronic aids and other resources are inconsistent. This is why achievement in communication is satisfactory rather than good or very good.
41. Teaching and learning linked to reading are satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the extent to which members of staff successfully create an interest in stories and books. During the inspection an outstanding lesson for the whole of the lower school meant that pupils made exceptional gains in attention and became very involved in the story, 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

The key to the success of this lesson was the use of sensory resources throughout; the total involvement of all supporting teachers and assistants; and the extremely skilful pace which gave pupils sufficient time to explore the materials with the high quality support they were receiving. Higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 have good opportunities to recognise their name card and higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 have good opportunities to develop reading skills by recognising syllables. However, overall teaching and achievement are not better than satisfactory because the use of objects, pictures and symbols to support early reading skills is not always as good as it could be. On occasions too many written and abstract symbols are used which makes learning unnecessarily difficult.

42. The inappropriate use of symbols can also be an unnecessary complexity in helping pupils to learn to make marks on paper and to write. Nevertheless, most pupils receive effective help in the fundamental requirement necessary for developing early writing skills; they are helped to develop the physical skills necessary to use and control a pencil. However, the school lacks a shared approach to developing pupils' further early writing skills. The school recognises that it needs to give pupils more chances to make marks on paper while also planning for this more systematically.
43. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator appreciates the need for more consistently precise assessment and has worked with a colleague to develop useful materials that help staff to agree on assessment. Senior managers recognise that the role of co-ordinators is generally under-developed and that English would benefit greatly from cohesive whole school development. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Staff now make good use of the structure for lessons recommended by the National Literacy Strategy. There is a new and spacious library and resources overall are satisfactory although the school needs more technological aids for communication.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. The development of pupils' communication, language and literacy skills across all subjects is satisfactory overall throughout the school. The strengths and areas for development parallel those described above. For example, the effective teamwork that supports pupils' readiness to learn and communicate applies to all subjects. However, the inconsistencies by some staff in using additional strategies and electronic communication aids to help pupils communicate and the lack of a shared and systematic approach to teaching early reading and writing skills are equally constraining in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy mathematics largely as a result of the very inclusive lessons with an imaginative use of resources.
- There are good assessment opportunities and these assist in detailed planning.
- Teaching plans state what is to be learned, but the targets are not always sharp enough.
- The monitoring of mathematics for post-16 pupils is not adequate and fails to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- The subject leader has not evaluated how challenging lessons are.
- Numeracy is used in many subjects, but more guidance is required if staff are to make the most of this.

