

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL

Witney

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123334

Headteacher: Mrs C Niner

Lead inspector: Mike Kell

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st April 2005

Inspection number: 268637

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	2 – 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	94
School address:	At The Bronze Barrow Cedar Drive Witney
Postcode:	OX28 1AR
Telephone number:	01993 703963
Fax number:	01993 708796
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Alley
Date of previous inspection:	7 th – 11 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Springfield is significantly bigger than most schools of this type and age range, but it is located on three separate sites. Its main site is at The Bronze Barrow; this is the shared, purpose built accommodation that opened in 2003 for Springfield and Madley Brook Primary School. The two schools have their own classrooms, but there are many shared resources and facilities, such as food technology and information and communication technology accommodation. There are nine Springfield classes based here. In addition there is a fully integrated nursery that contains children from both Springfield and Madley Brook schools and is jointly staffed by teachers and teaching assistants from both. Six classes, covering Reception to Year 11, cater for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties who are grouped according to ability and social needs. There are two designated classes for pupils with autism; one each for primary and secondary age pupils. One group of seven primary age pupils is based full-time at Ducklington Primary School. They are included full-time in their age-appropriate classes, supported by Springfield staff. The secondary age pupils at The Bronze Barrow site have particularly complex needs; the vast majority of pupils in Years 7 to 11 are based in the adjoining Wood Green School, where the 25 pupils are grouped into three classes.

There are three times as many boys as girls and all pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. In most cases this is for severe learning difficulties or autism, but smaller numbers are identified as having profound and multiple learning difficulties, hearing impairment, or speech and communication difficulties. Because of pupils' learning difficulties, their development, especially their attainment on entry to the school, is

significantly delayed compared with others of a similar age. The school has a broadly average socio-economic mix, in keeping with its intake from a wide geographical area. Almost all pupils have a white British background, and only one does not have English as their first language, although this is not their main barrier to learning. The school was recognised as an Investor in People in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
13101	Mike Kell	Lead inspector	Design and technology Music
9837	Roy Walsh	Lay inspector	
11239	Sue Flockton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education and citizenship Religious education
22948	Mary Vallis	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs
19386	Trevor Watts	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology German English as an additional language
17546	Chris Wonfor	Team inspector	Science Art and design Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International
Upperton House
The Avenue
Eastbourne
BN21 3YB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES	20
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	21
AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE AND KEY STAGES 1 – 4	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of Springfield School is satisfactory. Good teaching promotes pupils' learning well, although their progress over time is no better than satisfactory. The positive ethos means that pupils achieve very well in their personal development. Leadership is satisfactory overall although that of the headteacher is unsatisfactory. Management systems are unsatisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils, and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The head teacher and senior managers have worked hard and successfully to move the school into its new premises, but there is a lack of sharp, focused leadership and direction in relation to some aspects of the school.
- Pupils respond very well to adults' very high expectations of their behaviour; they behave very well and have very good attitudes to school; they show interest in lessons and are keen to learn.
- Senior managers' procedures for monitoring and evaluating different aspects of the school's work are not sufficiently robust, consistent or planned.
- Liaison with a range of therapists, nursing staff and other agencies is very good and contributes strongly to pupils' learning.
- Systems by which the school carries out self-evaluation, and uses this information, are unsatisfactory; it collects assessment data but its procedures for collating, analysing and using it are poor.
- Residential visits and the use of local community facilities and day trips to places of local interest support the curriculum well and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

The school's effectiveness has declined since the last inspection. The two key issues previously identified have been resolved; the poor accommodation has been addressed by the school's move to a new, purpose built site, and the inadequate post-16 curriculum has been resolved by the fact that the school no longer has students of this age on roll. However, deterioration in the effectiveness of leadership and management has resulted in a reduction of quality in other features of the school. In particular, teaching and learning, pupils' achievements and the quality of the curriculum all show unsatisfactory improvement; these aspects are now satisfactory rather than good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 2	Good	Very good
Year 6	Good	Very good
Year 9	Good	Very good
Year 11	Good	Very good

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

Although pupils learn well in lessons, this is not extended into good progress over time in many subject areas. Overall, pupils **achieve satisfactorily** in relation to subjects of the curriculum although they achieve well in personal, social and health education (PSHE)

throughout the school, and overall, their personal development is very good. Their achievement against personal targets is good. Boys and girls, pupils with additional learning needs and those whose first language is not English all achieve similarly. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, as do pupils in English, mathematics and history. Achievements are satisfactory in physical education and work-related learning (WRL), but unsatisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT). It was not possible to judge achievement in art and design, design and technology, geography, religious education, music and modern foreign languages. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality education for its pupils. **Teaching and learning are good** across the school. Teachers have good knowledge of subjects and of their pupils. The teamwork between teachers, effective teaching assistants and a range of therapists makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They provide very high levels of support and encouragement. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, but while many present appropriately challenging work, on too many occasions academic expectations are not sufficiently high. Lesson planning is variable; some plans are very detailed while others are much too sketchy. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress. Overall, the school's curriculum is satisfactory, but suffers from limited monitoring and evaluation by senior managers. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good, while provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory. The PSHE curriculum is well planned, and provides a good range of topics. There are satisfactory opportunities for enrichment and good opportunities for learning outside the school day. The school has good accommodation and staffing. Procedures for the care, welfare, and health and safety of pupils are very good. Pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance. The school has also developed good links with the local community and with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Senior managers have created a strong ethos of care for the individual, with an emphasis on personal development and behaviour management, but this is not paralleled by similarly high expectations of pupils' academic achievement. There are significant limitations in monitoring and evaluating lessons and the curriculum, and in tracking individual pupils' progress. Data is not collated and analysed and so it cannot be used to compare pupils' achievements in different subjects and different phases, or to show how well different groups of pupils perform. Overall, the head teacher is not leading the school firmly enough to overcome these matters. Governance of the school is satisfactory; all statutory requirements are fulfilled.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school. They are very appreciative of the school and the way it is developing their children's attitudes and learning. Pupils are happy with their school and enjoy everything it has to offer.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Strengthen leadership by articulating clear strategies for the inclusion programme, on all sites, and raising expectations of pupils' academic achievement by introducing accredited courses.
- Develop and implement routine and robust systems that enable senior managers to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, the curriculum, and the assessment, recording and tracking of pupils' achievements. The procedures need to be consistent, the outcomes shared and subject co-ordinators involved.
- Collate, analyse and use assessment data to compare pupils' relative achievements in different subjects and different phases, determine how well different groups of pupils perform, and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls, pupils with additional learning needs and those whose first language is not English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn well in lessons, although ineffective aspects of assessment, leadership and management limit their progress over time.
- Pupils do not have opportunities to follow accredited courses in Years 10 and 11.
- A range of therapists makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- Older pupils' achievement is not extended through links with local colleges.

Commentary

1. Overall, pupils learn well in lessons, but this is not extended into good progress over time in many subject areas. Teachers generally teach well and evaluate pupils' progress against the short-term individual targets outlined in their individual education plans (IEPs). However, in the majority of subjects, teachers do not assess pupils' attainment against nationally recognised levels, such as 'P' scales. Consequently, judgements of small gains in pupils' learning and how well they are progressing in subjects are difficult to make. One implication of this is that teachers do not always expect enough of pupils, nor provide appropriate challenge. This is particularly evident in Years 7 to 11 on the Wood Green site. Currently, no pupils integrate into mainstream lessons; none follows any accredited courses and none attend the local college for "taster" courses in vocational and other subjects. The collation and analysis of whole school data is limited which means that that pupils' relative progress in different subjects cannot be compared, and the performance of different groups of pupils cannot be determined.

2. Children's good achievements in the Foundation Stage result from good teaching and the quality of team working between adults, both with mainstream staff in the integrated Nursery, and between teachers and teaching assistants in all the classes. Staff quickly develop a clear understanding of each child's needs and are, therefore, able to help them to achieve well. This is supplemented by a well-planned curriculum and good assessment systems. Staff continually update records to show children's achievements, as well as drawing all the information together to provide an overall level for each area of learning in order to evaluate progress.

3. Pupils achieve well in developing communication skills; the school's recent emphasis on promoting these skills has resulted in a greater use of additional systems, such as signing, symbols and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). Although pupils make good progress overall, there are some differences between year groups and between pupils' progress in the three attainment targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6 in all the attainment targets, and in Years 7 to 9 pupils' progress is good in speaking and listening and reading, and satisfactory in writing. Pupils' achievements in Years 10 and 11 are satisfactory. The differences are due

to consistently better teaching and learning in Years 1 to 9 and a lack of expectation of pupils' writing in Years 10 and 11.

4. In mathematics, pupils achieve well in lessons and they make good progress as they move through the school. Enthusiastic, well-prepared and organised teachers plan activities that meet individuals' needs and so pupils are provided with challenging work. However, a significant weakness in Years 10 and 11 is the absence of courses that are nationally recognised. A number of pupils' attainment is such that they are capable of gaining certifications that are externally accredited. The lack of such opportunities indicates a lack of expectation and challenge.

5. Overall, pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory across the school. Those at the Wood Green site develop a range of scientific skills and, as a result, they are beginning to think scientifically and to apply their knowledge and skills to new ideas. Their learning is enhanced by opportunities to use the mainstream school's laboratories. Although these pupils are well challenged in lessons, this does not extend into opportunities for them to achieve any accreditation for their work.

