

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSTON CENTRE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104286

Headteacher: Gillian Phillips

Reporting inspector: Martin Pavey
17650

Dates of inspection: 2 - 4 May 2000

Inspection number: 66742

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Pupil Referral Unit
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Unit address:	Valley Park Cromer Gardens Whitmore Reans Wolverhampton
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Appropriate authority:	Wolverhampton Local Education Authority
Name of responsible officer	Bernard Peters
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Martin Pavey	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the unit led and managed?
		Music	
		Religious education	
Clifford Hayes	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the unit care for its pupils? The unit's partnership with parents
Roy Lund	Team inspector	Science	The curriculum and other opportunities for pupils
		Information technology	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	Mathematics	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Art	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Kingston Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) for pupils of primary age. At the time of the inspection, there were 24 pupils in the unit, 23 boys and one girl. Of these, five were in Key Stage 1 and 19 in Key Stage 2. Half the pupils were solely on the roll of the PRU and half were on the roll both of the unit and another school. Seven pupils in Key Stage 2 attend classes in mainstream schools as well as in the unit. Sixteen of the present pupils are of white heritage background and eight of black, including four of Caribbean heritage. The unit provides a full time education for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Because the borough does not have a special school for such pupils, the unit admits a number of pupils for whom a long-term education in a special school is appropriate. The unit is directly funded by the local education authority and is supported from a number of different budgets. All pupils have special educational needs and four have statements of these needs. When they join the unit, many pupils have already missed much schooling. Their attainment is overall well below the nationally expected level, with often very low levels of literacy and numeracy. Generally, the socio-economic circumstances of these pupils are poor.

HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS

The unit provides an effective education for its pupils. They achieve well in Key Stage 1, reaching an improved standard by the end of this stage. In Key Stage 2, their achievement is satisfactory. The rate of reintegration into mainstream schools and the number of lessons taken there are satisfactory, in view of the difficulties faced by many of these pupils. Teaching is of good quality. Leadership and management are good. In terms of the money spent per pupil and the quality of teaching, learning, attitudes and leadership, the unit provides good value for money.

What the unit does well

- Teaching is of good quality, and very good in Key Stage 1.
- Teaching and support staff are very dedicated to their pupils' welfare and know them well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and their relationships develop well.
- The headteacher gives very good leadership and has produced a clear commitment to improvement, among all staff.
- The headteacher has successfully led the unit through a period of rapid change.
- Systems for promoting good behaviour and relationships are very good.
- The unit provides very well for pupils' social development, and well for their moral development.
- There is a positive and friendly atmosphere, seen particularly in very good daily assemblies.

What could be improved

- Co-ordinators for all subjects are needed, with time to monitor standards and analyse pupils' progress towards their targets in all subjects.
- Improvement is needed in the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) and of personal, social and health education (PSHE), as well as in the curriculum for religious education (RE) and physical education (PE).
- Monitoring by senior management of standards in teaching and the curriculum, and schemes for the appraisal and performance management of staff are needed.
- The regularity and comprehensiveness of written reports to parents need improvement.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the local education authority.

HOW THE UNIT HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been no previous inspection by OFSTED, but much progress has been made since an inspection by the local education authority in November 1999. The unit prepared a clear and detailed action plan and has already achieved many of the improvements it aimed at, for example in assessments of pupils' attainment, targets for their academic and personal development, and regular meetings of staff.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils are achieving in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the unit.

Progress in:	by age 11	Key
English	B	very good A
Mathematics	C	good B
Science	C	satisfactory C
Personal, social and health education	D	unsatisfactory D
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	poor E

** IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs*

Results for the three pupils who took the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were below average in science, and well below in English and mathematics. Pupils did not take these tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, but these tests are taken when appropriate. When they join the unit, their attainment is well below the nationally expected level, but over Key Stage 1 they make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous standards. Achievement is most marked in the skills of literacy, reflecting very good teaching and detailed schemes of work. By the end of this stage, some pupils have attained the nationally expected level in some aspects of science, art and music. A few reach national levels in reading, speaking and listening and number work.

During Key Stage 2, pupils achieve a satisfactory level for them by the end of the stage. Their progress is not so rapid at this stage, partly because the teaching is not quite so good and partly because several pupils join during this stage and have not had the benefit of the education given in Key Stage 1. By the end of the stage, standards for many pupils are in line with the national level in art, but standards are well below this level in RE. Two subjects, ICT and PSHE, are not well enough provided, so that pupils' achievements in them are unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Good. Pupils enjoy coming and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Pupils often behave very well around the unit, though sometimes behaviour in classrooms is very challenging.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils generally respect each other, are keen to take responsibility and have good relationships with adults and each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Current attendance is an improvement on many pupils' records in previous schools.

Attitudes and behaviour improve during pupils' time in the unit. This is seen in their success in reaching their individual targets for behaviour and in the good quality of their relationships when compared with their records in previous schools. Several pupils integrate well in mainstream schools, either while still attending part time or as full-time pupils after they have left the unit.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall: 38	All lessons seen were at least satisfactory: 21 per cent were satisfactory, 60 per cent good, 16 per cent very good and 3 per cent (one lesson) excellent.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

English and mathematics are very well taught in Key Stage 1 and well taught in Key Stage 2. Literacy and numeracy are well taught across the curriculum. The teaching of science is satisfactory. Personal, social and health education is not formally taught, so that pupils do not receive regular instruction in health, sex and drugs education. Teaching is very good in Key Stage 1, where the teacher has particular strengths in the teaching of basic skills, planning and the management of pupils. As a result, pupils learn very well at this stage, making a very good effort in all their subjects. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2. Basic skills are well taught, while the management of pupils is generally good. At this stage, pupils learn well, though sometimes their behaviour holds them back. Teachers are good at providing individual education plans (IEPs) for all pupils and at setting them work designed for their particular needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Good in literacy and numeracy. All the subjects of the National curriculum except ICT are provided. The unit makes very good use of resources in the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils' requirements are well met by the curriculum and the annual reviews.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development; assemblies are very good. Good for moral and very good for social development. Staff set examples of kindness and understanding, while reinforcing expectations of good attitudes and behaviour.
How well the unit cares for its pupils	Well. Very good procedures for improving behaviour. Good procedures for the day-to-day monitoring of pupils' academic performance, but recording and analysis of their progress needs improving.

The curriculum has particular strengths in its provision for literacy and numeracy, but does not provide a full enough programme in RE and PE. The unit does not provide enough ICT or PSHE. Staff care well for pupils and are dedicated to their wellbeing. The school works closely with individual parents, but does not provide much regular information for all parents. Reports were not written in 1999.

HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and acting deputy head work very effectively for the improvement of the unit.
How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The advisory panel gives well informed support.
The unit's evaluation of its performance	Though teachers are aware of the day-to-day progress of their pupils, the unit lacks the staffing structure to make assessments of pupil's longer term progress. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the curriculum do not exist.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Teaching and support staff are well deployed and good use is made of accommodation. Resources for learning are lacking in some areas, but the unit makes good use of the resources it has.

