

INSPECTION REPORT

LONGFORD PARK SCHOOL

Stretford, Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106392

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Beverley Owens

Lead inspector: Mr M G Whitehead

Dates of inspection: 27th – 29th June 2005

Inspection number: 270959

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: SEBD/MLD Dual Registered
School category: Community special
Age range of pupils: 5 – 11 yrs
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 40

School address: Longford Park
Cromwell Road
Stretford
Manchester
Postcode: M32 8PR

Telephone number: 0161 912 1895
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Ms Marsha White
governors:

Date of previous This is the first inspection
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Longford Park School is situated in the urban area of Stretford, Manchester and is a day special school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. It also a school where pupils may be registered who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools. There are six girls and 34 boys on roll and 19 of them are part time. Seventeen pupils are dual registered. There is the full time equivalent of 27.9 pupils in the school. There are four pupils from minority ethnic groups including Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black African, Pakistani and another ethnic group; the rest are White British. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Following reorganisation the school opened in 2003 with a new governing body as a school for MLD/EBD & Dual Registered pupils. In December 2003 the school moved to its new premises and in April 2005 it took responsibility for a pupil referral unit - staff and pupils - who had been using the first floor of the building. The present acting headteacher has held this role since Sept 2004. Parents come from a wide range of socio-economic circumstances, which are average overall. The attainment levels of the pupils are below the national average because of their learning difficulties or their behavioural difficulties that have held back their progress. The work of the school has been acknowledged through 'Awards For All' recognising the high quality work in the physical education department.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21061	Mr M G Whitehead	Lead inspector	Art and design, design and technology
9981	Mr S Hussain	Lay inspector	
23390	Mr M Blackband	Team inspector	Science, music, physical education, special educational needs
27409	Ms S Hunt	Team inspector	English, citizenship/PSHE, religious education
28106	Ms M Majid	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, geography, history

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Longford Park School is a good school. Pupils receive a good standard of education through good and often very good teaching. Pupils learn and achieve well and the care and welfare they receive are good. Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are developed well. The leadership of the headteacher is good and the school is well managed by the governing body and the interim management committee. The school provides good value for money. This is the first inspection of the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well.
- Behaviour management is good and enables pupils to achieve well.
- The school values its pupils highly and has good arrangements for care and welfare.
- The school's accommodation and resources are very good.
- Leadership and management are good overall but the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are insufficiently delegated and defined.
- Assessment is not developed sufficiently to inform staff about the progress of some pupils.
- There is insufficient emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards reached by pupils are below the national average, but this is because of their learning and behavioural difficulties and it is therefore inappropriate to make such comparisons. Nevertheless, achievement in English, mathematics and science is good. Achievement in physical education and personal, social and health education is also good. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities are good, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Teachers are skilled in managing pupils with behavioural difficulties and are successful in encouraging and motivating pupils to learn. This results in productive lessons taking place and good learning by pupils. Although the attendance figures are low, they are skewed greatly by the large amount of absence by one pupil and the illness of others. Overall attendance is good, taking account of all the factors that affect pupils' ability to attend. The relationships of pupils with others are very good and they take an interest in their school work as well as taking some responsibility for themselves. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. There is a good ethos in the school and the procedures to ensure that all pupils are fully included are also good. **Teaching and learning are good overall**, and frequently very good in English, mathematics and science. There is, however, insufficient emphasis on the development of pupils' reading and writing skills. The difficult behaviour that pupils often present is managed well by the teachers. This ensures that their learning is disrupted as little as possible and they are able to remain focused and motivated. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities to widen their experiences and enrich the curriculum with visits out of school as well as welcoming visitors into the school to talk about their experiences or give first hand accounts and demonstrations, particularly in religious education and art and design. Assessment procedures, however, are not developed sufficiently or consistently applied to ensure that there is a clear picture of the progress being made by some of the pupils.

There is a good number of teaching assistants who are well qualified and effective in their support of pupils and teachers. The accommodation and resources are very good and the new building provides excellent classroom space, but there is very limited outdoor play space. Pupils are looked after well. The school focuses on returning the referred pupils to mainstream as soon as possible and works closely with the local schools from where they come. Pupils' views are taken seriously and there are good procedures for seeking and acting upon them.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. During this time, whilst there is no substantive headteacher, there is not only a governing body but also an interim management committee. This was established to help support the governors and the acting headteacher through this period of change. The acting headteacher provides good leadership for the school and has instigated change effectively since she took this position. Governance is good as the governors provide well for the school and have benefited from the support and guidance of the interim management committee. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

The co-ordination of subjects is satisfactory overall but there is insufficient delegation of management responsibilities. Procedures for performance management are well established and effective. The school is aware that monitoring of subjects by co-ordinators is an area in need of development, as the acting headteacher and her deputy are responsible for too much of it.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

It is clear that parents are positive about the school, and the pupils clearly enjoy being at school and say that the school is good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Define, delegate and establish co-ordination responsibilities for subjects amongst the staff.
- Develop assessment procedures further so that there is a formal indication of the progress being made by all the pupils.