6. Senior managers took the decision not to teach ICT as a separate subject in most classes, and so teachers on the Bronze Barrow site are required to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in ICT through the rest of the curriculum. Teachers have only had variable success with this. Pupils in Years 9 to 11 on the Wood Green site learn well in discrete lessons. Overall, although some pupils learn well in lessons, their achievement generally is unsatisfactory. This is because of unsatisfactory assessment arrangements, a fragmented curriculum and shortcomings in subject co-ordination.

7. Pupils achieve well in history and PSHE. Achievements are satisfactory in physical education and work-related learning (WRL). It was not possible to judge achievement in art and design, design and technology, geography, religious education, music and modern foreign languages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school are very good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils display very good attitudes towards the school and to learning.
- Behaviour is very good because it is consistently well managed.
- The school promotes very good social development amongst its pupils.
- Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their confidence, independence and self-esteem.

Commentary

8. Attendance is improving and is good, taking into account the complex medical needs of some of the pupils. The school has good systems in place to promote attendance and unauthorised absences are carefully monitored and checked. This all has a very good effect on pupils' learning. Punctuality is satisfactory because although many pupils arrive on time, others are frequently delayed by transport difficulties.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.0
National data	8.8

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.9
National data	0.5

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

9. The school is a well-ordered community. Almost all the parents are happy about pupils' behaviour and the consistency with which the behaviour policy is applied. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is very good. When occasional inappropriate behaviour does occur it is associated with the nature of pupils' special educational needs, and it is managed well so that pupils generally respond to the directions of the staff. The behaviour of pupils at meal times and in the playground is equally very good, with very few incidents of rough behaviour due to thoughtlessness. When these occur, parents say that the staff deal with them quickly and effectively. Pupils feel very safe and secure at Springfield; the very few fixed-period exclusions that have been imposed were appropriate and carried out in full accordance with school procedures.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed - White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
91
1
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

10. The majority of pupils have very good attitudes to school; they show interest in lessons and are keen to learn. They are attentive to instructions and adjust well to school routines. Although some pupils find it difficult to concentrate because of the nature of their special educational needs, such as autism, many sustain concentration well when teaching is stimulating. All the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that their children enjoy being at Springfield School. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities planned for them; they try very hard, are open to new experiences, are very pleased whenever they succeed and are willing to celebrate the successes of others. Within the context of their learning difficulties, children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress towards the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception year.

11. Pupils' personal development across the school is good. Their relationships with teachers and other staff are very good, and most develop positive relationships with other pupils. For example, a group of Year 9 and 10 pupils had recently been on a residential adventure course during which they had undertaken activities such as canoeing. They gave a presentation about their time there and it was very noticeable how they supported each other and gave interesting and confident explanations of the activities they had undertaken. It was evident that they had gained confidence and self-esteem both from completing the activities and from developing and giving the successful presentation.

12. Older pupils take responsibility for some classroom routines and support their less capable classmates within lessons. As they move up the school, pupils develop turn-taking skills and demonstrate their growing independence by working with minimum supervision and through making choices for themselves. Because teachers encourage them to think and remember, pupils enjoy taking responsibility. Pupils are very well supported in developing their independence.

13. The personal development of pupils is an important element of the school's provision. Pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural development is good and their social development is very good. The whole school sings hymns in assembly and reflects on feelings such as sadness as well as, on happier occasions, pupils' achievements. Reflection and spirituality are acknowledged in many areas of the curriculum; for example, in a literacy lesson for Years 6 and 7, pupils were spellbound when following the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* as the butterfly emerged from a cocoon. Showing concern for each other and understanding the importance of feelings is a central part of the school's ethos; for instance, more capable pupils carefully help others to leave the hall after assembly and help to put away equipment. Most are interested in discussing how they feel when others are angry or happy, and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. The school offers very many opportunities for pupils to make outside visits to extend their learning and to develop social awareness. Visitors are greeted politely and with interest and pupils are very proud of their school. A friendly atmosphere ensures all receive a warm welcome. Pupils' good cultural development is promoted through subjects such as music, art and design, English and history. The school also pays attention to developing their multi-cultural awareness. Religious education contributes well, as does the school's participation in the Comenius Project, which provides links and activities with other schools across Europe, and in the past some of the staff have visited schools in Belgium, France and Hungary. Visitors into school also assist this; recently a parent came into school to show pupils how the Chinese New Year was celebrated.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good, and pupils follow a satisfactory curriculum, with satisfactory opportunities for enrichment. Pupils' learning is supported by good links with parents, other schools and the community. The school looks after its pupils very well.

Teaching and learning

Overall, teaching and learning are good across the school. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' achievements and progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons.
- Teachers have good knowledge of subjects and of individual pupils' skills.
- Very high levels of support and encouragement contribute effectively to engaging pupils in their learning.
- The quality of teamwork between teachers, teaching assistants, therapists and other agencies makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Many teachers present appropriately challenging work, but on too many occasions expectations are not sufficiently high.

- The quality of lesson planning is variable; some plans are very detailed while others are much too sketchy.

Commentary

14. Although good, teaching and learning are not as strong as they were at the time of the last inspection. At that time, over 50 per cent of lessons were very good or better, and in 90 per cent of lessons teaching was considered to be good or better.

15. Teachers work very hard, and generally successfully, to teach lessons that promote effective learning. However, they tend to do this somewhat in isolation and without sufficient support and guidance from senior managers, or input from subject co-ordinators. This is because senior managers' monitoring and evaluation systems are not sufficiently consistent or rigorous, and their findings are not shared formally and routinely. Consequently, the school's best practice is not disseminated. Similarly, co-ordinators do not have opportunities to develop the teaching of their subject because they do not have the opportunity to monitor classroom practice.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	8 (14%)	36 (62%)	12 (21%)	2 (3%)	0 (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.

16. The vast majority of lessons have certain common features of good teaching. In particular, adults work well in teams and all of them expect pupils to behave appropriately, to listen to instructions and to respond sensibly. Because this is consistent throughout the school, pupils develop very good attitudes to their learning; they apply themselves well to their tasks. They remain involved, even when lessons are long or when tasks appear difficult, because teachers and teaching assistants encourage, prompt and support them very well. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and of their pupils. Therefore, they are able to provide them with activities that closely match their needs and so all pupils are involved in learning and time is used productively. The school's recent focus on developing communication skills has also helped in this respect. Teachers are effective in using a variety of additional communication systems, such as symbols, signs and PECS. Consequently, pupils make good progress in lessons in acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding.

17. Some elements of teaching are less effective, particularly the quality of lesson planning. On too many occasions, teachers fail to identify the few key features of lessons that they expect pupils to learn. Lesson objectives are often much too broad and long-term rather than sharply focused core features of the topic being studied. In these circumstances, teachers are not able to evaluate pupils' progress towards achieving them because of their impreciseness. Lessons in the Nursery are well planned and identify ways of promoting learning in other areas of learning as well as the ones that are the main focus of the activity. In a few classes and in some subjects, the most capable pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In part, this is because of weaknesses in planning; teachers do not identify challenging learning targets or provide the necessary extension work required. However, in addition, teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough. This is reflected in the absence of accredited courses for pupils in Years 10 and 11, and in other

phases of the school. The Nursery is an exception, where high levels of challenge are maintained.

18. Other professionals effectively support learning. The nurse, physiotherapist and occupational therapist develop good programmes to ensure that pupils' medical and physical needs are addressed so that they are in the best possible position to learn. The speech and language therapists contribute well to improving pupils' articulation and language acquisition. Other colleagues, such as the teachers from the county advisory service for sensory-impaired pupils, support individual pupils very well in lessons, such as by providing skilled signed interpretation.

19. Teachers' assessment of pupils and their work is satisfactory, although there are good procedures in the Foundation Stage. Informally in lessons, teachers assess pupils' knowledge and understanding well through questions and frequent discussion with support staff, but opportunities are often missed for support staff to record pupils' responses, especially during introductions to lessons. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses are recorded and measured against targets on IEPs. These relate well to targets set at the Annual Reviews of pupils' Statements of Special Educational Need, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils, especially more capable and older ones, to discuss their targets and consider how they might best achieve them.

20. Teachers record pupils' attainments electronically in English, mathematics, science, ICT and in PSHE. The assessment of progress in other subjects is more informal and is not measured against nationally recognised scales, such as 'P' levels. Good photographic evidence contributes to pupils' records of success as they move through the school, but this is not always annotated to show how it relates to the different areas of learning associated with different subjects.

The curriculum

Overall, the school's curriculum is satisfactory, with satisfactory opportunities for enrichment. The school has good accommodation and staffing, and satisfactory learning resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is good.
- Provision for PSHE is good.
- The curriculum for Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- There are good opportunities for learning outside the school day.
- There is a good match of staff to the needs of the curriculum.
- Overall management of the curriculum is limited.

Commentary

21. The overall quality of the curriculum has declined since the last inspection, when it was judged as good, although the Foundation Stage curriculum has remained good. Within the Nursery, all children are set specific individual learning objectives for lessons. The curriculum is well planned and is based on the nationally recognised stepping stones that lead towards the early learning goals. Planning ensures that all six goals are addressed adequately, and it is supplemented well by teachers' use of a pre-stepping stones programme that has been developed by the local education authority.