Now that the local education authority has provided good premises and a satisfactory staffing structure, the headteacher is able to make rapid progress in developing the unit. The leadership of the local education authority is satisfactory. As it manages the unit's finances as part of its overall budget, the opportunities for the unit to apply the principles of best value are very limited.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like coming and make good progress.• Teaching is good.• They feel well informed about how their children are getting on.• The unit expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.• The unit is well led and managed• There is a good range of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some think that behaviour is not good.• Some would like homework to be set.

The team agrees with the positive views of parents, except that parents should expect a written annual report as well as the more informal contact which the unit provides well. At present, the unit does not give parents enough information about their children's progress. Inspectors agree that behaviour is not always good and sometimes interrupts learning, but they have also found many examples of good, considerate behaviour. They do not feel that setting homework for these primary age pupils who have difficulties with their reading, writing and number work would result in any real gain for them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The unit's results and achievements

1. When pupils enter the unit, their attainment is generally well below the nationally expected levels in all subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1, results in national tests in English and mathematics in 1999 confirm attainment well below average; assessments in science show some pupils working at the nationally expected level in life processes and living things, but below this level in other respects. By the end of the stage, their attainment, seen in lessons and work completed, has improved and is now below, rather than well below, expected levels. In art and music, however, attainment is in line with the national levels, and a few pupils attain these levels in their reading, speaking and listening, and number work. During Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainment, making good progress in response to very good teaching, seen particularly in the teacher's very good planning and high expectations. Their progress, though good, is not as good as the teaching, as lapses in behaviour and attention hold it back to some degree.
2. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the nationally expected levels in all subjects except art, where it is in line with expected levels. Attainment in religious education is well below expected levels at the end of this stage. Pupils have not taken national tests in the unit at the end of this stage in recent years, though some have taken them in the schools they also attend. During Key Stage 2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their previous levels of attainment. Generally pupils do not make the rapid and assured progress they did in Key Stage 1, as the teaching does not have the same qualities of planning, discipline and expectation seen in the earlier stage.
3. In both key stages, attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is well below the expected national level, as the subject is not taught sufficiently to allow pupils to gain any measurable standard or make progress in it. For most pupils, attainment in literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is below the expected levels at the end of each key stage, but daily lessons raise attainment considerably over pupils' time in the unit. Pupils therefore achieve well in literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, making good progress in relation to their previous attainment.
4. Only in English and mathematics are targets for individual pupils clearly set and assessed. In English, pupils respond well to their targets, and in reaching them they demonstrate good progress. In mathematics, pupils' individual education programmes contain clear targets. These are usually met, particularly when they are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson. In other subjects, academic targets are not regularly given to all pupils, though staff are aware of each pupil's targets for behaviour.
5. In English, attainment is generally below, sometimes well below, expected national levels when pupils join the unit. During Key Stage 1, pupils respond well to the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject and direction of the class, making good progress and achieving well in relation to their previous levels of attainment. Attainment in reading is very varied, but all pupils made good progress in reading and discussing their class book, *Monty at the Party*. All could read the words and some could do so with accuracy and expression, helped by a clear grasp of punctuation. At this stage, they make good progress in writing, tracing and copying letters and words with accuracy; some can reproduce these with confidence. They speak clearly and with interest, sometimes at good length and with some evidence for their views. As a result, standards of attainment for some pupils at the end of

the stage are at the expected national levels in reading, speaking and listening, though writing skills generally remain below these levels. Overall, at the end of the stage most pupils reach Level 1 of the National Curriculum, and some Level 2.

6. During Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, though attainment generally remains below expected levels by the end of the stage. However, some make good progress in Years 5 and 6, attaining levels not far below those expected nationally by the end of the stage. In reading, standards vary widely. In Year 3, for example, one pupil read with confidence from the class reader, *Through the Dragon's Eye*, though another had difficulty in identifying relatively familiar words. In Year 5, one pupil read with confidence and some expression at Level 3 of the National Curriculum. Writing skills remain below national levels for most pupils, but work books give evidence of steady progress and growing independence, so that some pupils can clearly communicate meaning in their written replies to questions, and sometimes in short stories. For many pupils, however, writing remains a difficult process, and all are happier to speak, sometimes vividly, about what has happened in a story or video. They listen well, as when Year 4 pupils recalled accurately what had happened in their reader, *The Iron Man*, and talked convincingly about what might happen next. Overall, across both key stages, pupils have responded well to regular and careful teaching and have achieved good levels in relation to those they had previously reached.
7. In mathematics, by the ends of both key stages, the majority of pupils' attainment is below nationally expected levels in all aspects of work. However, a minority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attain standards which are close to national expectations, particularly in number. Pupils' oral work is better than their written work.
8. Pupils' achievement in both key stages in using and applying mathematics to solve problems is good. They have had difficulty in finding different ways to solve problems, but with help can increasingly manage this. This is a good improvement from when they started school and found it difficult to talk about their work and were afraid of making mistakes. A good example of pupils' willingness to try new strategies is a Year 4 pupil who independently chose to use a calculator to check his answer. Pupils work well with numbers in relation to their prior attainment. Towards the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are working with large numbers and are beginning to understand place value, including thousands. They use their knowledge of the five times table to tell the time. They are beginning to learn about digital time and the difference between morning and afternoon. They do not yet understand the need for standard measures for capacity.
9. Overall, pupils' achievement in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1. Pupils can identify and name various shapes. Their strength is in mental mathematics, where they can give the answers to various problems and work out answers mentally. They understand doubling and quickly subtract numbers to 20. In Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding in all aspects of mathematics are satisfactory, and in problem solving they are good. There is little evidence of the collection and using of data on the computer, at either stage.
10. In science, pupils begin their courses with widely differing knowledge of the subject and an overall attainment below the nationally expected level. Their knowledge, skills and understanding are not formally assessed on admission and this means that no learning targets are set in the subject, with a consequent adverse effect on their achievement. However, on the evidence of work seen, pupils achieve well and make good progress in Key Stage 1, in all areas of the subject. By the end of the key stage, attainment for some pupils is in line with expected national levels, though for most it is below. Pupils know that materials have different properties and that some are more suitable for the various parts of a building than others. They know that materials can be changed by heating, cooling, bending and stretching

and that waterproof materials keep out water. They are able to collect pond minibeasts from a pond and to examine them and group similar ones together. Some pupils know that electricity is used to work a variety of appliances in the home.

