

ST PETER'S INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

LINGSWOOD PARK

NORTHAMPTON NN3 8TA

Reporting Inspector: Miss C W Raymond HMI

Date of Inspection: 5-9 June 2000

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Information about the school

Name of the school:	St Peter's Independent School
Type of school:	Wide age-range
Status:	Independent
Association membership:	None
Age range of pupils:	2-18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys: 106; Girls: 65; Total: 171
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys: 19; Girls: 27; Total: 46
Number of boarders:	Boys: 1; Girls: 1; Total: 2
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys: 1; Girls: 0; Total: 1
Number of pupils with English as an additional language:	5
Termly fees (day pupils):	£806
Daily fees (nursery pupils):	£13.50 per day; £8.50 per half day

School address:	St Peter's Independent School, Lingswood Park, Northampton NN3 8TA
Telephone number:	01604 411745
Fax number:	01604 411745
Name of headteacher:	Mr G J Smith
Name of school's proprietor:	St Peter's Independent School Trust
Name of the chair of the governing body:	Mr Arun Kotnis
DfEE number	884/6007

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was carried out in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Employment of the school's suitability for registration under the Education Act 1996. The report concentrates on those aspects of the school relevant to that purpose and gives detailed judgements on provision for the under-fives and the teaching of English, mathematics and science.

MAIN FINDINGS

The school has many strengths and few weaknesses; it provides a good education.

Standards of attainment generally match national expectations and many pupils achieve above the national expectations, particularly in mathematics.

Standards of pupils' attainment in the nursery school are above average in all areas of learning and these standards are maintained throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. At Key Stage 3, in science and in English, pupils match the national standards and in mathematics they mainly exceed national expectations.

At Key Stage 4, standards improve. In mathematics, attainment is well above national norms, and in science and English it is above these norms. GCSE results have been generally good over the last four years and always higher than the national average. A-level results are in line with national patterns although numbers are small.

Pupils' progress is generally satisfactory and often good. Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes towards learning. Their behaviour is very good and they relate well to each other and to adults. When pupils have the opportunity to work together they

collaborate productively. They also show initiative in organising their lunchtime recreational activities.

Attendance is well above the national averages. Punctuality is good. Procedures for keeping the admissions register and for registering daily attendance have improved but they still do not fully meet the statutory requirements.

The overall quality of teaching is good and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The few unsatisfactory lessons were mostly at Key Stage 3 and involved non-specialist teaching.

Overall, the curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced. However, curriculum planning lacks an overall structure and in the upper school there are inconsistencies in time allocation and distribution, in timetabling, in the deployment of staff, and in the content of schemes of work.

The school has a new policy for the development of pupils' personal and social well-being, although as yet there is no formal or systematic provision of personal, social and health education and careers guidance. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is generally good.

Most teachers are aware of the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties and in the past the school has been highly effective in supporting individual pupils. However, the steps taken to address learning difficulties are not systematic and do not follow the national code of practice recommendations.

Useful baseline assessments are made of pupils entering the nursery. In the main school, teachers make unmoderated assessments of National Curriculum levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and some use is made of Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) tests. The lack of a school-wide policy on the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress leads to inconsistent practice, particularly in the secondary phase.

Pupils are well known and cared for and made to feel secure in the family atmosphere of the school. There is, however, no common system for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development. Individual reports give reasonable accounts of pupils' personal development.

The school has a brief but adequate policy on child protection. It has a copy of the local educational authority's (LEA) child protection policy and guidelines which it should consider integrating into its own school policy, with which all staff should be familiar.

The school prospectus gives useful information but is not explicit about the school's educational aims. The parents' questionnaires show the majority of parents are happy with the quality of education their child receives but are less satisfied with communication and the information they receive.

The headteacher provides a strong lead on the school's educational purpose. The staff work well as a team but there is little formal and systematic delegation of roles and

responsibilities. The school has grown to a size where its management would benefit from more formal structures.

The school's board of management plays an active part in the financial management of the school, but is not closely involved in planning overall educational development. The school has clear plans for developing its buildings, but there is no overall whole school educational development plan.

Effective use is made of staff, accommodation and learning resources.

There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced staff to teach most areas of the curriculum satisfactorily, but a reliance on part-time staffing leads to some fragmentation of pupils' experience and limits the range of A-level options for some students. Some staff have taken advantage of the limited opportunities for staff development. There are no technical, clerical or support staff, although much of the necessary work is carried out by members of the teaching staff and sixth form students.

The accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The Weston Favell Montessori Nursery School provides appropriate premises and effective accommodation. The main school has two buildings, which provide adequate accommodation for most current purposes. One pre-prep classroom is too cramped.

The procedures for identifying and managing health and safety and risk assessment are not sufficiently rigorous. A number of health and safety issues noted in the inspection were raised with the headteacher. These concerned the lavatories, the storage and disposal of chemicals in the science laboratory and pupils' dress in the woodwork room.

The learning resources are adequate for the curriculum and range of pupils, but there are some shortages in equipment for practical subjects and for information and communication technology (ICT) in Key Stage 1 and 2. The school has made some progress in establishing and organising a library but there is insufficient provision to support research and enquiry skills in some subjects.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve the quality of education still further the school should:

- improve the effectiveness of the management by:
 - preparing an educational development plan, which identifies key priorities, with costings and targets for action;
 - increasing delegation and clarifying the role and responsibilities of senior teachers;
 - increasing administrative and technical support to relieve pressure on senior staff and teachers;

- developing communications with parents and strengthening parents' involvement with the school and with their children's work;
- comply with legal requirements in respect of daily registers;
- develop procedures to manage health and safety more rigorously;
- improve the balance and coherence of the curriculum by:
 - ensuring effective organisation and delivery of the timetable and options;
 - improving the balance of curriculum time and allocation in the upper part of the school;
 - identifying and meeting more systematically pupils' special educational needs;
 - developing schemes of work which ensure continuity and progression across phases;
 - ensuring that assessment procedures are applied consistently across and within subjects and using the information gained to plan for the next stage of teaching and learning;
 - enhance the provision of personal and social education, including careers guidance, throughout the school;
 - ensuring more systematic use of ICT across the curriculum;
- improving the provision of learning resources by:
 - developing the library resources to support research and enquiry skills;
 - increasing the range of equipment for practical subjects and software;
 - developing technician support in science, design and technology (D&T) and ICT.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