22. All pupils, but especially those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, benefit from a sensory-based curriculum that allows them to explore objects related to lessons through their senses. Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs, such as autism and physical disability, is satisfactory, although it is good in the Nursery. Access to the curriculum is sometimes restricted for pupils in wheelchairs because facilities do not meet their needs. For example, tables are not height-adjustable in the food technology room, which restricts pupils' participation at times. For example, in an art lesson, a pupil had to try and balance her painting on a tea tray because the table was too low for her to sit at with the rest of the class. Pupils with autism receive a satisfactory curriculum that is highly structured but is not always planned sufficiently well to enable all to participate throughout the lesson. The less effective features of curriculum provision for pupils with additional special educational needs stem from the fact that there are no staff members with particular responsibility for managing this aspect of the school's provision.

23. Pupils on the Ducklington site follow the same curriculum as their mainstream classmates, and this is appropriately broad and balanced. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 11 on the Bronze Barrow and Wood Green sites suffers from deficiencies in planning, monitoring and evaluation. Although much of the long and medium-term planning that is done by individual teachers is thorough and detailed, there is no overall management of the curriculum. Therefore, no one has an overview of exactly which elements of each subject curriculum each class has covered. Subject co-ordinators only see the plans of what teachers intend to teach; no one monitors later whether the proposed topics were actually taught, how successful they were and what progress the pupils made. Similarly, children in the Foundation Stage age are placed in the Nursery as well as in other classes, but the person who has responsibility for monitoring their progress does not actually teach this age group. The problem is compounded by the fact that valuable curriculum information is not always passed on to pupils' subsequent teachers and it is therefore wasted. For example, teachers were observed starting new topics at the Wood Green site by providing activities that would enable them to make baseline assessments of what pupils knew and could do, when this information was readily available elsewhere. This does not make effective use of the data the school has collected on pupils' achievements.

24. Individual teachers are responsible for producing their class timetables, and although these may be monitored by senior managers, they are not evaluated. Consequently, they are all written in a different format and in many sessions it is difficult to identify the main subject focus of the lesson. This has implications for the breadth and balance of some pupils' curricula. For example, some subjects, such as a modern foreign language, are taught but do not appear on the timetable. In other instances, the wide age range within many classes means that curriculum coverage may be impaired. Humanities are planned on the basis of a rolling programme of history, geography and religious education being taught for the equivalent of one term per subject each year. Current arrangements for planning and monitoring the curriculum cannot guarantee that some pupils will not repeat topics or that others will not miss them completely. However, the wide age range in classes does occasionally have advantages, such as the pupils in Years 5 and 6 who experience modern foreign language because they are with older pupils.

25. The breadth of curricular opportunities for the oldest pupils, especially those on the Wood Green site, is unsatisfactory. Recently appointed staff are improving links with the adjacent secondary school and pupils now have some access to specialist rooms, such as science laboratories, and there is limited inclusion in mainstream tutorial groups. The leavers' programme includes a community module and some opportunities for work experience. However, the school does not offer any accredited courses to its oldest pupils.

Until recently, the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course was available. However, no elements of this course are currently taught although pupils have the skills to complete them, as demonstrated by their performance in plays such as *Midsummer Night's Dream* and their confident ICT presentation of their recent residential visit to the Woodlands Centre. In addition, pupils do not currently have the opportunity to attend college "taster" courses in vocational and other subjects. Overall, curriculum opportunities are too limited for this age group.

26. The PSHE curriculum is well planned, and provides a good range of topics. There is an appropriate emphasis on sex and relationships education, but drugs awareness is not yet fully covered. In addition, not all aspects of citizenship are yet included in the programme for pupils in Years 7 to 11. The use of local community facilities and day trips to places of local interest to support the curriculum provide good and useful opportunities for pupils to mix together and be part of the wider community. The many visits to local places of interest, such as the Ashmolean Museum and Cogges Museum of Country Life enhance pupils' understanding in subjects such as history and geography. There is also participation in local sports and arts events. Pupils have represented the school in boccia and table cricket tournaments, and the school has been part of the Witney Music Festival and the Witney Partnership Arts week. From a young age, pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential journey and these provide important opportunities for personal development. For older pupils, these visits also enable them to participate in a good range of activities to support the curriculum, such as climbing and abseiling.

27. While there are a number of effective links with other schools, the full potential for inclusion in mainstream classes to meet the curriculum needs of individual pupils is not being exploited. Integration is being addressed well in some instances, such as on the Ducklington site, but at other times planning is not sufficiently formalised and the school is not being active enough in developing these opportunities, particularly on the Wood Green site. All the extra-curricular activities like football and tag rugby that are run for pupils at Madley Brook School are also available to Springfield pupils. Unfortunately, these tend to be after-school clubs. As most Springfield pupils travel by taxi, frequently sharing transport with other pupils, it makes participation for them very difficult and so few can attend.

28. The Bronze Barrow site provides a very good range of facilities, including specialist features such as a hydrotherapy pool, sensory and soft play areas. The building is spacious and allows for pupils with mobility problems to move or be moved freely between rooms. There are some good displays, which contribute to creating an environment in which pupils' achievements are acknowledged and in which they can learn effectively. However, in many classrooms the amount of display is limited by problems with the alarm systems, which detracts from the provision, especially of those needing a more sensory curriculum. The Wood Green accommodation has a number of shortcomings, such as one classroom being a thoroughfare, although the new building will provide much more suitable accommodation.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for the care, welfare, and health and safety of pupils are very good. Pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils.

- Liaison with a range of therapists, nursing staff and other agencies is very good and contributes strongly to pupils' learning.
- Very effective induction arrangements allow children to settle quickly into school routines.
- Pupils' views, although valued, are not systematically collected.

Commentary

29. The senior management team sets high standards for the staff, and pupils are treated with high levels of dignity and respect. Class teams meet on a regular basis to discuss individual pupils' particular circumstances and this ensures consistency in the management of pupils and their needs over time. Pupils feel safe and secure. They are confident about being able to share their concerns and worries with staff because of the exceptionally high quality of relationships within the school.

30. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are very good. Risk assessments are carried out for pupils' activities both in and out of school. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff and the headteacher discharges the supervision of this important aspect of care very well. Parents are very happy with the quality of care provided and pupils say that teachers help them to attain their personal targets. Staff know their pupils and their special educational needs extremely well and the school holds detailed information on the requirements of each pupil.

31. The school has developed very close links with the nurse and therapists who work in the school. The nurse, speech and language therapists, physiotherapist and occupational therapist maintain a very good oversight of pupils' progress and develop appropriate programmes that are followed in school and at home. They liaise very closely and share information effectively with school staff and other agencies involved with the pupils and their families. These include social workers, teachers from the county advisory service for sensory-impaired pupils and the school-funded counselling service available to families. This joint working is an important factor in ensuring that pupils are in the optimum position to learn because their various needs are being addressed

32. As a result of the close liaison between agencies, Annual Reviews of Statements of Special Educational Need provide a very good forum for sharing information from home and school so that realistic, well-informed targets can be set. These reviews are well attended by parents, who feel very well supported. The good involvement of class teachers helps to ensure that progress is reported to parents as usefully as possible. Individual education plans effectively describe the different needs of each pupil and are regularly reviewed. Teachers are aware of pupils' individual targets and help pupils move towards them well.

33. The induction arrangements for pupils are very good, and as a result the school has an up-to-date picture of each pupil's needs and abilities to facilitate the settling-in period. Children are visited at home before they enter the Nursery, and once there they are observed carefully so that assessment of their special educational needs can be accomplished. Parents are grateful for the support they receive at this early stage of their child's education. Close liaison between teaching staff ensures pupils' anxieties are minimised when moving between classes. From Year 9 onwards, pupils meet with Connexions advisors and social workers in order to ensure support during transition times. The care and support given by the staff to pupils when they go out for work experience ensure their placements are rewarding and beneficial.

34. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory. Pupils at the Wood Green site are represented on that school's School Council, and pupils provide feedback on outcomes to their individual classes. On the Springfield site, pupils' views, though valued, are not sought in a sufficiently routine, focused and formalised way.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good and successful partnership with parents and keeps them well informed. The school has also developed good links with the local community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good links between home and school positively encourage parents' involvement in their children's education.
- The whole-school management of the links with other schools is unsatisfactory.
- There are good arrangements for the induction of new pupils to the school, and for organising their smooth transfer to other placements when the time comes.
- The good links that have been forged with the community support, extend and enrich pupils' learning well.
- The team work between the adults from both Madley Brook and Springfield schools contributes very effectively to the strength of the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

35. Parents who responded to the questionnaire, and those who attended the pre-inspection meeting, are very appreciative of the school and the way it is developing their children's attitudes and learning.

36. A number of parents help in school and often share their special knowledge or skills. For example, one parent developed the very informative school Internet web site, while another recently provided artefacts and information on the Chinese New Year. The school provides prospective parents with high quality information in the prospectus and school brochure. Twice yearly, the school magazine *Carousel* celebrates the achievements of each class over the preceding terms and highlights events organised by the very successful Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This information is very much appreciated by all parents. The very active PTA works closely with its counterpart at Madley Brook.

37. The headteacher and staff are very accessible to parents and there is a productive, two-way flow of both written and verbal information. The arrangements for the Annual Reviews of pupils' Statements of Special Educational Need are well organised and attended, with parents fully involved. The quality of documentation that the school provides to parents is good. Every term parents receive their child's IEP, containing revised targets, and the annual reports of their children's academic progress and personal development are detailed and informative. The home/school diaries are well designed and used very effectively to communicate daily between teachers and parents. The school has held some training sessions for parents on such topics as manual handling and signing, and is now planning a further programme on behaviour management techniques, building upon a first session that was very well received.