11. Within Key Stage 2, some pupils make enough progress in science to be close to the nationally expected level by the end of the key stage, though attainment for most is below this level. At this stage, their achievement overall is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment, rather than good. This is because some join during the key stage, without the benefit of the good start others have had in Key Stage 1, and teachers are not formally assessing their learning needs and planning work to meet them. Nevertheless, they can make predictions about 'what will happen if' and can test these predictions; they discuss what they find out and some can write an account of their experiment. Pupils know the parts of the eye and some of the differences between groups of animals and the main parts of a plant. They know the differences between solids and liquids and they can dissolve sugar in water to make a solution. They can separate sand and salt by evaporation. They know that sound is formed by vibration and can make simple instruments, in conjunction with their work in design and technology. However, they find difficulty in recalling and recording their observations.
12. Information and communications technology is not taught as a separate subject and pupils learn their ICT skills through their work in other subject areas. However, as it is not planned or taught systematically within the schemes of work of these subjects, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are variable and key skills are not being acquired. Hence, attainment is generally well below the nationally expected levels by the end of both key stages and the pupils' progress and achievement are unsatisfactory. There are some examples of word-processing, used for captions for wall displays, of desk-top publishing for the production of dinner menus, and ICT features in pupils' work in Key Stage 2 art. Beyond these, there was no other ICT work available for inspection.
13. It was possible to observe only one lesson of religious education, but pupils' work was inspected in all years apart from Year 3, where none was available. Evidence of work seen confirms standards just below expected levels towards the end of Key Stage 1 and well below towards the end of Key Stage 2. Work on Old Testament stories and religious festivals in Key Stage 1 is plentiful, although confined to the naming of pictures stuck into books, but indicates a basic understanding of the subjects studied. At this stage, pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainment, making good progress in basic knowledge. Written work seen in Key Stage 2 is less varied and shows no development in standards of attainment over those in Key Stage 1. This is because the subject is not clearly co-ordinated and pupils are not set progressive targets, so that their achievement remains as before, with evidence of nothing beyond the cutting and labelling they did competently in Key Stage 1. Despite this, in the Year 4 lesson seen, pupils made good progress in their knowledge of local places of worship, as the result of very good planning and preparation by the teacher. Teaching of this calibre makes possible good progress, but needs to be followed up with well structured written work and targets, in all classes.
14. In art, by the end of both key stages pupils achieve the standard expected for their age. Throughout the school, pupils are developing reasonable skills in all aspects of the subject. They are very self-critical and try to improve their work to get it just right. They plan their work and improve it so that it fits the page well, and use a variety of techniques, including marbling. A few Year 3 pupils produce work of a good standard, such as still life drawing of animal skulls and detailed paintings, using a variety of brush strokes to show the effects of fire from a dragon's mouth. Generally in art, pupils use their imagination, mix colours, and use a variety of media such as watercolour paints, pencils and various materials for collage.

The also use art programs on the computer in Key Stage 2 to create pictures and study the work of famous artists as a starting point for their own work.

15. Pupils make good progress in art, in both stages. Their work is often well displayed around the school and clearly shows the improvement in their skills. For example, the complex portrait of King Henry VIII in Key Stage 2 shows considerable development on the simple self-portraits produced by the younger pupils. In Year 3, a pupil carefully mixed colours to match an illustration from a book and explained well how he had managed to make the colour get paler and paler as it went down the dragon's body. Pupils make good progress in their own personal and social development when working in this subject. In Year 2, pupils spontaneously organised themselves to work in pairs so that they could produce a large painting of Samuel Pepys. In Year 3, they were happy to plan work for a large mural, knowing that only one would be chosen to go on the wall in the 'quiet room'. In both lessons observed, pupils concentrated for long periods of time until their work was completed to their satisfaction.
16. Design and technology is taught mainly as resistant materials and food technology, with some work in textiles. The pupils have widely differing attainment levels in the subject when they join the unit and their attainment is below nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1, they make good progress and achieve well. They can discuss the materials they might use to make a garment and how they might fasten it together. They can select materials and cut card and fabric to make a model bedroom. They can cut out a face shape and make an articulated eye which rotates on a paper fastener and they can make an articulated skeleton from card by cutting with scissors and joining with paper fasteners.
17. In Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of the stage, they can discuss the best materials for making a model insect from waste materials and can make a model of 'The Iron Man' from the Ted Hughes story, which they have been studying in English, by selecting, cutting and fixing a range of materials like wooden sticks, card and plastic containers. In food technology, they can select, mix and cook ingredients and specify the equipment needed to make a pizza.
18. In geography, though attainment is below the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages, progress and achievement are good for these pupils. Much of the work in geography is undertaken with work in history and other subjects; for example, in Key Stage 1 pupils look at 'Washday - then and now', and in Key Stage 2, they learn about London, past and present, and ancient and modern Greece. They also undertake work on local rivers in conjunction with work on water in science. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils know that technology has transformed the way people live, for example through their study of washing machines. They look at different kinds of housing and where it is situated. They know something about the buildings of London. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can locate their own community on large-scale maps and aerial photographs and can find Greece on a world map. They measure the temperature outside and use a grid to find the temperature at different times of the year in England.
19. In history, by the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is slightly below the standard expected for their age. Throughout the school, pupils are developing useful skills in all aspects of this subject which enhance performance in and link very well with other subjects such as art, geography and English. In Key Stage 1, they make good progress in relation to their prior knowledge, for example learning to use evidence to discover about the Great Fire of London. In one lesson, when studying a picture of the fire, a pupil quickly announced that the fire had spread to several houses. When pupils start at this unit, several have little understanding of their own development from birth to age five and are unsure about the

passing of time. However, during lessons, these same pupils demonstrate that they realise that things were very different in times past. This is also the case for pupils in Key Stage 2, who are very interested to find out about Ancient Greece. They have many questions and use their knowledge of geography to help them discover about the country's terrain and weather. Their poorly developed literacy skills, however, make progress only satisfactory at this stage, as it is difficult for them to find information without support from the teacher or assistant, though they are involved and keen to learn.

20. In music, attainment in the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1 was around the nationally expected level. Responding well to the teacher's very good organisation and enthusiasm, pupils reached Level 2 of the National Curriculum in singing and rhythm. They achieved well, making good progress in relation to their previous attainment during the lesson; they explored different sounds well, remembered the words of *London's Burning* and progressed rapidly in singing the catch and introducing the various extra sounds at the right time.
21. In Key Stage 2, attainment was below the expected level for this stage in the one Year 3 lesson seen, remaining at around Level 2. However, a single pupil in Year 5 performed at the expected level in the limited range of activities seen in a brief visit. In the Year 3 lesson, pupils achieved well; they made good progress in their understanding of marching rhythm, parading about the room with enthusiasm and huge enjoyment, if not musical finesse. From their work on display in the classroom, Year 5 pupils have responded well to the teacher's good musical knowledge and have made progress in learning about instruments and their functions.
22. All pupils attend a daily assembly, which is always an act of worship and includes a hymn. All sing well, with much feeling, good tune and rhythm, and also with good body movements to emphasise the meaning. In this aspect of music, they attain the nationally expected level and make real progress in learning how music can be an enjoyable and outgoing experience. Their singing of an Easter hymn, moving together to express the divine love as 'so high, so deep, so wide', was very memorable.
23. Only one physical education lesson was observed and this was for Key Stage 2 pupils at the adjacent sports centre with qualified instructors. The unit staff were present to help and encourage their pupils in learning cricket skills.
24. Pupils' achievement in the games aspect of physical education is satisfactory with several pupils demonstrating good skills of aiming, hitting the ball with a bat and retrieving the ball quickly and accurately. On several occasions pupils who are very quiet in class were pleased to demonstrate their good skills to others. Pupils are making good progress in this aspect of the subject and are now able to work as a team in football matches. The only girl in the unit chooses not to take part and plays tennis with a nursery nurse during these sessions. Because other aspects of physical activities are under-developed, attainment is below expected national levels in this subject, as the school does not have sufficient facilities to work on them consistently. Gymnastics is confined to using the outdoor apparatus, which is uncovered and can be used only during fine weather. Pupils are adept at using this and climb and swing with confidence. They take turns and help each other. Dance is not yet offered throughout the unit, although this is planned for Key Stage 1 pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