Commentary

45. All teachers successfully use a three-part structure in their mathematics lessons. This structure, together with an appropriately modified mathematics curriculum, ensures that pupils up to Year 11 have opportunities to achieve well in aspects of mathematics such as number, size, measurement, shape, time and money. Pupils over sixteen use mathematics as an integral part of their accreditation course. This is particularly the case in modules such as 'Everyday Living' and 'Meal Preparation', where there are good opportunities to weigh, measure and use money in real life settings.
46. The teaching and learning of mathematics are good overall, although they are satisfactory at post-16. Teachers plan well for pupils up to sixteen. Their plans are informed by a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, but more particularly of the pupils. They use resources imaginatively to motivate and involve pupils and teaching assistants show a similar understanding and initiative when developing work for individuals and small groups. Thus, in a very good lesson for Year 8 and 9 pupils dealing with the number sequence from 0 to 10, the teacher and teaching assistants provided very good support with signing and singing for pupils who experienced difficulties in motor co-ordination or expressing themselves. The use of large, tactile number shapes meant that pupils could feel the numbers, put them together physically and discard them when counting forwards and backwards. The frequent collection of information during the lesson means that staff are able to keep up to date with pupil assessments and this in turn aids their planning. However, the information is not always recorded in a way that allows staff to see, and tell parents, exactly where a child is and which very small step is needed next. The senior staff have been working with the mathematics co-ordinator to introduce a more structured form of assessment and this is beginning to work well.
47. Achievement overall is satisfactory. As the result of their good teaching, all pupils up to Year 11, irrespective of gender, ability, or background enjoy mathematics, achieve well and make good progress. Although the majority of pupils are at the early stages of mathematical development, they show good progress in the development of gesture, voice and eye contact to indicate whose turn it is. They also develop the ability to pass objects around the circle, are very aware of two- and three- dimensional shapes around them and, often with assistance, they identify corners, sides and faces when asked. Work with higher attaining pupils is also good. Resources are used well and with good imagination by adults. Thus, a range of clocks was used for many pupils to emphasise the appearance and feel of the hands and faces. However, for those who had progressed further it was also the opportunity to identify and sequence the main events of the day.
48. For post-16 pupils, there are many opportunities within the week and as part of their accredited courses to use and reinforce basic mathematics skills. However, the system of recording student progress does not allow the development of a detailed profile of skills which each student has attained. Currently the school does not have an assessment system that moves with the learner through the school and identifies very specific skills. The new system should overcome this problem. Achievement, teaching and learning for these pupils are judged as satisfactory.
49. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, but a number of key actions are required if the subject is to continue its development. At present there is no continuity of mathematics co-ordination between the two school sites and this means that oversight of mathematical development is not a smooth process. Similarly, the lack of detailed classroom monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator means that new and younger staff are not receiving the feedback they might and this slows their professional development. Improvement since the last inspection is judged as satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Staff use mathematics in a wide range of lessons. It is used in music to emphasise beat and timing. It is part of many PE lessons, in terms of shapes and turns. Similarly, it overlaps art, food technology and design where shapes and measurement are central to much of the work. However, the lack of guidance concerning how best to use such concepts throughout the week means that many opportunities are lost.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their science lessons and make progress through first hand practical experiences.
- A new co-ordinator has been appointed who has good subject knowledge and knows what needs to be done to improve the provision.
- Teaching is planned to meet most individual needs, especially those who are at the early stages of scientific understanding.
- Occasionally the work set is mundane.

Commentary

51. Science is taught as a subject up to Year 11, and at post-16 elements of scientific discovery and learning are incorporated into the coursework, for example in observing changes to materials in food technology. Pupils throughout the school, including those of different ages, gender, special educational need and background, achieve satisfactorily and increase their understanding and knowledge of the world around them. In lessons all pupils enjoy the work and maintain interest over quite long periods of time, especially where the work is practical. Pupils' work folders show that achievement has been satisfactory but variable over the last year. The school has now settled into its new buildings and a new co-ordinator for the subject has been appointed and the lessons observed show that achievement is improving.
52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff teams work well together to provide a busy and enjoyable working environment. Teachers take good care to choose activities which will excite the pupils and maintain their concentration. For example, lessons about parts of the body were held in the sensory room with pupils using torches to see the veins appearing in their hands. However, teachers do not always take full advantage of the interest generated. Even though classes contain pupils with a wide range of abilities and ages, planning does not always include clear statements of what is expected from each pupil, or what opportunities there are for individual assessment and for pupils to use ICT, numeracy and key language. Pupils' records show that pupils in a few science lessons are spending time colouring in related words and pictures with all pupils in a class being given the same words or pictures. This is unsatisfactory and this activity does not assist the pupils in making rapid progress. In spite of this, pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are very good. Assessment is satisfactory but the system needs to be modernised and the co-ordinator has recognised this as an area for improvement. This is included in the subject development plan.
53. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with the development of a subject policy and an appropriate subject scheme of work. The new, well qualified co-ordinator is enthusiastic to develop the subject by taking a thorough approach to monitoring teachers' planning, meetings, observations and recording. Resources are satisfactory and sufficient for delivering the schemes of work but there are still areas for further development, for example in the provision of digital measuring instruments. A good-sized specialist science room has been set aside in the new building but this has yet to be set up. Visits to the Science Museum and to nearby Mudchute Farm have been used well to support lessons. There were no specific subject

judgements at the last inspection, but taking everything into account improvement is judged to be satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11 means they learn well.
- The subject is well led by the knowledgeable co-ordinator.
- A few teachers do not use ICT enough to support learning in other subjects.
- Digital photographs and DVDs are used to effectively record and demonstrate pupils' progress.
- The ICT suite is small and is insufficiently used.

