

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. PHILIP'S SCHOOL**

Chessington

LEA area: 314 Kingston

Unique reference number: 102622

Headteacher: Helen Goodall

Reporting inspector: Alastair Younger  
23587

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup>–22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 223656

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	5 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harrow Close Leatherhead Road Chessington Surrey
Postcode:	KT9 2HP
Telephone number:	020 8397 2672
Fax number:	020 8391 5431
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. C. Thibaut
Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alastair Younger	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
John Fletcher	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Roger Sharples	Team inspector	Mathematics French	Assessment
Mike Kell	Team inspector	Information technology Geography History Physical education	Personal development
Tony Fiddian Green	Team inspector	Music Religious education Equal	
Kay Rider	Team inspector	English Art Special education needs English as an additional language	
Sylvia Innes	Team inspector	Science Design technology	Learning opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International

"Bradley",  
15 Upper Avenue  
Eastbourne  
East Sussex  
BN21 3XY

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education,  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Philip's is a community school. There are 140 pupils on roll, 41 of primary school and 99 of secondary school age. Boys out-number girls about 2:1. At the time of the inspection there were no pupils in Year 1 and only one in Year 2 but it is possible for pupils to be admitted from the age of five. Pupils exhibit a broad range of educational difficulty, from moderate to severe. All pupils have statements of special educational need or are being assessed. There is a small population of pupils exhibiting autistic tendencies and a similar group of pupils with behavioural problems, many pupils have more than one difficulty and many have specific learning difficulties. About 15% of pupils are from ethnic minority groups and for many of these English is not the main language used in their home. About a quarter of all pupils are entitled to free school meals.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an impressive school. Parents can be reassured that when they send their children to St Philip's they will be taught to a very high standard in a safe, happy and very well managed school. Pupils, irrespective of their difficulties, make very good progress against the individual targets that they are set. They achieve well academically and very well with regards their personal development. By the time they leave they are very well prepared for adult life. The school is providing very good value for money

#### **What the school does well**

- Very high quality assessment ensures that individual needs are precisely identified and allows good programmes to be developed to help all pupils make progress.
- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, and staff with specific responsibilities, is excellent. The whole staff share a strong commitment to improvement.
- Personal, social and health education provision, alongside that for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good personal development.
- A good curriculum is very well taught, primary pupils are especially well taught.
- There are very good relationships with parents. They are kept well informed about their children's progress, and areas in which they are experiencing difficulty and this helps them to contribute effectively to their children's learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- Design and technology is a weaker area of the curriculum. It is less well managed than other subjects.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection in 1997. At that time the school was judged to be satisfactory. Weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been rigorously and systematically addressed. This has resulted in better teaching, higher achievement, stronger leadership and management and an improved curriculum. Specific concerns over the teaching of reading have been addressed particularly well. It is the view of the inspection team that these improvements are not only very good but that they are also sustainable. An immense effort has been made by the school to resolve transport difficulties but problems remain outside the control of the school. There has been a deterioration in physical education teaching.

## STANDARDS

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

<b>Progress in:</b>	<b>by age 11</b>	<b>by age 16</b>	<b>Key</b>	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A		

Pupils achieve well in mathematics, especially numeracy, where the National Numeracy Strategy has been wholeheartedly embraced. Achievement in English is also good overall and there has been a significant improvement in reading achievement in recent years. Achievement in all other National Curriculum subjects is good, except design and technology, information technology and physical education where it is satisfactory. Progress in personal, social and health education is particularly strong and pupils in Years 10 and 11 take very good advantage of the vocational opportunities presented to them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show enthusiasm for school and a genuine desire to make the best of the opportunities that are presented to them. They participate wholeheartedly at work and play and are keen to present the school in the best light possible.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Errant behaviour is one of the reasons why a minority of pupils are referred to the school but in lessons their behaviour is good, even when they find tasks hard. Pupils are happy and settled, there is very little misbehaviour at breaktimes, and no evidence of bullying sexism or racism. Isolated incidents have occurred, but not to any significant degree.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond to the very good provision for promoting personal development and demonstrate increasing degrees of tolerance and understanding of those younger or more disadvantaged than themselves. They become more responsible, rely less on others for help and form strong relationships with other pupils and with staff. By the time they leave they are very well prepared for adult life.



Attendance	Good. Most absence can be explained legitimately. It is often for medical reasons. Nearly all pupils establish very good patterns of attendance and it is only the intermittent attendance of four pupils, who have now left, that has reduced the overall rate of attendance over the past year.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good

*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.*

Teaching is very good overall because teachers combine the two important areas of academic achievement and personal development particularly effectively. About one third of all teaching is very good and over three quarters is good or better. Particularly good teaching is seen in the primary department. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents a high consistency of strong teaching. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics, science and music and good in all other subjects except design and technology, where good teaching of food technology is not matched by a similar standard in work with wood, metal and plastic and in information and communication technology and physical education where teaching is satisfactory. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught, with all teachers sharing responsibility. Very good assessment skills and careful planning, ensure that the needs of all pupils are well met through the setting of tasks well matched to individual ability. Teachers have very high expectations and use a very good range of skills to manage behaviour. This means that classrooms are very settled and the high level of challenge motivates pupils to participate fully in interesting lessons and learning is very effective as a result.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is good provision for all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, personal, social and health education, numeracy and literacy. A particular strength is the links that the school forges with industry and other educational providers, especially for pupils in Years 10 and 11. There is a weakness with regard the time allocated to the teaching of science and design and technology.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are offered good quality support to ensure that they do not miss out on anything and can join in with all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to reflect on their own, and others' lives. There are regular assemblies of an excellent standard. Pupils are very effectively taught what constitutes acceptable behaviour and the values of honesty and respect. They are encouraged to work together and to understand their rights and responsibilities in society. Art and music contribute significantly to raising pupils' cultural awareness and the strong religious education provision enhances their awareness of the lives and beliefs of people from cultures other than their own.
How well the school cares	Very good. This is a happy school in which pupils are well cared for. There are

for its pupils	very good procedures for ensuring that personal and academic needs are clearly identified and addressed. Underpinning the success of the care of pupils is the excellent communication between staff who share information to ensure that any problems a pupil may be facing are well understood by all.
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The school has established a good partnership with parents. They are kept well informed about their children's progress through high quality reports and through their good attendance at annual reviews. Pupils quickly learn that their parents will find out about what they get up to in school and that teachers know what goes on at home. This promotes consistency, removes uncertainty and encourages pupils to work hard and behave well.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher demonstrates a very clear vision and the ambition to relentlessly raise standards. The deputy headteacher provides support of the highest quality to ensure that that vision is translated into practice. In this she is very well supported by the primary and secondary co-ordinators. Almost all subject co-ordinators are achieving a high standard of success in the management and development of their subjects.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Over the past year the governing body has reorganised itself. Individual responsibilities for numeracy and literacy have been allocated and there are regular meetings of sub groups of governors who monitor aspects such as finance and the curriculum. Governors show a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of the challenges it faces in the future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There is extensive, high quality monitoring of teaching. Regular reference to subject and school development plans means that these are seen as working documents which are providing a strong lead to improving the school.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The excellent bursar ensures that the school's finances are exceptionally well administered. Spending decisions are well considered by senior staff and governors. Staff are deployed to make the best possible use of their skills.