- Place a greater emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Throughout the school pupils' achievement is good. Pupils in the pupil referral unit (PRU) classes achieve well, as do those in the classes for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Standards are below the national average, as is to be expected of pupils with these special needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst achievement is good in most subjects, it is satisfactory in reading and writing, and in ICT.
- Regardless of age, learning difficulty, behavioural difficulty, gender or ability, pupils are able to take full advantage of the good quality of education that is available for them.

Commentary

1. In the relatively short time that the school has been open the pupils have clearly achieved well and settled in to their new surroundings and new regime. When pupils join the school they have low levels of attainment and often low self-esteem. The school offers them every opportunity to enjoy learning and make progress. Consequently their self-esteem rises and they achieve well.
2. The majority of the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are PRU pupils who arrive in the school at various times during the academic year and are often disinterested in school, having been excluded or at risk of exclusion. For these pupils the school offers security and consistency, with good levels of care and support. This enables them to progress well and begin to work towards a return to mainstream schools.
3. Achievement in English, mathematics, science and personal, social, health education and citizenship is good for pupils in all year groups. The good quality of teaching ensures that pupils are well motivated and pupils benefit from the teachers' understanding of their special educational needs. In English, mathematics and science the teaching is often very good and this has a profound effect upon the pupils. This helps to overcome many of the barriers to learning that these pupils have experienced. Many have been disaffected and disinterested in school and learning in general, however, the skills of the teachers have rekindled their interests. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress.
4. Pupils with additional special educational needs make generally good progress because their behaviour is well managed and they are effectively taught to apply themselves in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of them and teaching assistants give a good level of support where necessary. Achievement in reading and writing is not as good as the speaking and listening elements of English. This is because many of the pupils have experienced difficult times in their previous schools and, for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, reading and writing are major hurdles to be overcome. This is also reflected in the relatively low self-esteem of some pupils. Other pupils who have specific learning difficulties also struggle with their writing because this is found to be the most difficult element of language and literacy.

Another factor, however, is that the school does not yet focus enough on ensuring that the key skills of reading and writing are fully developed so that these barriers are overcome.

- In ICT pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching they receive is satisfactory and this takes the form of both separate lessons specifically for teaching ICT and also the teaching of ICT that takes place within other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Positive attitudes and behaviour contribute well to pupils' achievements.
- The school sets high expectations for conduct and the rewards scheme is effective.
- The school promotes good relationships and racial harmony very well.
- Moral, social and cultural development is good, but spiritual development is satisfactory.
- Pupils with additional special needs are managed well, and this leads to good relationships at all levels.

Commentary

- Good attendance levels reflect pupils' enthusiasm for school. There is hardly any unexplained absence. The level of illness and medically related absence is very high and much of the absence is due to a very small number of pupils. The school has good procedures to promote attendance. On the first day of absence telephone calls are made promptly regarding unexplained absence and the school works effectively with the educational welfare service.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	12.2	School data	0.4
National data	n/a	National data	n/a

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

- Pupils show high levels of interest in the activities offered by the school. For instance, during a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were eager to take part in quick-fire warm up questions and then worked hard throughout the lesson, which involved halving and doubling in calculations. There is also much interest in lunchtime clubs such as library, games and football.
- Pupils behave well in the classroom, at break-times and as they move around the school. The school does not tolerate bullying and swift action is taken by staff to resolve any problems. Staff frequently praise pupils for their work and behaviour. Assembly celebrations and rewards such as stickers, certificates and merit points resulting in prizes act as a good incentive for pupils to behave well and achieve their best. The number of exclusions is low.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	37	3	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

- Staff take advantage of every opportunity to stress the importance of good relationships and teamwork. Consequently, pupils work very well together, for instance, in team games. The school's race equality policy is very effective and in personal and social education opportunities to discuss issues such as discrimination are taken very well.
- The moral development of pupils is good; the majority are helped by staff to develop a true sense of right and wrong. The provision for pupils' social development is good; at lunchtime pupils have opportunities to chat with staff or each other and are happy to talk to visitors about school life. Pupils' cultural awareness is developed well; visits to the Bridgewater Hall, Whitworth Art Gallery and the site of the River Mersey develop their understanding of the arts and their own culture and heritage. The Tsunami Charity Day and the celebrations of Greek culture and religious festivals also give pupils some insight into how different people live. There are limited chances in the broader curriculum for spiritual development and there are few periods of reflection in lessons or assemblies.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs are managed well. Teachers and teaching assistants establish good relationships with pupils, who feel confident that their needs will be met. Pupils work well with one another and support and encourage their less able classmates. Teachers have high expectations of the progress of each pupil with additional special educational needs, for instance, in science in Year 6 where all the pupils were appropriately supported in conducting an experiment to investigate shadows and record their work correctly in the form of a graph.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory. Care and welfare are good. The links with the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment and its use are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and teachers and teaching assistants work well together.
- The management of behaviour is good.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils learn well because they are well motivated.
- Assessment is not fully developed, particularly for pupils with additional special needs.