The school is owned by St Peter's Independent School Trust, a non-profit making body. There are three trustees. The school was established in 1979 when it was located in the Abington church rooms in Park Avenue North, Northampton. In September 1983, it moved to its present site in the eastern area of Northampton at Lingswood Park. Since this time, the school's accommodation has significantly developed and improved. The main school has two buildings, a purpose-built modern block with a useful hall and laboratories, workshop and classrooms, and a temporary

building, housing the prep and pre-prep classes centred round the staffroom. In 1998, St Peter's Independent School Trust purchased the Weston Favell Montessori Nursery School which is in a large house with a garden, in a residential area approximately two miles from the main site. In 1999, the two schools were amalgamated and now operate as a single school on two sites.

The school aims to offer an all-round education for all children regardless of attainment, heritage or religion. The academic and practical areas of education are considered to be of equal importance, with an emphasis placed on meeting the needs of the individual. The school aims to promote an ethos based on Christian principles. Choir scholarships have recently been introduced.

There were 56 pupils on the Weston Favell site at the time of the inspection. The school aims to prepare pre-school children for future education and life by providing a stimulating environment and activities which encourage their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development, appropriate to their age and attainment.

At the time of inspection there were 160 pupils on the main site. The school is non-selective and takes pupil with a wide range of attainment and from different backgrounds. Many pupils enter the school some way into their school careers. There are two pupils lodged with host families.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of pupils registered in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	8	2	10

Teacher assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at Level 2 or above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage at Level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	62	64	67

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of pupils registered in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	11	6	17

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at Level 4 or above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	15	16	16
Percentage at Level 4 or above	School	88	94	94
	National	68	69	75

Attainment at Key Stage 3

Number of pupils registered in final year of Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	5	14

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at Level 5 or above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage at Level 5 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	33	27	31

Attainment at Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	14	23

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils achieving standard	Boys	5	8	8
	Girls	12	15	15
	Total	17	23	23
Percentage of pupils achieving standard	School	74	100	100
	National	47.9	88.5	96

Attainment in the sixth form

Detailed results are not given, because fewer than ten pupils took A-levels in 1999.

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised absence	School	3.9
	National comparative data	7.8
Unauthorised absence	School	0
	National comparative data	1.1

Exclusions

There were no exclusions of pupils of statutory school age during the previous year.

Quality of teaching

	%
Very good or better	19
Good or better	66
Satisfactory or better	93

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

The school does not select its pupils on the basis of their academic attainment. There is no formal baseline assessment, although many parents have indicated that they would value a confidential assessment of their children's literacy. Many pupils have come into the school some way into their school careers. There are no externally-moderated tests at the end of Key Stage 1, 2 or 3. The school has a strongly-held view that publication of results causes schools place excessive emphasis on such tests. Unmoderated teacher assessment suggests that at Key Stage 1 all pupils are working at Level 2 or above. The most recent Key Stage 2 are 88 per cent attaining National Curriculum Level 4 or above in English, with 94 per cent attaining this level in mathematics and science. The observation of lessons during the inspection indicated that these good standards have been maintained this year.

At Key Stage 1 and 2, attainment largely matches or exceeds national expectations. At Key Stage 3, attainment varies more widely, though it still compares well with national norms. The pattern of attainment observed in science and mathematics lessons was mainly good, and was satisfactory in English lessons.

At Key Stage 4, attainment in science and in English is above national norms and attainment in mathematics is well above them. GCSE results have been generally good over the last four years and always higher than the national average. In 1999, 74 per cent of pupils attained five or more higher grades (A*-C), compared to 60 per cent in 1998. In 1999, 75 per cent of pupils achieved higher grades in English; the percentage was better still in mathematics. The only area of relative weakness in the GCSE results in 1999 was history, in which relatively few higher grades were achieved, although all pupils entered achieved a grade A*-G.

No conclusive judgement on attainment in the sixth form was possible in the inspection. It was only possible to observe one lesson, which was in drama. Geography and some other science coursework was reviewed. Because the cohort taking A-levels last year consisted of only eight pupils, no overall meaningful comparison with national norms is possible. In 1999, attainment in mathematics at A-level was above the national average. Four out of the seven candidates obtained grades A and B, in line with the national average.

Progress is mostly good and always satisfactory or better at Key Stage 1 and 2. At Key Stage 3, while progress is still good and mainly at least satisfactory, there were four lessons with non-specialist teachers in which progress was poor. At Key Stage 4 and above, the progress is almost always good.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs is variable. There are pupils in the school with learning difficulties but they have had no formal assessment and

targets have not been set through individual education plans. Some younger pupils with such difficulties are assumed to have behaviour problems, because their learning needs have not been recognised or catered for. These pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable. On the other hand, one pupil who has a statement of special educational needs has been very well supported and has made remarkable progress.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

Pupils of all ages show very positive attitudes towards their school. They arrive at lessons promptly, properly equipped and ready to learn. With few exceptions, they listen attentively, respond dutifully and sometimes very enthusiastically, and work with care and perseverance. Pupils willingly answer the teacher's questions and ask pertinent questions themselves when stimulated to do so. Except in a few overlong lessons or with unchallenging teaching, pupils concentrate well. On the rare occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, the pupils' response is tolerant. Pupils take evident pride in much of their work, presenting it well, although sustained high quality is clearly related to consistently high expectations by teachers. Occasionally, written work of the same pupil for different teachers varies noticeably in quality and neatness. Pupils work industriously on individual tasks. Though opportunities are fewer than they could be, when pupils have to work together, they collaborate productively. They do the homework they are set and most hand it in on time.

Pupils' behaviour is very good. They respect and obey the school rules. They move briskly but calmly and quietly around the school. Pupils treat the fabric of the school well. There were no exclusions in the previous year.

