

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN ELIZABETH II JUBILEE SCHOOL

Kennet Road, London

LEA area: Westminster

Unique reference number: 101184

Headteacher: Ms Mary Loughnan

Lead inspector: Alan Lemon

Dates of inspection: 11 – 13 October 2004

Inspection number: 268615

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
Age range of pupils:	5 - 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	63
School address:	Kennet Road London
Postcode:	W9 3LG
Telephone number:	020 7641 5825
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Lady Carol Djanogly
Date of previous inspection:	28 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee School caters for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Most pupils live in Westminster but others come from neighbouring London boroughs. Forty-one pupils have severe learning difficulties and 15 have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Eight pupils, most of whom are in Years 1 and 2, are autistic. As a result of their special educational needs, pupils' attainment when they enter the school is very low. Pupils' backgrounds are extremely varied and many have homes in less privileged areas served by the school. Forty-three speak English as an additional language. Nine pupils are either refugees or asylum seekers. A higher than average number of pupils enter or leave school other than at the usual time because their families spend limited time in the areas the school serves.

The school is involved in an Educational Action Zone from which it has been helped to build resources and expertise in information and communication technology. The school is also part of an Excellence in Cities scheme and from this has gained access to a City Learning Centre offering specialist facilities and training for information and communication technology.

Currently, the school is the subject of the local authority's re-organisation proposals for special schools. The school building is currently undergoing extensive renovations and repairs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20165	Alan Lemon	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music
9406	Roy Cottington	Lay inspector	
1880	Garry Bignell	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Citizenship Religious education English as an additional language
32963	Joan Lock	Team inspector	Science Geography History Design and technology
32915	David Harris	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. It provides good value for money. The school is well led and managed, which has ensured that teaching and learning are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and behave very well. They achieve well in their education and personal development.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's very good leadership has kept the school on the track of maintaining its good provision and good improvement.
- As a result of the school's very good ethos, all pupils enjoy excellent relationships with each other and staff.
- As many lessons are planned and carried out very effectively, pupils develop a very good interest in learning and work extremely hard.
- While the curriculum has improved, it has done so slowly because of the difficulty in providing continuous effective leadership for all subjects.
- The opportunities for higher attaining pupils to gain accreditation for their achievements are too limited.
- Pupils achieve very well in communicating, using information and communication technology and in art and design.
- The school provides the highest level of care and welfare for all of its pupils, including their health and safety.

Overall, there has been a good improvement in the school's provision for its pupils and in the standards they achieve. The school has made good progress on the improvements needed from the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils throughout the school, whatever their needs, achieve well. The achievement of students in the further education department is good.

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
Year 9	Good	Good
Year 11	Good	Good
Year 13	Good	Good

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

In Years 1 and 2, where most autistic pupils are grouped, achievement is good as a result of the expert ways the teacher and classroom assistants help them to overcome barriers to learning. These pupils achieve well in communicating, using the Picture Exchange Communication System. They recognise numbers and count up to 5 and know how their time is organised. In Years 3 to 6, and in Years 7 to 11, all pupils are taught and supported very effectively and achieve well in English and mathematics. A strong emphasis on teaching these pupils to communicate using signs and symbols or language leads to very good achievement in speaking and listening. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 copy the individual letters of their name. By Year 11, these pupils write sentences independently and read fluently. Higher attaining students in the further education department will

read novels with comprehension and interest. They recognise monetary values and make up given sums using different coins. Most pupils and students count out a given number of objects and many read the time from a clock face. Throughout the school, pupils and students with profound and multiple learning difficulties communicate well using switches and signs.

Achievement is good in most subjects and there is no variation in the achievement by different groups of pupils. Pupils and students achieve very well in information and communication technology because of the very effective use made of resources in many subjects. As a result of expert teaching and very high expectations, they also achieve very well in art and design. Achievement is satisfactory in science, overall, because the plan of what is taught is not completed and too little use is made of the science laboratory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is very good throughout the school. Teachers and their classroom assistants work together very effectively and have formed an excellent relationship with pupils, which results in pupils being confident and keen to learn. Teachers think of the best approaches to promote learning and use literacy and numeracy strategies well to divide lessons into varied and challenging activities. They have all the expertise necessary and in good measure to meet the range of pupils' needs, which leads to all pupils benefiting from very good inclusion. Lesson planning is very good in identifying clear learning objectives. Teachers and classroom assistants are thorough in assessing and recording how well each pupil has learnt in relation to what was planned.

The curriculum is satisfactory, overall, and meets requirements. While there have been some improvements in planning what is taught over the long term, for example in English, the task is not completed in many subjects. This is because the school has a recurring difficulty in recruiting suitable teachers to co-ordinate curriculum development. This results in some areas of learning lacking appropriate breadth and balance. The highest attaining students in the further education department have too few opportunities to enter for accredited courses. The provision for the care, health and safety of pupils is excellent. They are all supported and guided well in relation to their educational and personal needs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has provided the school with a very clear direction and sets the staff high expectations. As a result, staff morale is high and the teamwork is effective despite the problems caused over a number of years by high staff turnover. This has made it difficult, overall, to establish more than satisfactory leadership roles in the rest of the school, although the deputy headteacher and certain subject co-ordinators are effective. The management of the school is good, particularly in monitoring and evaluating teaching. Managing staff performance through annually agreed objectives linked to a very good programme of professional development makes a significant contribution to school improvement. The work of governors is good and they fulfil all of their statutory obligations.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. Pupils' views are also very positive.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the co-ordination of mathematics and science as well as that of many of the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum is made effective so that the planning of what is taught is made complete and provides a better breadth and balance of learning opportunities.