- Occasionally subject teaching is slow to start in lessons after break-times or lunchtimes.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	13	3	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

- Pupils benefit from the well-planned lessons because the teachers and their assistants have very good knowledge and understanding of the individual pupils in class. There is a variety of work that makes sure that the most able pupils have sufficient work and that it is challenging for them. Planning, however, for the pupils who are less able, is not as good and there are times when the lowest achieving pupils are reliant on the teaching assistants to help them through the lesson and the tasks that have been set.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have worked hard since the school opened to establish a clear code of conduct for the pupils and effective behaviour management strategies. A great deal of time and effort has gone into this enterprise and it has been very successful. There is clear insistence on high standards of behaviour. Pupils are praised for good behaviour in a very positive manner, which helps to raise their self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to work together when it is appropriate and this is especially so in music lessons, when their co-operation and combined efforts are essential.
- Good relationships with pupils are cultivated skilfully by teachers and teaching assistants. This creates a positive atmosphere and a good climate for learning within the school. Pupils respond well to the teachers and enjoy learning, which for some of them is a new experience. The clear boundaries that are set help to create a secure environment where pupils thrive and make good progress. They receive lots of encouragement and support during lessons regardless of age, ability or gender. In response to the work of the teachers, the pupils gain a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers make regular assessments, usually at the end of each lesson. In some subjects, however, the assessments are focused largely on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, and insufficient notice is taken of their academic progress. In many subjects assessment of pupils' progress in the lesson is not used sufficiently to help plan future lessons and therefore some opportunities are missed to tailor the teaching more closely to the needs of the pupils. This is an area where there is need for more development. In physical education assessment procedures are satisfactory and improving. The school is aware of the shortcoming and has plans to address this in the very near future.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs respond well to their teachers' high expectations of them. They are well supported by competent teaching assistants. However, assessment of their needs, whilst satisfactory, needs development. It is not used effectively to monitor pupils' progress or to establish realistic and progressive targets in individual education plans. As a result, these plans are not used as effectively as they could be in order to help teachers plan for each pupil or assess his or her progress.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- Opportunities for learning outside class and beyond the school day are good and enrich pupils' learning.
- The pupils' learning and personal development are very well supported by the very good accommodation and resources for learning.
- Teachers in the school during the inspection week have the appropriate skills and experiences to meet pupils' needs.
- The inclusion of pupils with additional special needs is good.

Commentary

17. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are satisfactory overall. All National Curriculum subjects are taught to pupils who attend full time, both in school and as part of the provision for dual registered pupils. Each subject has sufficient time for teaching and the timetable achieves a good balance of learning experiences. There are plans to improve the provision for religious education according to the new local authority's agreed syllabus in September. Pupils who are dual registered are given a satisfactory curriculum with the emphasis on literacy and numeracy. This is at the request of their mainstream schools, who find that these are the areas where most improvement is needed. This curriculum, however, could be improved by encouraging more use of ICT in all classes.
18. There is a good personal, social and health education programme for pupils throughout the school. Even though the amalgamation of the school and the former PRU is so recent, the school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and make progress. The needs of pupils with additional special educational needs are met well and there are very clear individual behaviour plans for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
19. Pupils with additional special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are supported as necessary, though the need for more detailed assessment inhibits the success of teachers in providing effective specific support for a small number of the lowest attaining pupils in the school.
20. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and as a result, achievement in English and mathematics is good. The school offers "Focus" sessions which engage the pupils and encourage them to learn. The school is aware that there is a need for a systematic whole-school approach to planning so that teachers are aware of valuable cross-curricular links. The curriculum is led well by the acting headteacher and the development planning for the improvement of the curriculum is realistic, with the first priorities being literacy and ICT.
21. There are good opportunities for enrichment in the school. During lunchtime, there are clubs available, such as a sports club, video club and ICT club, and pupils choose

these in the morning during registration. A list is produced and all staff know exactly where each pupil will be. There is an after-school sports club on one evening each week, but access to this is limited for some pupils due to transport difficulties. Pupils have very good access to the arts and visit the city concert hall regularly, also taking part in local education authority led arts festivals. They are given opportunities to play for the school teams in football, cricket and basketball and also take part in swimming events. They visit a nearby National Trust estate, which provides farmland and woodland walks along the river. The curriculum is enhanced by external visitors or experts, including an artist in residence. In addition, pupils have been taught physical education by outside agency coaches each week in different areas of the physical education curriculum, funded through the national 'Awards for All' grant.