Good relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils are courteous to adults and to each other. Older and younger pupils get on well, the former treating the latter with consideration. Evidence suggests bullying is a rare occurrence and well addressed by the school. In most older classes, boys and girls sit apart, but they are not unwilling to work in mixed groups and co-operate very well together. Pupils help each other readily. They give each other credit, often with spontaneous applause, and do not ridicule others' mistakes. The school population represents a wide variety of backgrounds; there is every sign that the pupils achieve the school's aim of showing respect for all regardless of religion, heritage or attainment.

Pupils act responsibly: they take a pride in their appearance, act in a safe manner and use time and resources properly. When given the opportunity, pupils exercise responsibility well, for example, as prefects or as guides for visitors. They also show initiative in organising their lunchtime recreational activities.

Attendance

Attendance is very good, averaging over 96 per cent in the last year. There is no reported unauthorised absence. Daily registration is conducted informally, sometimes before or after assembly in the morning and before assembly in the afternoon. Punctuality and attendance at lessons are good. There has been some improvement since the last inspection visit in the procedures for completing the admissions register and for registering daily attendance, but they still do not fully meet statutory

requirements. Details of pupils' leaving dates must be recorded in the admissions register and daily registers must be completed in ink and all absences recorded as either authorised or unauthorised.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

The overall quality of teaching is good and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. In the 72 lessons observed, 93 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, 66 per cent was good or better and 19 per cent was very good or better.

The consistently good quality of teaching is a major strength of the nursery school and has a significant impact on the children's attainment.

The overall quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. All lessons were satisfactory; the majority were good and often very good or excellent. At Key Stage 3 teaching was at least satisfactory or better in the majority of lessons observed and sometimes very good. In a small number of lessons, teaching was less than satisfactory and this was mostly as a result of non-specialist teachers working with unfamiliar classes. At Key Stage 4, teaching was mostly satisfactory or better and in many lessons it was good. During the week of inspection, public examinations meant that only one Year 11 and one sixth form lesson were observed.

In the most effective lessons, teaching is well planned and resourced, with highly interactive and challenging tasks that are well matched to the varying attainments of pupils, who respond enthusiastically. Teachers' expectations of pupils are consistently high. For example, in a Key Stage 1 science lesson, everyday items were tested which generated interest and enthusiasm. The teacher offered very good oral feedback and constructive evaluation. Similarly, in a Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson and Year 1 and 2 French lesson, teachers set a lively pace for learning, with clear learning objectives and challenging tasks that were differentiated carefully to match pupils' needs.

In the majority of lessons, teachers' subject knowledge was generally adequate and often good or very good. Teachers set appropriate activities for pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding and make good use of whole-class teaching. Relatively little use was made of group or pair work. There were common features in the lessons that were judged to be less than satisfactory: learning objectives were unclear, and pupils were not actively engaged in the learning process.

There is currently one pupil with a statement of special educational needs who receives good support; collaboration between subject teachers and the support assistant is good.

The marking of pupils' work is variable in quality within and across different subjects and key stages. Some work, for example in English, Year 8 French and Year 8 and 9 history, is marked thoroughly with constructive comments to help pupils improve their work. Less effective marking offers superficial comments on presentation, or

marks with no supporting comment on the quality of the work. In some subjects there is a tacit acceptance of work that is not up to the best the child can do. Grading systems are not used consistently across subject areas.

The school has a homework policy that clearly outlines the role of homework in helping pupils establish study habits that gradually help them to work more independently as they progress through the school. Homework is set regularly according to the timetable. The majority of parents are satisfied with the work that their children do at home, although some raised concerns about work not being set at times.

In the most effective lessons, teachers make ongoing assessments of pupils' attainment and progress and use this information to plan new tasks. However, there is less evidence of assessment data being used more generally to inform teaching and the planning and revision of schemes of work.

The curriculum and assessment

Overall, the curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced.

The curriculum for the under-fives is appropriately planned around the national framework of desirable learning outcomes and staff are planning to revise these to take account of the recently published early learning goals ready for the new school year. Curriculum planning is consistently good and benefits from the very good collaboration of staff who work closely together to provide a broad programme, which meets the needs of differing abilities and aptitudes.

The school aims to teach the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 and covers it partly at Key Stages 3 and 4. All pupils are offered English, mathematics, science, history, geography, art, craft, design and technology, physical education (PE), religious education (RE) and French. Key Stage 2 pupils also learn about food and nutrition. At Key Stages 3 and 4, there is the opportunity to study Latin and at Key Stage 4 pupils may study French, Spanish, or both. At Key Stage 4, the higher attaining pupils can move from general science and follow discrete courses in physics, chemistry and biology. When considering options, however, pupils are asked to opt for their chosen subjects at different times, which can cause confusion for pupils and parents. Continuity is a problem where pupils are taught in mixed-age classes, although some teachers differentiate the work according to age and attainment.

The school has a new policy for the development of pupils' personal and social well-being, and this provides a brief overview of the school's aims and provision. Aspects of social development are clearly covered in assemblies, in the classroom and in other parts of the school's life, although they are not always systematically planned. Some aspects of sex and relationships and drugs education are reported to be addressed in science, English literature, RE and PE, but the content and purpose were not explicit in subject documentation. The needs of pupils should be more clearly identified, so that the school can ensure the curriculum provision is appropriate.

The deployment of part-time teachers, whose contribution is valuable, fragments provision. For example, it is not unusual for older pupils to be taught by three or more

teachers for English. On occasions, again because of timetabling, pupils opting for food and nutrition or art may miss geography or history lessons and cannot make up the work. Some lesson periods in Key Stages 1 and 2 are too long and can lead to pupils becoming tired and restless. On the other hand, at Key Stages 3 and 4 some periods are too short. The school should continue to make sure that during drama productions, disruption of the curriculum is minimised. Where private music sessions take pupils out of lessons, there is a need for a considered policy for welcoming pupils back into the classroom so that they may continue satisfactorily with the whole class.