Staffing is good. There are sufficient staff to ensure that class groups are of a reasonable size. English, mathematics and science are led by subject specialists and a very good programme of training ensures that the needs of the school can be met. There is a very good range of resources, especially computers, and teachers put them to good use in the presentation of interesting lessons. Accommodation is good for the present population and very good for science and food technology but there is limited indoor provision to support physical education for secondary pupils. The buildings and grounds are immaculately maintained. The principles of best value are carefully observed.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are happy and like school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the setting of more appropriate homework</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• Their children are becoming more mature and responsible</li> <li>• The school works closely with them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the behaviour of children other than their own</li> <li>• the range of activities out of lessons</li> <li>• transport arrangements</li> </ul>
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The inspection team is in full agreement with parents over the strengths they have identified. It feels that the homework set is appropriate and that, whilst there are isolated incidents, behaviour is very good overall. There are many visits organised by the school in school time and there is a good range of lunchtime activities but the extensive geographical area from which pupils are drawn limits after-school activities. Transport issues have proved very difficult to resolve and many remain but the school has done everything within its power to resolve them.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. *Pupils across the school are making good progress and achieving well in almost all subjects.*

*There has been a very good improvement since the previous inspection. High quality assessment procedures are ensuring that the individual needs of all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or ability, are identified very quickly and that good targets are being set. Teachers are then planning very well to ensure that all pupils are being set work which challenges them yet remains achievable. Realistically sized class groups and very good support from classroom assistants help teachers to maintain a very good balance between pupils' academic achievement and their personal development.*

2. As in similar schools of this type, the ability of pupils on entry varies greatly, but it is below average in nearly all cases. It is the opinion of the school, and the inspection team agrees, that the most recent intake of pupils has more severe learning difficulties than groups higher up the school. Nevertheless, these needs are being particularly well met through very strong teaching which has resulted in a good improvement in pupils' achievements since the previous inspection.

3. Pupils achieve well, and make good progress in English. Progress with speaking and listening is good. The youngest pupils join the school with weak language skills, some pupils use Makaton signing whilst others can speak in single words or short phrases. By the time they leave, many pupils enjoy reading and talking about the books they are studying. Progress is achieved through good awareness and use of language by the staff. Teachers' instructions are clear and precise; there is good questioning of pupils and positive encouragement of pupil's attempts at discussion. The teachers' approach to language is particularly successful for pupils with English as an Additional Language. Progress with reading is good and there has been a significant improvement in reading achievement in recent years. The youngest pupils join the school with very few reading skills but by Year 6 pupils recognise enough words by sight to enable them to make good progress through a reading programme. In the secondary department the progress of recognising sounds continues and by Year 11 the more able pupils read newspapers. Progress with writing is variable. Many of the youngest pupils join the school unable to hold a pencil but by Year 6 they have made good progress and most write news and simple phrases in their books. In the secondary department progress is satisfactory and by Year 11 the most able pupils write imaginative stories but handwriting remains a mixture of print and linked script and punctuation continues to show inaccuracies.

4. Pupils achieve well in mathematics, especially numeracy, where the National Numeracy Strategy has been wholeheartedly embraced. Many pupils enter the school unable to count nor

recognise numbers but by the end of Year 6 more able pupils can calculate change from £1.00 and most pupils recognise a triangle, circle and a square. By the end of Year 11, pupils are remembering and using their times-table and are generally accurate up to 8x. They can apply their money handling skills to making decisions on the purchasing of a bicycle either using cash or credit. An area of weakness relates to the visual representation of data, such as in graphs and charts.

5. Pupils achieve well in science in all Key Stages because they are very well taught and they are provided with interesting and motivating lessons which match their individual needs. They begin using good scientific enquiry methods from the start and by the end of Year 6 pupils carry out practical investigations confidently. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 3. They make very good progress with learning about electricity, and learn about materials changing from solid to liquid then to gas. They confidently carry out investigations, know about fair tests and use them well. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 4 when they continue to build on learning from previous years. They make good progress with recording their findings and contribute to the planning of their own investigations check back to their predictions when they have completed investigations.

6. Progress in personal, social and health education is particularly strong and pupils in Years 10 and 11 take very good advantage of the vocational opportunities presented to them. Achievement in all other National Curriculum subjects and religious education is good overall with three exceptions. It is satisfactory in design and technology where at Key Stages 3 and 4 the range of topics, other than in food technology, is narrow, being mainly toy and entertainment based so that pupils do not learn enough about a wide range of products and consumer wants and needs. In physical education, shortcomings in accommodation and specialist expertise contribute to satisfactory, rather than good, standards. In information and communication technology, pupils with better literacy and computer skills are not being given sufficient opportunities to make progress more quickly.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. The majority of pupils clearly enjoy their life at St. Philip's, demonstrate positive attitudes to the school community and to work and they show a real pride in their achievements. On arrival in the morning greetings are cheerful and happy and pupils are obviously keen and eager to start the day's activities. They like being at school and in the vast majority of cases they show a real interest in their work and persevere with the tasks set. There is a genuine enthusiasm and sometimes excitement to participate in discussions and activities. On the very few occasions where pupils fail to maintain concentration, or are less enthusiastic, they are quickly re-focused.

8. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good and a positive aid to the learning process. They understand and respect the behaviour code and respond enthusiastically to praise, awards and public celebration of their own and others' work. At one assembly there was a delightful example of a year ten girl being full of pride at being presented with a swimming certificate amidst spontaneous applause from her peers. Around the school pupils observe the basic courtesies of politeness and they acknowledge others in a very mature way. During the inspection pupils greeted inspectors politely and exchanged pleasantries with good humour. In the playground, at breaks and lunch times pupils play together amicably and enjoy the interaction with adults. The school environment, building and property are treated respectfully by pupils who follow health and safety rules sensibly. The school is an orderly community in which pupils are clearly happy.

9. Relationships between pupils, with teachers and support staff are very good, a strength of the school and have a significant influence on pupils' personal development and on the standards achieved. The consistent application of the school's ethos by all members of staff encourages pupils to be very aware of each other and is the basis for the very good relationships. Interactions with adults in lessons

and around the school often include the positive use of humour. There are many good examples of pupils supporting each other, working collaboratively, and sharing equipment and materials in lessons.

10. The vast majority of pupils make significant progress in terms of personal and social development during their time at the school reflecting the successful implementation of individual plans to build confidence and self esteem. Pupils help with class routines, take part in school assemblies, and represent the school in musical and performing arts productions and at various sporting functions. Older pupils value an incentive scheme which involves negotiating personal awards with peers and negotiating privileges with senior staff and this makes a significant contribution to preparing them for life after school. Pupils respond proudly to the challenge of taking on responsibility and relish the opportunities provided to represent the school and to contribute to the life of the school community. Pupils taking part in an inter school football match demonstrated the sort of mature and sporting approach which has resulted in the school retaining a good sportsmanship trophy won in three consecutive years at the Surrey Special Schools Sports Association's annual event.

11. Attendance in the last academic year at St. Philip's was around 91 per cent. Of the absence, almost 3 per cent was unauthorised. This was almost entirely due to the poor records of a small number of pupils who have now left the school. Attendance in the current academic year is good and should result in an annual figure around 95 per cent. Authorised absence occurs through normal ailments and as a result of children's particular medical conditions. Good attendance contributes positively to pupils' progress. Punctuality at the start of the day depends on the bus contractor and the traffic. During the inspection buses arrived on time but detailed records show that there are often late arrivals. Once in school pupils are quickly involved in productive work. The school is very unhappy about various aspects of the bus service but has been unable to secure the improvements required. One evening during the inspection a coach was almost half an hour late to pick up pupils making it a particularly long day for the younger pupils and giving the school a major problem contacting parents.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

12. Teaching is very good overall because teachers combine the two important areas of academic achievement and personal development particularly effectively. About one third of all teaching is very good, much of it in English, mathematics and science, and over three quarters is good or better. Particularly good teaching is seen in the primary department. It weakens slightly at Key Stage 3, where planning is more inconsistent in quality and there is less success in the teaching of basic skills of literacy. Teaching strengthens again at Key Stage 4, where syllabuses for accredited courses give a firmer guide to planning. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents a high proportion of strong teaching and a very good improvement, especially in the teaching of reading, since the previous inspection.

13. Teachers are making a difficult job look easy. They do this by planning very carefully. This results in the individual needs of pupils being well met. In turn this means that pupils are usually working on tasks well matched to their ability; in which they are challenged yet able to achieve success. Pupils have to work hard to achieve the lesson objectives but they do so because they are well supported and the range of tasks presented to them interests and motivates them. As a result pupils rarely misbehave in class and develop very good attitudes to learning. This allows teachers and support staff even more time to teach rather than managing errant behaviour and keeps lessons running at a very good pace, with few interruptions. When all these factors come into play, such as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson on ordering numbers and a Year 10 science lesson on the solar system, then teaching is excellent

14. Teaching is greatly facilitated by the very high quality of assessment in the school. Teachers supplement the results of formal assessment very well, with their own continuing assessment in each lesson. Work is marked promptly, there is high quality discussion between pupils and staff and in many lessons there are particularly good summing up sessions which allow pupils to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge and teachers to establish whether what has been taught has been learned. This helps teachers to set appropriate homework.