Commentary

54. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory overall, but it is better in Years 7 to 11, and this is a reflection of the quality of teaching. Work in pupils' folders indicates that there have been gaps in the past, but more recent work is of higher quality. The past gaps may be explained by the considerable changes to the accommodation which have taken place, putting equipment out of commission for long periods. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 learn to operate switches to activate fans, music and lights and teachers use computers well to teach pupils the principles of cause and effect, as they explore what happens when they press a switch. By Year 6, most pupils are able to do this with increasing independence and experience using a variety of software.
55. In Years 7 to 9, pupils use computers with increasing confidence and get pleasure from seeing digital photographs of themselves on the screen. A very well taught upper school session with a group of pupils from Years 7 to 10 was highly effective, with all staff aware of progress and targets on the new assessment sheets. All the pupils were engrossed in their tasks and were enthusiastic about what they had learned and achieved. More able pupils in Years 10 and 11 word-process their name and surname correctly and learn to use the karaoke machine and operate a camcorder. Less able pupils have opportunities to operate battery-operated toys and can press specific points on a touch screen to produce visual and sound effects.
56. Pupils at post-16 achieve satisfactorily. Pupils are taught, and assessed on, skills in using computer equipment as part of the ASDAN accreditation programme. Lower attaining pupils of this age experience sights and sounds generated electronically for example by computers and are taught how to activate switches to make these experiences happen. Higher attaining pupils use word processors with support and are familiar with the printer. They are making progress in using and controlling the mouse and using simple graphics programmes.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. ICT is mainly taught through other subjects and most teachers ensure that this is done as a matter of routine. They provide pupils with a satisfactory variety of activities and make use of an appropriate range of software. Teachers do well in ensuring that all pupils, even those with physical difficulties, are able to control computers through appropriate switches. The teaching is made relevant to their lives. Pupils learn how to control everyday devices such as kettles, microwaves, televisions and CD players. A few teachers lack the expertise and a few do not always make it a priority to incorporate ICT into their lessons. For these lessons, learning can be hit and miss. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are taught well in specific ICT lessons by the specialist teacher and this skilful teaching leads to good achievement. Most pupils who need them learn how to use electronic aids to develop their language and communication skills. A few pupils however have not been given enough opportunity and for these pupils this is an omission. The co-ordinator has improved the assessment procedures and these are now good. Pupils are given targets for ICT, which are clear and specific and enable all staff to know their levels of attainment.

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a high level of expertise and a clear view of future developments. He has worked hard to improve the records of what pupils have achieved using different media like the digital camera and is producing a DVD showing different levels of work which will allow all teachers to use the same standards to judge the quality of pupils' work. This is a useful step forward. Management of the subject is only satisfactory, as the co-ordinator has limited time to ensure that all staff can use the available software and assess pupils' progress. However, he has produced training materials for other teachers on using equipment such as the scanner which have been found useful. The ICT suite is not used effectively; it is small and has a limited number of up to date computers available. The department also lacks such items as interactive whiteboards, which could be used profitably to support learning. Teachers receive good support from an ICT technician. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. The inspection team saw some good examples of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects, and there is a computer in each classroom. ICT is particularly well used in mathematics, where pupils take turns using a programme to draw triangles and pupils become increasingly enthusiastic. Digital photographs were used effectively in a citizenship lesson to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding. While most teachers make effective use of ICT to support learning, a few teachers do not use it, even when it would clearly stimulate the pupils.

HUMANITIES

History and geography were sampled and religious education was inspected in full.

60. No lessons in **geography** were able to be seen during the inspection. However, an examination of subject files, pupils' work and discussions with staff shows that the school offers a satisfactory curriculum which adequately meets the needs of the pupils. In **history** pupils follow a suitable scheme of work which gives them satisfactory opportunities to make progress in the subject.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned to meet pupils' needs.
 - Achievement may sometimes be held back by teaching which is not very skilful.
 - The subject is led with considerable enthusiasm but monitoring and assessment are not fully developed.
 - Teaching and learning vary in quality from teacher to teacher.
61. Achievement in the subject is satisfactory. There is a well planned curriculum for teachers to follow, and teachers and teaching assistants usually make sufficient use of sensory materials to ensure that the curriculum is relevant for pupils. For example, pupils enjoy celebrating special occasions such as Eid, by making cards and Easter by decorating eggs. In activities such as these they make satisfactory gains in increasing their awareness of 'special' events. However, achievement is sometimes hampered where the teaching is not well paced, and the activities are not relevant to all the pupils.
62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. During the inspection judgements about teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, there was detailed planning and preparation that meant differing needs within the group were met very well and the level of challenge was realistic throughout. For example, one really good lesson concerned

the idea of 'special' people who help 'us'. Exciting props and teaching strategies meant that pupils learned quickly what a police-officer looks like and does. Where lessons are less successful, teachers use spoken language which is too complicated for the pupils to understand and the resources are not sufficiently well organised to ensure that sensory materials are available throughout the lesson. As a result, the pupils become bored and learn little because they do not understand what is happening.

63. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator leads the subject with considerable enthusiasm. She has made very good use of the locally agreed syllabus to ensure that the school has a curriculum that is relevant for pupils. As a result, this subject makes a good contribution to pupils' developing experience and understanding of cultural differences at a level suitable for them. However, the co-ordinator and senior staff recognise that the school needs to develop more consistent and precise means of determining what pupils have learned. They also acknowledge that the co-ordinator's role is not yet fully developed in monitoring teaching and raising achievement. The subject has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, music and design and technology were sampled, and physical education was inspected in detail.

64. A scrutiny of work and displays and a discussion with the post-16 co-ordinator indicated that **art** is a subject that contributes well to developing pupils' confidence and self-awareness. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject in their planning. They make good use of resources, particularly paintings of classical artists, to stimulate learners to produce their own versions of subjects such as water lilies and cityscapes (Monet), personal photographs (Warhol) and collage (Miro). There are good multicultural stimuli that contribute to work on hand paintings (Aborigines) and Diwali cards.
65. Art is enjoyed by all learners as a result of the stimulating topics within the scheme of work, but also because of visits, such as the recent workshop at the Tate Modern. In addition, teachers provide good multi-sensory stimuli which assist learners in their production of pictures and collage books relating to such topics as the rainforest and grasslands. Art also makes a significant contribution to the development of learners' self-confidence by the way in which displays are used to both celebrate and explain how individuals have interpreted their world as the result of looking at the work of great artists of both the past and present.
66. The bulk of the school's **music** teaching is provided by two 'facilitators' who are skilful performers and have enormous enthusiasm for what they do. Their work is exciting to watch and pupils enjoy the 'buzz' that their lessons produce. Although they are theoretically managed through the school's music coordinator, they are not permanent members of the established staff and they have not been fully included in all the school's planning and teaching systems. Among other things this means that not all the activities closely match pupils' individual needs, and this is a weakness. The scheme of work for the subject is unsatisfactory as it lacks the required detail. There are regular, well-received visits from instrumentalists through the Newham Academy, and a Latin American harp player recently gave a performance to the pupils. Photographic evidence shows that these visits were much enjoyed by everybody and gives an insight into how the school could improve its opportunities for pupils to develop an interest in the subject.
67. Evidence from pupils' work and lessons in **design and technology** shows that, although all aspects of the subject like resistant materials are covered, the school makes it a priority to prepare pupils for as much independence as possible through food technology. Teachers and teaching assistants make sure that there are plenty of sensory experiences. They exploit the subject's natural links with mathematics and science by encouraging the counting of 'spoonfuls' of cake mixture and ensuring that pupils feel the difference between separate, combined, raw and cooked ingredients. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' experience of

different cultures as teachers plan to use foods from various parts of the world. In the lessons observed there were missed opportunities for assisting pupils in their understanding. In one lesson, the recipe cards had too many symbols and in both lessons, although teaching and communication was satisfactory, staff did not sign consistently usefully throughout.

Physical Education (PE)

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learners achieve well, and become physically confident and aware of their bodies.
- Teaching is good at all levels, providing positive experiences for learners.
- The new co-ordinator is imaginative and has developed a good action plan.
- The subject is constrained by the limitations arising from the school's outdoor facilities.