Some documents are available which outline the general aims and areas of the curriculum. Most documents focus on the content of what pupils are going to do rather than the objectives of the learning. There are informal staff discussions about school work but, with no common structure to the school curriculum planning, teachers appear to work in isolation. The overall planning of the curriculum is undertaken by the senior teachers and headteacher with informal consultation with staff, but there are no formal procedures for monitoring its effectiveness or identifying areas for development. Not all staff have produced long, medium and short-term planning to ensure pupils receive a progressive and coherent experience. This would also assist new teachers in particular.

The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, but does not always prepare pupils sufficiently well for some aspects for the next stage of education, training or employment. The curriculum for pupils of secondary age offers little careers education and there is a need for impartial guidance drawing on the local careers service. Most pupils are given equal access to the curriculum but there is no formal policy for pupils with special educational needs.

There is enrichment of the provision through the extra-curricular activities which include sport, art, music and computer clubs. Pupils are frequently taken on educational visits, which include trips to France and Belgium, as well as to theatres and museums. Pupils speak enthusiastically about these visits. They also enjoy the visitors to the school who bring particular expertise. During the inspection there was a visit from puppet players for the younger pupils.

There is no school-wide policy on the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and practice varies between age ranges and among subjects. Useful baseline assessments are made of pupils entering the nursery and in the main school teachers make unmoderated assessments at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Some use is also made of the tests published by the QCA. No such tests are used at secondary level, where GCSE and A-level are the only external assessments. Assessment and marking procedures vary from subject to subject and in some subjects, for example English, some elements of the curriculum provided make no contribution to the overall assessment of pupils' attainment. In mathematics and science, on the other hand, good use is made of end-of-unit tests.

There is an agreed code for reporting to parents levels of attainment and effort, but the criteria for assigning these letter grades are not explicit. Whilst parents of pupils of primary age are given assessments based on age-related National Curriculum levels as assessed by teachers, this is not the case in Key Stage 3. There is little scope for using

assessment information to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision, to spot individual under-achievement or to inform curriculum planning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Overall the school provides well for the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. It makes very good provision for moral and social development. The school clearly aims to teach the curriculum within a firm moral framework. Pupils are taught the principles distinguishing right from wrong. Some links are made between pupils' moral development and their growing awareness of a spiritual dimension to life. Some teachers draw the pupils' attention to values and beliefs enabling them to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge satisfactorily. During the inspection there were examples in all key stages, of pupils' attention being drawn to the wonders of the natural world, as well as to the uplifting qualities of music and literature.

Assemblies are a regular feature of school life and play an important part in pupils' spiritual and moral development. In one particularly good assembly with a strong spiritual dimension, pupils were led to consider the value of apparently humble work, as much may depend upon it.

The school does well at all key stages to promote very good social development. Pupils relate well to one another and to their teachers. They are open and courteous to visitors, polite and well behaved in class and around the school. Breaks from work in the playground are friendly times. Boys and girls work and play easily together and although an understanding of citizenship is not always explicitly emphasised, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in the school community. For example, the prefects' help to maintain silence outside examination rooms, supervise some of the break times, set out hall furniture, and frequently take care of younger pupils.

Pupils' cultural development is taken seriously. Pupils are introduced to a relatively wide range of cultural pursuits including literature, drama and art. Pupils begin to appreciate the wide diversity of British culture as well as the richness of other cultures, traditions and faiths. The school is fortunate in having a wide range of cultures represented in its community. In geography, pupils from different backgrounds are often consulted as experts. In other areas, the contribution which these pupils could make towards an even richer cultural experience for others is not always fully realised.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

Pupils are well known and cared for. They feel secure in a family atmosphere and have adults to whom they say they can turn to for advice or if they are troubled. The school keeps itself well aware of pupils' circumstances and reacts very supportively when these impact adversely on their life and work at school. The strong ethos of respect for all fosters a friendly, purposeful atmosphere in which pupils can not only learn effectively but also develop into self-confident, mature young people.

Without explicit policies or elaborate procedures, good behaviour is successfully encouraged and minor misbehaviour effectively dealt with. Sanctions are not a

prominent feature of school life and are infrequently invoked. Pupils feel that rules are reasonable and their application fair. Those parents who responded to the questionnaire were unanimous in their view that the school achieves high standards of good behaviour. The school deals effectively with rare occurrences of bullying which come to the attention of staff.

The school's files of individual pupils' reports demonstrate a reasonable account of pupils' personal developments and performance. The school has no common system of monitoring pupils' routine academic progress, and relies largely on informal communication among teachers. Form teachers have a general responsibility for such monitoring but no time reserved for this purpose. The only records of pupils' progress, which are held centrally, are copies of twice-yearly reports to parents. Although the majority of parents were happy with the information they received about their child's progress, a sizeable minority indicated they would like to have more information.

Healthy living, including a healthy diet, is actively promoted through some curriculum subjects and more generally, although some parents and pupils feel that lunchtime menus could be better matched to this advice.

The circumstances of all accidents are logged in sufficient detail. At least one trained first-aider is always available. There is a designated child protection officer and a brief but adequate policy on child protection. The school has a copy of the LEA's child protection policy and guidelines which it should consider integrating into its own policy and procedures, with which all staff should be familiar.

Partnership with parents and the community

The school prospectus provides useful information for prospective parents, but does not fully set out the school's educational aims. There is no parent-teacher association nor any formal organisation of friends of the school.

Responses to the parents' questionnaire show that most parents are satisfied with their involvement with the school. However, 40 per cent of parents feel that the school does not encourage parents to play an active part in the life of the school. Just over two-thirds of parents feel that it is easy to approach the school with questions and problems. Less than half the parents feel that the school handles complaints from parents well, and that the school gives clear understanding of what is taught. Just over 60 per cent of parents feel that the school keeps them well-informed about the progress being made by their children. A significant number of parents are not content, therefore, with the school's partnership with them. Whilst the evidence of inspection supports parents' positive views, it also indicates that the school's links with parents are not as good as they could be. The school should ensure that it monitors and, where necessary, improves its communications.

There are good relationships with a number of local industries: for example, a local firm provides timber for the workshop. There is very little work experience.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

The school's board of management, which meets approximately every six weeks, supervises the general management of the school. There are five members, who are all members of the local community. The headteacher also attends board meetings. The minutes of recent meetings indicate that the Board plays an important role in relation to the financial issues. The development of the school buildings and the recent purchase of Weston Favell demonstrate effective financial management.