15. Teaching is very good overall in English, mathematics, science and music and good in all other subjects except design and technology, where good teaching of food technology is not matched by a similar standard in work with wood, metal and plastic and in information and communication technology and physical education where teaching is satisfactory. Overall, the skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught, with all teachers and support staff sharing responsibility. The teaching of literacy is a particularly strong feature of the curriculum both in general classroom practice, where key words for each subject are introduced relevantly, and in separate literacy sessions which are taught to a high standard. The teaching of personal and social education is good. The key to this is that the lessons address topics that pupils easily recognise as being of help to them both now and later in life. Pupils therefore learn very well and understand more about themselves and some of life's problems and rewards.

16. What cannot be underestimated is the high quality support provided to teachers and pupils by classroom assistants. In lesson after lesson they make an invaluable contribution. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, for instance, one was seen helping a group of lower attaining pupils to achieve their targets. In another lesson the assistant closely observed a single pupil to provide good quality assessment information. In a music lesson the assistant worked well with the teacher to encourage reluctant pupils to participate in singing.

17. Because of the high standards expected of teaching, satisfactory teaching constitutes a weakness in the context of this school. What sets the satisfactory teaching apart from the good and better is often the result of weaker planning, which does not take sufficient account of individual ability and occasionally results in higher achieving pupils being under-challenged in lessons which lack pace (as in a Key Stage 3 information technology lesson and a Key Stage 3/4 physical education lesson).

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

18. The school has a good curriculum. It provides a broad and balanced experience for pupils, which is relevant to their needs and meets statutory requirements, including provision for sex, health and drugs education, citizenship, and meeting the needs identified in Statements of Special Educational needs. An appropriate curriculum for religious education is taught which accords with the locally agreed syllabus. There is a good emphasis on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and information technology is developing well throughout the school. A weakness is in design and technology where there is a narrow range of topics studied with regards resistant materials.

19. The curriculum is further enriched through a good range of extra curricular activities which include lunch time sessions and sporting activities as well as a variety of visits to enhance what is being taught in class, such as the visit to the mechanical theatre to link with Key Stage 3 work on mechanisms in design technology. The school choir is a particularly good feature which pupils thoroughly enjoy whilst having their musical experience broadened. There are several school productions each year. These form an integral part of school life.

20. The curriculum is well planned to take good account of what has been taught before and what is to come. Co-ordinators for each subject play a key role in this and provide effective schemes of work to guide teachers' short and medium term planning. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The time allocated to the teaching of science and design technology is insufficient to teach these subjects to the standard which pupils are capable of. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum.

21. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This was a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection and it remains so. Throughout their time at the school each pupil benefits from a rich programme of spiritual, social, moral and cultural experiences which effectively contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals. Spiritual development is very good, with religious education playing a significant role in educating pupils to appreciate the world around them and the beliefs that are so important to different people. Pupils in Year 2 discuss topics such as 'why I am special', whilst those in Year 6 extend their vocabulary to include an understanding of words such as loving, forgiving, wisdom and selfish. In Year 7, pupils compare celebration rituals and different rites of passage. Moral and social development are also very well provided for. Older pupils are encouraged to self examine their actions and describe their hopes and dreams for the future. All pupils are taught about relationships and the requirement in a successful relationship for commitment and sharing. Pupils develop a social conscience through the examination, in personal, social and health education lessons, of 'Our beautiful world' describing the things that spoil it and the things that make it good. They also examine jobs around the home and school, describing things that make them happy or sad and discussing what they can do to help other people. Very good attention is paid to cultural development and pupils develop a healthy understanding of life in a multicultural society. They learn about the faiths and customs of cultures other than their own and in this they are well supported by visits and visitors. The strength of art and music in the curriculum ensures that pupils develop a strong aesthetic awareness and appreciation of fine things.

22. The quality and range of the personal and social education programme is very good. As pupils move through the school, so the programme increases and offers extra sections, such as the skills needed for life when pupils leave school. They are made aware of some of the social problems they may encounter such as drugs, sexual relationships, and wider issues such as friendship. Younger pupils think about their own targets and how they might improve their performance in some subject. The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their lives by providing a very good programme of personal development. This includes careers advice and information about the world of work including what will be expected of them when they have a job.

23. There is a very good programme for careers' education which begins in Key Stage 2 when pupils consider the work and jobs people do. In Key Stage 3, the quality of provision is maintained within the personal, social and health education programme, culminating at the end of Year 9 in a transitional review during which pupils establish plans for their longer term future employment or training. An excellent programme of careers' education is provided in Key Stage 4 where all pupils have opportunities to take part in work experience. This is effectively linked to a section of their Record of Achievement.

24. The school has very good links with the community, including links with local industry and the Kingston Education Business Partnership. Visiting speakers include the police who contribute significantly to the social and moral education of pupils as part of their community programme. There is very good liaison with mainstream schools and colleges. For example, primary school pupils and teachers are involved in the joint teaching of several subjects. This offers social benefits to both and the specialist facilities of St Philips to primary school pupils in Year 6. Very good quality links with the college of further education have been established and pupils take part in link courses which are well



organised and well structured to provide entry level qualifications for GNVQ in a range of vocational subjects.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

25. Provision for pupils' support, welfare and guidance makes a positive contribution to the educational standards achieved. Pupils are happy, feel safe and secure and there is good evidence to show that the vast majority are enjoying and benefiting from the education provided at St. Philip's. Teaching and support staff effectively promote the ethos of the school with the support and help they give to the pupils, who they know and understand very well. The well being and positive development of all pupils is uppermost in the minds of all staff at all times. Procedures to deal with Child Protection issues are very good and meet statutory requirements. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. Currently, there are effective relationships with a range of therapists and support agencies who make good contributions to individual pupil's development. There have been difficulties in securing the anticipated level of therapy services needed to meet the developmental targets of an increasing number of pupils.

26. There are appropriate procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety and the headteacher and site manager are thorough in their on going inspection for and elimination of risks and hazards from the site. There are regular evacuation practices and appropriate records of independent fire prevention and electrical equipment inspections. Appropriate first aid supplies are available around the site and first-aiders hold up to date accreditation. The school has clear procedures relating to medicines on site and staff take great care to ensure that children follow their medical regimes. In lessons observed during the inspection good care was taken to ensure pupils' safety. Good practice was observed in a physical education lesson, where pupils were practising hockey skills, during science experiments and in lessons where children were using scissors. Staff and adults on site are vigilant in ensuring children follow safe procedures and practices. No accidents or injuries occurred during the inspection.

27. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting attendance, discipline and good behaviour. Individual attendance is closely monitored by class teachers an administrative assistant and the deputy headteacher and overall school attendance is regularly checked by the educational welfare officer. Any unexpected absence is followed up, on the day, by telephone and appropriate procedures follow should explanations not be forthcoming. Pupils value the certificates received for full attendance in any term and the prizes for full or near full attendance in any year. The behaviour policy outlines clear behaviour expectations and effective procedures for promoting the code which are consistently applied by all staff. There is good, frequent, use of praise and encouragement, pupils' work is displayed around the building and there is celebration of achievement, effort and caring behaviour through presentations in assembly. Various rewards and an excellent incentive scheme, together with the special forms used to record incidents, provide good records of individual development and enable the setting of individual behaviour targets. Pupils with behaviour targets built into their education plans are effectively monitored on a daily basis. St. Philip's is an orderly community in which all children value rewards and commendations greatly, show pride in their achievements and respect behaviour expectations. The school has good procedures in place to deal with bullying and is effective in eliminating all forms of oppressive behaviour.