22. The school provides high quality resources which encourage pupils successfully. The school's new accommodation supports the demands of the curriculum very well. The classrooms are bright and well maintained, with attractive displays, and there are very good specialist facilities. There is a very effective library and ICT resource room with a suite of up-to-date computers. There is limited space available within the school grounds for physical education activities, however there are plans to transform an area of meadowland in to a sports field and the school makes very good use of the nearby community sports facilities, thus minimising the impact. The site manager has effected impressive improvements on the outside area, with thoughtfully planted flower beds. As a result, the area is an attractive environment for the pupils, who treat all the new accommodation with respect. There is a good number of expert teachers who meet the demands of the curriculum. The support of teaching assistants in all activities is very good.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. The provision of advice, support and guidance is satisfactory and pupils are well involved in aspects of the school's development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New pupils settle into the school quickly because of the good induction procedures.
- Pupils enjoy very good, trusting relationships with staff.
- Pupils feel valued because staff listen to and act upon their views.

Commentary

23. New pupils and their parents are given a guided tour of the school and offered a home visit. The acting headteacher spends much time with parents so that they understand the school's policies. Gradual and sensitive induction of new pupils ensures that they settle into the learning routines effectively.
24. Procedures for child protection are good. The designated officer deals with any issues effectively and the school also has a trained deputy. Arrangements for first aid and fire procedures are good. Safety risk assessments are undertaken as required. The school works effectively with the community in raising pupils' awareness of health and safety matters, for instance, the school nurse is a frequent visitor and gives talks on healthy lifestyles. Year 6 pupils take part in the 'crucial crew' initiative each year and this gives them good, basic guidance about dealing with emergencies.

25. Staff know pupils well and give them satisfactory advice and guidance. Good features include personal support and guidance, for instance, through group discussion and encouragement. The school's procedures for assessment are satisfactory at present and are acknowledged as an area where there is room for further development. Outside agencies such as the speech and language therapist attend the school regularly to provide additional specialist support to pupils where necessary.
26. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, reflecting the school's caring and family ethos very well. All staff befriend all pupils and this increases pupils' confidence, enabling them to report any worries or concerns, for instance, regarding bullying.
27. There are many chances for pupils to give their views about the school. The school council is firmly established and provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss school issues and learn about good citizenship, decision-making and democracy. It is pleasing to see how much pupils' ideas are welcomed and acted upon, for instance, regarding fundraising, playground resources and developing the school grounds.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Links with other schools, colleges and the wider community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive good information about the school and their children's standards.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to return to mainstream schools.
- Links in the wider community provide pupils with many additional learning experiences.

Commentary

28. The school welcomes parents as partners in the education of their children. There is good communication with the parents of pupils with additional special educational needs. The school and other professionals provide very clear reports. Parents are made to feel welcome at annual review meetings and their opinions are valued. Parents are supportive of the school's efforts and feel their children are making good progress.
29. The acting headteacher and staff are very approachable and always make time to discuss any issues. Complaints procedures are good. The school has recently developed a questionnaire for parents to give them a regular and formal chance to influence school policies and provisions – this is to be sent out shortly.
30. Parents receive good information about the school each term through the prospectus and attractive newsletters. Arrangements for consultation are good – an appointment is available each term, with the teacher. Pupils' end-of-year reports provide parents with much information about their standards. Target setting is a good feature. A small minority of reports checked by the inspection team was found to be descriptive of the work done, rather than how well pupils performed – the school must guard against this.

31. There are satisfactory links with parents, which help them to work with the school in promoting the children's learning. Some parents give their time generously to the school by helping with special events and accompanying school trips.
32. Links with many primary schools provide many pupils with good opportunities for mainstream inclusion. Many pupils attend primary schools regularly on a part time basis. Integration experiences are successful because staff at the school and mainstream schools work closely and plan together. A teacher and teaching assistant based at the school provide good support to pupils and mainstream schools on an outreach basis where there is a risk of exclusion. Links with other special schools are very good. The school hosts many events, especially sports, with coaching for all. A local college of further education recently offered a 'Para-Olympics Road-Show' for special schools, based at Longford Park School.
33. Many sports clubs and organizations in the community attend the school regularly and provide coaching in sports such as basketball, football and cricket. Other visitors include a graffiti artist and story-teller, who work with pupils. The business community shows much interest and involvement with the school by providing financial donations from time to time. Pupils develop a good sense of community through contact with different people - for instance, as they take part in events each year such as the Stretford pageant.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good. The leadership of the subject co-ordinators is satisfactory overall. The management of the governing body and the interim management committee is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher provides strong leadership for the school.
- The interim management committee and the governing body provide strong governance.
- The management of the school is effective overall.
- The leadership roles of subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	446,475	Balance from previous year	16,915
Total expenditure	439,460	Balance carried forward to the next	23,930
Expenditure per pupil	15,980		