- Pursue all the opportunities available to provide pupils in Years 10 and 11 and students in the further education department with appropriate accreditation for their achievements in the subjects they study.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement, overall, is good, as a result of very effective teaching and learning. The staff's good expertise and skill in meeting all pupils' needs makes significant contributions to their achievement in subjects and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Data on pupils' performance and their work show their achievement is good.
- All pupils, whatever their background or special educational needs, achieve well.
- There is very little variation from good achievement in the subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

1. The systematic monitoring of pupils' performance was recently implemented in English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education. This monitoring is based on a commercially developed program measuring pupils' performance using P Scales which are now being used widely in special schools. The extent of the data so far collected is too limited to provide a complete analysis of progress over time or to say what trends in performance there might be. However, data are sufficient to show the large majority of pupils making at least satisfactory gains in learning in those subjects monitored. In lessons and in the work pupils have done over the past year, the picture is of good achievement. What, in a number of instances, prevents pupils achieving very well is the fact that the planning of what is taught, for example, in mathematics and science, is not set out in a sufficiently comprehensive and balanced way. This creates some gaps in learning which detract from an even better picture of achievement. In addition, while the achievement of the highest attaining pupils is good, they could raise their achievement with the greater challenge presented by examined courses in English, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design.
2. Achievement in ICT is very good as result of high quality resources and the expertise used in teaching the subject. The use of ICT has a high profile in many subjects. This is especially true of the significant part played by interactive whiteboards in teaching and learning. These are often used very skilfully by staff and pupils for a wide variety of learning. The considerable subject knowledge with which art and design is taught and, in particular, the successful blend of appreciating and making art leads to pupils' achieving very well. Achievement in English is good, overall, and it is very good in speaking and listening. In English and in the other subjects, teachers and classroom assistants use a wide variety of means, including language, signing and symbols to develop communication. The promotion of communication and literacy is a key part in all lessons and is good. Pupils achieve well in mathematics lessons as teaching is very good. Pupils are making good progress by applying what they know about number, money and time in practical ways. They are equipped with many of the numeracy skills they need to cope with mathematics in other subjects. However, the subject has not been co-ordinated effectively for some time and this is just now getting underway. Incomplete planning of what is taught in mathematics is the result, with some aspects of shape, space and measure not being promoted effectively. Achievement in science is satisfactory but better achievement has been hampered by the slow development of the subject due to difficulties in recruiting a suitable co-ordinator. As a result, the science laboratory is not used sufficiently by pupils to learn about science through experimentation, which hampers achievement. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in religious education and in personal, social and health education lessons.

3. Very effective professional development has ensured there is the expertise to educate autistic pupils. As a result they make good progress in overcoming barriers to learning caused by autism by communicating more effectively, following normal routines, collaborating with others and coping with the unfamiliar. The group of autistic pupils has achieved the capacity to walk together to the supermarket and do some shopping. There has been a good improvement in the standards achieved by pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties in Years 7 to 11 and similarly students in the further education department. Their learning needs are very well planned for in lessons. The sensory approaches to learning they need are well understood and resourced. The fact that students with profound and multiple learning difficulties are all in one class means lessons are sharply focused on appropriately challenging activities. Pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported through the school and achieve as well as those who speak English only. The use of signing, symbols, pictures and the repetition of familiar vocabulary enables these pupils to take a full part in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to respond verbally in English whenever possible in order to improve their spoken language. Newly-admitted pupils with EAL are supported where possible by bilingual assistants and picture-based communications. This is valued and proves very effective.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, whilst their relationships with others are excellent. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of behaviour throughout the school day are very good.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy being in school and take part in all activities very enthusiastically.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and make an extremely good contribution to a very positive school ethos.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding and respect for the backgrounds, beliefs and culture of others.
- Too many pupils are regularly late due to transport problems.

Commentary

4. Without exception pupils and their parents say that school is an enjoyable experience for them and this view is well supported by the inspection findings. At the start of the school day all staff are on hand to welcome the pupils to school with every pupil being personally greeted by name. The morning welcome contributes to a very positive ethos and a very effective start to the school day. All pupils enter classrooms with a sense of eagerness and quickly settle down to their work. In lessons pupils show very positive attitudes to their work. They try hard and want to do well. They persevere with their work and show patience and tolerance when undergoing at times painful medical support. Above all, they enjoy the range of activities provided and at times become very excited in lessons activities. During the inspection several pupils said how much they enjoy school life and how proud they are of the school.
5. Pupils behave very well in lessons, during breaks and when moving about the school. There is a good awareness and respect for school rules. School property and resources are treated well. Pupils show high levels of respect for one another and there is an absence of any violent, aggressive or racist behaviour. On the contrary, they are keen to support and help one another and work well in pairs or groups when asked to do so. There have been no exclusions from school during the past 12 months.

6. Relationships between pupils and with staff are excellent and form the basis of an extremely positive climate for learning in which pupils feel happy and secure. Some 27 countries are represented in the school population, including teaching staff. The school, through its values, policies and procedures, has very successfully created an inclusive community where everyone has a sense of belonging. All staff provide excellent role models and these contribute well to standards of behaviour and relationships.
7. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils are given time for spiritual reflection in well-planned and sensitively delivered assemblies. They are encouraged to know the difference between right and wrong and are helped in this by skilfully devised behaviour plans which emphasise the support necessary to enable pupils to make the right choices. The very good social development of the pupils is encouraged at every opportunity, for example, in an excellent English lesson in the further education department students practised through drama how to behave in a theatre. The cultural development of pupils is also very good, with a wide range of cultural and multi-cultural activities and outings arranged in many subjects.
8. Based on published attendance figures, the school's authorised and unauthorised absence levels are slightly higher than those of similar schools.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	16.6
National data	14.8

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence in 2002/3.

9. The amount of unauthorised absence is due to several parents' removing their children for holidays abroad for protracted periods during term time. Sickness and hospitalisation account for the high level of authorised absence. However, latest figures, yet to be published, show a considerable improvement in attendance, with no unauthorised absence and authorised absence levels well below the national average for similar schools. The majority of pupils are transported to school by local authority transport and some start their journeys in neighbouring London boroughs. On too many occasions pupils arrive late for school, at times by up to 30 minutes. The school carefully monitors the performance of the transport providers and is aware of those who are frequently late. Currently the school is in discussion with those concerned in an effort to improve the service.
10. The school has maintained the very good standards in these areas of its work since the last inspection, which includes maintaining a record of no exclusions. There have been no exclusions of pupils for fixed terms or permanently in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum is satisfactory, overall, but is well enriched particularly with opportunities for participation in the arts. Learning opportunities for students in the further education department are good. The attention to pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is excellent. Pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment is good and it is used effectively to plan teaching and help pupils make progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- The attention given to improving the contribution of lesson planning to pupils' learning has paid dividends.
- Lesson planning is supported effectively by thorough assessment.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy work and invariably set about their lessons with energy.
- A good range of resources is used very effectively to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