38. The school has developed good links with the community. Teachers use local resources well to support classroom learning; there are regular visits to the leisure centre, to Farmoor for sailing and to local museums and churches. Facilities in the wider community are also exploited well through focused visits, including residential stays. The school provides opportunities for members of the local community to use its resources, such as the use of the hydrotherapy pool and school hall by parents, after-school clubs and parent support groups.

39. There are good arrangements for introducing new pupils to the school, and for organising their smooth transfer to other placements when the time comes. This includes those pupils who are fully integrated at the Ducklington site but who, at the end of Year 6, leave Springfield School when they move to a specialist unit at Wood Green School that is not part of the Springfield provision. Prior to leaving school, good help is given to pupils to

move smoothly onto appropriate courses at the local college, with good support from the Connexions service; the school is careful to include all relevant professionals, parents and pupils in discussions as far as possible.

Pupils placed at Ducklington Primary School are fully included in lessons, with good support provided by the teacher and teaching assistants who are based there. Much of the integration with Madley Brook School is of a social nature, for example in the playground or the shared hall, but the pupils dine separately and have different lesson timings so they do not meet as often as they might. There are also good and frequent educational links with Madley Brook School, with many pupils attending lessons in mainstream classes, ranging from occasional or one-off links, to learning in a mainstream class for most of the week. Teaching assistants from Springfield School, who may also give support to other pupils in the host class, always support these pupils effectively. Some rooms are shared, such as the library, food technology room and ICT suite, although this is not often used by Springfield pupils. Classes sometimes use the library together, for example for a shared 'story time'. There have been several joint training days for staff, such as for behaviour management and manual handling, and some joint concerts, festivals and dance occasions. No new pupils are currently being admitted into the Ducklington provision, but the number being integrated into Madley Brook is gradually increasing as more opportunities arise as the mainstream school increases in size. Even so, this is proving to be a slow process as the schools have been co-located for almost two years. An exception is the Nursery, where very strong links have already been established and children from both schools are fully integrated.

40. On the Wood Green site, one Springfield teacher is teaching 'disability awareness' in classes where some pupils may go to registration groups several times a week. During the rest of each day, Springfield pupils do not have lessons with their mainstream peers, as they are in separate classrooms. This limits their opportunities for inclusive education, although a pupil from the mainstream school sometimes attends lessons in the Springfield classes, and two Springfield pupils are due to join a mainstream group on a residential visit to Wales later this summer. However, pupils do mix socially - in assembly, in the canteen, outside and incidentally around the school. There is a very good and worthwhile link with another secondary school that enables a specialist teacher to teach languages, currently German, to a class. In addition, Springfield pupils have access to some of the mainstream school's specialist facilities, such as the science, food technology, music and ICT rooms.

41. While there are a number of effective links with other schools, the full potential for inclusion is not yet fully exploited. Senior managers are not sufficiently pro-active in seeking out opportunities to further develop productive inclusion, partly because the full extent and effectiveness of the current links are not monitored and evaluated with sufficient rigour.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership provided by the head teacher is unsatisfactory, while that of other key staff is satisfactory. Management systems are unsatisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory; all statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's senior staff, especially the head teacher, have worked well with governors to manage the move to the Bronze Barrow site.
- There is a lack of a sharp, clearly focused leadership and direction for the school in relation to some areas of its work.

- There are effective teams throughout the school, on different sites and within individual classrooms, which support the good quality of education.
- Senior managers' procedures for monitoring and evaluating different aspects of the school's work are not sufficiently robust, consistent or planned.
- Systems by which the school carries out self-evaluation, and uses this information, are unsatisfactory; it collects assessment data but its procedures for collating, analysing and using it are poor.

Commentary

42. There has been a decline in the effectiveness of leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. Input into the design of the new school, and the subsequent transfer of pupils from its main site and a local primary school have clearly taken up a significant amount of the head teacher's time, but have adversely affected her leadership in some other areas. Similarly, her time is currently being taken up with consultation and discussion about the new accommodation under construction at Wood Green School. Notwithstanding these factors, elements of leadership and management within the school are currently ineffective.

43. There are a number of deficits in the management systems in the school which are affecting the overall performance of the multi-site provision, and these are not being effectively remedied. Staff have not been drawn together to establish a whole-school vision of how to ensure pupils across the school make maximum educational progress, and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the benefits of the new school structure to pupils' achievement and wellbeing have not been undertaken. Whilst there is a strong ethos of care and concern for individuals, this is not paralleled by similarly high expectations of pupils' learning and achievement at a whole school level, and indicates weaknesses in leadership. This is exemplified by the lack of accredited courses for pupils in Years 10 and 11, and a view expressed in a report to governors on inclusion that, due to their difference in ability "it is difficult to see what the Springfield pupils would gain from participating in most mainstream classes".

44. Overall, pupils learn well in lessons because experienced, skilled and knowledgeable teachers and teaching assistants work very well together, providing pupils with appropriate activities matched to their needs. However, this does not translate into sufficient progress over time, because these lessons are not set in the context of a relentless focus on improving achievement. This is because of limitations in:

- tracking individual pupils' progress in the subjects taught, so that their next steps in learning can be carefully planned;
- curriculum continuity between year groups and school sites, so that pupils do not miss work or repeat it unnecessarily;
- the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of subject provision by curriculum co-ordinators, to identify and improve gaps in provision, teaching and learning;
- pupils' uneven access to aspects of the curriculum.

45. Management is ineffective because the links and ties between the departments of the school – each led by a member of the senior management team – are not clear enough. While each subject has a co-ordinator with a whole-school responsibility, mechanisms are not in place to enable them to gain a clear overview of provision. There are currently no designated members of staff to advise on curriculum and resource adaptations for pupils with very complex needs, to ensure they have full access to the curriculum. Members of

the senior management team are responsible for monitoring teaching, learning and the curriculum in the classes within their designated phases, but the procedures for doing this are inconsistent. Reports are written in different styles and formats and they are not analysed so that all senior managers have the same clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice throughout the school.

46. The school has very recently implemented a new system of self-evaluation of classroom practice, based on the new learning and teaching policy. The format is a list of 55 criteria. However, this system does not work in its intended way as a tool to support the senior managers' monitoring of the quality of provision because staff have not been trained in its use, views are subjective and not moderated for consistency, and there is no means of judging improvement against any of the 55 criteria.

47. Teachers at Bronze Barrow and Wood Green assess and record pupils' achievements as 'P' levels or, if appropriate, National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics, science, ICT and PSHE. Class teachers have no means of judging progress against nationally recognised levels in other subjects of the curriculum, and neither do the subject co-ordinators as this aspect of their role is under-developed. Co-ordinators do not observe their subject being taught; they do not receive assessment data from other classes, nor do they do get evaluations of curriculum plans from teachers after blocks of work have been taught. Consequently, no one is in a position to develop an overview of the status of the subject on the three sites, to disseminate best practice or to monitor the achievements of pupils in their subject in different phases of the school. No one, therefore, has formal responsibility for checking that pupils are making sufficient progress in a particular subject or are achieving as well as they can in different subjects.

49. At whole school level, data is not collated and analysed in order to improve standards of teaching and learning. The information available is not used to compare pupils' relative achievements in different subjects and different phases, nor is it being used to show how well different groups of pupils perform, such as pupils with different types of special educational needs. Therefore, whilst there is good evidence to show that pupils achieve very well against their personal targets, there are no objective systems in place to demonstrate this.

50. Pupils on the Ducklington site are integrated into mainstream classes for all lessons, and this programme is well managed on-site. Currently, no pupils at Wood Green join mainstream classes. There are some good links with Madley Brook School, with many pupils attending some lessons in mainstream classes, ranging from an occasional or one-off link, to pupils attending most of the week in a mainstream class. Overall, though, the management of these links is unsatisfactory. The integration of pupils into mainstream classes, as appropriate in terms of their individual needs, is a fundamental feature of the school's philosophy and the provision is deliberately planned for this to happen. However, the potential for further links is not being exploited, and current links are not rigorously monitored and evaluated to assure their effectiveness. Discussions indicated that the extent of the links is not clear to staff, and neither are the criteria upon which inclusion decisions are made, how active they are, how many pupils are involved, how effective they are in raising pupils' standards in different subjects, or how valuable they are in encouraging pupils' personal development and independence. Monitoring mainly consists of the teaching assistants reporting back to class teachers what 'their' pupil had been doing in the lesson.

51. The efficiency of staffing across the three-site provision has not yet been sufficiently considered. For example, the Ducklington site has a teacher and two teaching assistants to

support pupils in class, although an inclusion report noted that Springfield pupils follow the mainstream lessons “without too much differentiation”. On the other hand, there are staffing limitations at Bronze Barrow which affect the staff’s capacity to monitor teaching and learning.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1282841
Total expenditure	1212048
Expenditure per pupil	12495

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	(40765)
Balance carried forward to the next year	30028

52. Governors are effective in ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities and they maintain good oversight over day-to-day financial affairs. Other aspects of governance are satisfactory. There is an appropriate committee structure, with each having terms of reference, all classes have a link governor and there are governors with specific responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. However, procedures for governors getting first-hand understanding of the school through regular, formal and focused visits are more limited. Consequently, their understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses and their ability to shape the future direction of the school rely too heavily on reports. As a result, they cannot offer the right degree of supportive challenge.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Provision in work-related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have opportunities to undertake work experience but these are limited by the high staffing level required.
- Good information about WRL is provided within the PSHE programme as well as through meetings with the Connexions adviser.
- There are no opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to undertake link courses at local colleges.
- There are no business enterprise opportunities.