Note: During the year 2003/2004 the school was only funded for 27.5 pupils

34. Financial management of the school is good and the school benefits from the experience and expertise not only of the governors but also of the interim management committee. Their skills help the school to realise its aim to improve the achievement of pupils. The budget is carefully monitored by the interim management committee and

the governors set an appropriate budget for the school. In all their financial transactions, the school and its administration officer ensure that principles of best value are applied.

35. The school re-opened in September 2003 as a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. In December 2003 the school moved to its present new building. In Sept 2004 the acting headteacher took her position, having been acting deputy for over a year. At this time there was also a PRU operating from the first floor of the building, whilst the school occupied the ground floor. In April 2005 the school and the PRU were amalgamated under the leadership of the present acting headteacher.
36. It is clear that there has been considerable change taking place in the school concerning the leadership, management and the pupils it serves. Throughout this time, and particularly over the last academic year, the acting headteacher has taken control of the school and implanted her positive vision within. This has involved restructuring to include teachers from the former PRU, and ensuring that the wide-ranging needs of the pupils are being met. The acting headteacher has worked closely with the governing body and also with the interim management committee, which was established to support the school and its acting headteacher through this time of change.
37. There are now very well established behaviour management strategies and a policy that work very effectively in the school. There are a few occasions when teachers are over-anxious and spend too much time at the beginning of their lessons in activities that are designed to calm the pupils and have no bearing on the subjects being taught. All staff have received specialised training to help develop their skills. The acting headteacher and her staff are fully involved in performance management and appropriate goals have been set for all. The clear thinking and direct development plan have helped to move the school forward effectively and establish some secure foundations.
38. The governing body is strong and well led by the chair. They work well in support of the staff and pupils. They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and strive to fulfil them. In their wisdom they instigated the interim management committee to give support to them as governors and to the acting headteacher and her staff. This has been very effective and has enabled the acting headteacher and the governors to move forward despite the insecurity of some crucial posts. Everyone knows what is expected of them and the acting headteacher believes that they have come a long way, but still have areas that need to be developed in order to improve the school further. The management and governance by these two groups are strong, secure and based on the skills of experienced professionals.
39. There is an area that is in need of further development, and that concerns the leadership and management of the different subjects being taught in the school. At the moment there are some subject co-ordinators but the acting headteacher has to co-ordinate several subjects herself. Whilst the outcome of this arrangement is satisfactory it does present an overload of responsibility to the acting headteacher. This is not a satisfactory situation and these responsibilities need to be delegated to other members of staff, as a matter of urgency. The roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are also in need of clarification. There is also need for specific co-ordination of additional special educational needs, to relieve the acting headteacher of this responsibility; at the moment, whilst assessment is satisfactory overall, there is

need for more comprehensive record-keeping. However, statutory requirements are met fully and recent documentation in preparation for pupils' annual reviews is much improved.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good speech and language support promotes speaking and listening throughout the school.
- The assessment of pupils' achievements is satisfactory overall, but not yet fully developed and does not always inform planning.
- The temporary co-ordinator has implemented literacy strategies well in a very short period of time.
- Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well.
- There is not enough emphasis on extended writing and reading and the use of ICT within English lessons.

Commentary

40. The overall achievement of pupils is good. The majority of pupils join the school with low levels of literacy, some have speech and language difficulties and many have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. During Year 1 pupils make good progress and their skills develop well because their behaviour is managed well and teaching, especially of speaking and listening skills, is very effective. In addition the skills of the speech and language therapist are used well. As a result of good teaching in Years 1 to Year 3, pupils grow in confidence as learners and their achievement is good. They listen to poems, and using the key words given to them they describe what they have heard. Pupils in Years 4 to Year 6 also make good progress as they learn about different parts of speech and, by the end of the lesson can readily identify a preposition. Other pupils benefit during their English lessons from the support provided by a speech and language therapist. The teachers also make very good use of ICT to support teaching and learning.
41. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening throughout the school. Teachers and classroom assistants make good use of questioning and give clear explanations, involving the pupils well in discussions. Pupils listen carefully and answer questions with good levels of interpretation and understanding, for example, in a Year 6 class pupils listened and talked at length about Oliver Twist, after watching a video clip of the musical. They described the events in Victorian England extremely well.
42. Pupils' progress in writing is a focus for development, particularly with older pupils. Many of the pupils have a significant barrier to writing because of their previous experiences or their specific learning difficulties. Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties have often missed a great deal of teaching and learning because of disaffection, inattentiveness or absence. This means that they are disadvantaged when compared with their peers and their self-esteem is low. Other pupils have specific learning difficulties and need the specialist skills of the teachers at