11. While teaching is now consistently very good throughout the school, it had been unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11 and in the further education department at the time of the last inspection. The strengths there were in teaching, such as thorough assessment and effective use of signing to aid communication, have been maintained. Weaknesses, such as poor planning and low expectations, have been eliminated. In the context of the school's difficulties in recruiting and retaining well qualified teachers, it amounts to a considerable achievement that educational provision is effective.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	16 (38%)	21 (50%)	3 (7%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. Teachers' planning is very good. Teachers are guided by very clear expectations of what to aim for in setting out their intentions for each lesson, in particular giving clarity to what pupils should learn. The learning objectives for pupils are related well to the good targets written into their individual education plans and also, where necessary, their behaviour plan. The school is striving actively to sharpen links between learning intentions in each lesson and the learning opportunities set out in the planning for each subject. It has achieved this with English and is now addressing the other subjects. Teaching and learning in English are good. By using pictures, symbols and signing supplemented by information and communication technology, pupils learn communication skills, language and literacy very well.
13. Assessment is carried out regularly at the end of lessons by the teacher and classroom assistants, based on what pupils were expected to learn. This results in the widespread practice of good written records of pupils' achievement, which are used well towards maintaining the relevance of lesson plans and focusing more precisely on the areas of support each pupil requires. In effect, the work each pupil is given to do is carefully adjusted to be very well matched to capabilities. As a result, they face the right challenges, which ensure they are all included, whatever their background or special educational needs, in learning very well. With the good assessments of pupils' progress, teachers and classroom assistants are very alert to pupils breaking new ground in their learning and when this occurs they are immediate with their praise and congratulations. The incentive for pupils to succeed is, as a consequence, very strong.
14. Through continual assessment of pupils' progress and by building up excellent relationships with them, teachers and classroom assistants get to know their pupils extremely well. As a result, staff choose approaches to teaching and types of work that pupils find interesting and with which they readily engage. Good expertise has been developed through training in teaching pupils with autism. Recognised approaches are used skilfully with the result that

these pupils are learning very well to overcome the worst effects of autism by adopting routines and working together. More generally, the very good planning means lessons get off to a bright and well focused start when pupils are very skilfully drawn into participating. A friendly rapport, asking questions or song, are some devices teachers use very successfully to get pupils actively involved. Their involvement is made all the more meaningful by their being given a good explanation early on of what they should be aiming to learn. The approaches set out in national strategies such as those for literacy and numeracy are used effectively in making a good start, sustaining a good pace and keeping pupils interested.

15. Teaching approaches are made more effective by the frequent use of interactive whiteboards for visual reinforcement of learning. This ranges with equally good results from pupils following an animation of the song Ten Green Bottles in a mathematics lesson to students in an art lesson discussing paintings by Canaletto and Ingres, downloaded from the National Gallery website. However, the simplest resources are sometimes used with fantastic imagination, as when pupils arranged and took part in a birthday party, which was really a multitude of opportunities to learn to count and match numbers with objects. So they counted out cutlery, plates and party hats, with one-to-one correspondence being strongly reinforced as well as the estimation of which objects were bigger or smaller. Classroom resources are very well matched to pupils' different needs. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties are fully included in learning through good sensory resources. Students in the further education department were highly motivated by the effects they could create with a sound beam reacting to their physical movement. This provided them with a superb opportunity to initiate actions and interact with the sound beam.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, overall, and while it meets the needs of pupils effectively there is a lack of breadth and balance in some subjects. The school provides a good variety of additional activities and learning opportunities. Good resources support the curriculum and accommodation is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides a reasonable range of relevant learning opportunities for all pupils.
- Provision in the further education department is good and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
- The provision for meeting all pupils' special educational needs is good.
- The school provides a wide range of additional activities that enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

16. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are provided, although, because of difficulty in recruiting a suitable teacher, design and technology is, at least temporarily, not taught to the same broad level of most other subjects. However, learning opportunities for designing and making are provided sufficiently through food technology and art and design to meet the statutory requirements. Religious education is now taught according to the locally Agreed Syllabus and this addresses the improvement needed from the last inspection. The learning opportunities in English, personal, social and health education and physical education are good throughout the school and they are also good in French for pupils in Years 7 to 11. Provision for ICT is very good as a result of how well it is used across the curriculum and the fact that what is taught is planned comprehensively. The programme for art and design is very good because of the considerable expertise of the teacher and the high expectations with which it is taught. The good provision for personal, health and social education enables pupils to learn about friendship and learn the skills to work collaboratively and become increasingly more mature and independent. The promotion of literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum is good.

Pupils' communication skills have a high priority in all subjects and the use of ICT is included in all teachers' lesson plans. However, because the co-ordination of mathematics is not as good, the use of numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. A few pupils benefit from attending a nearby special school for some of their lessons. This results, in some pupils transferring to the roll of that school.