Commentary

53. Pupils in Year 11 are given experience of the world of work through work experience. They are prepared well for this as they are helped to consider issues in relation to WRL through elements of the PSHE programme. For example, they evaluate their own strengths and areas for development and they learn about various types of work and the tasks involved in each. The school maintains a good photographic and written record of pupils' work experience, and this is useful for further discussions held with pupils. Pupils are very proud of their achievements in this area but, because most of them need the support of an adult to travel and to undertake tasks, the work experience is limited to six one hourly sessions. Very little use is made of opportunities for work experience on the school site to provide a stepping stone towards more independent work experience.

54. Pupils' awareness of the world of work and of the opportunities available to them after leaving school is limited by the fact that there are no openings for pupils to attend the local college for taster or link courses. Although most pupils move to the local college when they leave school, the short visits which once took place are no longer available. A further shortcoming in provision is the lack of a business mini-enterprise scheme in the school, so pupils do not get first-hand experience or involvement in running a small business, such as making greetings cards or washing cars. This limits their understanding of the world of work and, therefore, their options.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Commentary

55. Most of the children of Nursery and Reception age are part-time and are taught only at the Bronze Barrow site, where they are mainly placed in a nursery setting that is shared fully with children on the roll of Madley Brook. A small number of Reception children are in classes for pupils with more complex needs, including autism, sensory impairment and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

56. Teaching is good overall, and has some very good features. As a result, children generally learn well and make good progress. When children enter the school, their skills are significantly delayed in all areas of their development compared with others of a similar age. However, staff quickly develop a clear understanding of each child's needs and are, therefore, able to help them to achieve well. Children with more complex needs learn equally well, as they also have their needs met in appropriate ways, for example, through teachers' use of a more sensory-based curriculum for those with profound and multiple learning difficulties. This curriculum is well planned, based on the nationally recognised stepping stones that lead towards the early learning goals. This is supplemented well by the use of a pre-stepping stones programme that has been developed by the local education authority. Individual education plans rightly focus on key individual targets for children, but the use of a large number of targets from the Annual Reviews of children's Statements of Special Educational Needs means that, in some cases, staff duplicate planning. Assessment systems are good. Staff continually update records to show children's achievements as well as drawing all the information together to evaluate progress in each area of learning.

57. A strength of the Foundation Stage provision is the team work between adults, both with mainstream staff in the integrated nursery, and between teachers and teaching assistants in all the classes. There are good links with parents, and the induction process for new children is particularly good. The accommodation is good, and includes an outdoor play area with a variety of activities available and access to sensory and soft play areas. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides good leadership and management in the integrated nursery, but does not oversee the other classes catering for this age group.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults create an environment that gives children a sense of security, and helps them to settle into the school and understand routines.
- Children with more challenging behaviours are supported to act more appropriately and so benefit from their lessons.

Commentary

58. Staff provide children with experiences appropriate to their needs, as a result of which they become confident in taking part in different activities. Consistent practice helps children to understand the structure of the school day and to become aware of expectations of their behaviour, for example, sitting in a small group or lining up to move to other areas of the building. Because staff have high expectations, children behave very well wherever they are. For children with more challenging behaviours, teachers write clear plans about how they should be helped and these are understood and followed by all adults; as a result children are able to stay seated with their mainstream peers for sufficient time to complete learning activities. Staff encourage children to make choices, for example at snack time, and this helps move them towards appropriate levels of independence. They learn to take turns, and to wait while others complete a task. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties are supported to respond when the register is called and to return the register to the office. Very good relationships underpin the learning in the classroom and staff praise and encourage children at appropriate times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in communication, language and early literacy skills because this is a particular focus of the very good teaching.
- The development of communication is well supported by the use of additional communication strategies, such as signing and symbols.

Commentary

59. Adults consistently and effectively support the development of language as they involve and support children in different activities. New vocabulary is introduced at a pace that matches children's capacities, and children's understanding is checked regularly. A few children show an interest in books and enjoy looking at pictures, turning pages and listening to stories. More capable children know that print is read from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom. Over time, and at an appropriate rate, many children begin to recognise their own names and those of their friends. Throughout the day, language is accompanied by the use of signs, which helps children's understanding, and some are responding well by signing. Good use is made of symbols to help some children to make choices, and to help their awareness of the activities for the day, such as the use of visual timetables that incorporate symbols. Staff provide very good role models of language use for children to copy and structured language sessions, including those led by a speech and language therapist, provide very good opportunities for the development of language and communication skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in developing their awareness of shape, size, and number.
- Teachers plan a wide range of mathematical activities and reinforce mathematical language effectively.

Commentary

60. Many activities introduce and reinforce early mathematical ideas, for example children match colours and shapes. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that children learn mathematical vocabulary and staff are adept at encouraging children to practise and use this language whenever possible. For instance, when children are playing staff ask them questions which require them to count and compare; they use terms such as 'big' and 'small'; and they reinforce positional language such as 'under' and 'over'. More capable children count to 10 and are beginning to recognise numbers. Learning in mathematics is well supported by the use of counting rhymes and songs, which help children to remember numbers and make the learning an enjoyable experience

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Progress in this area is developed effectively through a variety of practical activities that broaden children's experiences.
- Too little use is made of the local environment to further enhance children's learning.

Commentary

61. Children make good progress in developing the knowledge and understanding that help them make sense of the world around them. This is because teachers plan first-hand experiences that encourage children to observe what is going on and to explore their surroundings. Consequently, children are encouraged to explore many objects that are available in the classroom and in the outside play area. In doing this they learn, for example, about different materials and many are beginning to learn about aspects of the natural world such as the weather, or the taste and smell of different fruits. Children's use of the computer is linked to interactive programs that support a developing understanding of aspects such as number, and which help them to learn about cause and effect. More capable children use the mouse to move items around the screen. Children have limited opportunities to go outside the immediate school environment because they only go out with the whole nursery class. This restricts their opportunities to broaden their understanding of the wider world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In addition to specific focused lessons, such as swimming and movement, children are provided with opportunities to develop their physical skills throughout the day.
- Children achieve well in swimming because good use is made of the hydrotherapy pool.
- Children's hand-eye co-ordination is developed well.

Commentary

62. Children's achievement is good; they develop confidence, control and co-ordination in the hall and in the swimming pool. They learn to move in different ways, running, jumping, skipping and hopping, and develop a sense of space. Some with more complex needs find ways of moving in the soft play area or reach out to touch objects in the sensory room. In the outside play area, they learn the balance and co-ordination associated with riding a tricycle or pushing a buggy. Fine motor skills are steadily developed as children paint, glue and stick. They manipulate materials and objects by playing with different equipment, for example by threading and building. They gain in competence in making marks on paper and writing, they use scissors with increasing efficiency, and they learn to reach out to use a touch screen on the computer.

63. The hydrotherapy pool is an impressive resource that is being used very effectively to teach children to swim. Staff have written very good learning objectives based upon the

early learning goals for the class as a whole, and individual learning objectives for all children. This enables staff to focus on children's specific needs and help them to learn well and make good progress. Some children are still developing their water confidence, while others are learning to swim, for example across the pool with the use of flotation aids, but without additional adult support.

64. Staff are very clear about the individual needs of children, and provide them with the necessary help to make progress. For instance, children with profound and multiple learning difficulties are supported in a variety of ways when they use the sensory room, so that they are able to respond to the variety of stimuli.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many opportunities are provided for creative development, and children enjoy participating.
- Activities are very well planned to reinforce social and communication skills.

Commentary

65. The good progress children make in this area is the result of well-organised activities that allow them to explore and react. In art activities, they investigate colour, shape and form as they paint with brushes and sponges, and produce collages of materials with different colours and textures. They role-play different activities, for example being at the hairdressers, and as they do this staff talk to them, extending their vocabulary effectively. Children are enthusiastic about the different activities in which they participate, for example joining in action songs. They make good use of musical instruments that are put out for them to explore, and experiment with different sounds. Children's attention is often focused by the use of music, for example in the sensory room or in the class for those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, when different music is used to indicate different activities.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 – 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements in speaking and listening are good.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 9.
- Lack of accreditation restricts the level of challenge for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- The co-ordinator's restricted role reduces his potential for raising standards.

Commentary

66. Overall, pupils achieve well although there are some differences between year groups and between pupils' progress in the three attainment targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6 in all the attainment targets, and in Years 7 to 9 pupils' progress is good in speaking and listening and reading, and satisfactory in writing. Pupils' achievements in Years 10 and 11 are satisfactory. There are no differences between the achievements of boys and girls or between pupils of differing capabilities or with different special educational needs. For instance, pupils with hearing impairment achieve as well as their classmates because they are frequently supported particularly well in class by staff from the county advisory service for hearing-impaired children.