Longford Park School to help them to cope with these difficulties and in many cases, overcome them. Samples of work show an emphasis on using a wide range of worksheets, mainly dealing with the grammatical structure of English. Though pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory, there need to be more opportunities for extended writing in English lessons and greater use of ICT to record and redraft their work.

43. Achievement in reading is satisfactory and pupils work hard to overcome many of the difficulties that they experience. Some have missed vital parts of their education concerning reading whilst others are very anxious about reading. Consequently, for most pupils in the school, speaking and listening skills are higher than reading and writing skills. There is a large, well-stocked library now available in the school. The school aims to develop a small library within each classroom to make access to reading material even easier.
44. Overall teaching and learning are good. Lessons were supported by a very good range and quality of resources. As a result, pupils tried their best and displayed good attitudes to their learning. Assessment is still being developed within the subject, however, the level of work does not always meet the pupils' needs. Higher attaining pupils are well catered for, but the lowest ability pupils less so. Relationships between staff and pupils are good within class, which leads to good and very good behaviour.
45. The school has been in operation in its present state since April 2005 and a full complement of permanent staff has yet to be appointed. The literacy co-ordinator is the local education authority's literacy advisor, and went into the school only a few weeks before the inspection to advise and support English. She has achieved, in a very short time, a great deal and with the help of the hard working group of teachers is managing to develop a promising department. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. There is, however, still further development to be made in the areas of assessment and writing. The school's development plan acknowledges this situation and regards it as a priority for development.
46. The subject does contribute well to pupils' social and cultural development through theatrical productions by the school, the most recent being the 'Nutcracker Suite', and poets and professional readers visiting the school regularly.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. The provision to support language and literacy development across the curriculum is good. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted in many subjects. Teachers place great emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills in lessons other than English. For example, in science and personal, social and health education (PSHE) there are many opportunities for pupils to express their opinions clearly. During a Year 5 lesson in PSHE a pupil discussed various parts of his body and the changes that will occur in puberty in a very mature manner. In addition pupils showed good use of technical vocabulary in design and technology when describing how a battery-operated car worked. This contributes to their good progress in speaking and listening. There are also good opportunities in subjects across the curriculum for pupils to reinforce their skills in reading and writing as they make notes, read from textbooks or the teacher's notes on the whiteboard and discuss their work in class.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and often very good, and pupils have positive attitudes to this subject.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is being used very well to enhance pupils' achievement.
- Behaviour is very well managed.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The pupils are very well supported by the teaching assistants, which improves their self-esteem and confidence.

Commentary

48. Achievement in mathematics for pupils in the school and the former PRU, including those with additional special educational needs, is good overall. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing basic numeracy skills and also pupils are following a broad curriculum, incorporating all the main aspects of mathematics. Pupils work hard and their work is neatly presented and accurately marked.
49. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have developed a good understanding of basic number activities, such as counting on and back in tens and recognising odd and even numbers and sequences. They do simple addition and subtraction up to 25, make up amounts of money using coins, know simple fractions and tell the time, using o'clock and half past. Lower attaining pupils make good progress with simple number skills, such as money recognition, counting in tens and identifying simple two-dimensional shapes. During Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to build well on their mathematical understanding and make good progress. By the time they are in Year 6, they are able to use multiplication and division to solve simple problems, multiply decimals, recognise right angles and understand simple fractions. Lower attaining pupils make good progress as they identify simple fractions and do simple multiplication successfully.
50. As a result of the consistently good and often very good teaching, pupils make good progress in mathematics. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and produce stimulating, well-prepared lessons. They are using the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively and pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve. The start of each lesson is exciting in order to gain pupils' interest, and particularly good use is made of the interactive whiteboard. Teachers use questioning very well during the review session at the end of the lesson so that pupils can share their achievements with others. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and use praise successfully to encourage pupils to behave well and do their best. As a result, pupils are eager to please and work well. They use the very good resources very well to enhance learning. For example, a Year 5 pupil adjusted his answer immediately when he checked his results on a number line. Teaching assistants provide very helpful support for those who need it and they make a valuable contribution to learning. This support is effective in building pupils' confidence and raising self-esteem. This approach means that most pupils are developing a broad and secure understanding of mathematical concepts.
51. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who has ensured that staff have appropriate support and training in the National Numeracy Strategy, with the resulting

good standard of teaching and learning. The scheme of work ensures that all pupils achieve success. The coordinator has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the subject further. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and evaluating mathematics throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. The development of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects is satisfactory. At this time, teachers do not identify in planning occasions when pupils need to use their mathematical knowledge. It is used well in science, however, where during experiments to show how a light source affects the size of a shadow, pupils made accurate measurements and produced bar graphs. There was good discussion of how to interpret this information.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good, which results in pupils achieving well in lessons.
- Individual topics are well planned.
- Assessment is in need of further development.