Commentary

68. PE is a popular subject for pupils of all ages. Lesson planning is detailed, with good attention to individual needs, strengths and weaknesses. Imaginative use is made of equipment and there is a good pace to lessons. Pupils experience an appropriate range of activities that assist in the development of balance, movement and games skills, and make good progress. For example, in a good Year 11 lesson that started with a warm up session to the music of Enya every pupil participated and enjoyed clapping different parts of the body, following instructions from the teacher. Teaching assistants helped non-ambulant pupils who also had the same opportunity to demonstrate their skills to the rest of the class. The teacher demonstrated balance on one point of the body and the whole class enthusiastically copied. Individuals were asked to demonstrate good sequences and the rest of the class watched with a good level of attention. Throughout the session, there was a good reinforcement of both physical skills and the specialist vocabulary, such as 'balance', 'point', 'swinging' and 'turn'.
69. Leadership and management are judged as good overall. The co-ordinator has only had the role for a short while, but is already trialling a new curriculum with clearer assessment opportunities. He has made very good links with other schools and bodies outside the school and this is laying a good foundation for work on a wide range of physical skills. The use of dance is being developed as a means of celebrating the richness of pupils' backgrounds. Adaptations are being made, such as the use of ramps in bowling and more opportunities are developing for learners to use local sports and leisure facilities. Health and safety is, rightly, a key priority and this is reinforced by teachers in lessons and also in the careful attention paid to it by the very good site manager.
70. There are good opportunities for pupils at the post-16 centre and subjects such as rebound therapy, yoga and aerobics add a richness to the normal PE curriculum. The development of water confidence has been a particular strength, largely as the result of very good teaching and support provided by teaching assistants who implement physiotherapy programmes in the very successful warm water pool. Careful attention to detail is taken and the pool is being used well to develop confidence and provide opportunities for learners who have physical difficulties. The Stratford site is limited by its outside environment, which does not have a large enough soft or hard play area for the full development of games skills to develop. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for PSHE during the school day and these are used effectively to promote pupils' personal and social skills.
- Pupils' independence is supported well.
- The school is incorporating citizenship well into the PSHE programme of work.
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils through which adults model appropriate social behaviours.
- Procedures for assessment are still being developed.

Commentary

71. All pupils, irrespective of gender, background, age or special educational need, make good progress and achieve well in PSHE and citizenship. All staff work hard to ensure that pupils become as independent as possible, both in lessons and in other activities. All pupils have targets for personal development on their individual education plans and teachers and teaching assistants place a strong emphasis on helping them to achieve these. However, there is no school council to help pupils to share their views and help them to be effective members of their community.
72. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils rapidly develop their social skills because of the skilful teaching and effective support. Teaching for younger children appropriately focuses on improving their communication skills. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 participate in well planned good morning routines that give them the opportunity to greet each other in the classroom. Registration sessions are used effectively in Years 7 to 11 for personal development. For example, in a Year 7 circle time, the warm and welcoming atmosphere results in the immediate involvement of the pupils, who become enthusiastic and make good progress in social interactions. Good use is made of all times in the school day to promote self-help and independence. For example, there is very good provision for PSHE during lunchtime in the dining hall. Staff have had recent training on feeding and drinking and are using this effectively. Pupils receive certificates for using a knife and fork appropriately. Good hygiene is promoted effectively throughout the day.
73. The school has successfully incorporated citizenship into the PSHE programme. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are encouraged to learn how to behave in the environment and are taken on visits to places such as the library, West Ham football ground and the fire station. They are able to collect rubbish for recycling, some independently, and take it to the public bins. One pupil was able to recognise the bin for paper by its colour. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities, such as watering plants and feeding the goldfish.
74. In post-16, importance is given to independent living skills, such as making tea and toast, and pupils learn to spread butter on the toast. The ASDAN programme encourages pupils to develop as independent young adults and pupils experience the wider world by spending time in the community visiting parks, gardens, museums, shops and cafes. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of traffic. However, in a few lessons, such as food technology, there are missed opportunities for the promotion of independence.
75. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, as the school continues to have a good programme of personal, social and health education and the development of independence and life skills. The subject is well led and managed and there is a comprehensive scheme of work which includes a good emphasis on activities to promote pupils' capacity to be good citizens. The co-ordinator is producing information cards for parents, which include bathing, nail care, hair care, brushing teeth, relationships and sex education. At this time, procedures for assessment are not well developed, although there is a record of activities through photographic evidence and PSHE forms the main element of individual education plans.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	5

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	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).

* In a special school such as this, 'standards achieved' are judged in relation to pupils' individual targets and not in relation to national standards.