67. The school's recent emphasis on promoting communication skills has resulted in a greater use of additional systems, such as signing and symbols. Communication books are used effectively with younger pupils and pupils with autism. The good work of speech and language therapists is reinforced well within classrooms, where school staff implement individual programmes consistently. A small number of pupils use electronic communication aids, for example to take messages home, but the use of speech aids generally is underdeveloped. Teachers are very good role models, speaking clearly and waiting patiently for answers, and they use targeted questions well to include all pupils and to get more capable pupils to expand on answers given by others. Pupils respond well to these challenges and they also learn to react with others. For instance, pupils in Year 2 anticipated the foods that were to be eaten by the hungry caterpillar in the book they were sharing, and they helped each other to choose the named food. Very good use is made of home/school books to develop speaking skills, as was seen when pupils in Years 8 and 9 referred to them when recounting holiday experiences. Role-play contributes well to achievement, for example when pupils with complex needs re-enacted the story of *Burglar Bill*. Drama is also used effectively to explore non-verbal communication and communication with an audience; a very good adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* challenged the most capable pupils and increased their self-esteem very well. Pupils also learn how to communicate with different audiences. A group in Years 7 to 10 used formal language well as they confidently used a presentation program to illustrate their residential visit to the Woodland Centre.

68. Boys and girls of all capabilities enjoy sharing books, especially as teachers read stories aloud well. Phonic skills are taught well, and all pupils benefit from the school's use of reading symbols that frequently reinforce the written word. Therefore, pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to identify the letters of the alphabet by name and sound, and pupils in Years 7 to 9 make good progress because of a highly structured approach to word building that helps them decode unknown words and which links reading with writing. The oldest pupils use their reading skills in everyday situations, for example when choosing ingredients in shops or selecting food from a menu. Pupils develop good knowledge of books. Those in Years 6 to 8 know that 'publishers make books' and recall the names of several authors, including Jonathan Swift and William Golding. Links with Madley Brook also help to promote pupils' reading. Pupils from both schools benefit, and concentration levels are high, as some pupils in Years 5 to 7 share books with their reading partners in the pleasant joint library. Reading resources are good because of the wide choice available through this joint provision, and there are good examples of age-appropriate books. However, books selected for pupils on the autistic spectrum do not always match pupils' ages.

69. Achievement in writing for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good, but for other pupils is satisfactory. This is because younger pupils have many opportunities to make marks on paper and to trace or copy patterns or letters, using a range of implements including crayons and pencils. They learn to form letters and to spell simple words and names. Less

capable pupils benefit from 'hand over hand' writing and the use of symbols helps to convey the meaning of words. As pupils move through the school they continue to write small amounts for a range of purposes, and handwriting is often neat, but the rate of progress slows. This is because too little writing is expected by teachers; too few writing frames, which are frameworks showing how written work might be planned and structured, are used to encourage writing. There is sometimes too much emphasis on handwriting practice rather than using ICT or extended writing to record pupils' ideas and knowledge. Using sheets of paper, which are sent home termly, instead of exercise books not only detracts from the status of work but reduces opportunities to show how pupils are progressing. The lack of any accreditation in Years 10 and 11 is wholly unsatisfactory and detracts from pupils' motivation to write.

70. Teaching and learning range from very good to satisfactory, but overall they are good, although they were very good at the time of the last inspection. Lessons are enjoyable experiences for pupils, and are characterised by very good relationships and warm encouragement. This means that pupils want to please their teachers and so they try hard. In a very good lesson at Wood Green, the teacher's very good subject knowledge was evident as he confidently used a highly structured approach to reading and spelling. Very well behaved pupils completed the tasks competently, frequently answering well-directed questions in full sentences. As in other lessons, teaching assistants worked collaboratively with the teacher, often concentrating on pupils' individual targets and contributing very positively to their learning. Although some teachers have encouraged teaching assistants to record pupils' strengths and weaknesses, this is an area for further development. Time is used well and teachers generally plan opportunities to learn for pupils of all capabilities and with differing needs. Very occasionally this is not the case, such as in the lesson for pupils with autism when two members of the group were insufficiently engaged in learning because they had to wait their turn for one-to-one attention. Teachers use ongoing assessment well in lessons, asking questions to find out what pupils know and helping them move forward. Formal assessment and recording procedures are satisfactory, with some good individual practice where teachers regularly update the electronic recording of progress against nationally agreed levels. Targets on IEPs are variable but usually specific enough to be measured, although they are not shared sufficiently well with pupils.

71. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist but is new to the role and the school. He monitors teachers' planning but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching or provision for pupils with differing special educational needs, or to share his own good teaching practice. He is well aware that the subject is in need of further development; he is keen to introduce accreditation and to start analysing assessment data. The curriculum is satisfactory but there is insufficient enrichment through opportunities such as book days or visits from authors or poets. The school's adaptation of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory. Overall, development in provision since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

72. The promotion of language and literacy across all areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. Good questioning, for example in history, encourages pupils to be precise in their answers. Key words, that are important to a topic, are often identified in teachers' planning but are not stressed sufficiently during the lesson or used to reinforce reading. The social use of language is promoted well during the very good opportunities pupils have to mix with the public, for example when researching the local area or working with instructors on residential trips. Pupils have too few opportunities to reinforce reading and

writing skills in subjects other than English. However, reading was promoted well in a Year 2 to 4 science lesson when pupils were engaged in developing awareness of light and dark through stories. Older pupils complete written evaluation of their work in food technology, but in other lessons opportunities are missed for pupils to record their work in writing, either through dictating their ideas to staff or by reinforcing their own skills. The literacy policy does not put sufficient emphasis on identifying areas within all parts of the curriculum where these skills can be practised and extended.

Modern foreign languages

73. Insufficient evidence was gathered during the inspection to judge the overall quality of provision. In the single German lesson that was seen, pupils learnt very well when they were taught by a visiting specialist teacher from a local school. Lively and enthusiastic teaching and pupils' very willing responses resulted in a very productive and enjoyable session.

74. Many pupils from Year 3 to Year 11 learn features of different languages. Currently, French, Spanish and German are being taught in different parts of the school. They learn, for instance, to count; to name colours; to greet each other; how to tell a doctor what is ailing them; and to name members of their families. Within the limited responsibilities given to co-ordinators, this subject is well led and managed.

75. The school belongs to an international organisation, the Comenius Project, which provides links with other schools across Europe. The school maintains links with schools in Poland, France and Spain at the moment, and recent links have included schools in Hungary and Belgium. The links enable the exchange of letters and photographs, examples of work, information about the local area and local culture. The links provide very good opportunities for language development and social awareness, and for the promotion of an understanding of other cultures. However, sometimes these links are not capitalised upon in other subjects, such as geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well structured and planned for individual pupils.
- Pupils are interested, and make good progress.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator is limited.
- Accredited courses are not available for pupils in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

76. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are generally enthusiastic, and they are well prepared and organised. Planning identifies activities that meet individuals' needs and so pupils are provided with challenging work. They try hard to succeed. Appropriately, much of the work is practically based but planning ensures that the all required areas, such as number and using and applying mathematics, are covered. Staff use resources effectively to help pupils' learning, and generally run lessons that are structured well, with a selection of activities that help to keep pupils interested in the topics.

77. Pupils are well motivated by the whole-class teaching and the individual support they receive. Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively and so they are able to play an important role in supporting individual pupils; they are valuable members of each class team. Consequently, pupils achieve well in lessons and they make good progress as they move through the school. However, a significant weakness in provision is that no pupils in Years 10 and 11, on either the Bronze Barrow or Wood Green site, have the opportunity to take courses that are nationally recognised. A number of pupils' attainments are such that they are capable of gaining certifications that are accredited by agencies outside the school. The lack of such opportunities indicates a lack of expectation and challenge of pupils' capabilities.

78. The management of mathematics is satisfactory, but its leadership is unsatisfactory. The role of the co-ordinator is restricted because the school's subject co-ordinator role is extremely limited. Therefore, although individual class teachers assess pupils' National Curriculum and 'P' levels each year, no one has a responsibility for developing a clear view of pupils' achievements and progress across the school, nor of what has been taught in different parts of the school. The co-ordinator receives copies of proposed plans for the forthcoming term, but has no knowledge of whether they were put into practice or whether they were successful. In addition, the co-ordinator does not observe any other teachers' mathematics lessons and nor is she informed of the findings of senior managers when they have observed lessons.

79. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, but there is now scope to make further changes and to develop the subject. Staff have had valuable training in how to structure their lessons, and there are several plans in place to develop the subject, including a new way of assessing pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

80. Mathematical skills are developed and practised satisfactorily in other subjects of the curriculum. While teachers often take opportunities that present themselves to promote these skills, they do not often deliberately plan how, and when, pupils can rehearse such skills in their lessons. In science, geography and food technology, for instance, activities such as measuring lengths, weights, distances and quantities, and making charts and graphs are developed well. Pupils' mathematical understanding is also developed in subjects like music, when activities include sequencing and repeating patterns and when teachers ask questions like "I am not going to have 10 animals in this song, but half that number. How many is that?" Many pupils have learned to count in a variety of languages, including French, German, Spanish and Hungarian.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Scientific skills are taught well, through practical activities and investigative work, to pupils in Years 7 to 11 at the Wood Green site.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory.
- Information and communication technology is not yet used enough to support teaching and learning.