17. The curriculum in the further education department is good and is successful in promoting students' independence. There is a link course with a further education college, together with many opportunities for cultural and social experiences, which build on the students' knowledge and understanding. Currently, students are given the opportunity to pursue a maximum of two study modules from the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course. Last year, two students achieved two modules and one pupil achieved one. This year, all students are following some or all the elements of at least one module. However, the few higher attaining students are not challenged sufficiently by this and are not being given the opportunity to gain further recognition for their achievements through appropriate accreditation.
18. The assessment of pupils' performance in subjects using P Levels is assisting teachers in planning lessons to break down what pupils need to learn into small achievable steps. Autistic pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very well provided for by the successful introduction of well-proven methods of educating pupils with autism. These are providing the essential structure and predictability that these pupils need in the classroom. The use of the Picture Exchange Communication System by pupils and staff ensures good communication and inclusion in learning opportunities. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are supported effectively with a wide range of communication aids and by well-trained classroom assistants. The support teacher concentrates well on helping minority ethnic pupils and, in particular, those pupils who speak English as a second language. This is ensuring that these pupils are learning English at an appropriate level and pace and that they access the content of lessons. Sharing lessons with class teachers allows the support teacher to model good practice for colleagues.
19. There is very good use of visits to many places of educational interest and visiting experts into school to meet pupils. One of the significant strengths of art and design is the frequent use of galleries and art workshops run by professional artists to support pupils' work. The school has established important links with several arts organisations including the English National Opera, all of which contributes to very good participation in the arts. Several lunchtime clubs offer pupils opportunities to follow their interests, for instance the chance to be taught how to play computer games, or make jewellery. Pupils are encouraged to make choices from a range of activities and then pursue them for half a term before changing, ensuring that these offer good opportunities for learning. Pupils participate successfully in sporting activities with other schools. They won the Panathlon Challenge, competing with three other schools.
20. Despite problems over retention and recruitment, there are sufficient teachers and learning support assistants. Their knowledge and skills are generally well matched to the curriculum, although they lack expertise in teaching design and technology. The school is aware of this and is working to appoint a suitably qualified teacher. Advice and practical help from therapists have considerably supported learning. Resources are very good especially for information and communication technology.
21. Accommodation is good. There are good specialist areas in design and technology, food technology, music and art and design. However, the school's small hall puts a limit on the scope of activities in physical education for older pupils. The specialist areas for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties such as the splash pool and ball pool are good aids to learning. The library is a good resource and well stocked with appropriate books. The school is well presented and welcoming with displays which considerably enhance the learning environment. The outdoor areas such as the picnic area in the central courtyard and the garden in the further education area, which is tended by the students, are purposefully planned to promote independent and sociable activities. Roof repairs are currently in progress as is building work to upgrade and extend the provision for the sensory curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The attention paid by the school to the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils is excellent. The support and guidance they receive are good. Where possible, pupils' views are sought and they play an active part in school development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The highest priority is given to the care and well-being of the pupils and is seen as key to the success of learning and personal development.
- A range of dedicated staff and other professionals effectively provides for pupils' personal and academic development.
- Procedures for reviewing statements of special educational needs are very effective and contribute well to progress.
- Procedures for helping pupils to settle into school life are very good and enable pupils to quickly become part of the school community.

Commentary

22. The school takes extremely effective measures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The school environment is frequently assessed to ensure that possible risks are eliminated and this attention to detail has resulted in the introduction of a wide range of safety measures, for example, an electronic warning system enabling staff to summon help should there be an emergency. Fire drills are carried out regularly but the timing of these is varied so that all possible circumstances are covered. Records show that the building can be evacuated within one and a half minutes, even when pupils with mobility problems are in the splash pool. The welfare of pupils is seen as a vital and important part of the school's work and all staff share this aim. Child protection is viewed as an important part of pupils' well-being and effective procedures have been developed. Joint training with other schools ensures a very good level of awareness about these issues, whilst new or temporary staff are briefed about the procedures.
23. A very positive feature of pupil support is the way all staff and other professionals work together to ensure that every pupil receives the maximum benefit from a range of services. There are very high levels of mutual respect among teachers, classroom assistants and other professionals, with very good examples of joint planning, training and exchange of information and skills. There is a very strong sense of a shared common purpose for the benefit of the pupils that results in a very major contribution to teaching, learning and personal development.
24. All pupils have statements of educational needs and individual education plans. There is a very high level of awareness across the school about the targets and specialist provision, including medical support. Annual reviews are very effective with high levels of involvement of parents and, where possible, the pupils themselves. Individual risk assessments form a very important part of these reviews and ensure that all staff know the possible risks and vulnerability of every pupil.
25. Pupils joining the school very quickly settle in and value the warm welcome they receive from staff and other pupils. The school has well-established procedures for gathering all available medical and other information at this time and records are well maintained and monitored. All but one of the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with this aspect of the school's work.
26. The care, welfare and support of pupils continue to be a major strength of the school in line with the findings of the last report; the issues previously raised about the preparation of pupils in Years 10 and 11 and of students in the further education department have now been fully addressed by the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links between the school and the parents are very good. The school makes very good use of the community to enhance learning and development. Links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All parents express high levels of confidence and satisfaction about all aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of interesting educational visits and visitors.
- The school has developed good links with local colleges.

Commentary

27. The parents who attended the parents' meeting, those who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire and those interviewed during the inspection overwhelmingly express very positive views about all aspects of the school's work. In particular they agree that their children like school, that staff are very approachable and that the school is well led and managed. The inspection team fully supports these very positive views about the school.
28. The school has developed very strong links with the parents, even though some live some distance from the school. There are very effective levels of communication between school and home. These include information passed through the escorts, telephone calls and home visits. Academic progress reports are compiled at the same time as annual reviews, enabling parents to discuss curriculum areas as well as personal development progress. The school regularly seeks the views of parents through parental surveys. The results are analysed and, where possible, followed up with action. The school has recognised a barrier to effective communication due to language problems. Although interpreters are frequently used, the school is aiming to recruit more bilingual teaching and other staff.
29. The school makes very good use of educational visits and a wide range of visitors to the school to enhance learning and progress. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities and they make a very good contribution to their personal and academic development. Examples from a wide range of activities include visits to local shops, library and museums. Visitors include the English National Opera and London Wildlife.
30. Since the last inspection the school has further developed its links with local colleges to develop the range of courses and accreditation. The partnership with the Westminster Employment Service provides effective preparation for the world work and provides a range of work experience placements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is very good and, overall, that given by other key staff is satisfactory. The school is managed well. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effectiveness of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection.
- Despite difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, the school is managed well.
- Governors are fully committed to the aims of the school and are active in its support.