25. Pupils like the unit and their attitudes are good. They are keen to come to school and arrive happily, as great efforts are made to welcome them and meet their needs, for example helping pupils prepare their breakfast. The ethos and atmosphere of the school are welcoming, warm

and calm. Parents say that their children enjoy being at the unit. Staff prepare interesting and varied lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, which engage pupils as soon as they arrive, helping them to settle quickly.

26. The unit has good procedures, routines and expectations of behaviour. These are well understood by the pupils, who show great affection for and trust towards, the staff. Despite their difficulties, pupils often work hard, listen carefully to instructions and try to complete tasks and do their best, particularly in history and art. The majority of pupils' work is neatly presented and pupils are happy to show visitors their books and talk about their work.
27. Behaviour in lessons and at playtime and lunchtime is satisfactory overall. It is often good, with pupils involved and interested in learning. This interest, however, can be short lived and pupils can display aggressive and confrontational behaviour which challenges the teacher and sometimes upsets the class. This occurs when pupils over-react to actions by classmates, have to spend too long listening to teachers talking when they are keen to be doing, such as sometimes in art, or because they are afraid of failing. Occasionally, teachers show such patience that they allow pupils to challenge them for too long.
28. Pupils respond well to the daily 'praise sheets', which are taken home to help parents know how their children have behaved and which are an incentive to good behaviour. They do not always respond well to the mild sanction of 'a chance', which records a misdemeanour, as some pupils are very concerned that they may be punished at home and in school. This caused an outbreak of extreme behaviour. The headteacher is aware of this phenomenon and is trying to start a parenting programme to help parents help their children.
29. Several pupils make such improvements in their behaviour that they are able to return to mainstream schools with support. A few pupils return to the unit, finding the demands of the mainstream school too difficult. The staff of the unit are well aware of this and are seeking ways better to prepare their pupils for life in the primary or secondary school.
30. Pupils' personal development is good. Throughout their time at the unit pupils are encouraged to be independent. They are given responsibilities, such as taking registers to the office or setting out the classroom for lunch, and undertake these tasks willingly. Relationships with the staff are good and pupils make good progress in working with each other. The older pupils are now able to form a football team and work in pairs during training. At playtime, pupils often take care of each other when sharing the large climbing equipment. They know what is right and wrong, although when they break the rules they are more concerned with the effects of punishment on themselves than the impact of their behaviour on others. They do, however, volunteer to apologise. Pupils are often courteous and polite and frequently use their initiative, for instance by getting a chair for visitors. Pupils respond well to the good nurturing which the school provides, and many make good emotional progress. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1, where pupils may spend two profitable years in the class.
31. Pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory and for many it is an improvement on their attendance at other schools. The number of exclusions is reasonable. Exclusion is used as a last resort and effectively underpins the school's comprehensive behaviour policy.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

32. Teaching is of very good quality in Key Stage 1 and is good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, in either stage. In Key Stage 1, five out of the ten lessons

seen were very good, one was excellent and the rest were good. In Key Stage 2, nineteen of the twenty eight lessons seen were good, one was very good and the rest were satisfactory.

33. Leading characteristics in Key Stage 1 are the teacher's very good planning, assessment, and management of behaviour. Combined, these allow pupils to make rapid progress. They learn very well because they have confidence in the teacher's control and guidance. A good example of this was a mathematics lesson on counting in twos where the teacher had planned for a good variety of activities. She taught with pace and very good control, combined with plenty of encouragement.
34. In Key Stage 2, good teaching is marked by the assured management of behaviour and by good pace through well planned lessons, for example a Year 5 lesson in literacy, when the teacher planned very clearly for the widely differing needs of the pupils, encouraging one to continue work on key vocabulary while he helped the other with work of a higher level on the Story of Gelert. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, and not as clearly managed as in Key Stage 1. However, it leads to the accurate analysis of pupils' attainment and to clear planning for the next stage of work. Where teaching is satisfactory, pace is sufficient and the management of behaviour competent, but even so it sometimes leads to restless behaviour by these pupils, who need a lot of stimulus to remain concentrated on their tasks. For example, a well planned Year 4 history lesson on Lindisfarne and the Viking invasions began with good use of the video, but the pace and personal challenge were not quite enough to retain the interest of some very difficult pupils. Overall, pupils learn well in Key Stage 2. They acquire skills and knowledge at a good pace and often show considerable interest in their work. However, though they respond well to good teaching, they are not always able to get the greatest benefit from it because their concentration and behaviour sometimes let them down.
35. Classroom assistants support teachers well, working closely with them and providing vital and effective help to pupils. They help to keep them to their tasks, encourage their efforts with merited praise and administer records of achievement, giving rewards for good effort. They join in all the activities of the lesson. They are particularly helpful when pupils are distressed or disobedient, for example withdrawing them to the quiet room sensitively and returning them when they are ready to resume work.
36. Teaching of the key skills of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the unit and very good in Key Stage 1. Planning is very good for literacy and good for numeracy. Skills are regularly taught and well reinforced in all subjects. The assessment of progress is clear, with good records of individual achievement. As a result, pupils make good progress in these key skills, and a number are able to return to mainstream school with their confidence and competence raised. There is no separate teaching of ICT, which is not included in the regular work of other subjects, with the exception of art in Key Stage 2.
37. Careful planning and good teaching of basic skills allow teachers to meet the needs of all pupils. All have special needs, and work is often well provided to suit their particular difficulties. For example, the teacher of Key Stage 1 pupils is adept at assessing what they will next need to make continued good progress and is well supported by the classroom assistant in providing the right level of work and emotional support for them. The teacher of Year 5 pupils plans very carefully in giving work well suited to the very differing levels of ability in the class. During the inspection, all pupils but one were boys, but the teacher of the mixed class clearly provided work well suited to the girl in his class. Though pupils come from a number of ethnic backgrounds, none has English as an additional language.