Management of the day-to-day administration of the school is sound. The headteacher and his wife, the assistant headteacher, are strongly committed to the school's success. They both have substantial teaching responsibilities. The commitment to promoting an ethos based on Christian moral principles is reflected in good relationships and high expectations of pupils' self-discipline and behaviour.

The school has grown to a size where its management would benefit from more formal structures. This has been recognised in recent years with the allocation of senior teacher status to some staff, but this senior management structure could be better used to further the development of the school. Specific job descriptions would be helpful.

The school has developed a number of school policies, some recently; there is now a need to extend these to include policies on assessment and curricular planning. Teachers meet regularly in an informal way. However, there are no formal opportunities for them to address school-wide issues and to contribute to the development of the school. At present, there is little formal monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The large number of part-time teachers makes a more systematic approach particularly desirable. There is no special needs co-ordinator and the national code of practice is not fully implemented; there is no register of pupils with special educational needs. There now should be a more formalised system so that no child's needs are missed in the assessment process.

There are clear plans to extend and to develop the school building. An educational development plan covering the curriculum, assessment and learning resources, to which all staff could contribute, would be a way of setting out further steps to pursue the school's aims.

With the exception of the admissions register and attendance registers, the school meets statutory requirements.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

There are eight full-time staff and 20 part-time. Almost all staff have appropriate qualifications and experience for their teaching role in the school. The reliance on part-time staffing leads to some fragmentation of pupils' experience, as in Key Stage 3 English where some classes have four English teachers. Although the use of part-time staff can extend options, it also has the effect of limiting the range of possible A-level options for some sixth form students. The availability of staff means that a combination of biology and geography, for example, is sometimes difficult to provide.

Nursery staff have experienced appropriate and useful training in the last two years. The main school staff have had few opportunities for in-service training: apart from

two significant sports coaching courses, they have been limited to a course taken by the school's examinations officer and some sessions on A-level teaching provided by the examinations board.

There are no technicians, secretarial or cleaning staff employed by the school, and so much of the necessary work is carried out on a part-time basis, after school, by members of the teaching staff and sixth form students. This is not effective use of their time.

The school is located on two sites. The Weston Favell Montessori Nursery is housed in a large house with a garden; it provides appropriate premises and effective accommodation. The main school has two buildings, a purpose-built modern block with a useful hall and laboratories, workshop and classrooms, and a temporary building, housing the prep and pre-prep classes centred round the staff-room. A main role of the St Peter's Independent School Trust is to oversee the buildings. Accommodation is generally adequate for current purposes. One room in use for reception and Year 1 is rather cramped.

The quality of the displays on classroom walls is varied, but is good in Years 3 and 4, geography and the nursery. Access to the changing-room lavatories is available for those playing on the field during breaks or lunchtime when access is most likely to be congested. During the week, the cleanliness of the lavatories improved in the temporary classroom block. There are eight lavatories for pupils' use, while this number meets the relevant requirement, the intention to build a new lavatory suite is sensible.

A field adjacent to the school, owned by the local authority, is a great asset. It is well used and, to an extent, is maintained by the school. Access to hard play is barely adequate and some attention will soon need to be paid to the playground surfaces. Recreational play equipment is adequate.

Fire drills are held once a term and the fire book shows that the most recent have been properly recorded; the fire alarm system is checked weekly. However, no risk assessments have yet been carried out in the various areas of the school where safety is a significant issue. The procedures for managing health and safety are not sufficiently rigorous. A number of health and safety issues were drawn to the attention of the school during the inspection and prompt action was taken where possible. The issues included the storage of chemicals in the laboratory. This has no extractor fan or other means of venting fumes from chemical cupboards, sometimes from stock long past its time of safe use. A means of disposal of these chemicals needs to be arranged. The woodwork shop has appropriate emergency stop buttons strategically placed, but pupils were unaware of the type of injury that they were designed to limit, and many were wearing ties when working over woodwork benches. The school has plans to address these matters.

The provision of ICT for Key Stage 2 pupils is very limited and poorly located in the corner of a room occasionally used for changing and other practical work. It is very difficult for pupils to use the currently available books to find information or to assist investigations in mathematics or science. Equipment for Key Stages 1 and 2 games and PE is too limited.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 have access to sufficient appropriate equipment and books in ICT, geography and modern foreign languages. There is limited provision for science. At A-level, these difficulties become even more restrictive and effectively prevent A-level science students from conducting sufficient experimental work. The PE equipment in the hall includes benches and mats which show signs of wear and tear and need some servicing. Routine periodic inspection of them is needed.

Many items of furniture are old and worn but generally serviceable. Exceptions include the furniture in the sixth form room and in some other rooms. In the ICT room, stools with no back support and old wooden chairs do not provide appropriate seating.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

During the inspection an evaluation was made of the provision for all the areas of learning. Since the last inspection of the provision for four-year-olds, the nursery has conscientiously addressed nearly all the key issues. The provision is on a firm footing and has raised attainment and progress not only of the four-year-olds, but also those of the two and three-year-olds.

On admission to the nursery, most children are achieving average standards, with a small number of higher-attaining children and a few with some special educational needs. All make good progress according to their potential. Clearer arrangements for assessment, however, need to be made to ensure that all children's particular needs are met fully. While staff are aware of pupils with special educational needs, the steps taken to address them are not as recommended by the national code of practice.

Although belonging to St Peter's Independent School Trust, the nursery is run as a separate entity. Closer links with the main school could provide an opportunity for the nursery and pre-prep department staff to benefit from professional liaison.

The nursery is an orderly and cheerful community where the children have positive attitudes to their work and play. Relationships are positive and their behaviour is good. Children are given scope for initiative and the tasks are sufficiently demanding to allow each one to become a competent learner. At times it is difficult for staff to provide for and deal with such a wide age range. For the future, if the school continues to welcome two-year-olds, consideration might be given to providing for them in a separate area. This would provide more clearly for their particular needs. Children's response is very good in all language activities demonstrating good concentration and considerable interest in their work.