Commentary

81. Overall, pupils' achievements across the school are satisfactory. Throughout the school, they develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the living and non-living worlds. From an early age, pupils have many multi-sensory based opportunities to explore the topic they are studying. For example, in a mixed-age class of Reception to Year 3, pupils with complex needs pupils smelled, touched and felt different types of potted plants and flowers. The teacher made the lesson exciting by letting the pupils walk around the school, with support, to find different types of plants she had previously hidden. They were also taken outside to observe different plants and trees growing in the school grounds. They took cuttings of a variety of leaves and used their senses to decide which ones they liked best - smooth or prickly. A class teacher of Year 2 to 4 pupils used the sensory room extremely well when encouraging pupils to explore light and dark, using shadows of teddy bears and cut out characters from a story the pupils had been reading in their literacy lessons. Although pupils at Springfield do not produce very much written work, they have categorised various minibeasts and produced some fine models of minibeasts linked to their design and technology work.

82. Pupils at the Wood Green site are developing the scientific skills of planning a fair test, using scientific equipment and recording their findings in a variety of ways. As a result, they are beginning to think scientifically and to apply their knowledge and skills to new ideas, such as classifying plants. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the opportunities they have to use the mainstream school's laboratories, and teachers benefit from the help of a laboratory technician. As a result, teachers are able to plan specific experiments using appropriate scientific equipment; these provide pupils with opportunities to predict, experiment and record their findings in writing, diagrams and charts.

83. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is some good and very good teaching. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge. In the more effective lessons, teachers plan activities that stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for science. As a result, pupils want to contribute to lessons, ask questions and find ways of solving problems for themselves. This was particularly evident in a Year 2 to 4 class when pupils wanted to use the sensory room to enact the *Peace at Last* story by Jill Murphy. One pupil read the story very well, enhancing his literacy skills, while the others, listening carefully for their cues, held up different sized bears and cut outs from the story in front of a torch, casting shadows onto the wall. The pupils understood that by moving closer or further away from the light source they could alter the size of the shadow. Great fun was had when one pupil made the teddy bear's shadow bigger than anyone else in the room. Very good questioning, and teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistant, ensured that pupils were relaxed and confident to answer the questions they were asked. The vibrant atmosphere in the room encouraged many pupils to ask questions themselves and to experiment with light and dark.

84. Teachers set high expectations of behaviour and so pupils approach practical work safely and sensibly. However, not all have similarly high expectations of pupils' potential for achievement, and not all give them appropriately challenging work. Although Wood Green-based pupils are challenged well by their work in prediction, testing and writing up their results, there are no opportunities for them to gain any nationally recognised accreditation. Work is marked and dated but there are insufficient comments to help pupils understand what they have to do to help them improve.

85. Teachers and teaching assistants value the opportunities the subject presents for pupils to work collaboratively and to discover the wonder of the natural world. As such, the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. This was evident in some work completed by Year 10 and 11 pupils who visited Didcot Power Station to see how coal was converted into electricity and what effects this had on pollution in the area.

86. Development of the subject since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory; pupils' achievements are less good than they were at that time. The subject co-ordinator has recently started to address this, but currently leadership and management are unsatisfactory. She has an understanding of what teachers are intending to teach through the monitoring of their advance planning, but there are no procedures to monitor their evaluations of how successful lessons have been. In addition, the co-ordinator has no knowledge of pupils' achievements throughout the school. Therefore, neither the co-ordinator nor other senior managers are in a position to say whether pupils are being sufficiently challenged or whether their achievements are high enough. Very good use is made of fieldwork to support scientific investigation, and the school is developing its resources. However, at present teachers do not make enough use of ICT to support teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not learn well enough when ICT is taught through other subjects.
- Pupils on the Wood Green site learn well in discrete ICT lessons.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

87. Although some pupils learn well in lessons and make good progress over time, pupils' achievements generally are unsatisfactory because, overall, their skills are not developed systematically enough.

88. A decision was made not to teach ICT as a separate subject in most classes. Consequently, teachers on the Bronze Barrow site are required to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding through the rest of the curriculum. Teachers have variable success with this; they often struggle to engineer good opportunities for pupils to acquire the necessary skills associated with using a word processor, database or painting program. When pupils work on computers, teachers and teaching assistants are effective in deciding which skill needs to be taught next, and in helping individual pupils to learn, supported by prompts, demonstration and encouragement. However, often it is only one or two pupils who use the equipment in, for instance, mathematics, science and English lessons, and while there may be a rota to use the computer, it is frequently not adhered to, or no proper record is kept of who actually had their turn during the week.

89. Overall, pupils learn satisfactorily, and sometimes well, in lessons. Some of the most capable pupils learn, for example, to enter numbers or text in a word processing program, programme a floor robot, and use a program that creates charts. Other, less competent computer users, learn satisfactorily to use single touch switches that control screen

displays, music, lights, toys and messages to and from home. Pupils in Years 9 to 11 on the Wood Green site learn well in discrete lessons. Activities provide appropriate levels of challenge and staff provide good guidance, recording the successes that pupils achieve. On the Bronze Barrow site, pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in lessons when they have opportunities to use computers and other technological equipment. In the better sessions, links with other work are clearly evident and activities develop new skills as well as reinforcing those previously learned. For instance, a teacher worked well with an individual pupil on a painting program to draw a minibeast associated with the science topic. At other times, activities are not sufficiently well structured and there are no obvious relationships to other elements of the curriculum.

90. Provision has declined since the previous inspection. This is because of unsatisfactory assessment arrangements and shortcomings in subject co-ordination. While there are good plans for developments in the near future, such as a new form of assessing how well pupils are progressing, linked to long-term planning of what should be taught, currently no single person has a clear view of what is being taught throughout the school or of how well pupils are doing. The current arrangements, whereby several staff have responsibility for managing particular aspects of the subject, such as the software and switches, has resulted in a fragmented curriculum and inadequate expectations. No pupils are taking courses that lead to nationally recognised certificates approved by agencies outside the school. Pupils on the Wood Green site make satisfactory use of two ICT rooms in the mainstream school, but these are not as good as the suite on the Bronze Barrow site, which is rarely used.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

91. The use of computers and related equipment across the curriculum is satisfactory, although it is much more frequent in some subjects and classes than others. Switches are sometimes used well to enable pupils to participate in lessons; they allow pupils to contribute and to make choices. At other times, computers are used appropriately to support learning in other subjects, such as the Year 11 pupils who created graphs in a mathematic lesson from data that had been collected. This situation is very much the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Although there is now better access to good, modern computers, and more switches, there is little evidence that they are being used effectively to help pupils' ICT or general communication skills.

HUMANITIES

Geography

92. Geography was sampled during the inspection. It is taught in rotation with history and religious education, but as there was very little work available to examine judgements about achievement, teaching, learning and provision cannot be made. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the lesson observed. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 were restless at the end of the afternoon but one pupil showed good interest in the small world map. Although too many activities were planned and too much information was provided, pupils concentrated well on a carefully chosen video clip looking at significant landmarks in Australia.

93. The curriculum is enhanced by very good use of the school site and local area for younger pupils, and visits further afield for older pupils, for example to Witney Lakes. In addition, residential trips enable pupils to gain very good experience of a number of different localities. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The co-

ordinator has not had the benefit of training and is not sufficiently aware of what is happening in the subject across all years of the school. For example, there is little appreciation of how the Comenius project is contributing to pupils' learning; the project does not feature significantly in planning. Resources are poor and do not promote a sensory-based curriculum. For example, there are no floor maps or large maps of differing scales, or tactile globes.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is good because teachers plan a good range of interesting activities.
- A good range of visits enriches the curriculum.
- The co-ordinator does not have sufficient overview of the subject.
- Resources are insufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Commentary

94. Pupils' achievements in history are good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to understand time as they help to sequence the daily timetables. They explore toys and games used today and in the past, and the more capable ones identify similarities and differences between them. They show interest in books depicting historical characters, such as Florence Nightingale.

95. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 based at Ducklington use primary and secondary sources, such as books and artefacts, to research work about Ancient Greece and Rome. Their learning is 'brought alive' well by visits to museums like the Ashmolean and Stoke Bruerne. Pupils of similar age at Bronze Barrow make artefacts such as shields, helmets and axes as they learn about the Anglo Saxons and Vikings. Well-planned visits also contribute to the good achievement of pupils in Years 7 to 9. Pupils of all capabilities develop communication and social skills as well as learning about how people lived in the past as they visit a number of historical sites. Such was their enthusiasm for experiencing Tudor life that a member of staff at Sulgrave Manor remarked that they were a pleasure to teach. Boys and girls in Years 10 and 11 continue to achieve well. For example, pupils with complex needs construct their own life histories by placing symbols on a time line, while more capable pupils compare features of modern life such as education, food and health with life in Tudor or Victorian times. However, they are unable to receive external accreditation for their learning which represents a lack of expectation on the part of the school.

96. Teaching and learning are good overall. In a very good lesson on the Industrial Revolution, pupils in Years 7 to 10 used resources very effectively to develop historical enquiry. They worked in pairs to investigate artefacts and suggest their purpose. Good language development took place as they looked at christening robes, a lantern and a cuff link box, for example. However, the school's own resources are poor and this lesson was only so effective because staff brought in their own artefacts. This is a good example of the positive contribution support staff make to teaching and learning. The teacher's very good subject knowledge and probing questioning, directed well at individuals, enabled pupils of all capabilities to make very good progress. Pupils in Years 6 to 8 displayed empathy as they looked at pictures of Victorian Britain. They commented on the sad faces of people waiting at the hospital gates and considered life for children working in the mines. More capable pupils showed good recall of the video they had watched comparing modern and Victorian life. Good prompting enabled less capable pupils to think of artefacts related to jobs that they had seen on the video, and then draw them.