Commentary

53. Pupils achieve well in lessons throughout the school. They enjoy the many opportunities for practical activities and they are eager to learn. This, combined with the good teaching, ensures that the pupils make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have learned how people and animals grow and have worked on a topic about the five senses which involves elements of personal, health and social education. This topic work is continued as pupils progress up the school. The pupils learn about their own bodies and how they change. The pupils in Year 6, for instance, have made good progress in linking their knowledge to learning about their emotions and how puberty will affect their physical, emotional and social development. By Year 6 pupils have developed knowledge of electricity and about the solar system and they have learned how to work independently in conducting simple experiments. For example, during an effective lesson on the relationship between a light source and the size of shadow, through careful measurement and recording the pupils were able to apply their learning by constructing mathematical graphs and charts of the results. The subject follows national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).
54. Teaching is consistently good. The lessons are characterised by the brisk pace and by high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils respond well to the challenge. They are motivated and work hard and their behaviour is generally very good. The pupils, where necessary, are well supported by competent teaching assistants. Teachers use questions well to check understanding and to remind pupils of their previous learning. Relationships are good and in most lessons pupils are enthusiastic to answer questions and to share their opinions and knowledge with the teacher and the class. The pupils' achievement is good within lessons and scrutiny of their written work shows that they make good progress through the curriculum. Higher ability pupils in Year 6, for example, confidently researched the planets through the internet and have conducted their own experiments to establish which materials create the most friction.
55. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but need to be more rigorous. Currently the data available through the school's regular testing procedures is not used sufficiently to inform teachers about the pupils' learning or as a basis for target setting. As a result, teachers do not always adapt their lessons successfully to take account of the differing abilities of pupils, particularly the least able. Consequently, some pupils are very reliant on the quality of support from teaching assistants. Support staff have recently started to keep informal records of pupils' performance during lessons but as yet their comments are restricted largely to the pupils' behaviour and need to focus more formally on pupils' academic achievement. At the moment this information is available from teachers because they know the pupils well. Some pupils have been encouraged to evaluate their own work in science, but this is inconsistent through the school.
56. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has clear plans for development of the subject and a good grasp of the priorities involved. The resources are good and staff know what is available and appropriate for each activity. The co-ordinator has established good informal communication with colleagues but her role is undefined and she is unable as yet to monitor standards of planning or teaching or to lead staff in the construction of a whole school scheme of work. The accommodation is satisfactory and teachers make good use of visits to industrial museums and to the local park.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

It was only possible to see direct teaching of ICT in one lesson, although inspectors also observed at the use of ICT in other subjects, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils.

The provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is satisfactory overall and staff are making effective use of the new interactive whiteboards.
- Pupils respect the very good ICT resources and treat them well.
- The ICT curriculum lacks breadth, with too much stress on word processing.
- Opportunities to use ICT to enhance learning across the curriculum are not planned consistently.

Commentary

57. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory. They are taught word processing skills from the youngest classes and by Year 2, pupils have learned to use the mouse and the keyboard to control the computer, using word processing and graphics software. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to develop their skills in word processing as they follow a commercial scheme of work. In addition, they are able to use the internet to search for information and older pupils have used presentation software to enter and combine text and images. Pupils also use spreadsheets successfully to produce graphs of their findings from experiments.
58. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils effectively when they are using computers and provide a satisfactory standard of teaching. Most teachers have the necessary skills and the coordinator has identified staff in the former PRU who will need further training. In a good lesson seen, the teacher managed behaviour very well and pupils showed respect for the computers and worked well, showing enthusiasm and pride in their work.
59. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. At this time, the subject is led by the headteacher, as it is has not been possible to delegate this responsibility, but the headteacher is aware that this is a priority in order for the subject to improve. The school has a very good ICT suite, which is located well as part of the library and is spacious and well laid out. These computers are linked to a network where older pupils can access their own work with confidence. However, not all classrooms have a computer and this limits opportunities for the application of ICT skills in other subjects

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. This is satisfactory overall. In lessons during the inspection and on the basis of analysis of pupils' work, opportunities are missed to make use of the computers and other aspects of ICT to support learning. However, teachers are making very effective use of the new interactive whiteboards, especially in English. In addition, the pupils make use of the internet to look for information. They have looked for websites about the Victorians in history and have searched for lyrics in music. The school has bought a new and effective program which is an online digital library, showing the pupils up-to-date images and short, focused video clips. The coordinator is aware that more needs

to be done to raise teachers' awareness of ways in which computers can be used in a variety of contexts.