28. The overall effectiveness of the schools' assessment and monitoring systems have a significant bearing on the quality of education offered and on pupils' achievement. The procedures for monitoring and systems for recording pupil's personal development are very good. Across the school comprehensive records of development are maintained and used well to determine appropriate targets for further development. Since the last inspection the arrangements for assessing and recording academic progress have improved significantly. There is now a very good understanding of

assessment amongst the staff and examples of very good practice in terms of the clarity and accuracy of the records maintained. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of individual pupils is greatly aided by the depth and quality of assessment records now in place. The use of assessment data to inform curriculum planning and to help determine individual work schemes for individual pupils is very well developed across most curriculum areas. The practice in design technology and information technology is satisfactory but less well developed than in other areas. In most subjects the use of assessment data to guide differentiated teaching is very impressive.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

29. At the last inspection the school was judged to have a satisfactory partnership with parents but now the school enjoys very good and effective links with parents which contribute positively to pupils' learning and development. The vast majority of parents hold very positive views about the school and there is widespread agreement that the school is welcoming and that staff are approachable and willing to spend time discussing children's development. Many parents have come to rely on the school for general advice and guidance in relation to caring for and bringing up their children. A few parents expressed concern over the quantity and appropriateness of homework but the inspection team found that homework of an appropriate standard is set in accordance with the timetable. Formal and informal contacts with parents are comprehensive and effective in ensuring parental involvement in the education and development of their children. The school consults the parent body to determine satisfaction with the provision and also to seek views and ideas. Parents value these opportunities to express their views and are particularly positive about the feedback received and the fact that their suggestions are sometimes adopted. Parents are generally positive about all aspects of the school and it is particularly notable how many report that their children are very happy at the school and that they are very pleased with the progress that their children make.

30. Attendance at official parents' evenings and at formal annual reviews is high and parents generally feel well informed about their children's progress and about their targets for improvement. Annual reports are of a good standard providing clear statements of what children can do and what they need to do to improve further and parents are fully involved in agreeing targets for further development at the review meetings. There is regular contact between school and home on the progress that children are making and the school is quick to involve parents should the need arise. The home-school book is an effective communication mechanism which is extremely well used and effectively encourages the extension of children's learning and development at home. The relationship with parents is sufficiently strong that most take advantage of the opportunity to talk with teachers and specialists at the school whenever they need to. A few parents help in school on a regular basis and make a valuable contribution to the organisation and the education provided. The school provides good information on literacy and numeracy programmes and on the transition programme for older pupils, which helps parents to become more involved with the learning and development of their children. The attendance at, and support for a range of fund raising and social activities, organised by the Parents Association make a significant contribution to the very good education provided at St. Philip's.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

31. The headteacher demonstrates excellent vision and management skills. Under her leadership the school has improved consistently since the previous inspection because she has set very high expectations for the staff and ensured that they are well resourced and well trained to enable them to meet these expectations. A significant improvement since the previous inspection has been the contribution to this process of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators. The deputy head makes a very good contribution in ensuring that management decisions are effectively

implemented and a very clear management structure incorporating senior teacher and heads of primary and secondary departments facilitates communication and apportionment of responsibility.

32. Nearly all co-ordinators are pushing up standards through careful attention to the management of each subject and the production of good schemes of work. In this, a very good handbook, produced by the senior management team helps them. Only in design and technology is management weak. The school's personal and social programme is very well managed. The planning is very good and covers a wide range of topics and experiences for pupils so that they are very well prepared for more independent lives.

33. What makes the leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff excellent, rather than merely very good, is that the changes they have brought about are clearly sustainable and have been achieved because all staff have been involved and their contributions valued, leading to harmony and common purpose within the school. New initiatives such as numeracy, literacy and inclusion have been embraced wholeheartedly and through good links with mainstream schools and other institutions there is no sense of isolation as sometimes found in similar schools.

34. Development planning is very strong because it is so well informed by all members of staff. Each department produces a development plan of its own and these are used to help the drafting of the whole school development plan. There is a good degree of debate between staff to ensure that priorities are identified and funding allocated appropriately. The system works well because it focuses individuals on thinking about their own needs within the context of the whole school's needs. Criticisms voiced in the previous inspection have been well addressed. A weakness of the school development plan is that it does not address the identified weakness in the co-ordination of design and technology.

35. Governors are doing their job well. Increasingly, they are bringing an extra dimension to the leadership and management of the school by utilising their respective professional and personal skills, especially with regards business, finance and law. The formation of sub groups of the governing body to cover different aspects of the school represents an efficient and effective development. The appointment of numeracy and literacy governors is also a good move because it is resulting in first hand evidence, especially in the former, being brought to the attention of the whole body. The collective commitment of the governing body is evident in the high turnout for meetings. They meet all statutory obligations and pay due, and deserved, attention to the very strong senior management team without blindly accepting everything put before them. Governors show a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of the potential problems it faces, for instance, in replacing the deputy head when she leaves at the end of the year.

36. There is excellent monitoring and evaluation of teaching, supported by an excellent document on monitoring teaching and learning, specific to the school. All teachers are regularly observed in their classrooms. These observations are formally recorded and provide an invaluable guide to individuals as to how they can improve their practice. Importantly, responsibility for observation is shared by link inspectors from the local education authority as well as senior staff. It is strengthened further by very good, honest and perceptive self-evaluation by the teachers themselves and is followed by professional development discussions. Good quality, and extensive, training opportunities are offered to all staff, not just teachers.

37. The excellent bursar ensures that the school's finances, including all grants, are exceptionally well administered. A recent audit found no significant fault in procedures nor practice. Spending decisions are well considered by senior staff and governors and are well informed by development planning. The governing body is making a significant contribution to the effective and efficient management of finance. It ensures that money is being spent in support of identified educational

priorities. The pursuit of best value contributes to the school giving very good value for money. Staff are deployed to make the best possible use of their skills and the accommodation is efficiently used, with primary classes being given good access to specialist facilities such as for design and technology and (in the near future) the new science laboratory.

38. Staffing is good. There are sufficient staff to ensure that class groups are of a reasonable size, enabling staff to give individual attention to pupils and thus promoting learning. English, mathematics and science are led by subject specialists and a very good programme of training ensures that the needs of the school can be met. As with many special schools, there have been difficulties in recruiting suitable personnel. This has resulted in the school having no physical education specialist on the staff and this is currently having an adverse effect on standards in that subject. The excellent team of classroom support staff makes a great contribution to enhancing pupils' learning opportunities and promoting their personal development. There is a very good range of resources, especially computers, and teachers put them to good use in the presentation of interesting lessons. The use of new technology, including computers and an interactive whiteboard contributed during the inspection to two lessons in which teaching was graded excellent. Accommodation is good for the present population and very good for science and food technology but there is limited indoor provision to support physical education, especially for secondary pupils, and this restricts the range of activities that can be planned. The buildings and grounds are immaculately maintained and this contributes significantly to the strong ethos of the school.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

**39. This school has very few weaknesses and only one which needs addressing urgently. The headteacher, senior management team and governing body should now:**

- Raise standards in design and technology by improving co-ordination of the subject and addressing weaknesses in the curriculum. (Paragraphs: 18, 32, 66, 67)

**In addition to this, the following issues should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan**

- In physical education, shortcomings in accommodation and specialist expertise slow progress (Paragraphs: 38, 97)
- In information and communication technology, pupils with better literacy and computer skills are not being given sufficient opportunities to make progress more quickly. (Paragraph: 82)
- In mathematics there is an area of weakness with regards the visual representation of data, such as in graphs and charts. (Paragraph: 48)
- In science, progress is hindered because of limitations in the time allocated to teaching the subject. (Paragraphs: 20, 56)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed

75

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

23

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	27	46	20	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 school's pupils*

**Pupils on the school's roll**

No of pupils

Number of pupils on the school's roll

140

Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals

31

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

## **Attendance**

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	6

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	3

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	3
Indian	3
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	3

## **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## **Teachers and classes**

## **Financial information**

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8
Average class size	10.75

**Education support staff: YR – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	545

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	994495
Total expenditure	999386
Expenditure per pupil	7088
Balance brought forward from previous year	4891
Balance carried forward to next year	0

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	50

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	40	6	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	48	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	46	12	2	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	38	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	18	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	28	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	62	34	0	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	32	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	30	6	2	6



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **ENGLISH**

40. There has been good improvement since the last Inspection. There is now a full system of assessment related to National Curriculum targets with each pupil having their own literacy targets. Literacy is a key area of school development and all staff have been trained on the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils achieve well, fulfilling their potential and building strongly upon their prior attainment. In the Primary department pupils are given the confidence to speak and are encouraged to listen to others. They begin looking at books and talking about what they see and start to learn a whole word sight vocabulary. They are encouraged to write by practising their letters in the sand tray. In the Secondary department the pupils can use worksheets and cloze procedures to complete independent work and use phonic skills to improve their reading. In Year 10 pupils embark on Accredited courses with the most able considered for GCSE. The school has achieved increasingly good results on these courses.