The consistently good quality of teaching is a major strength of the nursery. It has a significant impact on the children's attainment from two-five years. The teaching is never less than satisfactory, nearly always good and sometimes very good. The quality of the teaching of mathematics and physical development is consistently good. The Montessori-trained assistant and Nursery Nurse Examinations Board (NNEB) assistants provide very good models for the children in their teamwork. They maintain

consistently high standards of children's good behaviour, attitude and response when working alone or with others.

The early years curriculum is now planned around the national framework of desirable learning outcomes. Curriculum planning is consistently good in all areas of development and benefits from the very good collaboration of staff who work closely to provide a broad programme of work. A very good feature of the nursery is the well-planned and challenging provision for outdoor play in the garden. Staff are looking to the new Early Learning Goals which will be in place for the coming school year.

There is a conscientious and thoughtful organisation of activities between the Montessori room and second classroom. The classrooms and outdoor play spaces are welcoming and stimulating areas and pupils settle quickly and happily to nursery school life. They behave well, learn school routines speedily and display an independence in their approach and attitude to work. Pupils learn to take turns and share equipment with each other and class discussions are well managed by the teachers so that pupils can think about other people's feelings and can articulate their own ideas and concerns.

The day-to-day running of the nursery is efficient and effective. However, the nursery school would benefit, when circumstances permit, from a further qualified nursery teacher who could give oversight to the planning of the curriculum, support the nursery assistants and liaise more closely with parents. Time and resources are well managed.

Provision for language and literacy development is a strength. By the time that they are five, children's attainment in language and literature is good for their age. While many children enter nursery with a satisfactory range of language skills, some need additional support if they are to meet national expectations by year five. The well-planned curriculum helps children to acquire the early attitudes and skills necessary for speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Children attain well in mathematics. Many attain at a higher level. They make good progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics matched to their maturity and learning abilities. Children are given opportunities to learn about weight and time, to match objects and shapes, to sort and count and to begin to learn a mathematical vocabulary.

Children are given good opportunities to develop their natural curiosity, knowledge and understanding of the world and become steadily more aware of other people and of features of the natural and man-made world. It makes a sound basis for historical, geographical and scientific skills and learning. Technological development is not quite so well addressed. There is little access to computers but in their dramatic and imaginative play children often talk about their growing understanding of electrical gadgets such as microwaves, telephones and light switches. Children are provided with opportunity to explore and select materials and equipment and use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes.

Provision for children's creative development is good. Children are able to explore music, sound and colour, texture and shape. Through their art, stories and imaginative

play children are beginning to express what they imagine or see and know. They make designs and models in two and three dimensions. A particularly good session of dance was observed when groups of children sang, danced and moved as a direct result of being inspired by a story. Children make good progress.

The development of children's physical skills is good and standards of attainment in a variety of skills such as throwing, pulling, climbing, balancing, running, are often above average for their age. Attainment is very good by the age of five. Progress is satisfactory and often good progress. Staff moving between a teaching and facilitating role ensures children use a good range of large and small equipment with increasing confidence and skill. In the classroom, children enjoy a good range of carefully planned activities which help them to develop their manipulative skills and hand/eye co-ordination. They are introduced to different media and begin to use tools such as scissors and glue sticks for cutting, sticking and making models. They become confident in using malleable materials such as clay, dough and wet sand to make representation of their own world and so gain increasing manipulative skill and dexterity.

ENGLISH AND DRAMA, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English and drama

Most pupils' attainment in English lessons and in their written work at all key stages is at least at and often above, the average for schools nationally. In public examinations at 16 and 18, success rates are well above national figures in both English language and English literature. At GCSE in 1999, 89 per cent of pupils gained a higher grade and none less than grade D. The corresponding figure for English literature was 68 per cent, with most other pupils gaining a grade D. Of the two A-level entries for English literature in 1999, one student achieved grade A, the other grade B.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils of a wide range of prior attainment listen effectively and speak confidently and clearly with a good range of vocabulary and structures. Most read aloud well, with fluency and expression and with good comprehension of what they read. Some who benefit from additional tuition in speech demonstrated particularly good use of voice in reciting poems they had memorised. Pupils' spelling is usually accurate and at Key Stage 2 they use dictionaries spontaneously. Much written work is of a good standard, pupils writing extensively for their age and attempting to use a wide range of vocabulary and interesting sentence patterns. They show keen interest in language.

At Key Stage 3, the standards of attainment displayed in lessons were more variable, but pupils' written work shows that they generally attain levels at or above the national average. Pupils speak, in class and beyond, with confidence and clarity and can express and defend a point of view. They read aloud with confidence and their writing is mostly of a better than average standard. Pupils' spelling is mostly accurate and their handling of punctuation and layout conventions is better than is typically found. Handwriting and presentation of work generally are good. Many pupils show an interest in, and good knowledge about, language and can give precise definitions of sophisticated vocabulary.

Because of GCSE and A-level examinations, at Key Stage 4 only Year 10 lessons could be seen together with a single sixth form drama lesson and samples of written work. In the Year 10 lessons, some pupils made extended, well-formulated comments on the literary texts they were studying, demonstrating also their precise understanding of what the teacher was saying. The quality of writing rarely falls below the national average; much is well above, over a wide range of types, and is presented carefully, mostly in neat longhand. Many pupils read quite widely around and beyond their set texts.

Standards of general literacy are at least satisfactory at all stages and improve as pupils advance through the school. Other subjects also offer opportunities for extended writing, for example history. Pupils learn and use accurately the technical vocabulary of different subjects. Pupils' competence in speaking is well developed throughout the school; they become fluent and confident speakers, ready and able to discuss their learning whenever they are given the opportunity.

Pupils' approach to learning in English lessons was enthusiastic throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Older pupils showed more variable levels of interest, depending on the quality of teaching and the task set, but their attitude was always positive. There were few opportunities overall for pupils to work together but even the youngest pupils showed willingness and ability to collaborate. Where tasks were unvaried, particularly in the longer afternoon periods with Key Stage 3 pupils, there was some falling away of concentration. Overall, however, pupils' behaviour and attitudes in English are good.