38. In English, teaching is very good in Key Stage 1. The teacher plans lessons very carefully, covers the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy very well, and ensures that pupils keep to the point. For example, in one very successful lesson, pupils learnt well because the teacher had an extremely clear lesson plan and led them through a series of reading and writing tasks with firmness and good pace. The management of behaviour was excellent, allowing the teacher to concentrate clearly on the assessment of pupils' progress. In turn, pupils knew that they had to perform well, and did so, with good concentration and pace.
39. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2. Here, lesson planning is clear and reflects the requirements of the strategy well. Teachers control behaviour well, though occasionally pace is a little slow and pupils start to become restive. Teachers assess pupils' work well and plan the next stage carefully, building on what pupils have learned. They use the resources available well. For example, the teacher of a Year 3 class made good use of the video, *Through the Dragon's Eye*, asking questions well designed to invite thoughtful comment and to help pupils recall the story so far. Pupils learnt well, responding with confidence and showing considerable interest. A Year 4 lesson, based on the story of *The Iron Man*, was well planned to cater for pupils' particular learning difficulties. Good pace, a variety of activities and clear use of questioning gave pupils the chance to show what they could do and to gain in confidence through consolidating their speaking and writing skills.
40. The teaching of mathematics is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In both key stages, teachers are good at presenting interesting work and enticing their pupils to learn. They provide varied activities and interesting resources such as games, which help to keep pupils working on the set task. Classroom assistants are used well; they encourage pupils to ask questions which extend their knowledge and then help them to check their understanding. Teachers' good skills in the management of behaviour help pupils to concentrate and to extend their learning. Teachers organise their lessons well and plan for individual pupils according to their specific mathematics targets on the basis of clear assessment of their attainment and progress. An example of these qualities was seen in a Year 5 lesson, in which the teacher shared clear objectives with the pupils, organised a relevant series of activities, and helped them to progress at a good pace. Pupils learnt well and achieved the goals for the lesson.
41. In science, no lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. Two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2; in one, teaching was good, and in the other satisfactory. Information from pupils' work and teachers' plans and records confirm that, overall, teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils respond accordingly, learning well in Key Stage 1 and in a satisfactory way in Key Stage 2. Where teaching was good, the teacher had a good subject knowledge and coupled this well with a good understanding of pupils' needs, so that the level of work was appropriate. Pupils felt that they could do the work and did not reject it out of hand. Lesson time was well used, and pupils were kept fully occupied and interested. Good use was also made of practical activities, so that the pupils remained interested. Good teaching in the Year 3 lesson seen gained a positive response from pupils, who watched a video with great attention, settled happily to work and were keen to relate what they had learned. Where teaching was satisfactory, the teacher had prepared a relevant lesson well; pupils learnt and revised competently, but their pace was affected by some distracting behaviour. This happened in a Year 4 lesson on floating and sinking, in which, despite the teacher's good planning and subject knowledge, pupils' behaviour led to loss of pace and interrupted progress.
42. In science lessons, teachers made good use of opportunities to reinforce literacy skills through discussion and questioning, and numeracy skills through weighing and measuring. However, they made insufficient use of ICT to enable less literate or confident pupils to

record predictions and observations or learn about control and measuring systems. The process of target setting and on-going assessment is unsatisfactory because it is too informal and inconsistent.

43. In religious education, teaching was very good in the one Year 4 lesson seen. Though standards are well below the expected level in the unit overall, this results from the inadequate oversight of planning and assessment and not from the quality of teaching. In this lesson, the teacher had assembled an extremely interesting collection of photographs of local places of worship - churches of different denominations, mosques and temples - and used excellent knowledge of the locality to teach a very well planned lesson on the different faiths of Wolverhampton and their beliefs, as seen in the architecture of their buildings. Pupils learnt well, responding very positively to the streets they knew, and learning the significance of things they had known but not understood before.
44. In art, teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good, the teacher has a good understanding of the subject, gives clear directions, and uses and chooses resources well. The teacher sets high standards and manages pupils well, giving them praise and encouragement sensitively. Pupils respond very positively and make a good creative effort, achieving well and reaching the nationally expected standard in this subject, for example, a Year 3 class made good use of a well planned lesson to prepare for painting a mural to go in the 'quiet room' and attained as well as other pupils in mainstream school. Organisation of the class enables the teacher to spend time with each pupil, questioning and extending learning, so that the pupil feels closely involved in the lesson and benefits from the teacher's encouragement. Teaching plans are clear and teachers do not allow themselves to be diverted from the task in hand. Classroom assistants are used well. They have a clear understanding of the aim of the activity and help the teacher to manage behaviour well. They also give good demonstrations of different techniques, leading to a good level of awareness of the subject and its potential, for these pupils. Sometimes, in Key Stage 2, too long is spent talking about the work at the start of sessions when pupils are anxious to begin. This can lead to loss of attention and confrontation.
45. In design and technology, teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge in Key Stage 1 and use their knowledge of pupils' needs to plan appropriate work. Pupils respond with confidence and keenness to learn, seen for example in their eagerness to complete the construction of a vehicle from the kits they were given. Teachers give pupils challenging work which gets a positive response and makes them think. Lesson time is used well, with a wide range of activities and plenty to do, which keeps the pupils occupied.
46. In Key Stage 2, teachers' knowledge and planning are satisfactory and pupils learn productively, filling gaps in their knowledge and making progress in acquiring necessary skills. Planning is sometimes very good, as for example in a Year 5 lesson on classifying bread products where pupils responded well and made good progress in describing the products by taste, texture and smell. In a few instances, restless behaviour resulted from a lack of pace and unsatisfactory preparation of materials, for example when Year 3 pupils failed to settle to a lesson on the making of pizzas. At all stages, teachers reinforce the pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy by discussion, weighing and measuring. However, they make insufficient use of ICT, so that pupils are unable to record their design process and evaluate what they have made. Good use is made of photography to record what pupils have made, as part of a formal system of assessment.
47. In geography, teaching is good in both key stages, and because of this pupils learn well. Teachers know and understand the subject well and plan appropriate learning activities.

Their planning ties in well with other areas of the curriculum, especially with history, science and design and technology. Good use is made of discussion to reinforce literacy skills, while those of numeracy are reinforced by measuring temperatures and distances and examining different scales in mapping. Pupils therefore get plenty of practice in basic skills and are keen to make more progress in consolidating them. However, insufficient use is made of ICT to enable less literate or confident pupils to record observations and data, and to make measurements. Lessons usually have good pace, with plenty to do, which keeps the pupils fully occupied throughout. In these lessons, pupils work and behave well. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils derived much benefit from comparing Wolverhampton and Bridgnorth, using maps and photographs to deduce facts and make predictions about each town. Sometimes, pace flags and an activity goes on too long, resulting in restless behaviour. Assessment is mainly informal, with insufficient feedback to the pupils on what they have learned, so that they do not make all the progress they might, particularly in Key Stage 2.