41. Progress with Speaking and Listening is good and pupils are achieving well. The youngest pupils join the school with weak language skills, some pupils use Makaton signing whilst others can speak in single words or short phrases. By the end of primary phase pupils can carry out teacher instructions and can talk satisfactorily about their work. In the Secondary department pupils enjoy reading plays and re-created the story of the Good Samaritan in modern style; they can read round the class and talk about the book they are studying, they also actively use language to structure a sequence of events using pictures as prompts. Progress is achieved through good awareness and use of language by the staff. Teachers' instructions are clear and precise; there is good questioning of pupils and positive encouragement of pupil's attempts at discussion. The teachers' approach to language is particularly successful for pupils with English as an Additional Language.

42. Progress with Reading is good. The youngest pupils join the school with weak visual and auditory skills for reading. In the Primary department pupils are encouraged to look at pictures and recognise their own names on cards. By the end of the primary phase pupils recognise enough words by sight to enable them to make progress through the reading programme, some pupils are beginning to establish an understanding of the sounds that make up words, particularly initial letters, and can describe the likely outcome of a story. In the Secondary department the progress of recognising sounds continues. Pupils find new words using onset and rhyme, for example, pupils practice their knowledge of short vowel sounds to find words that match 'pot' and 'nod'. By Year 11 the more able pupils read newspapers. Progress with reading is ably assisted by the volunteer parents who hear readers regularly and by the Home-School reading initiative.

43. Progress with writing is variable. Many of the youngest pupils join the school unable to hold a pencil correctly and use the sand tray to make letter shapes. By Year 6, though, they have made good progress, use their word books to write news and simple phrases and are exploring the use of adjectives to describe, for example, 'A New Dog': they are able to attempt spellings using initial letter and short vowel sounds and are introduced to punctuation and cursive handwriting. In the secondary department progress is satisfactory, pupils use worksheets to record; some imaginative use is made of speech bubbles to encourage early story writing and photographs are used to report real life events, for example 'This is me at sports day, I am in the relay race'. By Year 11 the most able pupils write imaginative stories but handwriting remains a mixture of print and linked script. Punctuation continues

to show inaccuracies with full stops and capital letter and spelling word books are not in general use. There is no whole school policy for writing and recording.

44. The quality of teaching in this subject is very good overall, and the teaching in the primary department is consistently very good. Teaching is slightly weaker at Key Stage 3. The school policy to ensure the training of all staff has resulted in good knowledge and understanding of the subject and very good lesson planning which ensures that all pupils are working on tasks suited to their ability and need. A standard lesson format for English is used and this is helping to maintain the pace of lessons and to focus staff on word, sentence and text level work. The staff have high expectations for pupils and the school has invested well in a very good range of resources, including books purchased with the crisp packet collection. Assessment is an important part of teachers' planning and the learning support assistants continuously record pupils' achievements during lessons so that progress can be maintained and new targets set. Good feedback from staff encourages pupils to maintain their enthusiasm and confidence. Pupils understand task requirements and the lessons are well paced to ensure good concentration. The learning support assistants play a vital role in encouraging attention to the task and offer gentle reminders to pupils whose concentration lapses. 'Successmaker' has been purchased but is not yet in use for literacy. The school has recently invested in Whiteboard technology and its current use is excellent, with pupils enjoying the interactive experience and responding well to its use, there are plans to locate this resource centrally so that all staff and pupils can access it.

45. The English co-ordinator offers very good leadership and management for this subject. She has been in post for less than a year but her impact is already noticeable, she has very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and is producing a bank of modules to support teachers with subject differentiation. She is actively involved with the assessment process and is keen to use the National Curriculum as the main assessment tool. She is hoping to introduce the use of the Year 9 Standard Assessment Tasks for the most able of the pupils and extend the access to GCSE for the most able Year 11 pupils. The school is ensuring a high profile for literacy and encouraging the co-ordinator to observe English teaching across the school to assist teachers with additional teaching methods.

## **MATHEMATICS**

46. Overall the provision for Mathematics is good. Since the last report there has been very good progress in the quality of teaching, in the content of the curriculum and the methods of assessing pupils' progress.

47. Across the school, pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their ability. In Year 5 they can complete number squares, filling in the missing numbers, for example, 11, 21, ..., 41. By the end of Year 6 more able pupils can calculate change from £1.00 and can round numbers to 0 or 50. Less able pupils are working between 0 and 5. They can recognise a triangle, circle and a square. In a Year 7 lesson the aim of developing the pupils' ability to understand the measuring of objects, using centimetres, was successfully linked to recording their body measurements for the fitting of the correct size of costumes to be used in a play for a class assembly. The pupils work very well with partners to tabulate their results. By Year 9 the more able pupils can add up a shopping list comprising three amounts, for example, £2.50 + £3.90 + £2.00, and understand the difference between 2D and 3D shapes. In Year 11 pupils are developing their ability in remembering and using their times-table and are generally accurate up to 8x. They can apply their money handling skills to making decisions on the purchasing of a bicycle either using cash or credit. In a Year 11 lesson pupils enjoy a game called 'Whiz-buzz' which reinforces the use and memorising of facts about times-table and the sequencing of number patterns. They responded by making good efforts to remember and adapting their knowledge to the game.

48. Overall, there is strong evidence of the progress in pupils' achievement in the basic skills of number recognition and the transfer of these skills to other subject areas, for example, in a Key Stage 2 physical education lesson pupils matched the hoops to the number of pupils. In a Key Stage 3 history lesson they created a timeline. There are insufficient examples of pupils using graphs to translate their findings, for example, the outcome of surveys. Limited use is made of computers to create different types of graph.

49. The positive progress is a direct result of the very good teaching seen across the age range, particularly at Key Stage 2, where the influence of the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy into the school is shown through the production of well structured lessons. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, on ordering numbers, the teacher used a computer effectively to focus the individual pupil on the set activities and played the guitar to encourage the pupils to develop the understanding of sequencing numbers through singing number rhymes. The learning support assistant worked with a group of pupils requiring more assistance, while the more able pupils worked more independently. This resulted in all the pupils being challenged at an appropriate level.

50. Because the teachers are consistently delivering well-focused lessons, the pupils display interest, good behaviour and long periods of concentration on the activities. They are given plenty of opportunities to, and are encouraged to ask meaningful questions, which helps in the development of their mathematical concepts. Throughout all key stages, most lessons are very thoroughly planned to provide challenging activities that suit the needs of the individual pupil. These needs are very well monitored and assessed by using an ongoing system of tests and observations. For instance in several lessons the learning support assistant makes notes on the individual pupils' input into a whole group session. This information is then used to plan future appropriate activities for the pupils. The assessment procedure in the subject is very effective in mapping pupil progress. At Key Stage 4 accredited courses provide a stimulus for continued learning and opportunities to put previously learned skills into a real life situation.

51. The subject is well co-ordinated with the co-ordinator providing consultative documents to inform the staff of ongoing and future developments. There has a considerable emphasis on the in-service needs of the staff in order to ensure the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and this has clearly paid dividends.

## **SCIENCE**

52. Pupils achieve well in science in all Key Stages because they are very well taught and they are provided with interesting and motivating lessons which match their individual needs.

53. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress. They begin using good scientific enquiry methods from the start. For example, they investigate the sense of smell and record what they have found out on charts. They take part willingly in practical and recording activities with the teacher and learning support assistants and learn to work in groups effectively. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils carry out practical investigations confidently, such as when they carry out a series of activities to find out about light and shadows. They make good progress with observation skills and by the end of the key stage they predict what might happen and test their ideas. Teachers provide pupils with very good opportunities to learn and think independently which significantly helps their understanding and their rate of progress.

54. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 3. They make very good progress with learning about electricity and constructing simple electrical circuits because the teaching methods used are

successful in enabling pupils to investigate and explore ideas so they can better understand the scientific principles. Pupils make very good progress with learning about materials which change from solids to liquids then to gases and they confidently carry out investigations concerned with evaporation. They know about fair tests and use them well.

55. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 4 when they continue to build on learning from previous years. They recall knowledge of the solar system with a small proportion of higher attaining pupils remembering the proximity of planets from the sun accurately and explain which planets are hottest and which are coldest which shows a sound degree of understanding of the topic. Pupils make good progress with recording their findings, often with the use of computers to word process information or to create graphs and charts to illustrate their findings. Year 11 pupils investigate the rate of cooling of water as part of their work on insulation. They use data loggers confidently to record temperature changes and later connect them to computers to interpret information. Pupils make good progress with learning to contribute to the planning of their own investigations and with learning to predict and to check their predictions when they have completed investigations.

56. The quality of teaching is very good overall and none of that observed was less than good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and plan lessons which are relevant to the needs and interests of pupils. They inspire them to learn and actively involve pupils by the use of effective teaching methods such as the use of an interactive whiteboard when they learn about the solar system in Key Stage 4 and the practical investigation of light and shadows in Key Stage 2. Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning through working in partnership with teachers. All staff have very good relationships with pupils and understand them very well. This results in the co-operation of pupils because they enjoy the lessons and want to do their best for teachers. Teachers manage pupils and lessons very well. They conduct lessons at a brisk pace with a good variety of activities to maintain interest and concentration. Work is very thoroughly assessed and is effectively used to guide planning for future lessons and for individual pupils. The very good progress pupils make in lessons is a direct result of very good teaching. They make rather less progress over longer periods of time because insufficient time is allocated to teaching the subject in sufficient depth. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend learning and sometimes to prepare for future lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils who respond by working productively and concentrating well. They behave very well which is another significant factor in the very good quality of learning in lessons.

57. There is a good science curriculum, relevant to the need of all pupils. Pupils have equality of opportunity and full access to the National Curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have opportunities to enter public examinations and they achieve results which at least reflect their potential. For example, they gain merit and distinction grades in the Certificate of Achievement tests.

58. Management of the subject is very good. There are good schemes of work to guide teachers' planning and teachers work together in a very good spirit of co-operation. There is a shared aim to improve the experience and standards for pupils. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is better, the school now has very good laboratory facilities and resources are better in quality and are more accessible. The department has the capacity to continue this very good improvement through the use of the new laboratory and the strengths of the teaching.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

59. There has been very good improvement in this subject since the last inspection. There is now a full scheme of work and on-going record keeping ensuring that all pupils experience a wide range of

media. In the primary department pupils complete still-life drawings, are extending their use of brushes, crayons and pastels, experience a range of simple printing techniques and continue to develop their skills with scissors and glue to make decoupage work. In the secondary department the pupils use their art to support their other topics and there are good examples of life-size Roman soldiers that groups of pupils are completing co-operatively. In addition, pupils are making Roman shields embossed with collage materials. In Year 10 the more able pupils select whether they will take art as an accredited option. This group of pupils show a good understanding of colour and their 'Sunsets' are very effective, they have extended their printing techniques to include screen printing which is well executed and effective.

60. Progress within the primary department is good. The youngest pupils are beginning to learn the skills of brushwork and colour successfully experimenting with mixing primary colours. By the end of primary pupils are learning to observe and record, some good work with leaves was observed when pupils were encouraged to reproduce the shapes of leaves, observe the veins and sketch their attempts. Progress within the secondary department is good. Pupils reproduce collages of Grecian Urns in preparation for making and firing thumb pots. By year 11 pupils completing their Certificate have established a personal portfolio of work showing a full range of media and styles.

61. The quality of teaching in this subject is good across the school. All secondary pupils and some primary pupils are taught by the specialist teacher in the art room where there is a very good range of resources and where there is ample space for pupils to spread out their work. All lessons are well planned, there is efficient and effective use of resources and the lessons are well paced. Success is achieved through offering a range of tasks that are well matched to the pupils needs and exciting and satisfying to complete and because staff have high expectations for pupil achievement. Learning support assistants are an asset to the effective management of pupils particularly those with autistic tendencies, who are thus enabled to take a full and active part in the lessons. As a result, the initial reluctance of some pupils who do not believe they can attempt the work is soon replaced by confidence to make an attempt and pleasure with their success. A challenging group of primary pupils were rotated through three activities to reproduce faces. One activity involved making a face puppet with a paper plate, a second activity involved the use of clay adding features and hair using a grater or garlic press and a third activity was to find faces in magazines and tear and glue. The pupils embarked on the tasks with enthusiasm, achieved notable success and were still able and willing to share in the tidying up.

62. The specialist teacher has very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Her co-ordination of art throughout the school is very good, she has produced module portfolios for other teachers and her record keeping system has ensured that pupils extend their skills and that there is continuity across the subject. Particularly successful use is made of the annual visiting artist and of school trips to the Tate and the local Kingston gallery to inspire pupils. A recent visit has inspired pupils to request that they make life size papier-mache figures.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

63. Pupils' achievement in design technology is satisfactory overall. At Key Stages 3 and 4 It is good in food technology and satisfactory in resistant materials.

64. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in designing and making items such as model cars from card and plastic. The range of skills and processes they use, such as methods of joining materials, is restricted by limitations of the scheme of work. Pupils make good progress in food technology lessons where they begin to learn about healthy diets. They carry out sensory food tests to find out more about food products and explore their preferences, for example in Year 5 when they

taste and record their findings about a range of bread products. In Key Stage 3, pupils make satisfactory progress in improving their design skills when they design bagatelle boards. They demonstrate competent use of computers when they use them to generate numbers for the board. Pupils make very good progress in food technology when they learn about ingredients and processes for making, for example, fruit crumble and bread. They design their own shapes for the bread and make very good progress with learning key words for the topic. In both aspects of the subject, pupils learn to evaluate their products and say what they might do to improve them further. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. They increase their range of skills and knowledge, for example cutting and joining wood and learning about mechanisms. They use hand and machine tools safely. They make good progress with learning about time management when they design and make a travel game within given time limits. Pupils make good progress in food technology lessons when, for example, they learn to design their own recipes for fresh fruit puddings. They increase their range of skills for using kitchen equipment and, for example, small electrical equipment, such as blenders, safely. They make good progress with learning about healthy diets and preparing simple meals.

65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In resistant materials, teaching was mainly satisfactory and occasionally good. In food technology it was mainly good with a significant proportion of very good lessons. In the best lessons, pupils are provided with challenge and choice and teachers have high expectations of what they will achieve in lessons and over time. Lessons are planned to interest and motivate pupils as well as being relevant to their needs. In less successful lessons observed, pupils spent too long on somewhat undemanding tasks and the pace of lessons was too slow. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is satisfactory overall with specialist teachers having good subject knowledge. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils which encourage their co-operation and enjoyment of the subject. Work is assessed in lessons and at the end of projects and assessments are used effectively to plan future work to help pupils meet the targets set for them in their individual learning programmes.

66. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but in resistant materials it provides a narrow range of topics, being mainly toy and entertainment based so that pupils do not learn enough about a wide range of products and consumer wants and needs. In both food technology and resistant materials, pupils have opportunities to enter for the Certificate of Achievement in which they reach satisfactory standards.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. It continues to be managed as two separate subjects and there is insufficient liaison between the two components of resistant materials and food, which adversely affects the overall quality of provision. Resources and accommodation are good and pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from access to the specialist facilities. There are sufficient, appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection in the quality of teaching and resources but not in the management of the subject (an issue outstanding from the previous inspection).

## **GEOGRAPHY**

68. All the issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed very thoroughly. Geography is now very well managed with a clear sense of direction. Teaching and planning are very well co-ordinated and classroom practice is monitored effectively. This has had a significant impact on raising the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Pupils are interested in the subject and have a good attitude towards it.