The quality of English teaching is variable but satisfactory overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2 lessons, it was nearly always good and sometimes very good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge, use time very well to provide varied but coherent activities that usually take account of the different ages or abilities within the class. Both lesson content and the manner of delivery match those of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers offer a very good model of spoken and written English and of handwriting, and have high expectations of their pupils.

At Key Stage 3, English is taught by a number of teachers, some specialists, some not. Each class has more than one, sometimes several, teachers. The teaching by specialists was markedly better than that by non-specialists. The latter have specified tasks within the English curriculum, but they often lack the expertise to make best use of the available time and appropriate strategies. They often also lack the knowledge to link the particular area they cover to the rest of the pupils' learning in English, and how it can contribute to the overall assessment of pupils' attainment in the subject.

Specialist teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4, on the other hand, is knowledgeable and stimulating. Teachers are able to stimulate lively, relevant discussion and elicit perceptive, well-expressed comments and questions. In the lessons seen, however, the number of pupils actively engaged in these exchanges tended to be restricted to those who spontaneously volunteered, leaving many as passive if interested spectators for much of the time. To raise standards further, so that all pupils achieve to their potential, teaching at Key Stage 3 needs to be more carefully co-ordinated. A more comprehensive scheme of work than the present brief list of content to be covered, would provide teachers with better guidance.

Drama is a very important and successful aspect of the life of the school and a feature of all pupils' curricular experience. In the few lessons seen and in recordings of various recent performances, there is evidence that standards are high. In the lessons observed, the good teaching, which is clearly expert in both practical drama technique and knowledge of the theatre, elicited keen response from pupils and enabled them to produce good work.

Resources are generally satisfactory for the curriculum offered, although library stocks are very limited and much is unattractive.

Mathematics

In 1999, the assessment made by teachers at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 showed pupils' attainment to be well above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 4, attainment is well above the national average. In 1999, 84 per cent of pupils gained a higher grade at GCSE. Mathematics results compare favourably with those in science. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls at this key stage.

Attainment in mathematics at A-level was above the national average in 1999. Four out of the seven candidates obtained grades A and B, in line with the national average.

Inspection evidence supports the view that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is above average. For example, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand can add and subtract numbers up to 99, multiply and divide numbers by 2, 3, 5, 10 and 100 and understand fractions such as quarter, third, half, two thirds and three quarters. Higher-attaining pupils measure length, weight and capacity using standard measures and begin to learn to use tally and frequency charts for gathering data. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils develop a good level of mental strategies for solving problems in number, money and weight and their data-handling skills are well developed.

By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils' number skills are very good, with some quick mental recall. They have good data-handling skills. Their algebraic skills are strong and their understanding of shape and space is good. At Key Stage 4, pupils are competent in topics related to number grids, shape and space and are successful in solving problems involving algebraic substitution and in re-arranging variables. Higher-attaining pupils at Key Stage 4 show a good grasp of symmetry, transformation and trigonometric functions.

Pupils make some use of numeracy in other subjects, for example in science, geography and food technology, numeracy skills are enhanced through the analysis and interpretation of data in pictorial form as well as through complex graphs and their interpretations. Across all groups at Key Stage 3, pupils are competent in estimating lengths and they achieve accuracy of measurement through their projects in D&T.

Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress across all key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress at Key Stage 3. The department's focus on building confidence in mathematics in these years contributes well to the pupils' progress. In well-organised and carefully-structured lessons, pupils' motivation and concentration contribute to

their good progress. However, some pupils' written work is often organised poorly and fragmented and fails to consolidate their progress. The highest attaining pupils at Key Stage 4 sustain their good progress. At both key stages, the pupils benefit from small groups that allow for individual attention. Progress in the sixth form is satisfactory and most students fulfil the promise displayed at Key Stage 4.

Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Behaviour in mathematics lessons is rarely less than good. Pupils are keen, well motivated and always respond enthusiastically to their experiences in mathematics. They work at levels appropriate to their abilities and respond well to time targets for the completions of tasks. Pupils work co-operatively with their teachers in all lessons.

The teaching of mathematics is generally good. Clear lesson objectives are shared with pupils and lessons are lively and interesting, encouraging good attitudes to learning and enabling children to make good progress. Teachers' expectations are consistently high; they manage pupils' behaviour well and make good use of resources. However, there is insufficient use of information technology to enhance pupils' learning. At key stages 1 and 2 teachers working with mixed-age groups often present work at three levels according to the pupils' prior attainment. Pupils' work is marked regularly with appropriate written feedback to help pupils make progress. Teachers set appropriate homework to further encourage progress. No teaching was seen in the sixth form.

The school's scheme of work is a useful document which guides progress and continuity within each phase, but there is insufficient co-ordination across phases. The use of testing and assessment is good and the use of the information gathered is very well used to match work carefully to pupils' attainment. In order to raise attainment and increase progress further, the school might strengthen the curriculum links between different phases and plan and map more rigorously opportunities to develop ICT capabilities and enhance teaching and learning.

Science

In 1999, the assessment made by science teachers at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 showed pupils attaining above the national average, matching results in separate GCSE biology, chemistry and physics courses. Pupils' attainment in double-award science is below the national average. The few students taking A-level biology, chemistry and physics scored average points.

Inspection evidence matched this pattern. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 whose attainment was average and above had accurate knowledge and understanding across the programmes of study. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in science is average. Most pupils show satisfactory understanding of ideas such as light and sound energy, metals, plastics, solar system and different parts of the skeleton. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 3, for example, could explain the dispersal of seeds and conditions necessary for their growth, and could express opinions as to what might happen if basic life conditions are changed.

By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. In general, pupils are able to recall knowledge with understanding from earlier work.

Higher-attaining Year 9 pupils investigating resistance factors, identified relevant variables and applied criteria for 'fair testing' when planning an extended investigation. Lower-attaining pupils, however, have a more fragile grasp of scientific ideas as indicated by an insecure understanding of the differences between power, energy and current in an electrical circuit. Whilst attainment is consistent across the science curriculum, there is little evidence of pupils' using planning and evaluation skills in science investigations.