48. The quality of history teaching is good across the unit. Teachers use varied resources, such as videos and paintings, to involve pupils and capture their interest. They also provide good links with other subjects such as art to help pupils gain a good understanding of this subject and record their knowledge in a way which is not too difficult for them. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and of child development. They therefore match work to pupils' needs, question sensitively to challenge and ensure success, and praise and encourage them. As a result, pupils are keen to work and learn, showing good interest and making a creative effort to understand the past. They concentrate and remain interested. For example, a Year 1 class remained attentive throughout a very well planned lesson on the Great Fire of London in which they made good progress in learning the vocabulary for this topic.
49. The teaching of music was very good in the lesson seen in Key Stage 1, where the teacher planned with great care and made sure that everyone was fully involved. Subject knowledge was secure and the assessment of individuals good. Pupils learnt well because they were fully involved, building up the stages of participation in the song, *London's Burning*, to a rousing crescendo. They made good progress in timing, rhythm and teamwork. The clear enjoyment of singing learnt in such lessons benefits all the pupils, who join with real pleasure in the assembly hymns.
50. It was not possible to observe much teaching of music in Key Stage 2, but that seen was good. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher had prepared a lesson on rhythm and beat, which pupils greatly appreciated. They learnt well, happily marching to a Souza tune. In another lesson, a Year 5 pupil responded well to the teacher's good subject knowledge, learning rapidly how sound is made by vibration and demonstrating this with growing confidence.
51. In physical education, one games lesson was seen, in Key Stage 2. In this lesson, teaching by qualified instructors was good. The lesson was planned thoroughly with clear learning objectives. Teachers' knowledge of the subject was very good, and they ensured that the lesson went at a fast pace. The teachers demonstrated clearly, giving specific directions well. The very good pupil-adult ratio meant that pupils were observed closely and good pointers were given for improvement. The unit staff were adept at intervening to control inappropriate behaviour. As a result, pupils learnt well. They enjoyed their physical education and did their best, showing good levels of interest and concentration.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

52. The quality and range of the learning opportunities offered within the curriculum are satisfactory overall. Part of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is provided through shared

placements with mainstream schools and this ensures that each pupil has a broad and balanced curriculum according to his or her needs. The curriculum in Key Stage 2 builds upon the curriculum offered in Key Stage 1 and provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop their communication skills, become more independent and gain in knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum is socially inclusive and provides all pupils with equal access to it and opportunity within it.

53. Within the unit, the main thrust of the curriculum is literacy and numeracy through the subjects of English and mathematics. Basic communication skills are taught through all subjects within the curriculum, for example by the use of questioning to encourage speaking and listening and through the use of measuring and weighing in science and design and technology.
54. The unit aims to cover as much of the National Curriculum as possible and is largely successful in providing the subjects of the National Curriculum, apart from a lack of timetabled time for ICT and insufficient planned ICT within the schemes of work of other subjects. However, although the curriculum is well planned in terms of the overall allocation of subjects, planning within subjects is often not well managed. In English, the curriculum is well planned throughout and pupils are given appropriate work for their varying abilities. However, neither in English nor other subjects is the curriculum monitored to check whether all pupils are being given work at the right level. In mathematics, for example, this has led to a number of instances where work which was too difficult was being taught. Throughout the unit, this lack of monitoring means that senior staff do not know whether schemes of work are necessarily appropriate and supported by relevant resources. As well as in ICT, the curriculum is underdeveloped in religious education, physical education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). These subjects lack adequate schemes of work, so that a full coverage is not guaranteed and pupils' progress cannot readily be measured. Apart from these subjects, the unit's curriculum refers well to the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, so that the pupils who spend part of their time in mainstream schools or who move back into mainstream schools are sufficiently prepared for integration. The unit currently has four pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need which require access to the full National Curriculum. This access is being well provided, with the limitations discussed above, even though the unit is not obliged to teach the full National Curriculum. The unit takes good account of the local education authority's (LEA) curriculum policy for pupil referral units.
55. The provision of extra-curricular activities is difficult because of the considerable distances some pupils travel on their way to and from the unit. However, the unit organises activities which extend beyond the school day. Pupils are, for example, given an opportunity to visit a residential educational centre in Wales where they benefit greatly from field studies and from the opportunity to develop their social skills.
56. Overall, the teaching of PSHE is not planned and provided regularly enough, and its curriculum is in need of improvement. The programme is covered mainly through the different subject areas. Some sex education is covered in science and also on a 'need to know' basis in other curriculum areas, but this is not well enough planned and monitored to ensure adequate coverage. The effects of drugs misuse are not covered. However, there is some good PSHE work, for example in studies of the local community and citizenship within geography and history, and issues of healthy living, including hygiene, in food technology. The unit makes good use of the community nurse to develop the pupils' understanding of health care. Break and dinner times are used very effectively to promote the pupils' social development, especially in taking turns and helping each other; this helps the pupils to develop co-operation and to raise their self-esteem.

57. The unit provides for work-related education through the theme of 'People who help us', and also through visits in the community, where pupils are able to see a wide variety of occupations. It makes very good use of the local community to reinforce the curriculum. Pupils are undertaking a study of the workings of their own town and a contrasting, smaller, neighbouring town, as part of their geography course. While doing this, they have met representatives of the community. They have also studied the River Severn. In English, they have followed up their study of *The Iron Man* by seeing the film at a cinema and by choosing books from a local department store. They have reinforced their understanding of wildlife communities in science through their study of a local pond, and through visits to an animal centre and a nature reserve. They have also planted a tree at an activity centre and are charting its growth. As part of their art course, the pupils have visited local museums and art galleries. Within the physical education curriculum, the unit makes good use of the swimming pool at a neighbouring special school and younger pupils make good use of an outdoor education centre. A music support group has demonstrated brass instruments to some of the pupils as part of their work in music. As a result of these experiences, the pupils are used to meeting people and most can talk to visitors with great confidence and maturity. The dedication and commitment of the staff in organising these visits are considerable, and have a very positive effect in developing the pupils' personal and social skills.
58. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory overall. The unit has good links with several schools in the area, especially those which send pupils and with which the unit shares pupils. However, the quality of these links varies according to how committed these schools are to their former pupils. A few members of staff have useful links with these schools for sharing information about the curriculum and for obtaining resources, but in general there is very little sharing of ideas with other schools. Good support and information are provided for mainstream schools before a pupil's reintegration there and the staff carefully support the reintegration process so that pupils do not fail to benefit from it.
59. The unit's provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Its provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. Spiritual understanding is mainly developed through the religious education curriculum, but assemblies too are very important in encouraging pupils to reflect on the spiritual aspects of life. The diversity of the natural environment and creatures within it are also discussed in science. In art, the pupils reflect on beauty through their visits to art galleries.
60. Provision for moral development is good. The pupils' moral understanding is developed primarily through the good role models offered by the staff and their constant, and unobtrusive, reinforcement of ideas of right and wrong. Assemblies provide an opportunity to reflect on moral issues.
61. The unit makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Their social understanding is very carefully developed through sharing and co-operating in lessons, for example waiting turns in using a piece of equipment. The dinner times are used very well to develop the pupils' skills in waiting their turn, clearing up and undertaking simple chores, like setting the tables and clearing away. Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to each other, and often respond with very good consideration for the welfare of others. They have very positive examples from their teachers, assistants and all other staff who care for them.
62. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. This is promoted through the study of music, history and art, of the local community in geography and through the study of different cultural traditions in religious education. There is some attention to preparing

pupils for life within a multicultural community, particularly through religious education, but overall the curriculum does not include enough specific teaching about different cultural traditions and festivals in so multi-cultural a community. This is reflected in a shortage of suitable artefacts, books and computer-based materials.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