HUMANITIES

History and geography were sampled. It was not possible to see the teaching of religious education during the three days of the inspection and therefore this subject was also sampled.

61. The school follows the National Curriculum guidelines for the teaching of **history** and **geography** and the subjects make an effective contribution to pupils' cultural development. There are attractive displays in the school of topics that pupils have studied in history. For example, a display on Victorian Britain shows how pupils in Year 6 have discovered interesting information about how Queen Victoria was the first queen to be filmed or photographed. A classroom display of Victorian children at work demonstrates from written work that the pupils understand the feelings of children working in coal mines. By Year 6, pupils have looked at Greek history and culture and have drawn Greek urns and have tasted Greek food. They have learned about Greek letters and how Greek words are used in English. They have researched Greece and Ancient Egypt on the internet and have looked at hieroglyphics. In geography, pupils have studied the Nile and show knowledge of the climate and what happens if there are floods.
62. The school has plans to follow the local education authority's approved syllabus for **religious education** in the autumn term and staff are working together to develop a comprehensive scheme of work. Statutory requirements are being met and the school benefits greatly from its strong links with the community and the visits to the school by members of local churches.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology, art, music and physical education were sampled.

63. **Design and technology** is taught throughout the school, often alternating with art. Evidence shows that pupils follow a basic design course and know how to follow a design brief. They produce ideas and then develop them critically until they arrive at an approved or chosen design. Pupils study background information, sometimes using the internet to access information and pictures which they incorporate into their work. There is also a strong focus on food technology, which is enjoyed greatly by the pupils. Leadership and management are satisfactory.
64. There is a great deal of evidence of pupils' **art and design** work around the school. The school has good resources that allow pupils to work in a variety of media including coloured pencils, charcoal, paints and some three-dimensional work using different modelling media such as card, paper, glue and fabric. The walls of the corridors pay tribute to the work of the staff and pupils as they hold displays of their work for everyone to admire. The school has played host to a visiting graffiti artist, and a visiting fine artist. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.
65. In the two lessons observed in **music**, which were both good, pupils were introduced to different rhythms and learned the effect of playing instruments together. The lessons were well taught and pupils collaborated well in listening carefully to others. Pupils

made good progress in their appreciation of working together and combining the sounds of their instruments.

66. In **physical education** pupils experience a progressive and balanced curriculum which effectively enables them to build gradually on their skills and to experience consistent success. As a result, they are motivated to work hard and they achieve well. In one lesson observed, the teacher maintained a very brisk pace and covered a wide range of footballing skills. Pupils made good progress. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra activities. Good links have been established with local premier league football clubs, local schools and the community. An 'Awards For All' certificate has been awarded to the school in recognition of the high quality of the work in the physical education department. The subject is well led and managed. Accommodation within the school is very good; however, outside provision is limited.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in this area of the curriculum is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in understanding and responding positively to some challenging and sensitive topics.
- Teaching is good and helps pupils understand important personal issues and their place in the wider community.
- The subject has been developed well over the past few months and is well led and managed.
- Citizenship is just being developed.

Commentary

67. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of important areas of learning. They achieve well in the study of challenging and diverse topics such as relationships, health and sex. Good teaching uses these topics to promote discussion and enhance learning. The teaching is good, sensitive and informed; the pupils show interest and behave maturely when discussing issues such as sex and relationships. The teaching is confident and teachers enjoy positive but respectful relationships with the pupils. Anger management is a topic within personal social and health education which is proving to be very successful in the context of pupil behaviour management.
68. The school is working towards its 'Healthy Schools Award' and pupils have completed successfully six units towards its completion; this is expected at the end of the year.
69. Citizenship is in the early stages of development, however, although the planning is embryonic, there are many good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and influence the work of the school. There is a school council, which comprises pupils from both key stages and is facilitated by one of the teachers. There are other practical opportunities for pupils. For example, the school has been very involved in the recycling of waste materials and colourful posters and pupils' work around school illustrates this.

70. The subject is well led by a newly appointed co-ordinator who has worked very hard to establish a curriculum which contributes substantially to the main work of the school, by helping pupils to become more mature and to be able to understand their responsibilities towards themselves and each other. The subject contributes well to pupils' social, cultural and moral development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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