69. In the primary department good teaching, effective planning and the choice of activities appropriate to the needs of all the pupils all contribute to pupils achieving well. They increase their knowledge and understanding of places through topics such as 'The Weather'. Younger pupils examine

the seasons and the changes they bring, and consider how the weather affects the clothes that people wear. This topic captured the interest of younger pupils as activities included making tissue paper 'blossom' to stick on trees, and cutting out clothes appropriate for different seasons and sticking them on a washing line. A lesson with older pupils extended these enquiry skills. The teacher used questions very well to encourage pupils to describe what they could see on photographs of different locations and then to draw inferences about the weather and to describe conditions, using key words such as hot, cold, misty, and foggy. This lesson also demonstrated an excellent use of information technology by the teacher as he used an interactive whiteboard to great effect. During Key Stage 2 pupils develop their geographical skills, particularly with regard to maps and mapping. By the age of eleven pupils look at a simple map and answer questions (e.g. what is opposite the post office? What is behind the church?) They follow simple directions and are beginning to read map symbols. They are also increasing their knowledge of patterns and processes through studies of rivers and settlements, and seas and coastlines including a visit to Hayling Island.

70. Geography in Key Stage 3 is also characterised by good teaching. Teachers' management of pupils and the effectiveness of their teaching methods mean that pupils make good progress because they are being presented with a wide range of interesting activities, interestingly presented. They continue their work on rivers and settlements, but develop greater understanding of the importance of rivers (flooding, reservoirs, and leisure) and their relationship with the development of settlements. Pupils carry out an in-depth study of the Kingston area and they extend their studies of different places by looking at London and an example of a less economically developed country such as Kenya. A particularly good lesson on the local area focused on its location within Great Britain and Greater London and required pupils to find their address on a map and also on an internet site from which they were able to print an aerial photograph of their neighbourhood.

71. Pupils in Key Stage 4 do not study geography but they do develop some geographical skills carrying out tasks when compiling evidence for their ASDAN portfolio. Pupils are required to plan journeys using a map, demonstrate that they can use street maps and Ordnance Survey maps and have to visit a local beauty spot (e.g. Beachy Head) and report back.

## **HISTORY**

72. The subject has made very good improvement since the last inspection. The appointment of a very effective subject co-ordinator means that the subject is now very well managed as he has produced clear planning documents for the whole school and a detailed subject development plan. In addition, teachers' plans and lessons are monitored systematically. These arrangements ensure that pupils receive a breadth of experiences as they move through the school and they have had a clear impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. A combination of good teaching and the effective contribution made by learning support assistants means that pupils achieve well and make good progress through Key Stages 2-3. They show interest in the subject and they have a positive attitude towards it.

73. During Key Stage 2, good teaching and planning ensure that pupils achieve well. They begin to develop a sense of time as they study aspects of history that are familiar to them and to which they can relate. They examine differences between the past and the modern day through a range of activities. These include sorting toys, comparing modern homes with those in Victorian times and changes in shops. These activities are also used to develop other skills, such as cutting and pasting, and personal and social development through visits to places such as supermarkets. Pupils are beginning to

understand changes in their own lives and those of their family and some can use terms associated with time, such as before/after.

74. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and, as teachers manage behaviour well, pupils make good progress. Teachers have high expectations, plan well and use methods that enable all pupils to learn effectively. Therefore, pupils are able to extend their understanding of time. At the beginning of the key stage activities such as an awareness of the seasons and differences associated with them help pupils to extend their use of phrases and words about the past (e.g. past, present, a long time ago, today, yesterday). At the age of eleven some pupils have an understanding that enables them to sequence events in the correct order. As pupils move through the key stage they also increase their knowledge of the past through studies of Victorian schools and the history of ships, which includes a visit to HMS Victory. Pupils are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the past through a range of activities (speech, drawing, writing) with varying degrees of assistance. A lesson aimed at enabling younger pupils to find out about a past event in their lives (when they were babies) gave them opportunities to make observations and to record them simply with help. Older pupils can describe how people used to live and can identify some features that are characteristic of different periods of history, such as Victorian times.

75. There is good quality teaching in Key Stage 3 and so pupils achieve well because they are motivated and show interest in their work. During this key stage they extend their historical knowledge and understanding through a range of topics including a study of local history, British history and ancient Greece. This work is well supported by visits to local museums, Hampton Court Palace and Bodiam Castle and by the use of information and communication technology. Pupils were seen using a web site on Ancient Greece to discover aspects of the ancient Olympics in order to compare them with the Olympic Games currently taking place. Pupils make good progress as they consolidate their sense of time and their understanding of why people in the past acted as they did, such as why settlers might have moved from their homeland. By the age of fourteen pupils can record events in simple ways and are beginning to develop evaluative skills.

76. The department is in the process of building up artefacts, but these now need to be catalogued to ensure that they are known to all members of staff and therefore used effectively.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

77. There has been good progress in addressing the issues raised at the time of the last inspection. Effective leadership and co-ordination of the subject has improved the quality of long term planning and assessment procedures and has encouraged the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other parts of the curriculum.

78. ICT is not taught as a separate subject in the primary department but pupils regularly experience and use it as part of their other classroom based subjects, and a number of good examples were seen during the course of the inspection. A Year 6 pupil, for instance, used a word processing programme well to record what he had learnt about light sources in science, and Year 5 pupils were excited and fully involved in using the interactive whiteboard to pick out words with a highlighter and move text as part of an English lesson. The teacher in a science lesson used the computer very effectively to encourage pupils to talk about pictures related to smells and to select their preferences, e.g. food and flowers.

79. As they move through the primary department pupils develop core skills as they improve mouse control, gain familiarity with the keyboard and learn how to access programmes. Pupils use computers to match objects and numbers, do simple word processing and draw simple shapes. By the



age of eleven they have used devices such as Roamer in order to learn about giving instructions in order to make things happen, and have used a program that helps with classification and sorting in science.

80. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Key Stages 3 and 4, where ICT is taught as a separate subject as well as being part of the wider learning experience. By the age of fourteen many are very secure in being able to enter, save and retrieve work and to use ICT to record and present findings. Year 9 pupils were observed using a computer to record phrases in a French lesson and Year 8 children generated numbers on a computer for use on a board game they were designing in technology. In addition, at the end of the key stage pupils have understanding of how to enter simple commands in order to instruct 'Superlogo' to draw shapes and many have used a remote data logger to measure sound.

81. As pupils move through years 10 and 11 they show increasing competence in using their ICT skills and in their understanding of the appropriateness of different programs. They have experienced a range of software by the age of sixteen. They can word process, use desktop publishing (for example the advertising flyer that a pupil produced to publicise the school drama production 'Alex and the Glass Slipper'), and load and use a CD-ROM to find information (e.g. about Colombia as part of a World Cup project).

82. Overall the quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 is satisfactory, and staff demonstrate good knowledge of the subject and manage pupils well. However, time is not always used well and some lessons lack pace with teachers' expectations not high enough. The way that lessons are planned and structured means that those pupils with better literacy and ICT skills are not always being given the opportunities to make progress more quickly.

83. The subject is in a strong position to move forward. The school has excellent resources, having invested heavily in developing an ICT room and upgrading its computers and it now has a networked system throughout the school. There is one computer to approximately every three pupils. This gives all pupils good access to computers and helps them to become confident in their operation. All classrooms now have at least one computer with internet access. Many members of staff use ICT creatively and appropriately, such as the digital camera and interactive whiteboard as teaching aids. The co-ordinator demonstrates a particularly clear view of how the subject can be developed and is particularly perceptive as to how it can be taught and used in other subjects. He has recognised the need to continue with the programme of staff training in order to raise overall levels of staff confidence and competence and is also aware of the need to consider increasing the level of technical support required to maintain a networked system.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

84. Since the last report there has been continued consolidation of the subject. At present the headteacher is acting as the co-ordinator until a new appointment is made.

85. The subject is taught to all Key Stage 3 pupils. In a Year 7 lesson pupils were able to greet one another, making a good attempt at using a correct accent. Pupils show progress by remembering the order of phrases and are confident in performing in front of the class. In a very good lesson in Year 8 the teacher insisted on the ongoing use of French as much as possible, thus reinforcing everyday vocabulary. The teacher displays good subject ability and her enthusiasm and use of challenging activities ensures that the pupils both enjoy and succeed in improving their performance.