Commentary

31. The improvement in leadership and management is largely the result of the headteachers giving the school a very clear direction and setting the staff high expectations. Parents are very positive about the school's leadership, seeing many benefits accruing to their children and they are extremely supportive of the work done by the headteacher and staff. Improvement is all the more impressive as it has been achieved against the odds of substantial breaks in the continuity of leadership and management in recent years. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have, on separate occasions, suffered long-term absences. In addition, they have had to contend with the substantial problem of recruiting and maintaining well-qualified staff. All of this has limited severely the scope for tackling the key issues from the last inspection of improving teaching and curriculum planning. Nevertheless, morale throughout the school is high and the senior management team's outlook is very positive. As a result, some impressive headway has been made such as on the quality of teaching. Despite recruitment and retention difficulties, the quality of teaching, overall, is very good and pupils achieve well as a result. The pace of progress in developing curriculum planning has been less marked because of the problem in establishing continuous, consistent co-ordination of subjects by key teachers. However, as much as could be achieved has been and in this respect English, ICT, art and design and religious education, in particular, have benefited from effective leadership and management. The leadership and management of the further education department are good, which has led to a well-planned and resourced curriculum.
32. The task of maintaining a coherent staff and ensuring effective educational provision has been managed with determination. Incentives to attract good staff to stay in post longer are proving successful. Retention rates have improved making it possible for teachers to be appointed very recently to key posts as heads of department. In addition, all subjects, except design and technology, now have co-ordinators, although, for some, co-ordination is very new. The school now finds itself able to extend its monitoring and evaluation work into measuring and analysing pupils' performance with the use of a systematic program based on P Levels. The arrangements for monitoring teaching are well-established and good. The high quality of staff is achieved by the effective management of its performance. All staff work towards agreed performance targets and a very strong link exists between these, school improvement and the very good programme of professional development. This has had a substantial impact in relation to how well staff promotes pupils' communication skills and the use of ICT, which has led to very good achievement by pupils in these areas of learning.
33. The training for governors provided by the local authority is highly thought of by them and they are greatly encouraged through attending courses to be active in the work of the school. Their role in advocating and pursuing its interests with outside bodies is much valued by headteacher. Regular written reports from the headteacher keep governors well-informed and they are knowledgeable and confident about new developments and the issues facing the school. As a result governors are well placed to help the school plan developments, decide the priorities for spending and seeing that best value principles are satisfactorily applied. The school's annual income is in line with that of special schools in general. The surplus of funds carried forward each year is above the expected level and this is largely the result of money budgeted for staff salaries not being spent fully. This occurs as result of employing temporary staff, who are not paid during holiday periods, in the place of difficult-to-recruit full-time staff.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1170025	Balance from previous year	72473
Total expenditure	1148498	Balance carried forward to the next	94000

Expenditure per pupil	17945
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OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

WORK RELATED LEARNING

34. Work-related learning is provided satisfactorily in various ways, particularly for the oldest pupils in the school. In several classes, pupils are given responsibilities for classroom tasks, for example, giving out and collecting equipment or taking the register to the office. Students in the further education department who are physically able are required to take responsibility for organising their lunch breaks by laying tables and clearing away. These tasks are very useful preparation for living and working independently. Training to become self-reliant when travelling is a key feature of the curriculum for those on ASDAN courses. This involves tasks such as familiarising themselves with the plan for a journey, understanding the route, practising the Highway Code when crossing roads and counting money to buy tickets. Accompanying staff ensure that these learning experiences take place in a supervised environment where pupils can make mistakes without becoming unnerved.
35. The school also organises visits from outside agencies to introduce pupils to the world of work. The oldest students have opportunities to do short periods of work experience – usually about a half-day per week. Taken together, these experiences help pupils to develop the basic skills and understanding needed to cope with living and working in a diverse world beyond school.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 to 4 AND IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of signing, pictures, symbols and words enables pupils to make good progress in developing communication skills.
- Achievement in reading and writing is good throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Good leadership and management of English have improved the curriculum and resources for learning.

Commentary

36. Teachers and their classroom assistants use language, signing, symbols and objects of reference very well to develop pupils' communication skills. Overall, achievement in speaking and listening is good throughout the school. Similarly, the input of speech and language therapists and the participation of pupils in social activities and visits out of school contribute significantly to their use of language. This sometimes accounts for very good achievement in speaking and listening. Higher attaining students in the further education department, for example, have achieved very well in reading aloud from a Harry Potter adventure, showing that they understand the influence of punctuation such as question marks by changing their voice appropriately.
37. By the end of Year 11, most pupils read text supported by symbols and some readily read aloud from an unfamiliar book. Pupils with autism in Year 2 achieve well in using the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to read and understand instructions as well as in communicating. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils form letters independently, write their names over dots and use symbols to produce descriptive five-word phrases. In Year 9, pupils identify the sounds of letters at the beginning of unfamiliar words and read familiar words with confidence. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties throughout the school achieve well, aided in their communication by using symbols, switches and body signing. Standards in writing are not as high as those in speaking and listening or reading but pupils make good progress from needing hand over hand support in Years 1 to 6 to forming the letters of their names by Year 7 and free writing of short sentences by the time they reach Year 11.
38. Teachers adapt their approaches to individuals very effectively, constantly communicating with pupils to make sure they get the most out of learning opportunities. Lessons are well planned to account for individual needs and classroom assistants are very well deployed to ensure all pupils are included in lessons. The structure of the literacy strategy is applied effectively. Good introductions to lessons set out clearly what pupils are to do, activities are well matched to pupils' needs and the closing sessions test what pupils have learned and celebrate achievements. Pupils' progress is being well assessed and recorded on a regular basis in the classroom. Teachers discuss pupils' progress with their classroom assistants and note their assessments on lesson plans, so informing the planning of future lessons. Pupils' work is regularly annotated to describe their level of independence and their progress. The relationships that teachers and other adults have with pupils are very good and do much to

create good conditions for learning. Lessons are mainly enjoyable for pupils and they participate eagerly, especially when the content is familiar to them. For example, the story of the Year 6 day out to Windsor recorded on video and projected through the interactive whiteboard with words and symbols to describe the activities, totally engaged them and resulted in their recalling words such as 'train', 'station', 'Windsor', 'castle', 'river', and 'swans' verbally or by indicating the correct symbols.

39. The English co-ordinator combines effectively her other role as the support teacher for minority ethnic pupils to work alongside teachers by leading lessons and modelling good practice. The co-ordinator has revised the plans for what is taught in English and these give greater consideration to all pupils' particular learning needs. This has improved lesson planning and the inclusion of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. The co-ordinator has built up very good resources for English. The library is very well equipped with books, particularly big books and has story bags with props to visually reinforce story books. It also has a good variety of audio-visual aids. Interactive whiteboards are used to very good effect in most English lessons and, by incorporating photographs, video clips, symbols and sound, encourage pupils to take an active and enthusiastic part in story-telling and story-making. Electronic switches of various kinds, light, sound and touch are regularly used to enable pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to communicate and make choices.
40. There is good improvement since the last inspection. The achievement of higher attaining Year 11 pupils and that of students in the further education department is better. However, this has not yet led to the provision of an externally accredited course which could be accessed by higher attaining pupils. Overall pupils' levels of communication have improved following the introduction of PECS for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and symbols for pupils at all stages. The library resource and supportive ICT network have enhanced lessons and improved pupil involvement. Teaching overall has improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. The use of signing and symbols allows pupils to participate in all areas of the curriculum. Speaking and listening are very well promoted across subjects as pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to what others are saying and helped to respond appropriately. Key words are discussed in different subjects; for example, in a history lesson, pupils were encouraged to look up the word 'politician' in dictionaries and discuss their findings after it had been used by the teacher introducing the lesson. Teachers and other adults consistently use age-appropriate language when speaking to pupils, giving them good role models and enhancing their self-image and confidence.
42. **Modern foreign languages** were sampled during the inspection and one lesson was observed. French is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 11, unless they have profound and multiple learning difficulties. It is well organised and very well taught by a teacher who is not a languages specialist.
43. Achievement is good overall. Pupils make good progress from very low starting-points and most are complete beginners. Those capable of communication recognise, recall and, in some cases, repeat simple words in French such as greetings, everyday objects, food and drink and colours. Pupils enjoy their French, especially singing songs and responding to images presented on the interactive whiteboard.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy the lively, engaging mathematics lessons.
- Work in lessons is very well thought out to be interesting and relevant and contributes to all pupils' learning very well.
- The range of mathematics pupils have the opportunity to learn is reasonably broad but there is not enough attention to teaching some aspects of shape, space and measure.
- The curriculum has lacked effective co-ordination for some time and this has hampered improvement.