63. All staff, teaching and support, are dedicated to the pupils in their charge. They display great patience and tolerance towards pupils and work tirelessly to promote their personal and social development. Child protection arrangements are good. The provision for health and safety is also good, except for the absence of a formalised sex and drugs education programme and two items of safety to which the unit is attending.
64. Overall, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The assessment of pupils on entry is effective. Good use is made of assessment information to help teachers plan individual lessons. Informal daily assessment in lessons is good. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic progress are satisfactory, with individual education plans (IEPs) being reviewed termly. Targets for academic progress have substantially improved in recent months, but are not yet sufficiently focused or specific. Although some teachers keep their own records, and pupils' achievements are conscientiously recorded for IEP reviews, the recording and analysis of progress do not yet allow the unit accurately to measure and evaluate the progress of individuals or of the unit over time. The unit is not assessing whether pupils' progress is sufficient in terms of their previous attainment. In some subjects, for example PSHE and religious education, this is not possible because there is no adequate syllabus or scheme of work on which to base such a judgment. The school development plan indicates that the unit intends to address this issue.
65. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. A real strength is the consistency with which staff apply the behaviour policy, so that pupils know what to expect and what is important. Another strength is the way in which staff encourage and support individual pupils, without ever losing sight of lesson and task objectives. All pupils attend the unit because of behavioural problems, and the fact that their behaviour is satisfactory is a direct reflection of the effective behaviour policy and its good interpretation by staff in the day-to-day activities of the unit.
66. Attendance is adequately monitored and the unit tries hard to encourage parents to ensure their children attend regularly. As a result, attendance is satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

67. Parents are very appreciative of the unit, and results of the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that they believe the unit to be performing well except in terms of pupils' behaviour and of the information sent home about progress. Some parents would like their children to have homework. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. They understand parental views on behaviour, but in fact judge that behaviour is good relative to the difficulties experienced by these pupils and their previous records. They do not feel that setting homework for these primary age pupils who have difficulties with their reading, writing and number work would result in any real gain for them.
68. The unit takes care to familiarise the parents and carers of prospective pupils about its work, prior to their admission, with preliminary visits and sessions in order to make parents, carers

and pupils feel more confident. Once pupils are in the unit, however, the quality of information to parents is unsatisfactory and inspectors agree that this needs to be improved. The fact that no reports were issued in 1999, because of staff absence, meant that those parents who do not attend IEP reviews received insufficient information on academic progress over a long period. Reporting to parents does not currently meet legal requirements. Additionally, reports in 1998 did not give a full enough picture of performance or personal development because reference to what pupils achieved was made only in English and mathematics. The unit plans to resume annual reporting in 2000.

69. Information for parents on general activities and issues is also sparse. The unit has not provided any newsletter or annual report to parents, though not obliged to do so, and has only a brief prospectus. This inadequacy is redeemed to some extent by the fact that IEP reviews are held termly and by the good day-to-day communication which exists regarding behaviour and attendance. The 'praise sheet' system is a simple but effective means of keeping parents informed on a continuing basis about progress in behaviour.
70. Whilst parents appreciate the value of the unit's activities, they do not make a contribution to the education given within it. The wide geographical spread of parents and the specialised nature of the care needed means that there is no parental help in the classroom. The absence of homework, a home-reading scheme, regular home-school diaries and a parent-teacher group severely limits opportunities for parents to get involved. However, the unit operates an open door policy for parents to consult teaching staff, a daily 'praise sheet' goes home and drivers and escorts make a daily link with home. Some parents do not attend IEP reviews, although there is a termly review of each pupil's work, which almost all parents do attend. When appropriate for individual pupils, the unit makes use of a home-school diary. It is now starting a parent support group.

HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?

71. The headteacher leads the unit very effectively. Since the unit moved to new and attractive accommodation and some very difficult staffing problems have been overcome, the headteacher has been able to make rapid progress in leading the school, giving it clear educational direction and building a team of experienced and dedicated staff. Teachers now share a common goal in the improvement of the education they offer and the progress their pupils can make. They and the headteacher are aware of what needs to be done, for example in the further development of the curriculum by the production of good schemes of work and its monitoring to assess pupils' progress. The headteacher's vision for the curriculum, to provide a good model of the National Curriculum within a pupil referral unit, is inspiring teachers to realise that their pupils can succeed and their attainments stand comparison with those in mainstream schools. The headteacher is also developing a clear pastoral direction for the unit, to support and nurture these often damaged children, so that they feel better about themselves and gain a measure of confidence. Headteacher, staff and LEA work closely together to achieve the aims of the unit's development plan. This is an ambitious and well presented document which clearly identifies the unit's needs and responds to the priorities identified by the LEA.
72. The unit has five particular aims, in the development of the curriculum, progress, behaviour, pupils' self-esteem and their return to mainstream education. Aims are well reflected in the unit's current development plan, which is a clear, relevant and comprehensive document. The acting deputy headteacher gives expert and dedicated support in the furtherance of these aims, particularly by giving pupils a very good start in Key Stage 1. However, although all staff, teaching and support, work well together and have a common purpose, the headteacher has not been able to delegate responsibility for the management of subjects as she would have wished, because of staffing problems. Such responsibilities are nominal at present, though they show a good intention. This is why some aspects of the curriculum are unsatisfactory and explains the lack of an overall system for the monitoring of pupils' progress. Appointing and training senior staff in these roles are now urgent, and the LEA has advertised the position of deputy headteacher.
73. The LEA conducted an inspection in November 1999 and found much to criticise, but has not been able to resolve the unit's long-standing staffing difficulties until recently. However, it has now published a new admissions policy, has successfully gained the support of the social services department in finding appropriate schooling for some very difficult pupils, is providing training in management for the headteacher, and is seeking to fill the post of deputy headteacher. It has provided very good accommodation for the unit and has given it generous support in improving resources and equipment. The LEA officer responsible for the unit is clearly aware of its needs and gives it good support. He also chairs the unit's advisory panel, which has given good support in recent years, but is now to be reconstituted as a management group and was not in operation at the time of the inspection.
74. Although the headteacher is aware of the quality of teaching and of pupils' achievements and behaviour, from frequent classroom visits, the unit does not have adequate and agreed systems for the regular monitoring of these aspects of its performance. In addition, there is no regular appraisal of teaching or support staff and their performance in the classroom. Staff therefore lack a well regulated means of knowing how effective they are. The headteacher is correct in judging the time to be right for such development, now that staff meet more regularly and share professional problems more openly. They have greatly improved their setting of targets for individual pupils in their IEPs, but need to find an agreed way to check the quality of pupils' overall progress.