Current attainment is above average for Key Stage 4 pupils studying separate sciences but below average for those taking the double-award course. Higher-attaining pupils studying separate sciences can explain chemical bonding in terms of ionic and co-valent compounds, and most have a good grasp of infection, bacteria, viruses and the body's defence mechanism. Lower attainers, however, are less secure in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas.

At Key Stage 1 pupils make an excellent start to class investigations and they make very good gains in knowledge, understanding and practical skills. Highly effective teaching focuses more sharply on conceptual development and thinking skills, enabling better understanding of scientific concepts. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress, although standards vary across attainment targets. Most pupils begin to make plausible predictions and perform experimental work competently and safely. In Year 6, pupils write accounts of their experimental work.

At Key Stage 3 pupils make good progress in most Programmes of Study. It is best in lessons with opportunity to test scientific ideas experimentally. However, only a limited range of investigations are attempted and pupils' skills of planning and evaluating experiments are weak. Data logging and other ICT skills are under-developed.

At Key Stage 4, progress is at least satisfactory across the entire science curriculum, and is good with higher-attaining pupils in particular. There is evidence of challenge, and progress is in line with pupils' earlier scientific attainment. There is evidence of good progress in investigative coursework assignments, which are well prepared and presented, demonstrating that pupils are confident in planning, completing and evaluating scientific investigations. There are limited opportunities to test hypotheses based on first hand investigations.

Overall, behaviour and attitudes to work are often exemplary. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, show high levels of concentration, are eager to carry out tasks, work hard and often continue with tasks without further direction. Lower-attaining pupils work better in a well-structured environment. Where classroom management is good, pupils co-operate well and help each other, taking pride in their work and its presentation.

Teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 was mostly good and always satisfactory. Classes are well managed. Teachers ensure that pupils understand their work; knowledge and understanding is good in their own subject. In the best lessons, challenging and adroit questioning aided progress and understanding. For example in a Year 9 lesson, good questioning and demonstration by the teacher enabled pupils to distinguish between dominant and recessive genes. At Key Stage 4 there were a few very good lessons.

Some lessons, however, provide insufficient opportunities for pupils' independent work, seriously lowering attainment in double-award GCSE courses. Homework in all years is well used to consolidate and to extend class work. Marking is inconsistent: comments do not always help pupils to develop their understanding. There is insufficient subject-specific target setting for pupils. School reports provide useful information on pupils' attitudes and progress but limited details on attainment.

The curriculum is broad and balanced but not always matched to pupils' abilities and attainment. It provides equal access and opportunity for all pupils. The criteria for choosing courses leading to double-award GCSE science need to be reviewed, as some pupils struggle to cope. A-level courses in biology, chemistry and physics, because part-time staff are deployed to teach other courses, do not always get enough time. Information and communication technology is not used enough by pupils as an investigative tool.

The head of department is enthusiastic and engenders a positive ethos. Lack of technical support results in poor storage of chemicals and equipment and inefficient use of teachers' time. Procedures for assessment are not used consistently to monitor progress and to improve attainment. GCSE course assignments are assessed according to the examination criteria and end of unit tests are marked thoroughly, but day to day marking is superficial. The results of assessment are not always used as an aid to curriculum planning. Accommodation is satisfactory. Resources are barely adequate, for example, insufficient for investigation work on radioactivity, although generally well used to support teaching and learning. Book provision is generally satisfactory and all pupils are issued with science textbooks. Library resources are too modest to support research on scientific themes. In order to raise further pupils' attainment, the department needs to develop schemes of work which ensure continuity and progression.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

This inspection was carried out by five of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) over four days. A total of seventy-two lessons across the curriculum from nursery to sixth form were observed. Additional observation included assemblies and extra-curricular activities.

HMI studied documentation supplied by the school. This included the school prospectus, curriculum planning documents, building development plans and pupils' records, including reports. They held planned discussions with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, other senior members of staff, some heads of department and a range of pupils representing each key stage. In addition, numerous informal discussions took place with teachers and pupils. A range of work was scrutinised from a sample of pupils in Years 1 to 12 provided by the school and during classroom observations.

Two HMI met with a small group of parents at the Weston Favell Montessori Nursery School and 47 parents at the meeting held at the main school. Questionnaires were completed by 50 parents.

Data and indicators

Pupil data

Year group	Girls	Boys	Total
N*	24	33	57
R	2	0	2
1	7	2	9
2	1	6	7
3	2	8	10
4	5	7	12
5	1	13	14
6	5	10	15
7	6	14	20
8	7	7	14
9	4	8	12
10	8	13	21
11	4	4	8
12	4	5	9
13	4	3	7
Total	60	100	160

*Weston Favell Montessori Nursery

Teachers and classes

St Peter's Independent School

Number of teachers	Full time	Part time
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total: 28	Female: 5	Male: 3	Female: 9	Male: 11
FTE teachers	FTE pupils		Pupil : teacher ratio	
School-age pupils	160		12:1	

Weston Favell Montessori Nursery

Number of teachers	Full time		Part time	
Total: 7	Female: 3	Male: 0	Female: 4	Male: 0
FTE teachers	FTE pupils		Pupil : teacher ratio	
Pre-school pupils	57		6:1	

Education support staff

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	variable
Percentage of time full-time teachers spend in contact with classes	57

Average teaching group size

Pre-school	*
KS1	18
KS2	17
KS3	12
KS4	14.5
Sixth form	8

*A definitive number cannot be provided, as not all pupils are full time.

Public funding

Funding	Number of pupils	Approximate amount (£)
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Assisted Places	0	-
Nursery	11	3,944
Scholarships	0	-
Other	0	-

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	150
Number of questionnaires returned:	50
Percentage return rate:	33

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	12	34	14	28	12
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	28	42	4	22	4
The school handles complaints from parents well*	14	24	26	10	14
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught*	18	38	20	10	12
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	28	34	16	14	16
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work*	48	38	8	4	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	36	52	8	0	4

I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home*	28	46	8	14	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	62	34	2	0	2
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	66	34	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	50	32	14	2	0

*Some parents did not answer this question.