Commentary

44. Teaching throughout the school is predominantly very good. Teachers have built very good relationships with pupils and, largely, so have classroom assistants. Where relationships are not of such a high quality it is only because of the newness of staff and there is more than sufficient support in classrooms for them to quickly match their more established colleagues' performance. As a result, pupils are relaxed and settle readily to work. Lessons invariably get off to a brisk start and pupils get fully involved in activities. There is a familiar structure to lessons that pupils are well accustomed to and this is based on the effective use of approaches in the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils know what is expected of them and they are at least willing and more often very keen to meet the challenges in the work teachers have planned. Activities are very well planned and based on a detailed knowledge of what each pupil can do in mathematics. The arrangement of groups of pupils according to their mathematical ability also ensures what they are taught more accurately matches their needs. As a result, the planning for each lesson is clear on what pupils should learn and, by the end of each, there is a good written record of what pupils have achieved. This high level of attention to what pupils learn means each lesson builds systematically their mathematical knowledge and skills and over time this results in good achievement across the school.
45. The very good relationships with pupils and the good understanding of their learning needs are used very well to choose and prepare interesting and engaging classroom activities. In accomplishing this, there is a high level of inclusion for all pupils in learning and those who do not speak English as their first language find no barrier to achieving as well their classmates. Interactive whiteboards, among latest modern technology in the classroom, are used very effectively. In one lesson, the pupils' digital portraits were used by the teacher as counting aids in an exercise of adding and taking away one, making the task more personal and interesting for pupils. Year 11 pupils took turns to draw the minute and hour hands on a clock face on the whiteboard to show different times at half past the hour. This provided a very clear demonstration for the whole class of how a clock face is set out to show the time. Equally, as each pupil had to make selections from the whiteboard menu to draw red or blue lines for the hands, undo errors and erase their work, they also learnt much about computer functions. Simple resources such as building-blocks and number-cards are used just as effectively to reinforce counting and matching objects to numbers. One excellent lesson on counting and matching numbers was, for pupils, an extremely enjoyable enactment of a birthday party. They excitedly set the table, counting out the cutlery and dishes, counting out party hats, one for each pupil, and the number of candles on the cake. This setting gave a myriad of excellent opportunities to learn number and the teacher worked most effectively not only in making the lesson exciting but also in ensuring that learning 1 to 5 was consolidated. There were very good opportunities for the pupils to learn about 'big' and 'small' and to identify colours such as yellow and green.

46. While the range of mathematics taught throughout the school is learnt very well by pupils, there are aspects of mathematics not given enough attention and, as a result, many pupils are not learning as much as they should on measurement by volume, weight and size. The emphasis is placed on pupils' acquiring the basic mathematical skills to increase their ability to cope in everyday demands. While this is appropriate, the extent of this emphasis is too much at the expense of the other areas of mathematical learning. In respect of basic mathematical skills, pupils are taught about money and time. The group of autistic pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, plan a shopping list and visit the supermarket on a regular basis. This is done primarily so that they can overcome the barriers created by autism and they achieve well by organising themselves and coping with the challenges presented by busy streets and shops. They also learn about money transactions to the extent of exchanging coins for goods. As a measure of the good progress over time, the highest attaining student in the further education department recognises the denominations of all coins and notes and makes up sums of money correctly from coins and notes. He knows the value of many items and estimates likely cost reasonably accurately.
47. The imbalance between the different aspects of mathematics has arisen as a result of ineffective management of the subject for some time. While the school has made considerable efforts to improve the provision for mathematics, it has found it hard to recruit and retain a member of staff to co-ordinate the subject across the school. Nevertheless, co-ordination is satisfactory as it has been particularly effective in ensuring very good teaching and learning. The delegation of responsibility for mathematics was made possible only very recently and there has not been enough time yet to tackle completely the shortfall in planning a comprehensive scheme of what to teach across the school. However, a good action plan is providing the basis to address the weakness in the curriculum and the work now underway to complete the scheme of work is effective. While there has been insufficient improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection, there has been a good improvement in teaching and learning. As a result, overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. As the management of the curriculum has been inconsistent over time, the co-ordination of planning opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills in other subjects has been unsatisfactory. When instances occur where pupils use number, for example, counting out beats on a drum, these happen fortuitously rather than a deliberate promotion of the application of mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning.
- Planning does not address how learning will systematically develop over time.
- Assessment is used well to build on learning from one lesson to the next but is not done with a clear view of how pupils should progress over a longer period.