75. The LEA provides the unit with sufficient resources for its basic curriculum and has recently increased the amount of money which it can spend on items to develop the curriculum. All finance is centrally managed with the exception of money for classroom resources. The LEA has calculated the amount of money spent per pupil per annum in maintaining the unit. This figure is £12557 in 1999-2000, and includes the extra funds required for the development of the unit in its new premises. For example, funds have been provided for a well planned play area, with sturdy and well fitted climbing frames, and the unit is discussing the development of a sensory area. It has acquired computing equipment, though this is not yet in operation and at present the unit's use of new technologies is unsatisfactory. The LEA's financial planning is now well matched to the unit's educational priorities, and provision for new areas of curriculum development is starting to have a positive effect on the breadth of activity which can be provided. The unit makes appropriate use of the resources provided by the LEA and of the specific grant it receives, for example in providing relevant training for staff. Overall, expenditure on the unit is appropriate for the special needs of the pupils it serves. However, there has not been sufficient joint forward planning by the headteacher and LEA to provide resources for the unit's future development needs, and the LEA has not provided an overview of costs until this year.
76. Application of the principles of best value is satisfactory, though the involvement of the unit in this aspect of management is very limited. The LEA controls almost all financial matters. It has compared costings for the provision of education otherwise than at school with those of special education. It has also compared the financial efficiency of supporting this unit with the costs incurred in residential provision, and has decided to invest more resources in staffing and equipment for the unit, so that it can provide a fuller service for the borough. It has consulted with the unit about its future needs and is in the process of providing for them.
77. The unit is well staffed with experienced teachers and classroom assistants. It is well staffed also with drivers, cleaners, cook and school secretary, though the secretary is not full time and the headteacher has to staff the reception office towards the end of the day. Teachers are well qualified to teach in the primary phase and have acquired the expertise they need to teach these pupils. They have not all received training in all the subjects they teach, and not all subjects are co-ordinated by a teacher with relevant qualifications and experience. The headteacher is aware of the position and is seeking to appoint staff to specific responsibilities.
78. Accommodation is good overall. It is spacious and well suited to the requirements of the curriculum. All classes have their own room, and there is also a technology room, to be developed. There is a large room which is being converted into a sensory area, as well as a well furnished dining room and a library which is used for assemblies. Rooms for the headteacher and staff are spacious and well furnished. There is no separate science or art accommodation, and physical education facilities are inadequate for the full range of the National Curriculum. These factors limit the possible curriculum in these areas.
79. The provision of resources is unsatisfactory overall. Resources are adequate for the daily needs of the subjects. However, ICT equipment is not yet in use and is insufficient for the needs of the whole curriculum, and there is a lack of equipment in science, art and physical education, so that an adequately wide curriculum cannot be offered. The range and quantity of library books are limited, and the library is not much used.
80. The needs of the four pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need are well met, although there is no register of special educational needs. Parents are invited to annual reviews. There are three statutory requirements which should be met; the unit is required to teach PSHE and does not have an adequate course in this; there is no appraisal of staff; and satisfactory reports have not been written to all parents.

WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. With the support of the local education authority, the headteacher should now:

- (1) Appoint co-ordinators for all subjects taught in the unit, so that these teachers can
 - monitor standards in their subjects and support good classroom practice,
 - prepare good syllabuses and schemes of work, and
 - set targets for pupils' academic progress, in all subjects. (paragraph 72)
- (2) Improve the provision of ICT and PSHE and, in addition, further improve the scope of the curriculum for religious education and physical education. To do this,
 - provide comprehensive policies and schemes of work, and
 - provide sufficient equipment, resources and accommodation for the curriculum. (paragraphs 54, 56)
- (3) Provide training for all staff in the leadership of subjects, with particular emphasis on
 - the further development of policies and schemes of work,
 - the analysis of the resources and teaching methods required to make best use of the work proposed, and
 - the assessment of pupils' work to evaluate the extent of their progress over an agreed period of time. (paragraph 77)
- (4) In terms of the performance of staff, introduce
 - overall monitoring procedures for standards of teaching and the curriculum, with particular emphasis on their effect on pupils' progress, and
 - schemes for the appraisal and performance management of staff. (paragraph 74)

- (5) Improve the regularity and comprehensiveness of written reports to parents, including the assessment of pupils' progress towards their targets for achievement and social development. (paragraph 68)

In addition to the issues above, the local education authority and headteacher should also consider the following less significant weaknesses for inclusion in the action plan:

- (1) The further development of multi-cultural education. (paragraph 62)
- (2) Fuller joint planning by the LEA and headteacher of the budget, needed to support the unit's development. (paragraph 75)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	16	60	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the unit's pupils

Pupils on the unit's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the unit's roll	24

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	0*

*Although all pupils have special needs and individual education plans, the unit does not maintain a register of these needs. However, full documentation is kept for each pupil.

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
Unit data	8	Unit data	1.3

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for last whole term before the inspection

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	16
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y1 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	212.5

information on any sums brought or carried forward.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	3	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	12	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	13380
Total expenditure	13380
Expenditure per pupil	557.50
Balance brought forward from previous year	-
Balance carried forward to next year	-

Note: the above financial information refers to the sum extended on books and resources only. All other finance is handled centrally by the LEA, and is distributed around various budgets. The unit has no separate allocation of money, apart from resources, and hence there is no

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	24
Number of questionnaires returned	8

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Opinions were invited on twelve statements in the questionnaire, and responses were as follows:

1. My child likes school: The great majority of parents agreed
2. My child is making good progress at school: opinion was equally favourable and unfavourable about the quality of progress which pupils achieve.
3. Behaviour in the unit is good: opinion was equally divided on this issue also.
4. My child gets the right amount of work to do at home; some parents expressed no view, but a majority disagreed.
5. The teaching is good: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
6. I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
7. I would feel comfortable about approaching the unit with questions or a problem: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
8. The unit expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
9. The unit works closely with parents: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
10. The unit is well led and managed: all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
11. The unit is helping my child become mature and responsible: almost all agreed, most agreeing strongly.
12. The unit provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons: almost all agreed, most agreeing strongly.

Two parents met with the registered inspector. They appreciated what the unit was doing for their sons and felt that they had made progress since joining. Their views support those of parents responding to the questionnaire.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents and find behaviour and progress good overall. Inspectors do not feel that setting homework for these primary age pupils who have difficulties with their reading, writing and number work would result in any real gain for them.