They conduct a simple conversation with a partner during a role play situation and write the day and date in French. They name la tete, la main and le pied. In Year 9 pupils can count to 10 and recognise numbers when they are held up randomly. They write the phrases used in greeting and their translation.

86. Pupils are very enthusiastic to participate in speaking French and show good recall of work conducted in previous lessons. Links with schools in France and Germany have resulted in the joint production of a good Millennium wall hanging, the visit of pupils from a school in Germany, an annual football tournament for the Comenius Cup and the joint writing of a recipe book. All these activities have interested and motivated the pupils.

## **MUSIC**

87. Pupils make good progress in learning music . This is a direct result of the high standard of teaching, as seen during the inspection time. Although music was being taught by a temporary replacement, she has applied the very best of her expertise as a teacher. This is all the more notable because music is not her specialist subject. She has brought enthusiasm to the subject and has involved pupils in a good range of activity, resulting in good gains in learning and musical experience.

88. The good progress in music is borne out, not only in classes, but also in assemblies and from the evidence of videos of past school performances. They sing with great enthusiasm, generally keeping good time and maintaining the rhythm. For example in a Year 7 lesson, pupils learnt about jazz, and how to build up from the basic pulse, add more rhythm, and ended by singing words over the top of the beat. Older pupils have enjoyed learning a New Zealand war dance, the haka, often seen before a rugby match. This involves keeping strict time, learning the words, and sharing the performance together. They caught the atmosphere of the war chant very well, and are to perform this for the whole school in the near future. In a Year 9 lesson pupils were singing and talking about World War 2 songs and they were able to add details they had learnt in history lessons, giving good links to other aspects of their work.

89. Most pupils enjoy music and this is largely due to the enthusiasm of the teacher. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in all lessons, whether singing, keeping time, or moving. Although some pupils seemed reluctant to participate when the lesson began, the involvement of teacher and support assistants won them over, so that by the end of the lesson they were all joining in enthusiastically. Behaviour is usually very good, and pupils are co-operative and interested. They are keen to display their knowledge, such as the instruments of the orchestra, pointing them out on the wall charts as well as talking about them, what they are made of, and what family they belong to, such as wind instruments.

90. Teaching is very good. The temporary teacher, who was taking all music lessons during the period of inspection, has applied her own knowledge of how to teach, and worked very hard to make music lessons both lively and interesting. She has established very good relationships with the pupils and they enjoy working with her. Planning is very good as a result of her careful work with the basic plans available. In every lesson, pupils are engaged in musical activity and, when used, the various commercially produced schemes are put to very good effect. There are very high expectations for work, for behaviour and for enjoyment. In the very short time she has been at the school, she already knows the pupils very well and enjoys teaching them. This is clearly recognized by the pupils, and they respond accordingly.

91. Both progress and enjoyment of music are enhanced by the school choir, performances for the public, and in the excellent assemblies that the school provides. A teacher plays the piano as pupils

enter the hall for assemblies, and the hymns and songs are lively and bright with one or other of the accomplished pianists supporting the singing. Pupils enter into the spirit of the assembly very well and sing with great enthusiasm.

92. Since the last inspection, music has improved well. Teaching is now very good and the overall planning documents, used during the inspection, were very good and the result of much dedicated work by the temporary teacher.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

93. Although achievement is satisfactory, the overall good progress that pupils made in physical education at the time of the last inspection has not been maintained.

94. The teaching of physical education in the primary department is satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well and take advantage of opportunities to encourage the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills, such as matching the number of hoops required to the number of pupils and asking pupils to read colours written on cards. Pupils behave and respond well, listening carefully and following instructions. As a result pupils' are satisfactorily acquiring and developing basic skills and co-ordination (e.g. running, stopping, dodging, changing direction and controlling speed) and simple gymnastic activities using a bench and box. In weaker lessons, however, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for the more able pupils to experiment and extend their skills and are not always sufficiently prepared. Also, some activities tend to go on for too long or are too repetitive so that there is a feeling that some pupils are becoming bored.

95. In a competitive football match against a local school Key Stage 4 boys played in an excellent spirit, well refereed by a teacher who gained and maintained the respect and attention of the players throughout. There was very good sporting behaviour and good appreciation of the opposition at the end of the game so that it was positive experience for all involved. Pupils demonstrated a range of footballing skills and appreciation of tactics, with the more able players showing good ball control and team awareness. Hockey and netball are also played, giving pupils the opportunity to further develop their passing and shooting skills and their tactical awareness. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the hockey session in terms of improving their skills, such as controlling the ball whilst moving and executing hit and push passes. The netball players focus on improving their technique through activities designed to increase their understanding of the principles and skills associated with defending. Their achievements were satisfactory in developing techniques such as watching the opponent, anticipation and keeping an eye on the ball and they were able to demonstrate these skills in a small game at the end of the lesson.

96. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils are well managed and lessons are well planned. However, as pupils remain with a single game for a relatively long session (80 minutes) activities are not sufficiently varied to retain the interest of all pupils, particularly those of a higher standard. In weaker lessons, the sequence of teaching, practice and rehearsal of newly learned skills is sometimes too repetitive so that some pupils appear to lose motivation.

97. There is no physical education specialist on the staff of the school and the former co-ordinator has recently left. It is clear that whilst the documentation to support the development of the subject is good, the lack of a specialist teacher is detracting from the drive for higher standards evident in other subjects. The multi-purpose hall is too small and restrictive and, with pupils standing around the playing area, indoor games take place in a very confined space.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. Pupils achieve well. They know stories from the Bible, in both Old and New Testaments. For example they have worked on the creation stories from the book of Genesis, and also know the events of Palm Sunday and the crucifixion of Jesus. Pupils have followed the idea that Jesus was a real person and understand some of the themes from his stories and parables, like the lost sheep or the lost son. They have widened their understanding from Christianity to other world religions and studied their faith, celebrations and festivals. For example, pupils in Year 8 were seen making a mezuzah (the small container found at the entrance to Jewish houses). They have studied Divali in Hinduism and Sikhism, Eid in Islam, and they understand the significance of the Passover meal for the Jewish faith. Pupils have explored some of the origins of these festivals, such as the story of wanderings in the desert found in the Old Testament, and are beginning to tie this study to the symbolism of the Passover food. Older pupils have studied some of the origins of Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism. They sometimes have the opportunity to visit places of worship such as a mosque or a church, and know what to expect to find inside these buildings.

99. Planning for the curriculum is very good. There is an emphasis on Christianity, as required, but other religions are included. Pupils have the opportunity to extend their work from religious education into other areas of the curriculum such as the preparation of special food when studying religious festivals or other cultures. They are encouraged to handle the special religious articles of other faiths with respect and care. Pupils in Year 8 were taught that the scrolls of the Law in Judaism are very special and should only be touched, by using the handles, not the paper. In the same lesson, a pupil was dressed in the prayer shawl and skull-cap, used in that religion. In this way important messages are given, because pupils learn well by seeing these articles in use.

100. Teaching is good. Teachers understand their pupils' needs and also have a good grasp of the subject, which enables them to teach accordingly. They set high expectations for work and for behaviour and have taught pupils respect for other peoples faiths. A strong feature of the teaching is the good match of activities to the pupils' abilities. All lessons contain some activity, which pupils enjoy. Some, in Year 8 were seen making models; some sampling bread, in Year 5; and others were making models of celebration cakes in Year 4. Pupils therefore respond well to religious education and behave well. They sustain good levels of concentration and are clearly interested in their work. Planning and the use of resources are good, and the school is fortunate in having access to a good source of these teaching aids, which are often borrowed.

101. There has been good development of assessment and use of computers. Further opportunities for visiting places of worship are planned. Very good planning has a direct impact on pupils' learning, and they are being given a very good programme of religious education. There is good co-operation among teachers, and they are about to meet together to discuss their new approach to assessment.

102. Since the last inspection, good improvements have been made. These are particularly noted in the overall quality of teaching, the planning of the curriculum throughout the school, and the assessment procedures which are now good. It is an indication of the school's commitment to improvement that assessment, though already good, is under review for further improvement.

103. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. They are being taught an appreciation of the world around them, and how to respect other people and their faith. They have many opportunities to study the family and religious life in several world religions, and to this is added the experience of festivals, food and celebrations across the range of religions they study.