Commentary

49. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory, whereas at the time of the last inspection it had been unsatisfactory. In one lesson, most Year 4 pupils pointed to the right parts of their bodies during singing 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. Higher attaining pupils went onto making faces and placing the features in the correct relationship to each other. Year 6 pupils were interested and explored the characteristics hard materials. A group of Year 10

and 11 pupils were keen to learn about the digestive system and named the different parts of the body associated with digestion. By the end of Year 11, pupils conduct simple experiments and discuss the reasons why an experiment succeeded or failed. They also know that safety is important and how to keep themselves safe. They use books and the Internet to research science topics. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

50. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, although it was not possible in the duration of the inspection to see lessons involving pupils in Years 7 to 9. Teachers have a sound knowledge of science and use interesting and stimulating resources to bring lessons to life. Information and communication technology is very well used to stimulate interest. The story of The Three Little Pigs was illustrated using an interactive whiteboard gaining pupils' interest in understanding the difference between hard and soft materials. Effective behaviour management systems mean lessons are well ordered and where pupils want to learn. Classroom assistants use their substantial knowledge of the pupils to help them effectively. Assessment is well used to plan work from one lesson to the next but is not used so pupils can build on their skills over a longer period of time.
51. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A co-ordinator has just been appointed who is developing good ways to improve the planning of what is taught in science and to support staff with training and resources.
52. Overall, planning is currently not sufficiently developed to ensure that learning progresses in a systematic way over long periods. For example, the long term plan only covers a two year period, whereas, in the case of Years 7 to 9, there is a three year period which results in there being no adequate plan for what current Year 7 pupils will be learning when they reach Year 9. The systems for assessing pupil progress do not provide enough information to help teachers and pupils to raise standards. The specialist science room is not used enough for science lessons, so more challenging learning opportunities through well-resourced experiments are lost. The lack of suitable accreditation in science means higher attaining pupils are not stretched enough and cannot show their achievements when they leave school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used very effectively to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- The achievement of all pupils is very good.
- The introduction of interactive whiteboards has improved teaching and learning.
- Subject leadership of the co-ordinator is very good.

Commentary

53. The use of ICT in its various forms by pupils and staff is very good and this leads to good teaching and learning, overall. The equipment available is wide ranging, including interactive whiteboards in every classroom, switches, sound and light beams and other communication aids as well as sound and vision recording and playback devices. ICT has a high profile and plays a very important role in most lessons. It is effective in enabling pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to communicate and make choices. Pupils are stimulated by the good use made of ICT by teachers and respond enthusiastically to challenges in work involving the interactive whiteboard.
54. Pupils with autism in Year 2 paid good attention when the interactive whiteboard was used. Despite their autism they sat well and waiting their turn. They all but one skilfully used the pointer to uncover familiar faces hidden under a colour screen. In reading, Year 6 pupils dragged symbols across the interactive whiteboard to match pictures, whilst pupils with

profound and multiple learning difficulties used the pointer to change images. Most Year 9 pupils confidently use the 'point and drag' technique to move information around the interactive whiteboard. The CLICKER 4 writing program has been adapted for use as the class register so pupils use 'point and drag' to register their attendance. In a history lesson, Year 11 pupils retrieved information by searching through an electronic file using appropriate touch-sensitive icons on the interactive whiteboard. Students in the further education department are very confident in their use of the interactive whiteboard and computer. Higher attaining students log on to and open WORD, word-process their writing, save it and know how it is later retrieved. They independently alter the size of letters and change the colour of the background. Students know about and access the Internet. They use e-mail to communicate with each other. Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties are motivated to make sounds and respond to rhythm by tripping sound beams in a music lesson.

55. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards to stimulate and involve pupils in lessons, often by incorporating video excerpts or photographs of the pupils into the story. Pupils are encouraged to become interactive and are given opportunities in most lessons to use the technology to answer questions or make choices to show what they have learned. Pupils enjoy using ICT in all its forms and show good concentration and effort when using it. ICT is planned into all lessons and pupil participation is assessed and recorded on lesson plans to inform following lessons. The planned use of an ICT skills checklist for recording individual pupil progress helps ensure that important skills are taught, practised and learned.
56. The co-ordinator for ICT has developed a comprehensive scheme of what pupils across the school are taught. The co-ordinators for other subjects have incorporated the use of ICT into their curriculum schemes, leading teachers to plan ICT effectively into all lessons. The ICT skills of the staff, teachers and classroom assistants are continuously being developed by the co-ordinator who has very good subject knowledge. Since the school has been part of an Educational Action Zone an interactive whiteboard has been installed in every classroom. Their impact on learning was the focus of research carried out by the University of Hull, which concluded that teachers were very resourceful in using interactive whiteboards to raise achievement. The school is currently aiming to become a centre of excellence for ICT and provide outreach support to other schools.
57. Extensive use of writing programs, including the use of symbols, has built pupils' self-confidence in communicating, reading and writing as well as improving the presentation of their work. The specialist resources of the dark room and the sensory room serve successfully to enable pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to interact and use switches and sound beams to communicate. A lunchtime ICT club allows pupils their choice of computer activities such as computer games. The ICT co-ordinator supervises the club and encourages pupils to learn new skills, such as the use of toolbars or manipulating hand-held game controllers.
58. ICT has shown good improvement since the last inspection. Training has improved the quality of teaching and, as a result, pupils' achievement has risen. Other subject co-ordinators are including ICT in their schemes, enabling teachers to plan lessons more effectively. The unsatisfactory progress made by pupils in Years 10 and 11 and by students in the further education department at the time of the last inspection has been addressed and these pupils now achieve very well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. ICT is put to good use in virtually all subjects to motivate, engage and teach pupils. It is an integral part of most lessons and used by most staff with increasing skill and confidence.

HUMANITIES

60. Two lessons were seen in **geography** and one lesson was seen in **history**. Pupils' work and records were scrutinised and provision for the subjects was discussed with the co-ordinator. Both subjects provide interesting lessons enriched by trips and activities such as role-play and model-making, all of which contribute well to the pupils' cultural understanding. The older pupils are encouraged to use the Internet and the school library to research topics, which develops their knowledge and skills. The co-ordinator helps people well with ideas and resources but does not have an overview of the subject. As a result, the long term planning is not sufficiently developed into a detailed scheme of work to ensure there is a full range of learning opportunities.

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- RE is well organised and well taught throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy learning about different religions and handling materials.

Commentary

61. Pupils achieve well in RE and gain much from the feelings that emerge from stories they hear in lessons, for example in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were learning about growth by following the story of *The Hungry Caterpillar*. Through sharing their thoughts and opinions with others, they are developing a sense of identity and self-worth. Pupils have a rudimentary understanding of some religious symbols and festivals. Pupils enjoy handling religious artefacts and dressing in clothes from other cultures. In a good Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils dressed in Muslim clothes and learnt about prayer positions.
62. Careful and sensitive teaching, supported by effective work from classroom assistants, leads to good learning and achievement. As well as learning facts about different religions, pupils are also learning how to interact with each other, to tolerate different opinions and beliefs and to behave appropriately when others speak. Good resources are available, including artefacts from different world faiths. Visitors to the school and trips to various places of worship help to reinforce learning.
63. The subject is well led and organised. Useful guidance is provided for teachers on what to teach during some of the topics. The programme follows the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Overall, development of the subject has been satisfactory.