97. Overall, a less effective feature of teaching is that teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills through opportunities for recording small amounts of work in

writing. Because of this, assessment tends to be based on photographic evidence, but not all teachers record progress against 'P' levels and it is difficult to track the progress pupils make.

98. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and this, together with the poor number of resources, leads to improvement since the previous inspection being unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is not a subject specialist but is very keen to learn. Currently she does not have sufficient knowledge of what is happening in the subject across the school or how to raise achievement further. The subject policy is outdated and does not reflect how other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy, can be reinforced through history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a good range of resources.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' multi-cultural development.
- There is no tracking of pupils' achievements or progress.
- The organisation of the timetable makes it difficult for pupils to develop their knowledge of the subject.

Commentary

99. Although few lessons could be seen, in those that were observed pupils learnt well. Teaching was good, and this is an improvement from the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teaching engaged pupils' attention because teachers used a variety of activities and a good range of resources. For example, in a good introduction to Islam the teacher stimulated pupils' interest by the use of a prayer mat, a copy of the Qur'an, and a video of the Five Pillars of the faith. Good management of behaviour, particularly of those pupils with more complex and challenging needs, enabled them to participate in the activities. Pupils participated well in oral sessions, answering questions well, but they were not always expected to record their work. Curriculum plans and displays around the school, such as the one of a Hindu festival, show that pupils learn something of Christianity and other major world faiths and the ways in which these affect the lives of believers. This provides good support for pupils' multi-cultural development.

100. Although pupils make good progress in lessons, it is not possible to judge their achievements over time. This is because pupils' records and reports show the experiences they have had, rather than what they know and understand, and teachers do not assess pupils' attainments against nationally recognised levels. In addition, the organisation of the timetable means that religious education, along with history and geography, is part of a rolling programme of subjects that are taught in blocks of time. As a result, they do not build on and consolidate previous learning systematically enough; when they start a new module they have very limited recall of previous topics. In addition, there are no accredited courses offered to pupils in Years 10 and 11; this limits opportunities.

101. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. The long-term planning follows the locally agreed syllabus and national schemes, and teachers' expected coverage of these plans is tracked by the co-ordinator. However, the medium term plans that teachers develop do not

sufficiently show what different groups of pupils will learn, and teachers' evaluations of their lessons are not returned to the co-ordinator. In addition, because of the constraints of the co-ordinator's job description, and lack of available time, she neither undertakes focused monitoring of lessons nor examines assessment information from different classes. The net result is that she has very limited knowledge of the subject across the school and has no first-hand information on which to base advice to colleagues.

TECHNOLOGY

Art and design

102. Insufficient lessons were observed to enable judgments on the overall quality of provision, teaching and learning and pupils' achievements to be made. In the lessons that were sampled, pupils learnt well. Teachers and teaching assistants encouraged pupils' personal development as well as their acquisition of new skills. For instance, they helped pupils to make choices and decisions about which colours and materials to use in activities such as blending with chalks. Pupils of all ages enjoy their art work and are learning to recognise colours, tones and textures. 103. Those with the most complex needs enjoyed feeling the texture and smell of paint, and were helped to hold brushes, crayons and chalks to make patterns on paper.

104. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to consider the work of other artists, which detracts from their cultural development. However, when pupils do this, displays of their work brighten up the school corridors. In one display, Year 4 - 7 pupils have considered the work of Andy Warhol and Monet and have created their own interpretations of these artists' work.

Design and technology

105. During the inspection, only food technology was being taught and, therefore, judgements are not possible about pupils' learning and achievement when working with resistant materials. Judgements could not be made on the basis of records because teachers only assess pupils' achievement against personal targets; there are no details of their achievement within the subject. Therefore, it was not possible to evaluate pupils' progress over time.

106. Two food technology lessons were observed; teaching and learning was good in one and unsatisfactory in the other. Where teaching was good, the adults' high expectations ensured a good level of challenge was maintained. The session was well planned and organised so that pupils knew what to do, and were confident because they had the skills to carry out the tasks. Work matched individuals' needs, so some pupils worked independently while others received support from the teaching assistants. In the unsatisfactory lesson, although the activities were interesting and pupils enjoyed them, the purpose of the lesson was not clear enough and did not indicate exactly what the teacher wanted the pupils to learn. Whether they had succeeded was therefore also unclear. In addition, time was not used efficiently because the lesson was not structured well enough.

107. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator's role is limited and there is no clear view of provision across the three sites. Long-term planning is sketchy and some documentation is very outdated.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Music

108. Insufficient lessons were observed for judgements to be made about teaching and learning, pupils' achievements or overall provision for this subject. The subject was not timetabled for pupils on the Wood Green site during the inspection, and at Bronze Barrow it is frequently taught as short sessions. In the lessons that were sampled, pupils learnt satisfactorily overall and sometimes well. When teaching was at its most effective, pupils were managed extremely well and teachers and skilled teaching assistants maintained a very good balance between providing support with expectations of independent work. At these times, pupils volunteer the songs to be sung, sing along and are keen to volunteer to take the lead in action songs. These songs provide many opportunities for teachers to encourage the development of literacy and numeracy skills through, for example, rehearsing numbers, the names of parts of the body and vocabulary such as 'fast/slow', 'loud/quiet' and 'long/short'. Teachers exploit these, and other, opportunities well. For example, the mathematical knowledge of a group of pupils in Years 4 to 6 was developed well when the teacher used music to reinforce the idea of sequencing, through the use of a repeating visual pattern.

109. There are appropriate curriculum plans that show how, in Years 1 and 2, pupils are made aware of everyday sounds, such as in the kitchen, and they then study a variety of themes, like 'the park' and 'animals'. While lessons encourage pupils' personal development, language acquisition and number skills well, they are less focused on developing their musical skills and knowledge through these themes. For instance, there is not the same focus on getting pupils to perform, using untuned instruments, as there is on listening and singing. Pupils' learning is enriched satisfactorily through links with Madley Brook, visiting musicians in school and trips off site, such as to the *New Beginnings* concert arranged by the local education authority's music service.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils follow a broad subject curriculum and make good use of community facilities.
- Teaching is inconsistent and some staff lack appropriate subject knowledge.
- Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of pupils.

Commentary

110. Pupils follow a broad curriculum that is enhanced well through community links. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 benefit from weekly visits for sailing or climbing. Residential journeys for pupils of all ages throughout the school help to extend the physical education curriculum through outdoor and adventurous activities, such as abseiling. Pupils in Years 8 to 11 at Wood Green also have the opportunity to visit the local leisure centre for sports such as basketball, but despite being situated on the same site as the secondary school there are no integration links with the school itself. Therefore, pupils are unable to take advantage of the facilities or the experience of specialist physical education staff, which is disappointing. Some pupils have been involved in boccia and table cricket tournaments, but they do not participate in national events such as the Stoke Mandeville Games or

Special Olympics. However, the co-ordinator is trying to re-establish contact with other special schools in an attempt to improve links.

111. Pupils of all ages make satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning are variable, but satisfactory overall. At its best, teaching is lively and busy and pupils work very hard throughout the entire lesson. However, some class teachers lack the necessary skills and subject knowledge, which leads to uninspiring teaching, so pupils do not achieve as well as they might. Teachers do not always change for physical education lessons, which does not represent best practice, and indeed for one dance lesson, there was no expectation for the pupils to change either. The explanation that pupils only change for physical education lessons and not for dance highlights a lack of understanding of the subject curriculum and teachers' inadequate expectations.

112. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Primarily, this is due to the limited role that has been given to the subject co-ordinator; leadership of the subject is satisfactory, but its management is unsatisfactory. Long and medium-term planning is detailed and although the subject co-ordinator is a senior manager and is working hard to develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems, she has very restricted subject responsibility. She is not able to observe how the subject is taught throughout the school and nor does she receive whole school assessment information about pupils' achievements and progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide pupils with a good variety of activities.
- Not all aspects of the subject are covered.

Commentary

113. Because of the emphasis put on this aspect, pupils' overall very good progress in personal and social development results from a combination of the school's ethos, their success against personal targets and, more formally, through the taught PSHE curriculum. Their achievements in the context of the PSHE curriculum are good, rather than very good, because of some omissions of content.

114. The most capable pupils begin to appreciate other people's needs and feelings as they interact with others in the class. Pupils become aware of the links between health and diet, and pupils with more complex needs develop increasing independence in their own personal care. Pupils consider how to deal with difficult situations, from 'stranger danger' to helping to resolve those in which their friends might be upset. Visits out of school enable pupils to learn appropriate behaviour in the community. The more independent, oldest pupils take increasing responsibility as they move through the school; they are more confident and contribute well to the life of the school community, for example by being part of the School Council or by helping younger pupils. In one lesson, pupils identified this as a strength of one of their group.

115. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a good understanding of how to extend pupils' personal and social skills. They do this by giving pupils opportunities in a variety of activities, including discussions and role-play, which enable them to appreciate and understand different situations. They are helped to consider their own strengths and weaknesses and to look at similarities and differences between people.

116. Leadership and management are satisfactory within the context of the limited responsibilities the co-ordinator is given. She has a developing understanding of the subject and has undertaken a review of the curriculum, which provides a good range of topics. However, other changes in the school curriculum mean that the drugs awareness aspect of PSHE is not yet fully covered, and citizenship has yet to be fully incorporated into the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	5

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.*