TECHNOLOGY

64. Insufficient **design and technology** lessons were seen to make a judgement about provision. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they design and make products. For example, Year 10 and 11 pupils designed and made a purse. Scrutiny of teachers' records shows there is a satisfactory range of activities planned, which includes preparing food, working with textiles and manufacturing objects from wood and plastics. However, from discussions it emerged that there is a lack of teaching expertise because of the school's difficulties in recruiting a qualified teacher. This has led to the design and technology workshop being under-used and, as a result, the opportunities for learning through work done using resistant materials are too limited.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

65. One **music** lesson was seen, involving music with students in the further education department. Otherwise, no specialist teaching of music took place during the inspection and, therefore, no judgement is possible on provision. Students, who had profound and multiple learning difficulties, interacted very well to the different musical sounds and rhythms they heard. A sound beam, which made sounds in reaction to pupils' movements, was particularly effective. The written plan of what is taught in music across the school provides a suitably broad range of learning opportunities based on the National Curriculum. These plans are adapted carefully to reflect the range in pupils' attainment and serve to support the inclusion of all pupils in learning opportunities. The plans clearly identify where pupils' communication and their use of information and communication technology will be promoted. However, the plans are based on a two-year cycle of topics, whereas pupils will remain in some classes for three years, which suggests they will repeat topics.
66. Two lessons of **physical education** were seen, which is too few to reach an overall judgement on provision.
67. One good lesson gave Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils a range of challenging activities to work at. They persevered enthusiastically and showed that, with opportunities to practise skills, they improved them and enjoyed the results. A lesson for autistic pupils in Year 2 provided them with plenty of activity stimulated by music and some skill-based work using balls, skittles, bean bags and a plastic tunnel. Pupils were encouraged to perform activities and given plenty of praise for trying which kept them motivated.
68. Lesson planning seen was good and included learning intentions for individual pupils, ensuring every one was involved in practising skills at appropriate levels, resulting in all pupils being successful and showing pleasure when congratulated. The newly appointed co-ordinator for PE has yet to monitor the subject to assess the need for improvements. Resources are adequate but the gym is too small for groups of secondary aged pupils to participate in vigorous indoor games.
69. The school makes good use of local sporting facilities including the swimming pool for Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strengths seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and improved upon.
- The work of accomplished artists is used very effectively to inspire pupils' creativity.
- Pupils have learnt the very effective use of drawing, painting and experimentation with a variety of materials to create art.

Commentary

70. The considerable degree of expertise with which art and design are taught leads pupils throughout the school to be engaged at an impressively high level in making art. Provision is very effectively led and managed as it is thoroughly well adapted to pupils' needs and creates a broad range of learning opportunities that are very challenging. Teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well by undertaking challenging work in generating creative ideas and in their execution of pieces of two and three dimensional art. These strengths were features of the subject at the time of the last inspection and they have developed well since then, resulting in a good improvement.

71. Pupils are helped enormously with their ideas and use of imagination by the significant number of references to contemporary artists' work and the works of major artists. Great use is made of museum and gallery resources near to the school. Pupils of all ages have made work in response to paintings by Hockney and Kandinsky. Following a visit to Tate Britain to see an exhibition of red and black constructions, Year 9 pupils made their own red and black sculpture by assembling folded and twisted paper. The full benefits of contact with artists' works is derived from the teacher's expert skill in interpreting these in ways that make them relevant and accessible and lead onto pupils developing their own responses. A group of higher attaining further education department students were supported very effectively in discussing details in a Canaletto painting. They chose this from the National Gallery website and projected it in large scale on an interactive whiteboard which was used effectively by them to enlarge parts and focus in on details. The same group are also exploring Ingres' portrait of Madame Moitessier. They are re-making the composition in life-size three-dimensions and recreating through drawing and painting the patterns, colours and textures in the fabrics of her dress and jewellery.
72. Pupils achieve very well in using art materials and equipment to draw, paint and assemble images using mixtures of different materials. For lower attaining pupils, the opportunities to improve hand-eye co-ordination, manipulation skills and choice-making are very well promoted. In one lesson, most time was spent in pupils' investigating gummed paper, learning how best to handle the sticky material before going on to apply it successfully to smooth the surface of the Clarice Cliff jug object they were making. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 who took part in an art workshop at the Serpentine Gallery experimented by drawing with eyes shut or holding hands. They achieved a very good exploration of mark-making and built on this by thinking how marks can expressively represent emotions such as feeling angry or relaxed. They went on to create a collage by re-assembling torn drawings in a different way.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHE is taught effectively and regularly in every class and this forms a strong basis for pupils' personal development.
- Good teaching leads to effective learning.
- Citizenship is well incorporated into the wider PSHE curriculum and is made relevant to pupils' capabilities.

Commentary

73. Achievement throughout the school is good. Pupils are set termly objectives, which they work towards. Many of these are expressed in terms of personal development, social interaction, behaviour and taking responsibility. Over time, pupils make clear progress towards these and their progress is recorded through teacher observations and extensive use of photographic evidence.
74. Pupils are given many opportunities to make choices and decisions, for example in choosing the activity they prefer, which materials to use and even the amount of support they may need. Classes spend much time in activities such as sharing, taking turns and responding appropriately to others. This helps them to become better prepared for coping with life beyond school and encourages them to develop an increasing degree of independence and maturity.

75. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are knowledgeable and skilled in helping pupils to learn more about themselves, their surroundings, the implications of their own behaviour and how to interact with their peers and adults. All teachers and support staff provide very good role models and show great care, patience and respect when working with pupils.
76. The subjects are led by an enthusiastic teacher who has identified areas for development, including extending the wider PSHE curriculum for older students. Improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory, especially the inclusion of citizenship strands which are selected because of their suitability to the learning capabilities of the pupils. Good connections are made with other subjects, such as science, in topics such as healthy eating and sex education. Resources for the subjects are adequate.

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	2
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	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4

The effectiveness of management	3
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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 against individual targets and not national standards.